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Poet Lore

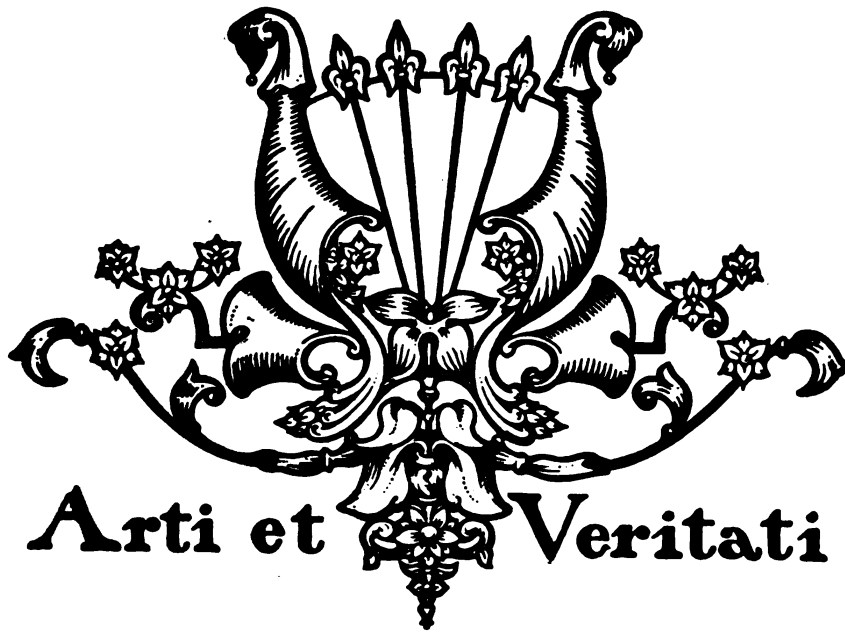
A Magazine of Letters

EDITED BY

CHARLOTTE PORTER AND HELEN A. CLARKE

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THE OLDEST AND LARGEST REVIEW IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
DEVOTED TO POETRY AND DRAMA

Poet Lore

TITLE REGISTERED AS A TRADE MARK

A Magazine of Letters

New Year's Number

The Will O' The Wisp, A Drama in Four Acts
By JAROSLAV KVAPIL

The Art of Play Interpretation
By G. F. REYNOLDS

The Typography of Plays
By ARTHUR SWAN

POEMS BY GERHARDT HAUPTMANN, GABRIELE d'ANNUNZIO,
MARION COUTHOUY SMITH, GRETCHEN WARREN, FELICE CAV-
ALLOTTI, RAINER MARIA RILKE, MARY CAROLYN DAVIES, ED-
UARD MÖRIKE, SVATOPLUK CECH, RICHARD BUTLER GLEANZER,
ISABELLE SCHWARTZ AND J. T.

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Poet Lore

Editors: CHARLOTTE PORTER and HELEN A. CLARKE

JANUARY-FEBRUARY, 1916

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Tractum
Poet Lore

VOLUME XXVII

NEW YEAR'S 1916

NUMBER I

THE WILL O' THE WISP

A DRAMA IN FOUR ACTS

BY JAROSLAV KVAPIL

Translated from the Bohemian by Šárka B. Hrbkova.

"And forthwith they sprang up because they had no deepness of earth. And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.

—Matthew XIII. Verses 5 and 6."

CAST OF CHARACTERS

KAMILO DUŠEK
LADISLAV HLAVÁČEK }
ŠIMR } *painters*
VANIČEK }
PAROUBEK } *sculptors*
MALINA }
MRS. HELLER
HELEN LINDNER, *her niece*
DR. VICTOR VLASÁK
DR. NEDOMA
MRS. DANEŠ
CLARA, *her daughter.*
MRS. FABIAN.
Two of her daughters.

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I

CHARLES FOŘT.
 BOHUŠ V. NOVÁK.
 MISS BUKOVSKÝ, *a singer.*
 STÁZA FALTYS, *a modiste.*
 BUKÁČ, *a newspaper reporter.*
 RÉZA } *artists' models.*
 BOŽENA }
 Servant at Dr. Vlasák's.

ACT I

The common atelier of DUŠEK and HLAVÁČEK. At the rear an entrance to the front hall, curtained off by embroidered draperies. At the right an entrance into a bedroom, before which is a screen. On the left, occupying the entire width of the wall, a large window. In the left corner a divan above which is arranged a canopy of rugs and squares of faded material. Two artists' easels. The smaller, which is turned at an angle away from the audience, holds a sketching-board with a drawing. The larger easel is turned towards the audience and on it is an unfinished painting of considerable size, unframed. Part of this picture is only outlined in charcoal; the rest of the surface shows the colors laid on. As far as can be recognized, it is to be a picture of Psyche pursued by dogs and geese. The girl's figure—Psyche—is, comparatively speaking, the most finished of any portion of the picture. Throughout the studio there are many small articles of art and furniture, in the corners and on the walls. Sketches, unfinished pictures, costumes, trifles, etc. On the whole, the disorder is artistic.

Dušek (Standing with palette before a large canvas and talking to some one behind a Spanish screen).—Well, we're through for the day, Réza. Come tomorrow at ten if you have time. Will you?

Réza (Behind the screen and not visible. Some of her garments are thrown over top of screen and she withdraws one garment after another as she clothes herself. She is unseen while speaking).—To be sure I will. Mr. Šimr doesn't need me any more and I don't go anywhere else.

Dušek.—Is Šimr done?

Réza.—He will be soon.

Dušek.—You'll be lonely now, won't you?

Réza.—For that red-headed Šimr? Go on!

Dušek.—You needn't pretend, Réza! Hlaváček saw you again not long since at Glaubic's. (*He laughs.*) Réza, Réza, what will the locksmith say to that?

Réza.—Nonsense! You don't suppose I'm going to run away from him with Šimr?

Dušek.—It's time Šimr was getting some sense.

Réza.—He? (*She laughs.*) Mr. Dušek, do you know what happened to us the other day at Glaubic's? No? Šimr invited us there, me and Božena, and Mr. Vyhlas also went. Each thought the other one had money; particularly Šimr who changed his last crown and ordered fish and pickles besides. It wasn't till twelve o'clock that they came to a mutual understanding of the fact that together they had only forty-seven kreutzers.

Dušek (Nods his head and speaks quietly).—The good-for-nothings!

Réza.—And Vyhlas had nine beers, you may be sure of that! And Šimr has a previous account there.

Dušek (Displeased).—He'd better attend to his painting!

Réza.—As good luck would have it, that fellow from the vice-regency who sometimes goes with us happened to be there and he loaned the money to Šimr.

Dušek (Inquisitively).—And did Šimr keep on drinking?

Réza (Laughing).—Of course! It ended up at Löffler's. (*A pause.*)

Dušek.—Hurry a little, Réza. I'm expecting a caller.

Réza.—Some young ladies, yes?

Dušek (Harshly).—What's that to you? (*A pause during which DUŠEK paints the lower part of his picture.*) Has Šimr given you back that watch?

Réza.—What watch?

Dušek.—Come, come! You pawned your watch when Šimr didn't have any rent money.

Réza.—And why not? Why shouldn't I help him? Last year when my mother was sick (*She steps out from behind the screen completing the buttoning of her waist.*)—Vaniček also loaned me ten florins. We have to help each other—the fine gentlemen won't help us. (*After a while.*) To be sure, you don't have to make debts any more.

Dušek.—No—and is that such a disgrace? Everyone can be glad when he gets out of debt. Only Šimr has the idea that he'd die instantly if he didn't have debts. (*A commotion is heard*

in the front hall.) And Hlaváček, here, also has that idea.

Hlaváček (Enters).—And Réza also? My respects, Dušek!

Dušek.—Welcome!

Hlaváček.—Are you two gossiping?

Réza.—About you.

Hlaváček.—Confusion! (*He taps RÉZA under the chin.*) If only the locksmith knew that Réza still persists in being a model!

Réza.—Well, he knows whom he is courting, and yet he doesn't want anyone else.

Hlaváček.—Well, I don't know about that, Réza! They say a certain countess thinks a whole lot of your locksmith. She owns three locks.*

Réza (Laughing).—And she hasn't the key to them, is that it? Let Franta make them for her then! (*Suddenly*) Heavens, here I am plunged in gossip—and at four I am due in Smichov. (*Seizes her little hat and sunshade which were lying on the divan.*) Tomorrow at ten, Mr. Dušek?

Dušek.—And in the afternoon, also; we have to work hard now.

Hlaváček.—Will you come tomorrow, Réza? I will make a sketch for myself at the same time.

Réza (At the door).—You'll do the parasite act, I'm sure of that. (*Departing.*) Well, good-bye!

Hlaváček.—Good luck! (*A pause.* HLAVÁČEK *inspects DUŠEK's picture.*) Have you been working long?

Dušek.—Since half past one. I didn't even go to the coffee-house.

Hlaváček.—They were inquiring about you there.

Dušek.—Who?

Hlaváček.—Well, Reitlinger—and those others. I had to play chess with them myself.

Dušek (Banteringly).—My, but that displeased you!

Hlaváček.—I'm not going to paint all the time, and where am I to go?

Dušek.—To be sure! If you're not painting, you must sit in the coffee-house or in the ale-house.

Hlaváček.—You've never in your life been there, have you?

*There is here a play on words which cannot be reproduced in English. The word "zámek" has two meanings (1) a lock to a door, and (2) a castle or palace. Hence one who has three "zámsky" may be the possessor of three noble castles or only the humble owner of three door-locks.

(*Shrugs his shoulders.*) As long as I'm not invited by counts and princes——

Dušek.—Oh, keep still! I guess we know each other.

Hlaváček (Tosses his head).—As far as I'm concerned—!
(*A pause.*) Are you going to work at this now? (*He indicates the large canvas.*)

Dušek. (Nods assent.)

Hlaváček.—And what about the portrait?

Dušek (Points to a smaller easel).—You see I've already made a study for it. But as long as the young lady won't sit for me, I can't begin. A photograph is nothing.

Hlaváček (Frankly).—You'll haul in another couple of hundred milo, wont you?

Dušek.—Paint—and you'll earn some too!

Hlaváček (Whistles).—Paint! What—a magpie on a willow?
(*Bends his head in the direction of the bedroom.*) I still have a canvas in there—

Dušek.—You could have finished it long ago. But in the morning you walk about the studio and whistle and in the afternoon you play chess at the coffee-house—and before you get home it's almost evening and then you go to Thomas's.

Hlaváček.—Indeed! To Thomas's!

Dušek.—Well, then, to Glaubic's! It's all the same.

Hlaváček.—And the frescoes for Skaliček's house—is that nothing? (*He is silent for a while.*) You know it's not a bit pleasant to parch out there in the sun a couple of hours every day.

Dušek.—Make illustrations, then.

Hlaváček.—Oh, I'd be a great success at that, I would.

Dušek (In the meantime making a sketch from a small photograph).—Listen—Ládo——

Hlaváček (Turns around).—Well?

Dušek.—Réza said that Šimr has been disgracing himself again at Glaubic's.

Hlaváček.—I don't know what you mean——

Dušek.—Now stop that! As if you weren't with him all the time.

Hlaváček.—If I can't be with you—

Dušek.—To be sure—you'd then have to sit in the studio—and that's not your style!

Hlaváček (Seats himself astride a chair and leans his elbows on the back of it).—You've gotten industrious all of a sudden!

(Laughs.) Did Pavlik's criticism affect you to that degree?

Dušek.—Don't remind me that they're tearing me to pieces in the papers!

Hlaváček.—Well, that's happened to bigger fish than you.

Dušek.—But they're right—I myself feel how my brains and colors are drying up—and that's what gnaws me and urges me to pull myself together.

Hlaváček.—O thunder! So you also believe things are going to the bad with you. (*He pauses a while then speaks with comic gravity.*) Come, old chap! Retire within yourself and remain there! But don't torment your comrades. (*He laughs.*)

Dušek (Impatiently).—You haven't a bit of feeling, Hlaváček. (*Warningly.*) Just wait till that kind of stagnancy seizes upon you!

Hlaváček.—Well, it isn't to be cured by trifles like this scene here.

Dušek (Peevishly).—What's the use of talking?

Hlaváček.—You're right! (*Gazes at his large picture.*) Hurry up and finish this canvas, but don't mix with those curs and geese. They will bark and sting you to death.

Dušek (Surprised).—Is that so? So *that's* how you interpret my "Psyche?"

Hlaváček.—How else should I interpret it?

Dušek (Stops in front of his picture and looks at it intently).—The idea! I meant it in an altogether different way. Those dogs and geese we have also with us, Láda—

Hlaváček (Laughs).

Dušek.—And they're with us more than elsewhere, my friend. That's what all the triviality of our sort of life—all the hatred of anything else is, believe me! (*Fervently.*) Only to escape from it, only to escape! To tear to pieces the ropes with which you have tied yourself down to this, to cut to pieces the roots in the soil—(*waves his hand*). Bah, what's the use—in short, I'm thoroughly sick of it all and I want to emancipate myself! (*Sits down again to his portrait and draws. A pause.*)

Hlaváček (Rolls over on the divan and whistles).

Dušek (After a while).—Again?

Hlaváček.—Am I bothering you? Don't let yourself be interrupted! Your sketching doesn't trouble me in the least when I whistle.

Dušek.—But your whistling bothers me!

Hlaváček.—Do you paint with your ears? (*He rises, and goes sidling across the atelier towards DUŠEK, and looks at his sketch.*) Fffff—f! (*Seriously.*) Kamilo, what about this Lindner woman?

Dušek.—What about her? Why, I'm going to paint her, as you see.

Hlaváček.—I'm not asking that! Why doesn't that woman get married? She doesn't lack much of being thirty.

Dušek (Provoked).—You gossiping old woman. You do not even know Miss Lindner.

Hlaváček.—I should say I did know her. From the street. Well, and— She isn't one of the youngest.

Dušek (Irritated).—And what's that to me?

Hlaváček (Sauntering about atelier with his hands in his pockets).—And yet she's a good-looking woman! Such an odd sort of beauty. You'll paint with a zest, Dušek. (*He makes a hissing sound.*) To paint her—well—that wouldn't be a bad idea—but to marry her?

Dušek (Disturbed).—Another piece of gossip?

Hlaváček (Indifferently).—Oh, not at all! (*Turns around.*) Dušek, do you know Dr. Vlasák? They say he's running after her.

Dušek (With apparent indifference).—Don't you believe it. Vlasák is a climber. And he won't marry anyone but a rich bride.

Hlaváček.—That's just it!

Dušek.—Don't think for a minute that Miss Lindner's dowry would suffice for him. My good fellow, you don't know that sort of people; if your dowry is under fifty thousand, they won't speak to you.

Hlaváček.—And the Lindner woman hasn't that much?

Dušek (Forcing himself to laugh).—Hlaváček, what's gotten into your head?

Hlaváček.—Well, hasn't she?

Dušek.—Maybe, later on, when she inherits something from her aunt.

Hlaváček.—By that time I wouldn't marry her! (*Merrily*) Dušek, you have a long wait ahead of you!

Dušek (Bursts out).—Ass!

Hlaváček (Laughing).—And you are my—! (*A pause.*)

Dušek (Throws down his crayon and buries his head in his hands).—Oh! Oh! Oh!

Hlaváček (Surprised).—What are you sighing about?

Dušek.—Oh, something just struck me . . . (*After a while he puts his hand into his pocket.*) Read this. (*He draws a crumpled letter from his pocket.*)

Hlaváček (Takes it but looks at the signature first). From Stáza. (*Reads. A pause.*) Well?

Dušek.—What do you say to it?

Hlaváček.—Do you want to know the truth?

Dušek (Lifts his head).—Well?

Hlaváček (Taps his fingers on the letter).—That is what worries and frightens you now. You see? *These* are the ropes which you were cursing. My good fellow, do you know how we all warned you six years ago? And even a year ago you could have retreated—but now?

Dušek.—Did you read what she writes? All at once she wants to leave Prague. And these reproaches! Am I driving her out?

Hlaváček.—She wants exactly the same thing you want. Is she to wait here forever? (*He looks at the letter again.*) As for the rest—I know *why* she wrote it. I talked with her in Spalena Street yesterday; she told me. She has seen you twice with the Lindner woman and her aunt. That's what's the matter. (*Shrugging his shoulders.*) She's a woman—persuade her if you can!

Dušek (Amazed).—Is *that* why?

Hlaváček.—And do you think I'm surprised at her? I myself can see that you are getting singed elsewhere.

Dušek (Lifts his head violently).

Hlaváček (Sharply). Why, certainly—here on this portrait! Dušek, take care—

Dušek (Irritably).—If I hadn't buried myself up to my neck among you, I wouldn't feel all this weight. (*Suddenly.*) But I'll get rid of it, I will yet rise above that which has already crushed the rest of you.

Hlaváček (Humorously).—Me too?

Dušek (Violently).—You too!

Hlaváček.—Well, to be sure I wear a last year's coat, and as for a better pair of boots (*He raises his foot*) I haven't the price either—

Dušek.—You see? A greasy hat and a worn tie are your complete pride—yours and your comrades'.

Hlaváček.—*Yours?* (*Angrily.*) *Baron!*

Dušek.—After all, what's the use of all quarrels? You know Goethe advised the artist to create and not talk. Paint, work as I do—and in a few years we will say what there is to say to each other.

Hlaváček (Wearily).—Well, all right! Save yourself then! (*Strikes the table with his hand.*) And I'll drown myself if it'll please you! (*Noticing DUŠEK'S irritation.*) Well—that's all!

(*The bell sounds in the front hall.*)

Dušek (Quickly draws out his watch).—That surely can't be Miss Lindner so early?

Hlaváček (Amazed).—Was she to come?

Dušek.—With Mrs. Heller, but not until four. (*He looks at his watch again.*) It must be they. They wish to see the studio. Please open the door.

Hlaváček (Goes slowly towards the front hall).

Dušek (Seizes a clothes-brush, quickly brushes his clothes and arranges his cravat in front of the mirror which stands on a table).

Hlaváček (In the meantime opens the door in the front hall).

Stáza (Speaks in entrance hall).

Stáza.—Is Mr. Dušek at home? (*In a lower voice*) Alone?

Hlaváček (Still in entrance hall).—Just go into the studio, Miss Stáza.

Dušek (Starts when he hears Stáza's voice).

Stáza (Enters atelier after tapping on door).—Am I not interrupting? Good afternoon.

Dušek (With feigned calmness which later changes into impatience with regard to Stáza's departure. At times he looks expectantly at his watch).—Ah, God's greeting to you, Stázička.* How does it happen that you're not at the shop?

Hlaváček.—Say, Dušek, I'll go around to Brunner's in the meantime and get that passe partout.

Dušek (Seizes him by the sleeve, disturbedly).—Wait! (*Aloud.*) He'll bring it when he's ready. (*Turns.*) Sit down, Stázička!

Stáza.—Thank you, I won't stay long. (*In a broken tone.*) I have just come to say good-bye.

Dušek (Shakes his finger at her).—Stáza! Stáza!

Stáza (Seeking to gain command of herself).—No, Mr. Dušek, it is settled. Tomorrow I leave for Vienna. My sister is already awaiting me. I have not been in the shop since Tuesday—what should I do in Prague?

Hlaváček (Who has seated himself on the corner of the divan in

*Stázička, a diminutive of Stáza, used in a sense of tenderness or caress.

order to be as little as possible in the way of this intimate scene).

Dušek.—And what is driving you out of Prague?

Stáza.—Ka-mi-lo! (*She bursts out crying.*)

Dušek (Impatiently).—Lord, Lord, such trouble!

Stáza (Seeking HLAVÁČEK with tear-filled eyes, she speaks between sobs).—Mr. Hlaváček, you know it yourself, don't you? I haven't come to upbraid Kamilo. If he'd only say one word or move a finger—(*She breaks into fresh weeping*) haven't I many, many times wanted to go away, and hasn't he as often held me back?

Hlaváček (Forcing himself to be calm).—You know, Miss Stázička, what I think about it. I told you yesterday, and I'd give Kamilo a talking to also—

Stáza.—I ought to go away, oughtn't I?

Hlaváček (Remains silent a moment and then says firmly).—Yes!

Dušek (Bursts out).—Hlaváček!

Hlaváček.—Why then did you detain me here?

Stáza (Trying to control herself).—Mr. Dušek—

Dušek (Looking at her).—Do you really want to go away?

Stáza.—Y-e-s!

Dušek.—Stázička, heed wise advice. You are going away on an empty errand, you don't even know what—

Stáza (Interrupts him).—And do I not live emptily here! Just remember, Mr. Dušek—six years! (*She weeps again.*) I didn't come to reproach you; we were both young and unwise then . . . (*She offers her hand to DUŠEK.*) Good-bye!

Dušek.—Stáza, don't complain afterwards that I deserted you.

Stáza (Touching the photograph which is leaning against the smaller easel and gazes at it intently. Then she seizes it and hands it to DUŠEK).—Do you think I don't know all? (*Indicates the photograph with her other hand.*) You see, that I stand in your way!

Dušek (Bursts out, jerking the photograph from her hand).—For God's sake, I implore you, Stáza, don't torment me with this too! You used to be jealous of the models who came here—and now I wouldn't dare even to paint a woman's portrait! (*Violently.*) I paint whom I choose!

Stáza (With bitter calmness).—And I will not hinder you! (*She falls into silence for a few moments and then extends her hand to DUŠEK.*) Good-bye, Mr. Dušek!

Dušek (Exasperated).—Good-bye! (Extends his hand to her.)

Stáza (Turns away and bursts into sobs).

Hlaváček (Moves).—Miss Stázička. . . .

Stáza (Extends her hand to HLAVÁČEK). Thank you, Mr. Hlaváček. (She ceases crying for a few moments.)

Dušek (Excited).—Stáza!

Stáza (Crying again and indicating with her hand that he is not to detain her).

Dušek (Seizes her hand).—Stáza, don't be angry with me! If you only knew—

Stáza (With a smile of pain).—I know! (She draws a ring from her left hand.) This ring—was—from you—Mr. Dušek. (She offers it to him.)

Dušek (Pushes aside STÁZA's hand).

Stáza.—No—I must return it to you! (She lays it on the table.) Let there be an end to it forever. (She presses a handkerchief to her eyes.) Good-bye! (Departing towards the door she extends her hand to HLAVÁČEK.) Good-bye, Mr. Hlaváček!

Hlaváček (Accompanying STÁZA to the door, presses her hand).—It will be best for you both this way. And if you insist on going to Vienna, why. . . (He departs with STÁZA, towards the entrance).

Dušek (Advances after them, but at the door by a motion of the hand he indicates a sudden resolution. He returns. He puts his hands to his head and with staring eyes gazes into space. He seats himself on a low stool and buries his head in his hands. After a while, he arises, in a listening attitude. Looking towards the table where STÁZA had placed the ring, he reaches for it and drawing a purse from his pocket throws in the ring. The door in the entrance hall bangs. DUŠEK sighs deeply).

Hlaváček (Returns, incensed. With long strides, his hands in his pockets, he paces the studio. After a pause).—Hereafter enact such scenes as this without my presence, I beg you, Dušek!

Dušek (striking his hands together).—For God's sake, please, Hlaváček . . . (Explodes.) You have something for your companions and the ale-house—haven't you?

Hlaváček (Suddenly and wrathily).—Dušek! (Maliciously.) Now the ropes are torn to pieces—and now—you can soar! Away off somewhere to the New Town to St. James' Square—yes?

Dušek.—Ládo, if you knew how I feel now you wouldn't torture me!

Hlaváček.—Oh, you'll console yourself again. (Recovering.)

And for that matter, do what you please! (*Pulls out a drawer in the table and stirring up the papers therein, indifferently.*) Didn't you see that book here that I brought yesterday?

Dušek (*Who has meantime consulted his watch, then quickly removed his coat, untied his necktie and unbuttoned his collar. From the case on the shelf he takes a clean collar, and another tie and dresses himself.*).—No, I didn't.

Hlaváček (*Observing him, indifferently.*).—Are you going somewhere?

Dušek (*Dressing himself.*).—Where would I go? You know the ladies are coming.

Hlaváček (*Making a hissing sound.*).—I know!

Dušek (*Measures him with his eye, then goes into the bedroom from which he almost immediately brings another coat. He puts it on. Speaking angrily.*).—Did I drive out Stáza?

Hlaváček (*Curls his lip.*).—No, you didn't drive her out! She almost stayed long enough to meet the Misses—ahem—the Misses Lindner! (*He seizes his hat.*) Well, just so that Stáza is out of your way, yes? (*He crushes his hat down upon his head.*) Say, I'll return about six. If Šimr should come—

Dušek (*Interrupts him.*).—Wait for him yourself!

Hlaváček.—To be sure, now we'll all get our walking papers since you have—(*He breaks into a laugh.*)—emancipated yourself!

Dušek (*Explosively.*).—And do you know who always abused me the most on account of Stáza? It was you, Hlaváček, you! You and your companions used to mock at me—and when I protested, you rolled your lips in scorn. (*Changes his voice to imitate Hlaváček's*) "Miss Stáza—why not?" (*Breaking off.*) and today you content yourself with every model.

Hlaváček.—Only that I don't get mixed up for a full six years with one! And if I should, I don't kick her off just the instant another skirt dazes me!

Dušek.—Ládo (*Beats his breast with his clenched hand.*) On my soul, you should not torture me today! Don't you see for yourself that something better has moved within me than disgust with my recent intrigue? Don't you see for yourself how superficially, trivially we live, day after day, without disturbance and without growth? I would have suffocated in the atmosphere if I had not awakened in time. What I have done—to Stáza today was cruel—I know it!—but it is better at once when she herself wished it, than to drag down not only her but myself also.

Hlaváček.—*Yourself also!* That is your system of ethics!

Dušek.—Just consider, Láda, what have I accomplished in those six years? Where am I today when I am thirty-two years old? In order not to disturb myself from the madness of my youth I vegetated—like a mere hired clerk who plans out his day to fit the occupation of his sweetheart. (*Puts his hands to his temples.*) How I could have grown elsewhere and how I have buried myself here to no purpose! In the moments when I was nearest the inspiration of my thoughts, I had to throw down my palette because it happened that the hour was drawing near when Stáza was leaving and when I was to wait for her. What did she say to me, how did she uplift me? We talked about her companions, about the troubles they had in the shop, we rambled the streets—and we welcomed Sunday as our salvation because we could ride out by steamer to Chuchle or to Závist.

Hlaváček.—You didn't say a word of this even in our last year at the Academy.

Dušek.—Indeed, I didn't. I was a madcap boy. On the strength of a little warm water at the coffee-house, I babbled about the Bohemian life and I wanted to copy scenes from Murger. And I wanted to have in this Prague puddle of ours my own petite femme—you know in what a crazy state I returned from Paris? Made giddy by the frivolity and recklessness of a superficial life I wanted to enhance my supposed genius.

Hlaváček.—And who then is to blame? I? Or we? Or your surroundings, the atmosphere which you breathed, the soil into which you grew? (*Waves his hand.*) Kamilo, Kamilo,—everywhere on earth it's the same! Except that it may have some other form.

Dušek.—Aha, some other form! Larger and freer; a form which does not strangle and lace you in. (*Clasps his hands.*) Lord, Lord,—how petty it all is and how useless! And you sit at the bottom—at the very bottom—and roll your eyes—and moralize!

Hlaváček (Surprised).—I?

Dušek (Cuttingly).—You, too!

Hlaváček.—It appears, then, that—(*The bell in the front hall sounds.*) Here you have them, go and open the door! We can finish telling each other another time.

Dušek (In the meantime goes to the front hall and opens the door).—My deepest respects, gracious lady—my deepest respects, Miss! (*A rustle in the hall.*) Enter, please. (*He leads the ladies into the atelier.*) My friend, the painter Hlaváček. (*Mutual bows.*)

Mrs. Heller (Looking around).—So this is how it looks in a studio!

Hlaváček (With a smile).—In a neglected studio, gracious lady.

Helen (Extending her hand to DUŠEK).—First of all, let me thank you, Mr. Dušek, most cordially for the Böcklin. It is a splendid work.

Mrs. Heller.—Although somewhat incomprehensible. You'll pardon me, gentlemen,—but your modern art is a little heavy and mysterious for us ordinary mortals.

Helen (Laughing).—Auntie is opposed to all modernism! But don't be angry, the modern poets fare just the same with her.

Dušek.—And how about you, Miss? (*Noticing that the ladies had not yet seated themselves.*) But I pray, ladies! (*Indicating the divan.*)

Mrs. Heller (About to seat herself on a nearby stool).

Dušek (Pointing to a divan).—Ah, gracious lady, I pray!

Mrs. Heller.—Thank you, thank you—it's all one!

Helen (Seating herself on the divan).—I will sit here myself—and the sign says I'll not marry!

Dušek (Smiling).—Don't forget, Miss, about our modern art! Do you like it?

Helen.—Assuredly more than Auntie does. There is something illusive—tempting about it (*She laughs.*) You know, I'm not an aesthetic. But everywhere in foreign countries I prefer the salons to the galleries. The galleries are serious and dead in their classicism—but in the salons there is warmth and evolution, life breathing with passion. . . . Is it not so, gentlemen?

Dušek (Inspired and amazed).—Miss——

Hlaváček—It seems we could easily win over Miss Lindner to our guild.

(*DUŠEK gives HLAVÁČEK a displeased look.*)

Helen.—Most assuredly Mr. Hlaváček! (*With coquettish modesty.*) I paint a little myself.

Dušek (Surprised).—Indeed?

Mrs. Heller.—Helen has temperament—that's true! (*Laughing.*) She didn't even want to leave Paris last year.

Helen.—The gentlemen will readily understand that.

Hlaváček.—And we certainly envy you!

Mrs. Heller.—Apropos, Mr. Dušek, we are not coming alone here. Dr. Vlasák promised that he would come for us here.

Dušek.—Ah, I beg——

Helen.—And my portrait, Mr. Dušek? How shall we arrange about it? Aunt thinks that you could paint at our house—that is—at *her* home, for we wish to surprise father with the portrait.

Mrs. Heller.—If it would not be too much trouble for Mr. Dušek, it would, perhaps, be the best plan.

Helen.—Although—I'm not afraid of studios!

Mrs. Heller.—But still it's inconvenient, Helen . . . Isn't that true, Mr. Dušek?

Dušek.—If you will give your consent——

Helen.—You couldn't, then, paint from the photograph?

Dušek (Takes the board from the easel and shows the drawing to the ladies).—I have made a slight beginning. In the meantime it's only on paper as an experiment——

Mrs. Heller (Looking at the drawing).—But the likeness already appears.

Dušek.—Miss Lindner will now allow me to paint wholly from life.

(*HELEN nods her head assuringly.*)

Mrs. Heller (In the meantime examines the studio).—Ah, what charming miniatures and unfinished pictures. (*Gazes at DUŠEK'S large picture.*) Is that yours, Mr. Hlaváček?

Hlaváček.—Alas, no, gracious lady!

Mrs. Heller.—Ah, then it's Mr. Dušek's!

Dušek.—But now it will wait.

Helen.—Won't you delay yourself with my portrait?

Dušek (With a smile of mute denial).—May I begin soon?

Helen.—Perhaps at once—tomorrow—yes, auntie?

Mrs. Heller.—It will be better to begin after Sunday, Helen, dear. If Mr. Dušek is to paint at our house, the back room must be prepared.

Helen.—It is a corner room, Mr. Dušek, and there is plenty of light.

Hlaváček.—Is not some one rapping? (*Listens.*)

Helen.—Perhaps Dr. Vlasák has already come for us.

Dušek.—Apparently he didn't notice that we have a bell. Pardon me, ladies—(*Goes to front hall.*)

Mrs. Heller.—And what are you painting, Mr. Hlaváček?

Hlaváček.—Scarcely anything, gracious lady!

Vlasák (Having knocked, enters with DUŠEK).—My greetings, ladies!

Mrs. Heller.—Good evening, Doctor!

Helen.—You certainly hurried. (*She offers him her hand.*)

Vlasák (*Advances towards HLAVÁČEK, with a measured bow.*)—

Doctor Vlasák.

Hlaváček.—Hlaváček, the painter. I'm pleased to meet you. (*Extends his hand.*)

Helen (*To HLAVÁČEK*).—But you surely paint something, Mr. Hlaváček. (*Pleadingly.*) Please show it to us!

Hlaváček (*Easily*) Miss Lindner embarrasses me. I don't paint at home at all, Miss Lindner, because I'm now doing ornamental work on the home of Skalíček, the architect.

Mrs. Heller.—And have you nothing at all at home?

Hlaváček.—Only a picture just begun. But it's getting a rest now there in our bedroom, for it would uselessly litter up the studio.

Mrs. Heller.—Ah, so you also live here? How pleasant?

Helen (*Goes to door at right*).—May I?

Dušek.—Oh, Miss Lindner—I beg, please—don't go in there! Old bachelors' disorder—

Helen.—What of it? (*Enters the smaller room.*) This?

Mrs. Heller.—Helen is so willful! (*Laughs.*)

Dušek (*Follows HELEN into the smaller room*).—I beg you, Miss Lindner, don't notice our housekeeping!

(*HELEN laughing audibly behind the scenes.*)

Hlaváček (*Talking at the same time*).—I'd sink with shame if I couldn't show the ladies something better. (*Laughing.*)

Helen (*Returning*).—Auntie, you ought to see that picture! That's surely modern enough!

Dušek (*Coming after her*).—Please don't tell Hlaváček, lest he imagine that its modernness consists in the unfinished condition of his picture!

(*All laugh.*)

Vlasák.—Mr. Hlaváček would be no exception.

Helen.—It would be a rare case that would escape a rubbing in from you.

Mrs. Heller.—Allow me, then, Mr. Hlaváček! (*She enters the smaller room.*)

Dušek (*Behind her*).—And again I beg, that you don't get frightened at our disorder.

Hlaváček (*Merrily shrugging his shoulders*).—I must go and at least defend my masterpiece since it arouses such attention! (*Enters the small room.*)

Helen (*Who has paused, meantime, in front of the screen which*

separates her from the entrance to the smaller room, gazes at DUŠEK'S picture.)

Vlasák (Steps up to her quickly).—Do you look at such things?

Helen.—Look at it too! (She laughs and her eyes glow suddenly.)

Mrs. Heller (Behind the scenes).—Here is a whole storehouse of paintings—allow that!

Vlasák (Looking at the picture).—The original is even prettier.

Helen (Looking longingly at the picture).—That's a poor compliment for the artist!

Vlasák.—Especially in this sort of costume.

Helen (Strikes him lightly with her glove).—Fie, you shameless one!

Vlasák (Tries to put his arm around her waist).—Surely, Helen isn't jealous?

(HELEN laughing, strikes him again with her glove and follows him to the center of the studio.)

Mrs. Heller (Enters with the artists).—Helen, dear! Again tormenting someone?

Helen (Bent on mischief).—Throw him out, gentlemen. He is slandering your pictures!

(DUŠEK slightly taken aback.)

Hlaváček (Laughingly).—Luckily I haven't the smallest piece of canvas here.

Mrs. Heller.—Now we've seen everything, Helen, dear, and we'll go. (Gives her hand to DUŠEK.) May I beg of you, then, Mr. Dušek?

Dušek (Kisses her hand).—Whenever you command, gracious lady.

Helen (Also gives her hand to DUŠEK and does not drop his hand until she finishes speaking when she lightly shakes it).—Then it's arranged for after Monday! I'll send you a message yet, or maybe I'll write you.

(DUŠEK kisses her hand with a happy smile.)

Helen.—My respects, Mr. Hlaváček! (Beckoning to him.) Come, Doctor!

(HLAVÁČEK bowing deeply.)

Mrs. Heller (Simultaneously).—Good-bye, Mr. Hlaváček!

Vlasák (Extending his hand to HLAVÁČEK).—My respects. It was a pleasure to meet you.

(The ladies have in the meantime entered the front hall.)

Vlasák.—Your servant, Mr. Dušek! (Noticing that DUŠEK

is going with the ladies.) Ah, so you'll escort us—(*Departing. A stir in the front hall.*)

Helen (*Laughing in the front hall.*)—It seems to me, Mr. Dušek, it seems to me—!

(HLAVÁČEK accompanies the party as far as the door and then returns to the studio with an easy, swinging step.)

Dušek (*Laughingly in front hall.*)—I could convince you, Miss Lindner. (*A pause.*) My deepest respects. Yes, yes, with absolute assurance. My respects. (*The front door closes. DUŠEK returns to the studio.*)

Hlaváček (*As soon as DUŠEK enters, HLAVÁČEK snaps his fingers and turns on his heel.*)—Well, we're in it, now!

Dušek (*Still excited by his callers now looks surprisedly at HLAVÁČEK.*)—What the devil is the matter with you again? (*At that instant the bell in the front hall rings violently to the rhythm of a military march.*)

Hlaváček.—Still another caller? Is the stream of our visitors to be uninterrupted today?

Dušek.—Well, they don't distract you from work! (*Renewed ringing.*) Very likely it's that wild Šimr!

(HLAVÁČEK has gone to the front hall.)

(DUŠEK stops in front of a small easel and involuntarily gazes at the photograph of HELEN.)

Hlaváček (*In the front hall where he is unlocking the door.*)—Why, Šimr, my respects to you! How does it happen you're going so early?

Šimr (*Entering the studio.*)—Your servant, Dušek!

Dušek (*Excited.*)—Your servant!

Šimr.—I couldn't wait till Réza came; I met her way up by the bridge. (*A pause.*) Were those women who were coming down the stairs up here to see you?

Hlaváček.—That is—to see Dušek.

Šimr.—Who is it?

Hlaváček (*Tosses his head.*)—Dušek is painting her. Miss Lindner. Do you know her?

Šimr (*Whistles shrilly.*)—And so *that's* the Lindner? (*To DUŠEK.*) Ha, ha—Dušek, that's something, isn't it?

Dušek (*Explosively.*)—What's something?

Šimr (*Laughing.*)—Well, so, so! That other one—does she watch her?

Dušek (*Becoming wrathful.*)—Shut up, Šimr, will you?

Šimr.—Ah—in order not to drag down *your* scutcheon, so?

Dušek (Violently).—You know I'm not going to run around with models to Glaubic's any more, as you do. (*A pause.*) I don't grasp in what way that lady has injured you that you talk about her so! You are always complaining that there is no understanding for art in our society—and when some one does appear who understands it, you scoff at him.

Šimr (Tosses his head).—My world suffices for me!

Dušek (Indicating ŠIMR with his thumb).—Do you hear, Láda? What did I say?

Hlaváček.—Don't begin again, I beg of you!

Dušek (Crosses the studio and laughs contemptuously).—And the best thing about it all is that you call this artists' life! You botch up some small order just enough so that you could get something to eat out of it—

Šimr (With feigned gravity).—Ah—mainly— to drink!

Dušek (Shaking his finger).—Just own up! It is suffocating here among you just as in those ale houses! (*Spreads out his hands.*) Lord, lord, how gladly I'll fly from here!

(*ŠIMR looks at him amazedly.*)

Hlaváček (Surprised).—What—?

Šimr (Nudges HLAVÁČEK).—That's on account of her, eh?

Hlaváček (Nodding to ŠIMR).—Well, Kamilo—then those dogs and those geese—(*Indicating the picture with a motion of his head*) will remain for us after all?

Dušek.—That's something different, you heard very well! What makes me wrathful is that you indulge in such coarseness. Especially Šimr here.

(*ŠIMR grins.*)

Dušek.—Well, laugh, laugh, you idiot!

Šimr.—And are you going to take Stáza there with you?

Dušek (Furiously).—Šimr! (*Steps up to him and then stops.*) As if I didn't know you!

Hlaváček (Motioning to ŠIMR).—Let him alone, Šimr! (*To Dušek.*) And you get a little sense, you childish man! What do you care, after all, for the Lindner? You'll paint her, draw a few hundred—and enough! What are you getting excited about?

Dušek.—No one mentioned money! You are only angry at society because you haven't its money. (*Angrily.*) Oh, to be sure! Are you envious because I paint better portraits? Don't hang around the ale-houses, don't disgrace yourselves on the streets—and then people will notice you, too. (*To ŠIMR.*) You know very well no man is going to Thomas's to hunt you up in

order to have you paint his daughter. (*Turns to HLAVÁČEK.*) And you, Hlaváček, are also a regular weather-vane. A little while ago you were like a lamb—now comes Šimr—and your tongue runs just like his!

Šimr.—And neither of us can get in a word because of Dušek! Hlaváček (*Seizes his hat*).—Come on, Šimr, let's go!

Šimr.—Oh, there's no hurry. (*Hesitates.*) I say, Dušek, I hope we understand each other?

Dušek (*calmly*).—No, it doesn't appear so. (*A pause.*)

Šimr.—I say, Dušek, would you lend me a florin?

(HLAVÁČEK *laughs boisterously.*)

Dušek (*Also smiles and then reaches into his pocket*).—Here you are, you crazy fellow! (*Hands him a florin.*) And get wise!

Šimr.—And now—come with us!

Dušek (*Indifferently*).—Where?

Šimr.—Well, perhaps to "The Well." There is bowling today.

Dušek.—No, no, I won't go! I've had my fill of you today. (*A pause.*)

Šimr.—Dušek, do you need Réza these days? I'd like to daub at something or other.

Dušek.—Aren't you through yet?

Šimr.—Oh, sure, but still I'd—

Dušek.—As far as I'm concerned—let her go to you. Anyway I'm going to begin the portrait.

Hlaváček.—And what about this? (*Points to the large picture.*)

Dušek (*Cuts him off*).—You won't finish it for me!

Hlaváček (*Jams his hat down on his head*).—My respects! Come on, Šimr!

Šimr (*Offering DUŠEK his hand*).—I thank you, Dušek, for the time being—and don't be angry!

Dušek.—You little fool! (*Indifferently.*) My respects!

(ŠIMR and HLAVÁČEK *depart.*)

(DUŠEK *gazes intently at his picture, shakes his head—and slowly, hesitatingly takes it down. Then he places it in the corner, with the canvas side to the wall. He seizes HELEN'S photograph and standing at the window, remains gazing at it steadily.*)

Curtain.

ACT II

MRS. HELLER'S reception rooms. The chief reception room has appointments showing the taste and luxury typical of a wealthy family of Prague's most eminent circle. At the right an entrance to the front hall, in the rear an open door through which one can see into farther rooms likewise tastefully decorated. At the left side of the room there are windows, also a divan and a fauteuil arranged in a semicircle. The lights in all the rooms are burning brightly. Men in evening clothes, ladies in rich toilettes of light colors.

(MRS. HELLER enters from rear, dressed in a simple, tasteful gown as befits the hostess.)

(NEDOMA enters at the same time from front hall.)

(VLASÁK enters behind NEDOMA.)

Mrs. Heller (*Frankly*).—At last, then, our doctor! (*She extends her hand to NEDOMA.*) Ah, Dr. Vlasák! (*Extending her hand to VLASÁK.*)

Vlasák (*Kissing MRS. HELLER'S hand*).—Are we not to be scolded gracious lady, for coming late?

Mrs. Heller.—What are you thinking of? You are practically the first ones. Only the Daneš and Mr. Dušek have arrived as yet. (*Quickly*) To be sure—the artists also, Mr. Bláha and Miss Bukovský.

Nedoma. (*Merrily to VLASÁK*).—There—what did I say? It is, my friend, still good form to come very late. (*Draws out his watch and shows it to MRS. HELLER.*) The company is invited for eight, is it not? Please note—it is half past eight—(*He points to the face of the watch*) and still we'll wait longer!

Mrs. Heller (*Laughing*).—You are bad, doctor! Why, Mr. Dušek is already here—

Nedoma (*Cuttingly*).—To be sure, I comprehend how it is Dušek wasn't late!

Mrs. Heller.—and the Daneš. (*With a smile.*) And now, you don't comprehend why Dr. Vlasák came late, do you?

Vlasák. (*Hesitates*).—But, gracious lady—

Nedoma.—Then it is really Miss Daneš?

Mrs. Heller.—Didn't you know it, doctor? Oh, you must immediately offer congratulations!

Nedoma (*Offering VLASÁK his hand*).—Should I?

Vlasák (Lightly protesting).—Our gracious hostess speaks a little too definitely.

Mrs. Heller.—Well, and—? Mrs. Daneš doesn't contradict in the least when it is mentioned.

Vlasák (Slightly surprised).—Really? (*With a smile.*) Truly, dear Mrs. Heller, your news is always agreeable—

Nedoma.—And how about Miss Daneš?

Mrs. Heller.—You don't know even that? And you are their family physician?

Nedoma.—But *only* their physician, my dear lady. Among our sort it is true that a physician may also become a family confidant but not in every case. In your household, to be sure, that honor is accorded me.

Mrs. Heller (Laughingly).—Our doctor is even gallant at times!

Nedoma.—Is that so strange?

Mrs. Heller.—Strange enough especially since some one of us is ill all the time. Why, you don't even have any time left for gallantry.

(HELEN enters from the back through the door at the left. She is dressed in a rich and daintily attractive gown.)

(DUŠEK follows her. Since the first act DUŠEK has changed into a perfect dandy; his evening clothes are faultless, his hair smoothly brushed and his beard cut according to the mode.)

(VLASÁK bows silently to Helen who extends her hand.)

Nedoma (Greets HELEN and presses DUŠEK's hand).—If one wouldn't seek you in reception halls, Mr. Dušek, he never would find you in your studio.

Vlasák (Gives his hand to DUŠEK).—My respects, Mr. Dušek! Never mind in the least the doctor's reproaches, Mr. Dušek. Today is again one of his bad days.

Dušek (To NEDOMA).—Ah, did you struggle clear upstairs to see me, Doctor?

Nedoma (Surprised).—Didn't you find my card?

Mrs. Heller.—Pardon me, gentlemen. (*She departs through the left door at the rear.*)

(All bow silently.)

Nedoma (To DUŠEK).—I was at your studio Sunday morning—and today is Wednesday.

Helen (To DUŠEK).—What! You haven't been at the studio since Sunday? (*She shakes her finger at him.*) You! you!

Nedoma (To HELEN).—And you scold Mr. Dušek for that?

Perhaps if you definitely command him.

Helen.—Just see, Mr. Dušek, what a protector you have won! (*To NEDOMA*).—But, truly, I myself am to blame that Mr. Dušek is so busily occupied. (*Indicates DUŠEK*) Sir, my instructor in painting! (*Laughing*) And my faithful advisor in everything at all times. He even designed my ball costume for the National Beseda.*

Nedoma (Amazed).—Thunder! (*To DUŠEK*) So you are becoming not only a modern but a fashion artist?

Dušek (Slightly piqued).—What I heard from you, doctor, concerning my last picture, was my greatest incentive.

Nedoma (Gravely).—Pardon me, I gave you counsel in all frankness!

Dušek (Caustically, bowing).—I'm assured of that!

(*NEDOMA turns away indifferently.*)

Helen (Wishing to change the conversation).—Please be seated, gentlemen! Or do you wish to go into the other room?

Nedoma (Seats himself on the divan).—Let's talk in here before the rest of the company arrives. (*With a smile*) Although Dr. Vlasák may be drawn towards—

Helen.—Oh, to be sure! (*To VLASÁK*) Clara is here, doctor. (*She points to the rear.*) If you wish—

Vlasák (Disturbed).—Oh, Miss—(*He seats himself*) I am in constant suspicion here.

(*DUŠEK seats himself.*)

Helen (Seating herself).—He who doesn't defend himself.—

Nedoma (To DUŠEK).—Apropos, Mr. Dušek, I just went up to your place Sunday to ask you for Mr. Hlaváček's address.

Helen.—Mr. Hlaváček is here. Aunt invited him for today.

Nedoma (Pleasantly surprised).—Really? (*To DUŠEK*) I needn't even trouble you then—

Dušek (Bitingly).—I beg!

Nedoma.—nor need I interrupt you in your tailorish problems. (*He laughs.*)

Dušek (Angered).—I don't comprehend, doctor, why you call me—

Helen (Quickly interrupting).—Don't you know, Dr. Nedoma? He will rebuke you for a whole year because you weren't in your studio those three days.

Nedoma (significantly to DUŠEK).—In a year, we'll say to

*The chief social event of the season in Prague.

each other what we have to say.

(A knocking at the door.)

(HELEN arises.)

Fořt (Enters from the front hall).—My respects, gracious Miss! (He kisses HELEN'S hand and silently bows to the gentlemen.)

Vlasák (Gives his hand to Fořt).—Good-evening, colleague!

Fořt (With a bow to NEDOMA).—I take the liberty of introducing myself, Karl Fořt.

Helen (Quickly).—Ah, I beg pardon; I thought the gentlemen were acquainted. (Introducing.) Doctor Nedoma.

Nedoma (Extending his hand to Fořt).—I'm glad to know you, Mr. Fořt.

Helen (Indicating a chair).—Please, Mr. Fořt.

Fořt (To Helen).—You were not even at the academic ball. (To DUŠEK). And you, Dušek, didn't come either!

Nedoma.—Do you wonder at it?

Fořt.—But for that, Dr. Vlasák here—

Helen (Looking at VLASÁK).—and Miss Daneš was there too, wasn't she? (She laughs.)

(FOŘT laughs and nods assent.)

(MRS. HELLER enters from left door near rear.)

(HLAVÁČEK follows her. The state of his clothing indicates that it was secured in a hurry. He has a coat which was apparently made for another figure and wears a loosely tied neckkerchief.)

Mrs. Heller.—Ah, Mr. Fořt! Welcome!

(FOŘT kisses her hand.)

Mrs. Heller.—It seems that the gentlemen don't want to join our company. (To HLAVÁČEK) Allow me, Mr. Hlaváček. (Introducing) Doctor Nedoma; your sincere admirer.

Nedoma (Arising).—Mr. Hlaváček? Ah, this is a pleasure! (Presses HLAVÁČEK'S hand cordially.)

Mrs. Heller.—I asked Mr. Hlaváček especially for your sake. (A knocking on the door. MRS. HELLER steps to the right.)

Mrs. Fabian (Enters with her daughters. She hastens in an affected manner towards MRS. HELLER).—Ah, my dear! How kind you are! (The FABIEN girls kiss MRS. HELLER'S hand.)

Mrs. Heller (To the newcomers).—Please come! (She nods towards the door at the left near the rear.) And the gentlemen will also surely come; we shall begin the program now.

(All arise departing separately.)

Nedoma (Detaining HLAVÁČEK to the last. When the company has passed out, he pauses with HLAVÁČEK at the rear).—May I

detain you, Mr. Hlaváček? (*Laughing.*) Or do you want to hear the program?

Hlaváček (Returns with him towards the front).—I'm at your service, doctor!

Nedoma (Seating himself).—They won't miss us. Let's sit down!

(*HLAVÁČEK sits.*)

Nedoma.—Mrs. Fabian has brought her daughters; the concert will surely begin with the "Slavonic Dances."

(*HLAVÁČEK laughing.*)

Nedoma.—Where those young women go, they play the "Slavonic Dances" for four hands. Mrs. Fabian in the meantime fairly overflows with bliss. But no doubt we'll hear it way in here—and it would be better if we didn't hear it at all.

Hlaváček.—The doctor evidently isn't a lover of music.

Nedoma.—Why not? But I don't coquette with it. (*Points in the direction of the main reception room*) All these yawn—at least in spirit—at such a musical soiree, but that doesn't stand in the way of their talking learnedly about music as if it were their daily bread. They go to concerts—and are bored; they go to the opera and are bored. But while music is the fashion they must not remain away. (*Behind the scenes DVOŘÁK's "Slavonic Dances" is played on a piano. NEDOMA listens.*) Do you hear?

Hlaváček (Laughing).—The doctor is a good guesser!

Nedoma.—I beg you! (*Spreads himself comfortably in the chair.*) I am, in my turn, interested in pictures. Not because it's the fashion, but from an innate fondness for them. I have a nice collection of originals.

Hlaváček.—And an excellent reputation among painters, doctor. I am all the more sorry that I sold my "Will o' the Wisp" since I learned recently that it might have become your property.

Nedoma.—Listen, Mr. Hlaváček! (*Gazes at him intently.*) You are a true friend of Dušek's, are you not?

Hlaváček (Somewhat surprised by the question).—For years, doctor. We came to the academy together from the technical school and since last summer we have had a company studio.

Nedoma.—You have separated now?

Hlaváček.—That is to say, Dušek wanted to be alone. When we have finished a song, there are easily different opinions. You understand.

Nedoma.—With regard to your friend, certainly. But what—you fell out with each other?

Hlaváček.—Oh, not at all—the bonds became looser just gradually.—We are friends as before—except that the former heartiness is lacking. (*Laughing.*) To be sure—here to this gathering—we came together; Dušek had to introduce me.

Nedoma.—Oh, well, you'll get used to this sort of thing.

Hlaváček.—I'd almost say, doctor, that I'd be afraid of it. (*Confused.*) Oh, Sapristi! I'm talking a little too freely.

Nedoma (With a smile).—Oh, just go ahead and talk! If I were Dušek I would envy you that tenacity.

Hlaváček.—Really?

(*NEDOMA nods.*)

(*A pause.*)

Hlaváček.—But Dušek has completely adjusted himself to a different atmosphere.

Nedoma.—He was adjusted into it, as the saying goes. (*Significantly.*) A will o' the wisp as in your picture—you know? But for that he has changed into a perfect dandy. (*Throws his head in direction of other room.*) Well, hasn't he? (*Making a motion with his hand.*) If he'd paint more and better, it would be better for him.

(*HLAVÁČEK nods.*)

Nedoma (Warming up).—But what insults me the most is the decline of his taste, his artistic consciousness. And you, Mr. Hlaváček ought to be even more hurt by it. (*Violently.*) Why, thunder, he has gotten so mixed up in those enchantments that he has become Miss Lindner's tailor!

Hlaváček (Not comprehending).—It isn't possible!

Nedoma (Bursting into a laugh).—Indeed it is! He designs her costumes and—is making a paintress of her! You know how such a young woman paints—to be sure, she isn't hindering anyone, so let her paint! But Dušek impressively raves about those daubs of hers. (*Spells out the words*) im-press-ive-ly raves, I tell you. And not only out of gallantry! Everywhere that he sets foot. And he believes what he says. (*Violently*) That's how stupid he has become here, that's to what degree his senses have become stultified!

Hlaváček.—Do you think, doctor, that I don't feel it all doubly?

(*A pause.*)

Nedoma (Suddenly).—Oh, well, what's he to us, anyway? Let's talk about something else! In the first place—since you've sold your "Will o' the Wisp" you must paint me something else

soon—you understand—(*Someone knocks.*)

Novák (Enters the room).—My respects, doctor!

Nedoma.—At your service, Mr. Novák. Well you *have* been detained! Don't you hear? (*He points towards the rear from which the sound of music is heard.*)

Novák.—Really? Pardon me, I must offer my greetings to the lady of the house. (*He departs through rear.*)

Nedoma.—Do you know him?

(*HLAVÁČEK shakes his head.*)

Nedoma (Caustically).—Bohus Vladimir Novák, the poet of Prague reception rooms! (*Looks intently at HLAVÁČEK.*) Haven't you read anything of his? (*Dryly.*) Neither have I. And I hope no one in Bohemia has, either. But—he's a poet! Yes, indeed, a highly gifted poet as any one in society will attest—even Mrs. Daneš although she reads only Marlitt and Haecklander.

Hlaváček.—Aha, he's a parlor specialist!

Nedoma.—Excellent! A specialist! Our social set, my friend, scorns the other castes but nevertheless, it feels that it lacks something. So, to make up this lack, it coddles up in its own greenhouse this sort of compensation, for it is too supercilious to accept from another order of society what it does not have itself. (*He points behind the scenes.*) Bohus Vladimir Novák suffices for our social set, as the entire field of literature. And since society recognizes him as a poet, ergo—

Hlaváček.—Mr. Novák is an authority. (*Laughs.*)

Nedoma.—And see, that's why Dušek can never perfectly plant himself in this social set. Even in the most modern garments with the newest perfume on his neck-cloth he will ever remain a common parvenu. (*Quickly.*) Nota bene, a parvenu *without* money; only a parvenu *with* money looks as if he might belong among us.

Hlaváček.—Among *you*, doctor? Pardon me, but your views—

Nedoma (Laughs).—Ah, so, I understand! You see, my friend, I am a physician in those families. I live with them, know their weaknesses, I understand them—and—I forgive them. "We are caught together, we will hang together" say the Germans. I am, my friend, a cynic even in their company. But that suits them, hence, they like me. A family physician, Mr. Hlaváček, is also a piece of furniture in a reception room.

Hlaváček (Frankly).—Then the atmosphere,—has no in-

fluence on you, doctor? (*He laughs.*)

Nedoma.—The atmosphere, my friend, devours only the weak. Every atmosphere. Only the other day, I had a great debate about that with your friend Dušek.

Hlaváček (Assenting).—A beloved theme of his in recent times!

Nedoma.—Isn't that so? He complained that he had to escape from his hitherto atmosphere by main force in order to save himself from crumbling. He had to save himself, he said, and get into freer, clearer air.

Hlaváček (Smiling a little).—He is slurring his own nest!

Nedoma.—Do you know what I said to him? That any medium can not gnaw at a strong man. And may the devil take a weak man! Among us or among you—the same holds true. But a new medium devours a weak man much quicker.

Hlaváček.—And Dušek is in a new medium!

Nedoma.—Exceedingly so! And, my friend, he is in great error, in the meantime. He seeks in our society what doesn't exist there. The new colors and the new perfumes have deluded him—nothing more. Fundamentally it is the same. Except for the fact that Dušek's awakening will be all the more terrible when he comes to, in a strange world.

Hlaváček.—And yet—he has found here a new intoxicant!

Nedoma.—What good does it do him? Does it create anything in him or bring anything out of him? Not a thing. Did you see his new picture?

(*HLAVÁČEK nods.*)

Nedoma.—Well—then! And that is only the beginning of the end. (*A pause.*) You ought to give him a talking to.

Hlaváček (Smiles).—I'd fare ill, if I did.

Nedoma.—He's touchy, isn't he? Another sign of a fall. And, my friend, he's fallen into quite an agreeable world, where at least they rave about art, if nothing else. Sir, we are, so to speak, in an artists' hall, here. (*Laughs.*) Truly, though, Mrs. Heller herself has enough earnest interest. But—the rest! But Mrs. Heller is taming them; note—first, the musical competitions of artists and dilettantes—and, no supper until eleven. (*Looks at his watch.*) I am hungry now.

Helen (Enters at the rear with Clara).—O ho! here are two deserters! Go at once and listen!

Nedoma (Laughing).—Won't you relieve us of duty? Come, Mr. Hlaváček; the ladies are evidently longing for confidences.

Helen (Shakes her fan at him).—You—truthful man! Mr. Hlaváček has found fine entertainment among us on his very first visit.

Nedoma.—He who seeks, always finds, my dear lady.

Helen.—Mr. Hlaváček was hardly looking for—you.

Nedoma.—But I was looking for him! Come, Mr. Hlaváček we mustn't be in the way. (*Departs, HLAVÁČEK with a bow follows him.*)

Clara (Sits down).—Do you know, Helen, dear, what they are saying? That Dušek is courting you?

Helen (Laughing as she seats herself).—And is that why you've dragged me here? Are you jealous of me?

Clara (Embarrassed).—Tell me, Helen, dear, do you intend to marry him?

Helen (Laughs aloud).—Well, well,—you, little stupid! Do you think I want to get married á tout prix?

Clara (Suddenly).—Don't you want to get married? (*Timidly.*) That is—you don't want to be married to Dušek, isn't that so?

Helen (Merrily).—No! But why such speeches?— (*She looks closely at CLARA.*) Ah, that's it. (*Insinuatingly.*) I don't want to marry anyone, my good little soul,—not anyone!

Clara (Astonished).—Honestly, don't you want anyone?

Helen.—Dearie, isn't it you who is in love?

Clara.—Hush, Helen dear!

Helen.—They say that Vlasák wants you, doesn't he?

(*CLARA confused.*)

Helen.—And they say that you ought to be jealous of me.

Clara (Reproachfully).—Helen, dear!

Helen (With a smile).—Am I so dangerous?

Clara.—You are, Helen dear, you are!

Helen (Flatteringly).—But not to you, Clara, love. You are a very wealthy prospective bride.

Clara.—Mamma reminds me of that constantly.

Helen.—Well, there you have it! I can't be dangerous to those who wish to marry rich. For me there would be—for instance—(*Laughing*)—Dušek!

Clara (Unbelievingly).—And would you want him?

Helen (With a smile).—For a husband?

Clara.—Why, then, does he come to see you?

(*HELEN laughs aloud.*)

Clara.—And aren't you sorry for him? Doctor Nedoma

said not long ago at our house that Mr. Dušek is failing.

Helen.—Well, that's once that the *physician* in Nedoma didn't speak! Maybe he was speaking of his pictures. (*Surprised.*) And what of it? Can I command him to paint more or better? Can he paint at all when he goes about all day, seeking opportunities to meet me, when he makes friends with those fops who he imagines are favorites in my aunt's house? With that Fořt and that Novák? (*Dryly.*) But he *has* changed, hasn't he?

Clara.—All on account of you, Helen dear—and for that reason you ought to be honest with him.

Helen (Laughs bitterly).—Marry, Clara, dear, marry! You should marry while you still have faith in men!

Clara.—Has some one deceived you?

Helen (Haughtily).—Some one—me? Because I'm not seeking a husband? (*Shaking her head.*) Child, child!

Clara.—Believe me, dear Helen, I don't understand you.

Helen.—Because I don't care to marry? Well, you know, sweetheart mine, I know men a little. Do you think than man, Dušek, is any better? Until recently, he went about with a milliner.

(*CLARA surprised.*)

Helen.—Yes, a milliner! For six years he had relations with an ordinary milliner. Vlasák knows it, ask him! He lived with her and adapted himself to that queer sort of society while he had a girl from that sphere. Now he is crazy about me—and makes friends with any fool of our set. (*Merrily.*) Now that's charming, isn't it? Do you think that what happened before insults me? Why? On the contrary—that mannerly big-eyed artist stimulates me! He has entertained me during the entire winter with his courtship. (*Convincingly.*) Oh, my girlie, he has fine feeling! With his whole being he hangs on every movement of my lips! I barely speak and, like one intoxicated, he loses himself in my moods. (*A pause.*) Such marvelous power wouldn't please you, would it?

Clara (Astonished).—After all that you know about him?

Helen.—Do you know anything better about the men of our own set? And if you don't know—can you take oath that they are different? And, for that matter, would you want a husband who had not sowed his wild oats?

Clara.—You want to tease me, don't you, Helen, love?

Helen.—Tease you? Don't demand much in matrimony

and you won't miss much. And then—do I want to marry Dušek?

Clara.—Of course, you can't do that. But you could tell him.

Helen.—Why, when he hasn't asked me?

Clara.—And if he does propose some time?

Helen.—He will never get to the proposal. And if he does speak out, still—well——

Clara.—Well?

Helen.—Well, let him speak out! It will be a joke.

(*Fořt enters at the rear and stands near the other room.*)

Helen (Observes Fořt).—He won't be the first to speak unadvisedly. (*Points to the rear.*) That one has already blurted out his love—and how stupidly. Just wait!

Fořt (Advances).—The company is wondering where the ladies have concealed themselves. (*To CLARA.*) Miss Clara, you ought to hear Bláha's concert numbers.

Helen.—And not I?

Fořt (Naïvely).—No, not you. I would like to say something to you.

(*CLARA and HELEN laugh outright.*)

Vlasák (Enters at rear).—In a little while the entire company will have moved to the front reception hall—and Mr. Bláha can play for himself.

Helen.—Doctor, you must set things right! Clara was just about to return; escort her to the music room. Anyway, Mr. Fořt wants to avow his love for me, he has owned up to it.

Fořt.—I wouldn't be so bold.

Helen.—What sort of confidences can you have that Clara mustn't hear them?

Fořt.—That's a secret.

Vlasák (To CLARA).—Come, Miss Clara, or else Fořt will yet betray his secret to us. (*Departing with Clara towards the music room.*)

Fořt.—Do you take me for such a fool? My dear sir, I've been a match for cleverer people!

Vlasák (Looks around and laughs).—Thank you for the compliment!

Mrs. Heller (Entering from other room).—It seems to me that our guests are not enjoying themselves very much. Some one runs away every little while.

Vlasák.—I've been looking for the deserters, my dear lady,

and I'm gathering them up for Mr. Bláha's concert.

Mrs. Heller.—Please do!

(VLASÁK and CLARA leave.)

Mrs. Heller (Follows them but stops at the rear).—Helen, dear, aren't you coming?

Helen.—Wait a minute, auntie—just a minute. I want to hear out Mr. Fořt. (*Laughs.*)

Mrs. Heller (Merrily).—Poor Mr. Fořt. (*Departs.*)

Helen (Seating herself).—Well, then—you fountain of news!

Fořt.—Do you know what I want to tell you?

(HELEN shakes her head.)

Fořt.—Dušek is in love with you.

Helen (With comic amazement).—You don't mean it?

Fořt (Naïvely).—Don't you know it? Last evening we were at Nikl's and Dušek confided in me. (*Laughs emptily.*) That was some fun! He told how beautiful you are—really—he said that!—and what talent you have—

(HELEN laughs.)

Fořt.—I laughed at him, too, until I got him wrathful. He said to me "If you only knew how such a woman uplifts a man!" And he owned up to me that he'd die without you!

Helen (In humorous vein).—And did he tell you to tell me?

Fořt.—Why, what do you think? I had to promise that I'd not betray him. (*Innocently.*) See, again some one loves you!

Helen (Alluringly).—Why, don't you, any more?

Fořt (Confused).—I, Miss—? (*Hesitates.*)

Helen (Laughs).—Ah, thou bumpkin!

Fořt (Foolishly).—Aren't you poking fun at me, Miss Helen?

(DUŠEK enters at rear and stands still in door of music room.)

From behind the scenes are heard the passionate, longing strains of a violin.)

Helen (Laughs outright at Fořt).—Go and listen to that virtuososo, go! (*Notices DUŠEK.*) Look, Mr. Dušek is afraid of that violin!

Dušek (Enters slowly).—Am I intruding?

Helen.—Just come in, Mr. Dušek, and take Mr. Fořt's place.

Fořt.—Miss Helen always finds some agreeable excuse when she wants to get rid of me.

Helen (Laughing).—Do you know, Mr. Fořt—(*Stopping*) But why should I make you angry at me?

Fořt (Departing).—I renounce the rest of my punishment

in favor of my friend Dušek.

Helen (With comical surprise).—Man, man,—but you're witty!

Fořt (Blissfully).—I should say so! (*Bowing, departs.*)

Helen.—Mr. Dušek, it appears, has been wholly entranced by those artistes in the four-handed performance! (*Laughs.*) Or by Miss Bukovský? Or Clara?

Dušek.—Miss—

Helen.—Ah, Clara? Don't try to compete with Vlasák.

Dušek.—Is it the truth?

Helen.—About Vlasák and Clara? Why yes, Mrs. Daneš is already telling of it publicly.

Dušek.—And Dr. Vlasák?

Helen.—I beg of you! Clara is a wealthy catch—and that's enough. (*Seats herself.*) Do you care to stay here a while with me? Or do you want to listen to Bláha?

Dušek (Glowing).—Oh, Miss Lindner—if you'll allow—

Helen (Indicates with a wave of her hand the divan where she herself is sitting).—Come, sit down.

(*DUŠEK seats himself.*)

Helen.—It's rather tiresome back there, isn't it?

(*DUŠEK is silent.*)

Helen (After a while).—Tell me, what you are doing nowadays. It's a pity you're not a landscape artist; there must be plenty of motifs in the snow covered plains and drifted forests for landscapists, don't you think so? When the sun vanishes in the mists and everything is lost in the grayness—(*A pause.*) Do you remember the other day how we rode in the sleigh from Zbraslavi? Did you notice how Novák frowned when we were getting into the sleigh because you and not he sat in our sleigh?

Dušek (Laughing).—Poor Novák! He hardly spoke to me that evening.

Helen (Leaning backward).—By the way, why don't you ever paint landscapes? Oh, if I only had your brush! I'd like to paint a vast winter landscape—monotonous, immeasurable.

Dušek.—Paint it, Miss Helen! You can do it better than I.

(*HELEN laughing softly.*)

Dušek.—Oh, indeed you can! You surely don't think I'm flattering you? For scarcely a year have I been allowed to slightly cultivate your technique of form—and ere long I shall be useless to you!

Helen (Gazing at him).—Useless? Oh, now you are cruel!

Why, do you think society will have had enough of you when you will have had enough of my painting?

Dušek (Confused).—Oh, no! I have come from another sort of world and I will know, that I'd very soon have to leave this one forever if it were not for that happy chance. (*His speech grows lower but more impassioned.*)

Helen.—What chance?

Dušek.—That I may keep vigil over your hand as it paints and at the same time be one of those who are—(*He becomes silent and then bursts out warmly*) one of those who are, after all, happier mortals!

Helen (With alluring charm).—And who are they?

Dušek.—Those who are nearest to you, even if they are indifferent.

Helen.—Indifferent to me? Why, haven't I the right to tolerate about me only those who are not indifferent to me?

Dušek (Becoming more and more impassioned as a result of HELEN'S nearness).—You have—but you are too good, to use your power.

Helen (Laughs oddly, with bitterness).—I, good? (*Thoughtfully.*) Ah, because our entire social set hasn't wholly wearied me as yet?

Dušek.—Social set? Oh, no, not your set,—but— (*Softly and timidly*)—I.

Helen (Touches DUŠEK'S hand resting on the divan).—You! You overesteem our social set.

Dušek (Pleadingly, in a tone trembling with joyful unrest).—Miss Helen!

Helen (Waves her open fan merrily).—Oh—Oh—Oh! (*Laughs.*) Mr. Dušek, have you, too, become a hypocrite? Or do you want me to flatter you?

Dušek.—How? And I a hypocrite? Oh, believe me,—all others can easily be truthful!

Helen (Points towards the rear).—Those in there? (*Laughs.*) Ah, Dr. Nedoma—yes, yes—he is sometimes almost too truthful! But who beside him? Fořt? He speaks the truth only out of ignorance. Or Novák? He would choke on truth judging by the way he belies himself.

Dušek.—There are others there—

Helen.—Oh, yes, Dr. Vlasák, perhaps. But he dares tell the truth only to Clara now. (*A pause.*) Or could you be jealous—(*Laughs*) of that old Mr. Daneš?

Dušek (Surprised).—Jealous?

Helen (Captivatingly).—To be sure, jealous! Everyone is jealous who imagines he is not the first one— or the only one.

(*DUŠEK shows excitement.*)

Helen (Suddenly).—Pst! (*Tensely. She again touches DUŠEK's hand. She listens to the music of the violin. After a moment she looks inquiringly at DUŠEK.*)

Dušek (Embarrassed).—And may I speak, then?

Helen (Laughing).—Why, why, Mr. Dušek, what has happened to you? (*Frankly.*) Just as if we didn't all like you, indeed, as if you were merely tolerated among us! Believe me, I myself am very grateful to you for many reasons. I can't define it—but it is as if you had brought something new into my life, a little real interest for art, a little dispelling of the monotony of our social existence. (*Gazes at him.*) To be sure, I am becoming enriched by what you lose, many insist. You do not paint, you are losing your broad outlook, they say,—and all that you have, you give to me.

Dušek.—Miss—Helen! (*Seizes her hand. Helen does not draw it away*)—would it be a sin even if it were the truth? You thank me for a few moments which have really enriched *me* and for a little inspiration which is only a slight return for my great inspiration drawn from you. (*Ardently.*) May I tell it all?

(*HELEN remains silent.*)

Dušek.—Or—is it really *necessary* for me to tell it?

(*HELEN as if lost in thought, shakes her head.*)

Dušek (Speaks more and more ardently, in a suppressed voice which almost thrills on the waves of the violin's strains).—You know it, don't you? And you are right when you say I am losing myself wholly in you, in your being. I believe it would be the end of me to wake from that which intoxicates me now. (*Points towards the music room.*) They, in there, can't comprehend what has become of the former wanderer, unstable and roving. But they are mistaken if they think that therefore the artist in me is dying. Believe me, my art can not die while it lives through your being!

Helen (Held by his ardor).—Am I so powerful? (*Involuntarily leaning backward until her head nearly rests on DUŠEK's arm.*) Well, that is strange—(*She speaks in a more and more suppressed and fervent manner.*) Heretofore everyone has told me that I was not on earth for the happiness of others—And I myself had begun to believe it! (*Recovers herself.*) But no, no—

these are only moments which fill me with longing. (*Quickly.*)
No, no, no, Mr. Dušek—I beg of you, don't believe it!

Dušek (Firmly grips her hand).—I can't control myself. And I believe in you even if you don't believe in yourself. I am carried away by something stronger than an instant of intoxication and I'm too weak to free myself from its power. (*Gently draws HELEN's hand to his bosom.*) Do you hear the violin?

(*HELEN bows her head. DUŠEK's lips touch her hair.*)

Dušek (With passionate eagerness).—The weeping of the violin is blended here with the perfume of your hair, with the warmth of your hand, with the revelation of your being. You, yourself, no longer have the power to lift the spell from me!

(*He kisses her hand passionately.*)

Helen (Recovering).—No, no, no—Mr. Dušek, please don't believe it! Don't believe in this hour, don't believe even in me! (*The violin music ceases and applause is heard. HELEN withdraws her hand from DUŠEK's grasp. Merrily.*) You gallant knights! You know well how to soar! And so ardently and sweetly! (*Arises.*)

Dušek (Gradually awakening from his intoxication).—You aren't angry?

Helen (Cordially extending her hand).—Child! Why, did you say something so very wrong?

Dušek.—But you—

Helen.—Did you not see that you *might* tell me?

Mrs. Fabian (Speaking behind the scenes).—Truly marvelous! Such a violin solo—

(*DUŠEK in the meantime kisses HELEN's hand again and draws her close to him.*) Thank you! (*Touches her forehead with his lips.*)

Helen (Freeing herself suddenly).—Come, come—(*Laughs.*) or else they'll catch us here like two lovers! (*Seizes DUŠEK's hand and draws him towards the other room. There they meet MRS. FABIAN and MRS. DANEŠ.*)

Mrs. Fabian (In perpetual exaltation).—Oh, Mr. Dušek, you missed that splendid violin solo! How could you miss it? You yourself an artist—why, you ought to have that much sympathy for another sort of art!"

Mrs. Daneš (Emitting her words crunchingly from between her teeth).—Mr. Dušek is satisfied with an obscure corner from which he may listen.

Helen (To DUŠEK).—Didn't I say that they'd suspect us?

(*With conscious intention*) How easily Mr. Dušek could have compromised himself here with me! (*Takes his arm.*) Come, Miss Bukovský will make up our loss to us. (*They depart.*)

Mrs. Fabian (*Goes slowly forward into the room.*)—A really charming lad is this painter. And how talented, so they tell me! A regular genius!

Mrs. Daneš (*Cuttingly.*)—It's a pity his genius is a little entangled just now.

Mrs. Fabian.—So he's really in love? (*Pointing back of the scenes.*)

(*MRS. DANEŠ nodding significantly.*)

Mrs. Fabian.—Mon Dieu!—An artist—how could it be otherwise? (*Longingly gazing after the departing pair.*) Fortunate ones!

Mrs. Daneš.—But I don't understand Helen!

Mrs. Fabian (*Surprised.*)—Why! Such a divine artist!

Mrs. Daneš.—I don't know whether that would suffice for Helen after marriage.

Mrs. Fabian.—How you talk, Mrs. Daneš!

Mrs. Daneš.—Would you give your Juliana to him? Or Joanna?

Mrs. Fabian.—But dear me, our girls needn't even think of marriage yet!

Mrs. Daneš.—And later you'd change your mind about it! (*Seating herself.*) Heavens, Mrs. Fabian, believe me—I often wonder at Mrs. Heller for caring so much for these so called artistic people.

Mrs. Fabian (*Seating herself.*)—I don't quite comprehend you, Mrs. Daneš—

Mrs. Daneš.—They may be good people, I'm not saying anything about that—but—please tell me the sense of getting them accustomed to our sort of life? They can't live up to it, my husband also says it—they just can't live up to it! They haven't the education or the income. You know what the result will be? Discontentedness, my dear Mrs. Fabian, discontentedness and debts. (*From behind the scenes is heard a girl's voice in song accompanied by a piano.*)

Mrs. Fabian.—We will miss that delightful Miss Bukovský!

Mrs. Daneš (*Undisturbedly seizes her hand.*)—Debts, Mrs. Fabian, debts! and the outcome of it all? Oh, there'll be a public collection, they'll come to you with a subscription sheet—and—what are you going to say to them?

Mrs. Fabian.—My heavens!

Mrs. Daneš.—To be sure, who cares for five or ten dollars. You'll gladly give it just as I do. But in the first place, there's too much of it—and then, dear Lord, how can those people feel in our company when they know that every little while a collection has to be taken up for some one of them! Here a nation's gift to an author, there a benefit for an actor who doesn't even act any more, in a day or two, a monument to a poet——

Mrs. Fabian (Tries to speak).—Please——

Mrs. Daneš (Makes no pause in the flow of her eloquence).—Very good, very good,—we like to give, but once in a while it is overdone. It isn't a matter concerning only those poverty stricken artists but at once they make out of it a sort of national duty and some people get glory out of helping to get the suscriptions. They want to get appreciation—and we have to do the paying!

Mrs. Fabian (Embarrassed).—We have run away from the music room. They will miss us. (*Rising.*) Come, let's hear at least a little of the program.

Mrs. Daneš.—Mrs. Fabian won't listen to a thing against those artist people! Oh, of course, of course, your daughters are halfway artists also——

Mrs. Fabian (Glowingly).—I am proud of them. Everyone praises them so much.

Mrs. Daneš.—Our Clara also plays. And sings. But now it's all going to stop for there'll be other worries. (*Slips her arm through MRS. FABIAN'S.* (*Confidentially.*) Frankly speaking, Mrs. Fabian, I'll be glad when that Dr. Vlasák speaks out. I've really had fear of Helen; she knows so well how to fascinate men! And I believe the doctor was more than half caught. By good fortune this artist is here now and he has somewhat broken off matters. (*Confidentially.*) But his falling in love is all in vain, believe me, all in vain! I'm almost sorry for the poor fellow; Dr. Nedoma said here not long ago that he isn't even painting nowadays——

Mrs. Fabian (Amazedly).—It isn't possible! Such a talented fellow—I've heard! Why, that love ought to inspire him——

Mrs. Daneš (Dryly).—I beg of you,—*that* love! What sort of match is it? Helen, to be sure, will some day be Mrs. Heller's heiress—but she has a good while to wait! How much of being thirty does she lack? And Mrs. Heller is of my age, she won't die right away. (*A pause.*) (*The singing behind the scenes has*

ceased and applause is heard.)

Mrs. Fabian (Disappointed).—Why, we've missed everything!

Mrs. Daneš.—Oh, well, we'll hear enough yet. At any rate, we've had a good frank talk.

Mrs. Fabian.—We must go back, they will miss us. (*As they depart, they meet, at the door, with Miss Bukovský.*) Ah, Miss Bukovský, it was charming, delightful! We all repeat, you are our nightingale. Such a pleasure when you are on the stage!

Miss Bukovský (With a smile).—My gracious lady is truly one of our most loyal patrons.

Mrs. Fabian.—You're surely not going so early? After such triumphs?

Miss Bukovský.—Oh, no indeed, dear lady; I just ran off for a breath to this room. (*All is spoken in the other room.*)

Vlasák (Joins this group, accompanied by HELEN).—Are you receiving congratulations, Miss Bukovský?

Miss Bukovský.—Surely not for those few measures of song? (*Laughs.*)

Mrs. Fabian (Enters at the rear).—But we'll surely hear something more?

Miss Bukovský.—I don't know. (*Departs with MRS. FABIAN.*)
(*MRS. DANEŠ departing with them.*)

Vlasák (To HELEN).—Am I again in disfavor?

Helen (Standing with him in the entrance to the music room).—I wish to say something to you. Quickly, or some one will come. (*She goes towards the front.*)

Vlasák.—Ah! (*Follows her to the front.*)

Helen (Gazing at him steadily).—Victor, Dušek proposed to me a while ago.

Vlasák (Surprised).—Today?

(*HELEN nods assent.*)

Vlasák.—Not before today?

Helen.—Seriously, Viki, seriously! I'm sorry for him!

Vlasák (Laughs).—I am, too.

Helen.—I am going to tell him the truth. I'm resolved.

Vlasák (Points towards rear).—To Dušek?

Helen (Decisively).—To Dušek.

Vlasák (Thoughtfully, after a pause).—Has he done you any harm?

(*HELEN laughs.*)

Vlasák.—Why, then, should you injure him? And what do you want to tell him? That you are indifferent to him? He will go mad. (*His lips twitch.*) Or else do you mean to tell him all!

Helen (Bitterly).—I almost ought to.

Vlasák (Dryly).—Helen, dear, leave out the sentimentality! (*More animatedly.*) And what did you say to him?

Helen.—Nothing.

Vlasák.—Well—then! (*He seats himself.*) Helen, dear, I am still here.

Helen.—I know—Clara's intended.

Vlasák.—No, Helen—your lover! (*Seizes HELEN'S hand.*)

Helen (Slowly steps back).—That must cease now! That doesn't happen any more—(*With an odd laugh*)—even in immoral novels! (*She seats herself.*)

Vlasák (Passionately).—Helen, what have you done? I burn when you only touch me, you consume me with your beauty, you stifle me with your passion—and your glowing lips set me afire when you speak! (*Sits down beside her on the divan.*)

Helen (Lightly running her fingers through his hair, as she looks into his eyes).—There,—there— but you're in love! You do love to be petted—and you're almost in tears. And what sad eyes you have! (*She taps him with her finger under the chin.*) Well, you must get over it, Viki.

Vlasák.—Do you know what they are saying, Helen? That Mrs. Daneš is openly talking of Clara's wedding.

Helen (Calmly).—Well, and—

Vlasák.—And you won't—strangle me?

Helen (Laughs aloud).—They are saying? Are they really saying it? And for that I am to be jealous? Or to cause a scandal?

Vlasák (Embraces HELEN violently).—Helen, I love you!

Helen (Withdrawing herself from his arms).—Just marry her, marry her! (*Gravely*) I am not a moneyed match, Viki.

Vlasák (Reproachfully).—Helen!

Helen.—Didn't you know it? (*Tenderly.*) Sweetheart, you must marry. Do you think that I surrendered to you in order to win a husband the more easily? (*Bitterly.*) In one's twenty-sixth year, my boy, and with my dowry a woman of our set can't desire more than what you have given me! (*Earnestly.*) Don't pretend—I beg of you at least don't do that! Did I want more? And do you think others have not courted me? Rich, respected

(*Laughing*) and aged suitors? (*Again changing her tone*) Ugh! Am I to sell myself? (*She places both palms on Vlasák's shoulders and gazes intently into his eyes.*) Victor, was it not better this way?

Vlasák (Confused).—You are a demon, Helen!

Helen (Laughs nervously).—But you won't marry me, will you? I would not even want you to! I like you too well to pay for you so cheaply, if it doesn't have to be. (*Pats him with her fan.*) There, there, Viki—marry rich, make a career,—even if you have a wicked mother-in-law and good children— (*Bursts into a hysterical laugh.*)

Vlasák (Abashed).—Helen, every man is a rascal, isn't he?

Helen.—So they say! And happy the woman who doesn't find it out! (*Thoughtfully.*) Or are those happier who learn it in time? (*A pause.*) Indeed, what would I have had if I had married at twenty as Clara is doing now? I would now be a deceived wife, also. And possibly loveless, without feeling! (*Tossing her head.*) I am as I am! And if some one must suffer for all other men,— (*Ardently*) Victor, it must not be you!

Vlasák.—Helen, would you care to be my wife?

Helen (Laughs harshly).—Madman! Women like me don't marry. At least, not the men who know them—or else not until they are compromised before the world. (*In an ordinary tone.*) What a household that would be! (*Earnestly.*) And does my Victor think I would be faithful to him?

(*VLASÁK is silent.*)

Helen.—There, see! A relationship like ours, sweetheart, is something different from marriage.

Vlasák (Embraces her, drawing her close to him).—Helen!

Helen (Fervently kisses him on the forehead).—There—and now you have absolution! You were near to overflowing, just like Dušek. (*Laughs*) That Dušek, what a husband he would be! How he'd trust me!

Vlasák.—But—Helen, dear!

Helen (Laughing).—You don't think—? Victor! But I like him, truly. Such an exotic perfume of our social set! (*Mischievously.*) And after all—perhaps it might even be a happy marriage. A worn out generation, my friend, occasionally needs a little fresh blood in its veins.

Vlasák.—Dušek didn't live otherwise in his former life, I know that!

Helen.—Then it's the change of air. In our atmosphere

his virtue waxes remarkably. (*In her ordinary tone.*) We mustn't frighten him till he's run the whole gauntlet.

Vlasák (Bitterly).—Helen, we have nothing to rebuke each other with.

Helen (Recovering).—At our very souls' foundation, not a thing.

Vlasák (After a pause, in low ardent tones).—Helen, love, do you remember what you promised me the last time? (*Whispering.*) Tomorrow is Thursday.

Helen (Shaking her head).—No more!

Vlasák (Reproachfully).—Helen! On account of Dušek?

Helen (Laughs. Then with greater earnestness).—On account of some one else!

(*Music behind the scenes.*)

Vlasák.—Don't torture me, Helen! Am I to blame that you pity—Dušek?

Helen (Ruffling his hair).—Don't you know what we just said to each other? That we are both alike—

Vlasák (Embraces her).—Will you come tomorrow?

Helen (Gently nods her head).—At six. (*Walks quickly into the other room.*)

Curtain.

ACT III

DR. VLASÁK'S apartments, which have very simple but tasteful appointments. In the rear are two doors, one leading to the vestibule and the other, at the right of the first, leading to the bedroom. At the left is a window near which is a writing desk. At the right against the wall is a divan and near it a small table. In the left corner a stove, near the rear between the doors is a case of books. There is very little other furniture, in the room. The room is dusky and later becomes completely dark.

A maid kneels near the stove kindling the fire. She coughs at intervals. Near her on the floor stands a lighted candle. In the front hall the clicking of the lock is heard.

Vlasák (Enters, wearing an overcoat covered with snow. His collar is turned up. On his head, a tall silk hat.) Are you just making a fire, Mrs. Šebesta? (*Turns around.*) Come in, Fořt, I'll light the lamp in a minute.

(*FOŘT enters, covered with snow.*)

Servant.—God grant you good evening, gracious master! I couldn't come earlier. My daughter came late from school and I didn't want to leave the baby at home without any one to look after it. I'll be through in a minute.

Vlasák (To FOŘT).—Just lay off your things, Fořt. I'm sorry I have to lead you into a dark room.

Fořt.—I'll bring in a fine mess. Allow me to hang my overcoat in the vestibule if there is a hook there. (*Goes out of room.*)

Vlasák.—Light the way for him, Mrs. Šebesta.

(*Follows FOŘT into vestibule.*)

(*Servant goes towards vestibule holding the candle aloft.*)

Vlasák (Returns without his overcoat. Breathes into his numbed hands). Thunder! Such weather! And here it's no better.

(*FOŘT returning minus his overcoat.*)

Servant.—Shall I make a light, gracious master?

Vlasák.—Light up!

(*SERVANT goes to writing desk and lights lamp there. A light is cast around the table but otherwise the room is in semi-darkness.*)

Vlasák.—Was any one here? (*Draws down the curtain.*)

Servant.—Some gentleman, just as I came to build the fire. He said that he'd come again, for it was something important, he said.

Vlasák (Thoughtfully).—I wonder who it could have been?

(*SERVANT again stirring in the stove, and blowing at the fire. Coughs violently.*)

Vlasák.—There, Mrs. Šebesta—(*Turning to FOŘT.*) Sit down Fořt and excuse me just a minute.—(*To the servant.*) And hurry up, Mrs. Šebesta, build a fire in the bedroom, too, so that you wouldn't have to come back here again. And make a big fire, understand?

Servant.—So soon, gracious master?—I'll have to go get some coal, then, for I used up the last for this stove.

Vlasák.—Is it all gone again? (*Puts his hand into his pocket.*) Well, hurry then—here is a crown. (*Hands her the money.*)

Servant.—The coal dealer who used to be in this building has moved out. I'll have to go clear over to Carmelite Street. (*Closes the stove door, takes the lighted candle, standing beside the stove and goes to the bedroom.*)

Vlasák.—If you had come a little later, Fořt, you wouldn't have found me at home. I have to go away soon.

Fořt.—I'm in a hurry, too. I want to be at the Imperial by six.

Vlasák.—So you'd like to see my apartments? You can hire them next May. I will move to the other side of the river. (*Goes to the door of the bedroom.*)—Come! (*He opens the door and looks within.*) What, are you here, yet?

Servant (In the bedroom).—I'll just scrape out these ashes and I'll go right away.

Vlasák.—Well, you didn't have to do it just this minute! (*Turns around to Fořt.*) Well, look in and see how you like it. (*Entering bedroom.*)

(*Fořt follows VLASÁK.*)

Vlasák (Within the bedroom).—Here's where I sleep. There is a separate entrance from the vestibule. (*A pause.*)

Fořt (Enters a little later from the vestibule).—What do you pay?

Vlasák (Entering after him).—Two hundred.

Fořt.—Well, that's cheap enough. To be sure, here on the Jansky summit—

Vlasák.—But the quiet is a compensation and you can study well here.

Fořt (Naïvely).—It isn't a matter of study only; but I'll be secure here. (*Laughs.*) Well, doctor, you know what you're about by having these apartments while you're a single man.

Vlasák (Somewhat surprised).—Why? (*Becomes calm again.*) Ah so! You are looking for a quiet place *not only* for study.

Fořt (Laughing egotistically).—For study of *women*, doctor.

Vlasák (Laughs).—You, you!

Fořt (Ingenuously).—And you didn't manage to get the good out of these excellent apartments?

Vlasák (Considering Fořt's artlessness).—Ah, I say, *Fořt!* (*A pause.*) Do you want the apartments?

Fořt.—I should say so! A separate entrance to each room, all under one lock and key—

Vlasák.—The landlord lives up over me on the second floor. Day after tomorrow I pay the rent and so I'll give warning.

Fořt.—I say, won't you please rent the apartments for me right on the spot? I'll make a deposit on the rooms after the first.

(*SERVANT steps out of the bedroom and having extinguished the candle which she carries, places it on the table.*)

Vlasák (Impatiently).—Hurry up, Mrs. Šebesta! Do you

hear? (*Looks at his watch.*)

Servant.—In a quarter of an hour I'll be back. (*Goes towards vestibule.*)

Vlasák (Calls to her).—See that you don't stop anywhere on the way!

Fořt (In the meantime remains standing near the writing desk from which he takes a photograph at which he is now gazing).—Well, I declare, Miss Lindner!

Vlasák (Hastily).—Yes, yes! Fine photograph, isn't it?

Fořt (Stupidly).—I also asked her for a photograph—but there wasn't any chance!

Vlasák (Forcing a laugh).—Oh, everyone hasn't that much luck!

Fořt (Laughing).—You, you!

Servant (In the vestibule).—He's at home, yes. He just arrived. (*Talking outside.*) My gracious master, that gentleman is here.

Vlasák (Angrily).—Haven't you gone yet? (*With great impatience*) Lord! (*Startled.*) Who's here?

Dušek (Enters, wearing an elegant winter overcoat, snow-covered) Am I interrupting?

Vlasák (With forced agreeableness).—Oh, is it you? How do you do?

Fořt.—Ah, the Maestro Dušek? What do you want here?

Dušek (Disagreeably surprised at Fořt's presence).—Ah, the doctor has a caller!

Fořt.—I'm going—I'm going! You have secrets with the doctor? A patron, eh?

Dušek (Laughs).—Of course!

Fořt.—Well, nine months ago. . . (*Observes Dušek's displeasure.*)—Well, I'm off—I'm off. Your servant doctor; don't forget to tell the landlord. Good luck, Dušek, good luck to you! (*Departs.*)

(*VLASÁK accompanies him.*)

(*DUŠEK in the meantime divests himself of his overcoat, removes a white handkerchief from around his throat and arranges all together with his hat, on the divan.*)

Vlasák (Returns).—You must pardon me, Mr. Dušek, for hastening so. . . I am to be in Smichov by six.

Dušek.—Oh, I've come at the wrong time, then? Pardon me, if I had known . . . But I would so much like to talk with you!

Vlasák (Looks at his watch with apparent uneasiness).—It is just forty minutes after five—

Dušek.—But, if I am detaining you—

(VLASÁK in his excitement does not catch his words.)

Dušek.—It isn't anything pressing, at least, for you, sir—

Vlasák (Suddenly).—Oh, I pray—that's all right! I have to wait for the servant, anyway.

Dušek.—But I wouldn't like to—

Vlasák (Again looks at his watch and becomes absorbed in thought. Suddenly after having glanced involuntarily towards the door of the bedroom).—Just stay, Mr. Dušek. *(Seats himself at the writing desk and motions to him to take a nearby seat.)* Have a seat.

Dušek (Seats himself. His manner is hesitating).—Now, I don't know how to begin. We were, yesterday evening, my dear doctor, at Mrs. Heller's—

Vlasák (Rises).—Wait, didn't some one ring?

Dušek.—No, I didn't hear anything.

Vlasák (Listening).—I must have imagined it. *(Seats himself again).* Go on!

Dušek (Begins anew).—For that matter, doctor, I don't believe I need to—*(Suddenly)* What's the use of any beating about the bush? I'll tell you openly why I've come to you.

(VLASÁK impatiently twisting in his chair.)

Dušek.—Undoubtedly you know that a great change has come into my life. Ever since I've known Miss Lindner—

Vlasák (Laughs nervously).—Ah, that's the reason!

Dušek (More joyfully).—Oh, you already know? Doctor, I've wronged you. *(Abruptly)* That is, I beg your pardon,—wronged!—I express myself stupidly. But it was said, you know, that you were—courting—Miss Lindner.

Vlasák (With twitching lips).—To be sure—it would be strange indeed if gossips wouldn't dish up some such report! *(Hesitates.)*

Dušek.—And so I was involuntarily prejudiced against you.—Forgive me! But, that isn't the question. Last evening I experienced two great joys; the first when I heard of your engagement to Miss Daneš—

Vlasák (Hastily).—Oh, no, no—we are not engaged yet!

Dušek.—Then, that you had been paying court only to her. But that is really only the preface to the reason for my coming here. Yesterday, I finally took courage—

Vlasák (*Again looks at his watch expectantly and rises.*)—Pardon me, Mr. Dušek! I am awaiting the servant, I sent her for some coal. . . . (*Walks across room.*) Confound that woman!

Dušek (*Arises.*)—I've come inopportunately, I see.

Vlasák (*Lightly presses his arms as if to make him seat himself.*)—Please go on talking! And don't take my restlessness in bad part; I ought to be gone and that old woman—

Dušek (*With a smile.*)—The state of single blessedness is beginning to torture you, too, is it?

Vlasák.—I should say so! (*Laughs impatiently.*) If you have the bachelor's joys I have, just hurry up and marry.

Dušek (*Embarrassed.*)—That's easy to say! (*Sighs.*) Ah, good Heavens! (*A pause.*) Doctor, I must finish telling you.

Vlasák (*Seats himself.*)—Please go on.

Dušek (*Laughs.*)—We are a funny lot, aren't we, when we're in love?

Vlasák (*With growing wonder.*)—Allow me, Mr. Dušek, tell me exactly what I have to do with that matter—

Dušek.—You are a family friend in the home of Mrs. Heller. Also of the Lindners'. You are a man of their social circle who understands and can do a lot more than, for instance, I, such—(*Considering*)—well—such a parvenu!

Vlasák (*Astonished.*)—Do you want to pay court to Miss Lindner?

Dušek (*Startled by the words.*)—You utter the words more quickly, doctor, than I dare to think them.

Vlasák (*Inquisitively.*)—And what about Miss Lindner?

Dušek (*Blissfully.*)—Oh, as far as she's concerned! But her family, her relatives—

Vlasák (*Surprised.*)—Ah, so it's only the relatives you now fear! (*Blurts out.*) So that's it, is it? (*Abruptly.*) And I am, then, to be a diplomat?

Dušek.—Not at all, doctor, but, in the meantime, just my friend. I would wish very much to regard you thus.

(*VLASÁK bows silently.*)

Dušek.—I've been thinking about it very seriously today, in fact, all night long. (*Frankly*) Why, I never closed my eyes for very joy! And it occurred to me—(*A bell sounds in the vestibule.*)

Vlasák (*Rises quickly. Greatly disquieted.*)—Excuse me, Mr. Dušek. . . .

Dušek (Does not rise).—Please go ahead! I'll wait.

Vlasák (With growing restlessness).—Forgive me, Mr. Dušek, but it's high time I was going.

Dušek.—Good, we'll go together and I'll tell you on the way. *(Rising.)*

Vlasák (In impatient embarrassment).—That is—no . . . I'll have to stay here after all. *(The bell rings again, this time more loudly.)* Please, allow me—

Dušek (Who has, in the meantime, put on his coat, now grasps his hat).—I won't detain you any longer. *(Offers his hand to VLASÁK and is ready to go.)*

Vlasák (Steps in front of him).—Allow me—I'll open the door.

Dušek.—I'll call on you tomorrow, may I? *(Steps towards door.)*

Vlasák (In great excitement).—But, I beg, that you wait a moment! *(Points to chair.)* Please wait an instant till I see who it is. *(The bell rings again.)* Excuse me! *(Departs and closes behind him the door that leads to the vestibule.)*

(DUŠEK stands surprised in the middle of the room, not understanding VLASÁK'S excitement. Steps to the door of the vestibule then draws back and goes to the writing desk, shaking his head. He suddenly notices Helen's photograph on the table, seizes it in amazement, and absorbed in thought, stands gazing at it. Then he lays it aside and walks across the room.)

Vlasák (Enters showing excitement).—It was the servant, at last! *(Quickly.)* So, Mr. Dušek, pardon me, and tomorrow—we'll meet again! Will you be in your studio in the morning? *(DUŠEK nods assent stiffly.)*

Vlasák.—I'll call on you, then, to save you the trouble of coming here. *(Quickly.)* Oh, that's all right, all right! *(Takes the lamp and accompanies him to vestibule.)* At your service, Dušek, and don't be angry at me! *(They depart. It is wholly dark in the room. In a little while VLASÁK returns and sets the lamp on the writing desk. The stage becomes a little lighter at the left side from the rays of the lamp. VLASÁK, after setting down the lamp, goes to the door of the bedroom and opening it, speaks to some one within, with a sigh of deep relief.)* Thank heaven, I've gotten him out of the way!

Helen (In a simple dress—without her cloak which she has cast off in the bedroom, enters, drawing deep breaths—loosening, meanwhile, a black silk shawl on her head. Harshly.)—What did

he want here? What if I had met him on the stairs?

Vlasák (Likewise excited).—That's why I had to detain him here until you came. (*Notices HELEN. Tenderly*) Helen, darling, you're all a-tremble!

Helen (Sighs).—There isn't any wonder! The very journey—from the bridge here—and the fright—when I knew you were not at home alone! (*She draws the shawl from her head to her shoulders.*)

Vlasák.—Come, sit down. —You are shaking! (*Leads her to the divan where the light is very dim.*) Shall I put the lamp here?

Helen (Seating herself).—No, thank you, no, the light bothers my eyes. (*A pause.*) Come, Viki, sit by me! (*Laughs.*) So, you're a diplomat! I came near finding Dušek here instead of you. (*She ruffles his hair.*)

Vlasák.—I couldn't help it, really. He came—I couldn't deny myself to him . . . What a terrible man! (*Sighs and then laughs.*) Do you know Helen, love, what he wanted? That I should speak a good word for him—to your father!

Helen (Softly).—The fool!

Vlasák.—No one but a man in love could become such an idiot! (*Abruptly.*) Apropos, Helen, what did you promise Dušek yesterday?

Helen (Amazed).—I?

Vlasák.—From his talk, I gathered that he is wholly convinced of your love. Did you say something to him?

Helen (Bursts out in wicked laughter).—Didn't he say, also, that on my bended knees, I implored him to marry me? What does that man think?

Vlasák.—Haven't I told you repeatedly to get rid of him at one stroke? He is becoming more and more inconvenient. Tell him once for all—"I'll take you!" or "I won't have you!" "Your wooing is agreeable," or not—in short, one way or other—so that the affair would come to an end!

Helen (Absorbed in thought).—Ah, it will all end, anyway. . . (*Tosses her head.*) Victor, Dušek has never been an obstacle to you! (*A pause.*)

Vlasák (Embraces her and slowly lifts her from the divan).—Helen, darling—

Helen (Arising independently and crossing the room).—Sweetheart, I want to talk seriously with you today. (*Smiles.*) Yes, seriously! (*Seats herself at the writing desk and indicates a*

nearby chair. *With a smile adds.*) Please sit. Make yourself at home!

Vlasák (With one arm about her waist, reaches with other for lamp).—Look, Helen, my love—

Helen (Lightly slips out of his embrace).—Pst! (*Seats herself again.*) Who knows when we shall again meet this way? Perhaps, never again!

Vlasák (Reproachfully).—Helen!

Helen.—Victor, let's speak frankly! We have absolutely nothing to reproach each other with; for we made no promises to each other. You were not drawn to me through pure love—

(*VLASÁK moves and tries to speak.*)

Helen (Undisturbedly).—I say that you didn't draw me to yourself through love, through passion. (*She laughs bitterly.*) And I surrendered not otherwise! And I wanted you just as I want a new maid or a trip to Misdroy in the summertime. Yes!—And you—hush, Viki, hush! you desired me in the same wanton fashion! Was it your first affair?

(*VLASÁK is silent.*)

Helen (Tosses her head).—And it wasn't your last, either! Even though you'll marry now. No, don't play a part, Victor! If you didn't believe, what you'd like so well to deny now, I wouldn't be in your apartments now when Prague is talking about your engagement to Clara Daneš. And I tell you myself, "Marry," because I know that I'll not be your wife and may not be. And because I know that I'll have you even afterwards—or as long as I don't weary you or—you me!

Vlasák.—Helen, love of mine, you are unkind!

Helen (Carelessly).—Don't pretend! I didn't come to enact a farce, with tear-dimmed eyes and a category of your sins. And I also know it's neither the first nor the last time I'll come. If, however, I'd say to you now, "I'll marry Dušek—" (*She tosses her head.*) Or for that matter—not particularly Dušek, any other man—even that stupid Fořt. If I said that, do you know what you must do Victor? You must open the door, escort me forth—and never breathe a word! Just as I have said to you, "Go, marry Clara, if you wish!" We have belonged to each other only for a while and we have paid for each other with our passion, as others pay with money!

(*VLASÁK buries his head in his hands.*)

Helen.—Our particular system of society is a market place with only a few mediums of barter. And many fine ladies are

rich enough to pay for their lovers in cash. (*Laughs harshly.*)
But our accounts are also settled aren't they, Victor? (*Rising.*)
And what was before or what will be later, we don't have to know!

(VICTOR *shows disturbance.*)

Helen (*Lays her hand on VLASÁK's shoulder.*)—Victor, I don't believe a soul in our world—and those of them who are not fools, don't believe us either. But they wouldn't forgive us if they knew. Well then, not for their sakes but for our own, we'll both lie about this. Society would laugh a guffaw at you if you entered matrimony pure as you men demand women to be—and society will loudly defame you if you oppose its pharisaism. I am too independent not to demand the same right for myself. Our society, my friend, permits only a *man* to live his youth unburdened by thoughts of his future wife. But it gives this permission only *silently*. I demand this same right for myself, although I don't wish to be enslaved by the public opinion of those hypocrites. That is why I have been yours to control—in your arms—(*In bitter mood*) and that's why in society I'm always such—a desirable match.

(VLASÁK *moves.*)

Helen (*Quickly.*)—Well, I'm not a rich match—as yet,—but at least I'm a woman who hasn't compromised herself.

Vlasák (*Seizes her hand.*)—Helen, you are far better than I! You are deeper, more sincere!

Helen.—At any rate, I have some principles, you mean? In my sinfulness, there is, at least, a system! (*She laughs bitterly.*)

Vlasák.—And why, Helen—(*A long pause.*) Why, Helen dear, do you tell me those things just at this time? In these few moments, of which we are defrauding ourselves by grave and severe discussions? (*Rising.*) Helen, don't torture me! (*Passionately.*) Before we know it, you will have to leave! (*Seizes her head and draws her to himself.*)

Helen.—Do you know what I said at the beginning? The world isn't as truthful as we are at this moment. Before the time comes when love or something else casts you into the arms of another woman, we must tell each other all,—Victor,—all! (*She stands erect and draws a deep breath.*) And I didn't want you *not* to know why I do not regret that love. (*With a fascinating smile.*) And now, since you know. . . .

Vlasák (*Madly embracing her.*)—Helen!

Helen (*Withdraws from his embrace after a little while.*)—

There's something else, Victor! (*Seizes his hand.*) I thank you for never compromising me by even a word or look, during the whole time. (*Hastily.*) No, no, don't be modest! It's beyond most men. Our future life is altogether too long and our taste too accustomed to the pleasures of our present surroundings to lightly throw away our reputations even be they undeservedly good. It is our good fortune, Victor! If we had not played our comedy so well, do you know what would have happened?

Vlasák (Softly).—Yes, I know, Helen!

Helen.—You would have had to be *more* than my lover. Our love would not end here (*pointing towards the sleeping room.*) but at the altar! (*With a bewitching gesture of warning.*) Remember that, Victor!

(*VLASÁK silently embraces her.*)

Helen (Bursts out laughing suddenly).—I've given you a fine sermon, haven't I? (*Taking his chin into her hand.*) Viki, Viki, do you recognize me? I tell you, I also at times—(*Becoming grave*) think seriously! (*Puts her hand on her forehead.*) Oh, Lord, Lord!

Vlasák (Laughing).—I never in my life would have thought that I'd hear so much truth. And last of all from my Helen! And, at that, just in this place!

Helen (In her ordinary tone).—Am I not good for coming? If only you knew, Victor, what a time I had getting here today! I drove with Aunt to the concert at the Rudolfinum*, I purposely accompanied her right to the concert—and then came here over the chain bridge.

Vlasák (Frightened).—You came on foot, Helen? How can you be so imprudent?

Helen.—How was I to get a carriage near the Rudolfinum and avoid being observed? I couldn't, of course, take Aunt's carriage over here. And the streets of Small Side† are usually so desolate. I was so thickly veiled that even an acquaintance wouldn't recognize me.

Vlasák.—You think so?

Helen.—And for that matter, no acquaintances of mine pass this way. On the chain bridge I met that artist—you know, that—

*The main concert and art hall of Prague named after Rudolph II., emperor of Hungary 1572 and king of Bohemia from 1575 to his death in 1612. He was a patron of arts and sciences. Tycho Brahe, Kepler, Zed-Hajek and other scientists were his special guests and favorites.

†Small Side. A portion of Prague just across the river from the Old Town.

Vlasák (Quickly).—Surely not Dušek?

Helen.—Oh, no! That other one—Hlaváček.

Vlasák (With great anxiety).—Did he recognize you?

Helen.—To be sure not! He would surely have greeted me. But he didn't give a sign.

Vlasák.—Don't do such things, Helen!

Helen.—Well, it's the first time it ever happened.

Vlasák (Shakes his finger threateningly).—And the last!

Helen.—Why, did I do it so clumsily? (*Draws her watch from the bosom of her dress and looks at it.*) Viki, it is almost half past six! At eight the concert will be over—and if Aunt should stop at home and I were not there yet—

Vlasák.—What did you tell her?

Helen.—I told her that I'd go home in her carriage—

Vlasák.—But at home?

Helen (Carelessly).—Nothing.

(*A bell sounds in the vestibule.*)

Vlasák (Frightened).—Who is that?

Helen (In a low voice).—Don't open.

Vlasák (Also in a low voice).—Who can it be? It surely wouldn't occur to anyone that I'm at home!

Helen.—We won't make a sound.

Vlasák.—Pst! Don't talk! (*They seat themselves at the table.*)

Helen (Whispering).—Does anyone come here in the evenings?

Vlasák (Whispering).—Never. I am never at home in the evenings.

Helen.—Who can it be, then?

(*A renewed ringing.*)

Vlasák (Shaking his finger).—Let them ring!

Helen (Much alarmed, whispering).—He must have seen that light in the window.

Vlasák (Looks towards the window).—The curtain is drawn.

Helen.—But perhaps, even through the curtain—

Vlasák.—Pst! (*A violent, prolonged ringing.*)

Helen.—He surely noticed the light.

Vlasák (Suddenly).—The servant! (*Whispers.*) She was to come back to build a fire, she went for coal—and the key is in the door. (*The bell is rung more vehemently.*)

Helen.—Go and open the door for her.

Vlasák.—And what if it isn't she?

Helen (Goes towards the bedroom).—I will hide in the bedroom.

Vlasák.—That's where she's going to build a fire. Stay here. (*A renewed, wild ringing.*)

Helen (Excited).—Hurry! Whoever it is knows you're at home—open!

Vlasák (Decisively).—Stay here. And if I don't say in a loud voice. "So you've returned, Mrs. Šebesta?" go at once into the bedroom.

Helen.—All right! Quickly!

Vlasák (Takes the lamp and departs, indicating meanwhile to HELEN to be absolutely quiet.)

(HELEN nods assent and steps close to the book-case near the door of the bedroom.)

Vlasák (Enters the vestibule. The stage is in complete darkness. VLASÁK outside is heard opening the door and then cries out in amazement).—Ah! (*In a loud voice.*) Is that you, Mr. Dušek?

(HELEN trembles.)

Vlasák (Outside).—I am about to go, also—

(HELEN steps toward the bedroom.)

Dušek (Enters the room talking towards rear).—I just had to return, doctor.

(HELEN disappears into the bedroom.)

Vlasák (Enters with the lamp in his hand, behind DUŠEK.)—Is it so urgent? (*Looking about.*) Sit down here, please! (*Indicates a chair near the table on which he sets lamp.*)

Dušek (Shakes the snow from his overcoat with a violent motion, throws off his hat and speaks rapidly without seating himself).—Dr. Vlasák, why didn't you go away with me at once!

Vlasák (Grasping that DUŠEK knows about HELEN, boldly retorts).—But, by what right—

Dušek (Explosively).—By what right? (*Pauses, listening.*) I'll very soon tell you that. (*Abruptly*) Pardon me! (*Leaps quickly towards entrance to vestibule and having opened the door stands on the threshold partly turned towards the room and partly towards the vestibule.*)

Vlasák (Comprehending his intention, furiously).—Have you gone mad, man? (*Seizing him by the hand he draws him away from the door.*) What do you want, speak!

Dušek (Again runs to the door).—I'll tell you at once, but from here!

Vlasák (Raging).—Insolent fellow! (*Seizes him again and drags him into the room.*) Don't you yet see what you are doing in my apartments?

Dušek (Frees himself from VLASÁK's hold).—I'll answer for it but not to you. (Suddenly, hearing a rustle in the vestibule.) Aha! (Jumps to the door of the vestibule flings it wide open and screams into the darkness.) Who is here? (A pause.) No one? Oho! (Runs into vestibule.)

Vlasák (Behind him).—I'll kill you, you blackguard!

Dušek (In the vestibule).—Shut up! (Throws VLASÁK bodily into the room. In a moment he bursts in himself dragging by the hand the resisting figure of HELEN enveloped in a cloak with a shawl on her head. In the light he looks into her face.) Miss He— (Groans. In a broken voice.) Really? (Lets go of HELEN's hand and sinking into a chair, drops his head into his hands.)

(HELEN erect and pale at the door.)

Vlasák (Glances at HELEN then throws himself upon DUŠEK).—Villain!—(Wants to throw him.)

Helen (Holding him back).—Hush, doctor! (Seeking to control herself.) Ask this gentleman to leave at once! (Draws the shawl from her head and loosens the cape.)

Dušek (Gazing at her, with a smile of suffering).—You are right, Miss Lindner—I can go now! I have convinced myself of that which even a moment ago seemed to me the most shameful lie. (Rising.) And if you wish, I will also even forgive. (Starts to go.)

Helen (Abruptly, in a commanding tone).—Wait! I don't want you to go away with the notion that I have robbed you of something. You are probably vain enough for that! If either one of us is to forgive anything, (Haughtily) it is I! Your vanity and also your crudeness—(Laughs disdainfully) and likewise your baseness in spying on me within a few hours after the moment when you pleaded for my love! (Commandingly pointing to the door.) And now go!

Dušek (Utterly undone).—Miss—Lind—ner——(Clasps his hands.) At least, don't believe that I spied on you!

Helen (With contempt).—Go, hypocrite!

Vlasák (Scornfully).—Mr. Dušek, there is the door!

Dušek (Made furious by his words).—You—keep still! (Tossing his head.) But no—even you shall know all! A while ago when here, here—(Points towards writing desk) I opened my whole heart to you, you still had the right to cry me down. You might have called me a madman or a fool—as you wished!—if there had been one drop of honesty in your make-up. You could have spat in my face when I avowed my love for Miss

Lindner. And you should have struck me in the face as a liar when I said that I believed Miss Lindner had some regard for me!

(HELEN proudly measures DUŠEK.)

Dušek (Continuing).—But you, you—you fairly gave me your blessing when I confessed to you. (*Reaches for HELEN'S photograph on the writing desk.*) This photograph as well as your impatience might have aroused my suspicion—but I, fool, believed, believed,—even at leaving, I thanked you! In the very moment, Miss Lindner— (*Turning to HELEN*) when you were already in the next room! And I went down the stairs from here—happy, rejoiced—

Vlasák (*Bursts out*).—Don't lie, you sneak!

Dušek (*Undisturbed*).—And how absolutely I believed in you, Miss Lindner! When on the corner here, I met a man who saw you entering here—

Helen (*Haughtily*).—You ought to be ashamed to add lies!

Dušek (*Bursting out*).—Do you know who it was? A man in return for whose friendship I have given only kicks!—

Helen (*Involuntarily*).—Hlaváček!

Dušek (*Laughing wildly*).—Yes, Hlaváček! And he had to drive me in here, yes, fairly drag me by force clear up to the door, although everything convicted you! Even the moment when I was departing, the light in the windows, and the eternity during which I rang the bell so furiously! (*Clasps his hands.*) God! God! God!

Vlasák (*Goes to the door and commandingly indicates it*).—Mr. Dušek—!

Helen (*More calmly*).—Go, Mr. Dušek! (*Dryly.*) But know this before you leave—you haven't the right to defame me. And if you think I have broken your heart—well, you have done the same before this to other women. And you had no right to do it! As far as morality goes, I stand as well as you. (*Turns away.*) Good-bye!

Dušek (*Desperately*).—Miss Helen! (*Approaches her.*)

Helen (*Evading him*).—Go, please!

Vlasák (*At the door*).—Don't you hear?

(DUŠEK stands erect, shivers and then, brokenly, departs into the vestibule. Outside the door closes after him. A long pause.)

Helen (*Shivers and sinks in a heap on the divan pressing her head into her hands*).—Oh! Oh! Oh!

Vlasák (*Stands a while undecidedly in the middle of the room.*)

Suddenly he advances towards HELEN.—Helen, forgive me!

Helen (Rising).—Is it going to begin all over again? (*Points to the door.*) I hope, that *now* we needn't act the farce any longer.

Vlasák (Frightened).—For God's sake, Helen—

Helen (With icy calmness).—Did you hear? And you know what I told you a moment ago?

(*VLASÁK surprisedly shakes his head.*)

Helen (Sorrowfully).—Just recall! Without your or my fault everything has suddenly changed. (*Takes his head between her hands and looks into his eyes.*) Poor fellow! Poor fellow!

Vlasák (Not comprehending).—No, Helen,—*you* are the one needing pity! I am to blame and *you* are the one sacrificed!

Helen (Wondering).—Only I? And not you? (*Violently seizes his hand.*)—What will you do now, Victor?

Vlasák (Crushed).—I don't know—

Helen (Surprised).—You don't know? Now, at this moment, you don't know? At this moment when perhaps even the street-arabs are running about Prague saying—

Vlasák.—Helen!

Helen.—Yes, when in a little while the scandal will be the topic of discussion in every coffee-house and restaurant in the city? And you don't know?

Vlasák (In hollow tones).—I know, Helen.

Helen (Icily).—Have you asked for Clara's hand?

(*VLASÁK shakes his head.*)

Helen.—Are you otherwise bound to her?

(*VLASÁK remains silent.*)

Helen (Harshly).—Aren't you?

(*VLASÁK again shakes his head.*)

Helen (Slowly but firmly).—And when do you wish to speak to *my* father?

Vlasák (Frightened at the word but quickly recovers).—When you wish.

Helen.—At once, tomorrow! (*A pause.*) Tomorrow, you understand? (*Looks at him.*) Do you want to?

Vlasák (Resignedly).—Yes!

Helen (Gives him her hand).—Thank you, Victor! (*Sinks on the divan.*) Poor boy! (*Glancing at VLASÁK, she buries her face in her hands.*)

Curtain.

ACT IV

The artists' atelier of the first act. HLAVÁČEK and ŠIMR are now located here. Many things are changed and on the whole the studio is simpler in its appointments. The divan is still in the corner but minus the canopy. The screen near the side door is also missing. In the front near the left wall is a shelf with various small articles. Under it there hangs a large decorative plate. The pictures on the two easels are turned at right angles from the audience. In the center of the studio is a small table on which is a jardiniere with an azalea plant containing white blossoms. Near the window on a stand is a palm. Through the window the ruddy glow of the setting sun shines, coloring the white azalea blossoms a deep pink. Later the glow grows dimmer gradually until towards the close of the act, there is only a soft twilight. The freshness of a May evening is apparent.

Hlaváček (Seated at a smaller easel on which he is painting the azaleas placed not far away. While he works he whistles a merry Slovák tune. Having finished whistling a measure, he rises and views his sketch from a distance. Then he sits down again and paints. He hums the tune slowly again and gradually breaks into singing).—

Oh, that's what you have for it all, Katrine
 Oh, that's what you have, Kathie—
 How oft I came to see you, love,
 Beneath your little window!

(He whistles again.)

Dušek (Enters meantime, slowly. The change in him is apparent. His hair and beard are unshaved and unkempt; his clothes of the latest cut to be sure, but uncared for. His cravat, though modish, twisted and carelessly tied. On his head a fashionable tall silk hat but it is unpressed and ruffled. His entire behavior is now timid, uncertain and almost frightened. He enters without removing his hat).—At your service, Ládo!

Hlaváček (Sees DUŠEK, stops whistling, throws away his palette and turns on his stool).—Dušek! Well, I'm glad to see you again! (Extends his hand.) Most happy, old pal! (Gazes at him.) Man, what are you doing? Do you know that I haven't seen you since last winter?

Dušek (Smiles bitterly).—Yes, I know it. I haven't seen

you, either. (*Reproachfully*) Don't you know where I live?

Hlaváček.—Well, but are you ever at home? I always make a useless trip up to your attic, when I want to see you.

Dušek.—As if my studio weren't just around the corner!

Hlaváček.—And it's further from your place here than from mine to yours, eh?

Dušek.—Oh, well!—Anyway, it's all—(*Waves his hand*) why should I interrupt? (*A pause.*)

Hlaváček (*After a while*).—Are you painting?

Dušek (*Crossly*).—Painting—the devil! I've got a lot of inspiration to paint!

Hlaváček.—Well, then, what are you doing?

Dušek (*Ill-humoredly*).—Nothing! (*A pause*) Have you a cigarette?

Hlaváček (*Inclines his head toward the little table*).—No, I haven't, but there's the tobacco, help yourself—

Dušek (*Goes to the table and rolls a cigarette. Then he stands behind HLAVÁČEK*).—For whom are you making this?

Hlaváček (*Bends backward and gazes at his sketch*).—Oh, this is only to fill in as a rest. I bought the azalea the other day and thought I'd try out some paints on them before they stop blooming. (*Looks intently at the azaleas.*) What a tone to them, isn't there? They look rose-colored when the sun shines on them.

Dušek.—Have you lots of work?

Hlaváček.—You know how it goes, something to do all the time. Weren't you at the Rudolfinum gallery?

(*DUŠEK shakes his head.*)

Hlaváček.—I have that last year's canvas on exhibition there, you remember it? The one on account of which you invoked maledictions on my head because I wasn't in a hurry about painting at it, "The Will o' the Wisp." Well, you see, brother, it's done.

Dušek (*Throws away the unfinished cigarette. Bitterly*).—Well, you see! (*A pause.*) Is Šimr with you now?

(*HLAVÁČEK nods.*)

Dušek.—And what is he doing?

Hlaváček.—Gadding around. But he has luck, the rascal. He sold his picture.

Dušek (*Timidly*).—A big one?

Hlaváček (*Laughing*).—Oh, a larger family size! (*Takes a good look at DUŠEK.*)—Well, Milo, how about it?

Dušek.—What?

Hlaváček.—How is your "Psyche" getting along?

Dušek (Fretfully).—Don't aggravate me! (*Goes to the window and looks out.*) Oh, Lord, Lord! (*Turns around.*) Do you know, Ládo, that it's a half year since I've been in this studio? (*Sorrowfully*) And I really shouldn't have come crawling up now!

Hlaváček.—Haven't you gotten any wisdom, yet, Kamilo?

Dušek (Laughs mournfully).—Nowhere to put it, old pal! Can't fill up with water a dish that's full of holes.

Hlaváček (With warm open-heartedness).—Now what! You're surely not going to make yourself miserable for ever!

Dušek (Sadly).—Ládo! Ládo! It's easy for you to talk!

Hlaváček.—If you weren't so hot-headed and would once in a while come among us, you wouldn't have to think so much of things you can't change.

Dušek.—Oh, no, no, no—I don't fit among you fellows any more. I'd just needlessly poison you all.

Hlaváček.—Such an idea! You must force yourself, then.

Dušek.—To work? Do you think I don't try? Work, if you can, when you feel as I've felt for three solid months.

Hlaváček.—First of all, come back among us to your own world, don't *think*, and do a few merry stunts with the boys—in a few days you'll be in first rate condition.

Dušek (Impatiently).—Oh, I say—please—(*A pause.* *Dušek seats himself on the divan. After a while.*) Ládo, tell me one thing.

(*Hlaváček.*—Well?)

Dušek.—Did you tell that to anyone that time?

Hlaváček (Not comprehending).—What?

Dušek (With impatience).—You know, that evening—at Dr. Vlasák's—

Hlaváček (Recalling).—Oh, that? (*Earnestly.*)—Why, what do you think? We promised each other that we'd both keep still about it. Why, did someone—?

Dušek.—Doubtless I'm mistaken. But, they say, something was said not long ago at the coffee-house.

Hlaváček.—Who knows what you've heard!

Dušek.—And you know that—(*In a lower voice*) Miss *ndner* is married?

Hlaváček (Surprised).—You don't say? After all?

Dušek (Bitterly).—She's married to Vlasák, didn't you hear about it? Yesterday, at the Dominican church, very quietly—

at six o'clock in the morning.—(*Maliciously*) Maybe they thought we published it that time throughout Prague! (*A pause.*)

Hlaváček.—Good enough for 'em—for both of them! (*Notices* DUŠEK.) I say, old man, you're not torturing yourself because they got married?

Dušek (Haughtily).—You fool!

Hlaváček.—What's gnawing at you, then?

Dušek.—Not for her, by any means—believe me, not for her! And after the worst desperation was over that time, I almost believed you—that it had all turned out for the best! But now! Look at me! (*Rises.*) Well?

Hlaváček.—Well—what?

Dušek.—Don't you see? (*A pause.*) Did you know that they returned my picture from the Rudolfinum?

Hlaváček (Surprised).—Wha-a-t? (*After a while.*) What did you send?

Dušek.—I finished that "Psyche." That is—I finished at it! They fairly threw it back at my feet. (*Bitterly.*) My "Psyche" you know. For two months I forced myself to paint at it to get a little calm out of my work. I began again and again, virtually fought with myself about the thought and the form, I wrung my brain and soul—and—nothing, nothing, nothing! (*Explosively.*) Bah! (*A pause.*) I'm not surprised at them for not wanting it. It was a terrible daub, worse than a chromo. (*Sadly.*) Ládo, you know I didn't use to be just an ordinary dauber, did I?

Hlaváček (With genuine feeling).—And you're not, you little idiot! What if you have made a mess of one thing? That's nothing! You slid out of the track last year, a little, and then you had a sudden awakening—well,—what of it? Buy yourself some canvas and paints, smear up something, come again among your old comrades—and you'll see—it will once more be a "go!"

Dušek (Bitterly).—As if I had even the price of the paints. (*Stops suddenly, after a while.*) But what made me come to you at all? That time in my anger I gave up the place—you recall that time? I thought by spring I'd get something together and disappear to Munich—

Hlaváček.—And today you have to move, is that it? It's the first?

Dušek.—Only that I have no place to move to. Tomorrow a new renter moves into my rooms—

Hlaváček.—An acquaintance?

Dušek.—No, some German. A sculptor.

Hlaváček.—And you're not going to take the trip to Munich?

Dušek (Bitterly).—What on? On the strength of the debts I have now?

Hlaváček.—Well, then stay here with us until you find something again. We'll find a place for you. You can sleep here. (*Points to the divan.*) It isn't very cold in May.

Dušek.—Oh, no, no! (*Considering.*) Well, we'll see if I won't be in the way. (*Looks around.*) But I wanted to say this! I have all sorts of trash and old things up there—don't you want them?

Hlaváček (Embarrassed).—My boy, I haven't any of these just now—(*Makes gesture indicating money.*)

Dušek.—Pshaw—money! You don't suppose I want to sell the stuff to you?

Hlaváček.—Don't you need any?

Dušek (Laughs bitterly).—Oh, I need it all right! But five florins won't help me any. I made a lot of debts early in the winter when I was still with those—(*Hesitates*) Well, you know what I was doing! And now I've been making more debts. I've pawned everything I owned.

Hlaváček (Softly).—Milo!

Dušek (Takes out his pocket book and draws forth a pawn-ticket).—Look! This was the last thing—my dead father's watch. They loaned me six gold florins on it. (*Out of the purse falls a ring.*)

Hlaváček (Stoops).—You dropped something didn't you? (*Searching on the floor.*) Aha, here it is! (*Picks up the ring.*)

Dušek (Seizing it).—Show it to me! (*Gazes at it and then says sorrowfully.*) Lâdo, don't you know this ring? Don't you? It is the one that Stáza gave back to me that time. (*Points towards center of studio*) Right here, don't you remember? (*In bitter tones*) It will soon be a year ago. Oh, oh, oh!

Hlaváček (Involuntarily).—Poor Stáza!

Dušek (Abruptly).—Why—poor Stáza? She's better off than I am. (*A pause.*) She got married in Vienna, did you hear about it?

Hlaváček (Surprised).—Really?

Dušek (Dryly).—Of course. You know how it goes—a woman! (*Becomes silent, then softly.*) And yet it didn't have to be! (*Gazes at the ring and then thrusts it into his purse.*) So it goes! (*With a melancholy smile.*) Well, they're both married—

and the second one punished me for that first one!

Hlaváček (Shaking off the mood induced by DUŠEK).—Thunderation, Dušek, cut out this sentiment business and get down to work! The devil took two girls and one picture that they turned back to you! If I were to torture myself this way on account of every woman——

Dušek.—It isn't the women, Ládo! I was caught in the abyss between two worlds. Each sprang back and I—descended. Don't you suppose that when the crash came—you know that time in the winter—that I didn't do my level best to get back to the world that had formerly disgusted me? I didn't go to the studio for a week, I hung around the taverns, I cut away the new roots joining me to the new life just as energetically as I had torn up those which bound me to the old. And when, after a week, I came back to my studio to the cold and the dust and the disorder, when I again seized my palette and wanted to begin—*(Bursts out)*—Ugh! *(Weariedly)* Well, you heard how it turned out with my "Psyche."

Hlaváček.—You began where you always falsely saw the peculiar life of the artist. Going to drinking taverns wasn't the road, my boy, that led back to us.

Dušek (Provoked).—Oh, I know! *(Crosses the studio gazing at the wall where a revolver hangs under the shelf.)* But the longer it lasts the more I'll get tangled up. *(Looks around at HLAVÁČEK to see if he is observed.)* I'm an object fit only for under the earth anyway. *(Reaches for the revolver.)* Look! This would fix things most easily!

Hlaváček (Noticing that DUŠEK has taken down the revolver, springs forward quickly).—Silly madman! *(Jerks the revolver out of his hand and stepping up to the table, tosses it into a drawer.)* You didn't give it to me last year to be haunted by it now! *(Forces himself to be jocular.)* No, my boy, this isn't for shooting purposes. Unless I should happen to shoot it off myself before I went to the pawnshop. *(A pause.)* Sit down and let's talk.

Dušek (Nervously).—Are you going to stay at home? I'd go with you if you'd want——

Hlaváček.—Wait! We're celebrating May Day today, you know—in the fashion on Střelák! The boys will come and Šimr has gone to bring in Réza and Bozena.

Dušek (Quickly).—No, no, no. I'm afraid of people and especially of the boys. *(Resignedly.)* I ran away from our own world—and they've kicked me out of the other one! *(Tosses his*

head.) Oh, well, I'll manage somehow—(*Hesitates and looks around.*) Say, Ládo, you have some books haven't you?

Hlaváček (With quick willingness).—You want to read something? With great pleasure! I've thrown all the books into the trunk, I'd have to go hunt them—

Dušek.—Have you—Daudet's "Sappho?"

Hlaváček.—Why, you've read that already.

Dušek.—What of it, I want to read it again. Lend it to me, please.

Hlaváček.—Right away?

Dušek (Quickly).—I'd rather have it at once.

Hlaváček.—Well, come on then, we'll find it. (*Goes into the bedroom.*)

Dušek (Goes after him but pauses on the threshold).—But don't be angry.

Hlaváček (Behind the scenes).—Don't mention it!

Dušek (Glances into the bedroom, then quickly walks away from the door, steps to the table and having pulled out the drawer takes the revolver, quickly thrusts it into his lower pocket and with a bound is back at the threshold of the bedroom. Excitedly he asks).—Have you found it?

Hlaváček (Behind the scenes).—Wait, wait—aha, here it is! (*The trunk-lid is heard to fall behind the scenes.*)

Dušek.—Good, thank you!

Hlaváček (Enters wiping the dust from the book on his trouser leg).—Here is "Sappho"—and come and get something else when you're through reading it. At least bury yourself in books if you don't yet feel like painting.

Dušek (Takes the book. His voice suddenly becomes softened and gentle).—And there's something else, Ládo, don't be angry with me—I often did you injustice, didn't I? You know, last summer—

Hlaváček (Pressing DUŠEK's hand).—Eh, don't even speak of it! Am I made of butter?

Dušek.—But I must say it. Well, then—thank you!

Hlaváček.—What for?

Dušek.—Oh, well, for—all sorts of things. (*Stands at the window.*) Look the sun has gone down. Prague is certainly beautiful! (*Breathes deeply and places his hand on his forehead.*) Oh, Lord, Lord! How many times I've gazed from here on lovely Prague, on the river and on Castle Hradčany! (*A pause.*) That isn't the truth even, any more! (*Sighs deeply. Suddenly*

he trembles and presses his handkerchief to his eyes. He sobs convulsively.)

Hlaváček (Amazedly).—Why, why—Milo!

Dušek (Recovering).—Eh! (*Waves his hand, quickly wipes his eyes and seeking to control himself, speaks.*) You see—now—how—I feel—

Hlaváček (Hearing a sound in the front hall).—Aha, now someone is coming! Will you stay with us?

Dušek.—Please don't detain me. I feel horribly depressed here. Wherever I look, there are reminders— (*ŠIMR enters the door, supporting on either arm RĚZA and BOZENA.*)

Šimr (Catching sight of DUŠEK).—Ah! What male-bird have we! Dušek! My Dušek! Look, girls—

Dušek (Forcing himself to be cordial).—Good luck to you, Šimr! (*Offers his hand.*) You hardly know me any more, do you?

Šimr (Frankly).—Ah, my good fellow, I didn't get so stuck up! (*Stopping short.*) There, little one, don't get wrathful. You know my tongue gets away with me sometimes.

Rěza.—We never get to see you any more, Mr. Dušek.

Dušek (Waving his hand).—Pshaw! Why should—

Hlaváček.—Say, Šimr, Dušek may move in with us for a while.

Šimr.—It's all right with me. (*To DUŠEK.*) Do you want to?

Dušek (Shakes his head).—Oh, no, no—it was only a notion. I'd only be in the way.

Hlaváček.—Out with it, Kamilo, would you care to or not? Speak out, if you care to come in with us. Our janitor will move you, it's only a few steps.

Božena (Showing DUŠEK a bracelet).—Look, Mr. Dušek! See how deep Mr. Šimr went into his pocket.

Šimr (To DUŠEK).—You see, my dear fellow, I got rid of a picture. That scene, you know. Oh, no, you didn't see it.

Dušek (With secret misery).—You sold a picture?

Šimr.—Sure thing! They had begun to roast it in the papers but someone was easy enough to buy the picture anyway. (*Gazing at DUŠEK.*) Well, and you?

Dušek.—I haven't a thing at the exhibition this year.

Šimr.—I know that. But what about the picture in the Christmas exhibit?

(*DUŠEK hisses.*)

Šimr.—Well—what?

Dušek.—Don't mock at me, Šimr!

Šimr (*Shrugs his shoulders*).—Hm! (*Turns away*.) By Jove, Dušek, I owe you a gold piece, yet, do you know it! (*Reaches into pocket*.)

Dušek (*Surprised*).—You owe me?

Šimr.—For nearly a year—don't you remember? (*Gives DUŠEK the coin*.) Plenty of money, old chap! (*To the models*.) Haven't I, girls?

Réza (*Laughs*).—You'll blow it to the winds in a hurry.

Dušek (*Puts the coin in his pocket*).—Thanks!

Šimr.—That is to say—I thank you!

Hlaváček (*To ŠIMR*).—Haven't you seen Paroubek?

Šimr.—He's at the Slavia, he'll be here soon. Malina also. (*Reaches into his pocket*.) Here are the provisions! (*Places a package on the table*.) Look, Dušek, you must learn to live this way again. For forty kreutzers a side of bacon, a few wieners—

Hlaváček (*Unwraps package*).—For forty! Thunder! That won't be enough!

Šimr (*Looking around with a mischievous grin*).—But they threw in the advice not to eat anything from the dealers in smoked meat—

Hlaváček (*Springs up*).—I'll give you a good— (*Stretches out his hand as if to slap ŠIMR*.)

Dušek (*Impatiently*).—Good-bye, Láda! (*Extends his hand*.)

Šimr (*To DUŠEK*).—Man, alive, how you look! If I were a landscape artist, I'd use you as a model for a ruin!

(*The models burst out in noisy laughter*.)

Dušek (*Hurt by the jibe quickly draws his hat down on his forehead*).—Good-bye, Šimr.

Hlaváček.—Won't you wait?

Dušek (*Impatiently*).—No, no, no!

Šimr.—You're a queer one! To get wrathful for a word! Good luck to you! (*Offers his hand*.)

Dušek (*Having extended his hand, indifferently, to Šimr, again offers his hand to HLAVÁČEK*).—Good-bye, Láda, old boy, I thank you! And don't be angry with me, please!

Hlaváček (*Astonished*).—What puts you in this soft mood? (*Earnestly*.) Well, good-bye—and come if you care to. There's plenty of room here for you.

Božena.—My respects, Mr. Dušek.

Réza (*Simultaneously*).—Good night!

(DUŠEK *departs. A pause.*)

Réza.—What makes that Mr. Dušek so peevish?

Hlaváček.—You know—

Šimr.—We don't know, man! Did you say anything to him?

Hlaváček.—Not a thing!

Šimr.—The crank! He changes with each moon's quarter.

Božena (*Singing*).—"That's all because of love—"

Hlaváček (*Impatiently*).—Hush, Božena, hush!

Šimr.—To be sure! Just because she sings a little!

(*Beats time.*)

"That's all because of love

Which joyous makes the world—

Hlaváček.—Hold your tongue, Šimr, please do!

Šimr.—Well, then, it isn't! (*Seats himself on the stool and swings his legs.*) Just for that, I'll tell you a fine story, Božena.

Well, then, once upon a time there were two sisters—one had had the small-pox and the other was named Marie. And those girls had two brothers and those brothers didn't have any sisters—

Réza (*Screaming*).—Oh, we know that one!

Hlaváček (*Shakes his head thoughtfully*).—I wonder what's the matter with Dušek? I never in my life would have said—

Šimr (*Waving his hand towards the rear*).—Look at him! Haven't I always said so? All of a sudden we got too common for him—and all of a sudden they dropped him elsewhere, now he doesn't know where to head in.

Hlaváček.—He's in hard luck. Let him alone!

(ŠIMR *whistles.*)

Réza.—How that man tortured me when I use to sit for him last winter! Once he actually threw me out.

(ŠIMR *and BOŽENA laugh.*)

Šimr.—And didn't you freeze to death, Réza? Or were you dressed?

Réza (*Laughing*).—Well, that *would* have been fine—just *that* way!

Hlaváček (*With a visible effort to lead the conversation to other subjects*).—If those two sculptors don't come, we'll eat the stuff ourselves.

Šimr.—Holla! Vaniček said he was going to be home in the evening. (*To HLAVÁČEK.*) Is he?

Hlaváček.—I don't know.

Šimr.—We'll ask. (*He strikes the wall at the back of the room.*)

Bozena.—He won't hear that.

Šimr.—Why wouldn't he hear it!

Hlaváček.—He was here this afternoon. And wanted to carry off the oleander from the front hall.

Šimr.—Just let him try it! I wouldn't return it to him if he'd flay himself alive.

Bozena.—Is that oleander his?

Šimr.—It's mine, now, Bozena, dear! In the winter it began to wither and so he presented me with it. Now I've brought it back to life, it has fine fresh young leaves and so—*Vaniček* wants it back.

Réza.—You'd be a fool to give anything back!

Šimr (Shrewdly).—I'm not so green!

Vaniček (Enters).—Why, aren't you people going anywhere today?

Šimr.—Don't you know this is May Day and we're celebrating?

Vaniček.—I say, *Šimr*, that oleander is growing first rate. I must be carrying it back.

(The models laugh aloud.)

Šimr.—I should say *not!*

Vaniček.—Say wouldn't you like my brand new couch also?

(A pause.) (VANIČEK goes to the divan on which a guitar is lying and having seated himself, whistles, thrumming on the strings meanwhile. Simultaneously a drumming on the door of the front hall is heard.)

Šimr (Screaming).—Hurrah! I'll wager it's those two tramps, Malina and Paroubek! *(Stands in the center of the studio.)* The funeral march! Attention!

(All except HLAVÁČEK stand up and at the top of their voices sing the funeral march.) Tramtará ta tamtadadadada, tramtarádáda tramtaratata. Tam, tam!

Paroubek (Enters, smiling quietly).—A funeral?

Malina (Enters after him and himself sings the next measures of the funeral march).—Tramtaráta, tramtaráta, tramtara, tramtara, tramtarááá—rara—

Réza (Mischievously screeching into MALINA's singing).—All labor has died, Paroubek, hurrah!

Hlaváček.—That pleases Paroubek.

Paroubek (Sidles lazily towards the divan where he sits down).—You do like to grind, don't you *Hlaváček*? But you haven't hurt yourself yet by overwork.

Hlaváček.—Why, am I a sculptor?

Šimr.—I hear, Paroubek, that you've finished that caryatid.

Malina.—Well, I'm glad of that, myself.

Paroubek (Wrathily).—No, I didn't! My stove smokes all the time!

Réza (Laughing).—Even to this day? And why do you have any fire at all? Most likely on account of that frozen thing, Marie. (*Turning to the rest.*) You have to keep a fire for her even in July, when she's posing.

Paroubek.—I'm not running any fire—don't you hear that my stove smokes? (*Indistinctly.*) Who's going to burn a fire in May? (*All laugh.*)

Šimr.—Why shouldn't you keep a fire in May? That's what a stove is for.

Hlaváček (Strikes the table with his fist).—Šimr if you don't cut out such silly, asinine jests—(*Shakes his finger threateningly.*)

Šimr.—Well?

Hlaváček.—Well, we'll eat that side of bacon ourselves, see?

Malina.—Well, I'm glad of that!

Božena (Places herself coquettishly in front of MALINA).—What do you say to it, Mr. Malina, I want to have my hair cut short.

Malina (In the same tone which by the disagreeable repetitions is all the more tiresome).—Well, I'm glad of that, myself.

Paroubek.—Do it, Božena, but wait till the moon's waxing. It'll draw your hair out again.

Šimr.—Short, everything short! Božena has to have everything brief! She had that last beau for an entire two days.

Božena.—Just wait till a wife has you on a short bridle!

Paroubek (Settled comfortably on the divan. Pokes VANIČEK with his elbow).—D'ye know whom we met just now?

Hlaváček (Who, during the scene just preceding has sat with his hands on his knees, on the stool near the easel, hears PAROUBEK'S words).—Was it Dušek?

Paroubek (Nodding).—Dušek. Was he here?

Šimr.—Yes, and poisoned the air. (*Opening the parcel which he brought.*) If it got even into this side of bacon—

Paroubek (Continuing).—He certainly looks bad—doesn't he, Láda?

Hlaváček.—Did you talk with him?

Paroubek.—I should say not! He turned the corner when he caught sight of us.

Hlaváček.—Upon my soul, boys, I've felt as if I'd gotten a whipping ever since I saw Dušek. I have a feeling all the time that we shouldn't have let him go away.

Šimr.—I suppose I ought to have implored him not to leave.

Hlaváček.—You know him and you know how morbid he is. And these evenings, in solitude, with horrible thoughts—*(Rises)* Do you know what, I'm going to get him!

Šimr.—It's a wonder you wouldn't get tired of it!

Hlaváček.—He talked such queer things here—Upon my soul, I almost have a fear for him!

Šimr.—You idiot—He likes himself too well.

Hlaváček *(Stands undecided in the center of the studio.)*

Réza.—The other day I almost wept for Dušek. We found a newspaper in the house and there was a report of the Christmas exhibition. And what they said about Dušek!

Hlaváček.—I know! *(Tosses his head.)* You know, Šimr.

Šimr.—You recall, boys, how Dušek raged last year when they praised someone else instead of him? Once he actually startled me by saying he'd become stunted in growth among us!

Paroubek.—Eh, you can't stop the growth of a good seed!

Šimr.—Like you, for instance? *(Laughs, then gravely.)* But Dušek already had this in his blood! As long as he kicked others, it was all right—but now when someone kicks him down—

Hlaváček *(In a low voice).*—Stop it, Šimr!

Šimr.—Just stand up for him! Such a thing as this happens only to such fine gentlemen as he was. *(Angrily.)* If I'm a painter, then I'm a painter—and if I'm a baron, then I'm a baron! But to quit painting to imitate a baron—

Hlaváček.—It's a pity, it's a pity to lose such skill! How that man understood colors and what ideas he had! It was exactly as if—*(At that instant a hollow sound echoes in the front hall caused by a fall. HLAVÁČEK is startled.)* What is happening out there?

Šimr *(Looks out of the door. With comic sorrow).*—Alas, our Lord Jesus! *(Goes into front hall.)*

(All display excitement.)

Šimr *(Returns carrying the broken oleander in a shattered jardinere).*—Look, Vaniček, we shan't go to law about the oleander! It fell of itself from the stand to the floor.

Bozena *(Surprised).*—Didn't someone knock it down?

Hlaváček *(Uneasily).*—Why, we were all here!

Réza.—That's a sign!

Malina.—Well, I'm glad of that myself.

Šimr.—A sign, indeed! That Vaniček will now have holy peace.

Paroubek.—Réza, you're superstitious!

Hlaváček (*In the meantime has seized his hat. Uncertainly—*
Boys, I'm going down for Dušek after all——

Šimr.—What, again?

Hlaváček.—I haven't any peace here while I don't know about him. (*Departing.*) I'm back in a few minutes. (*A pause. All gaze after HLAVÁČEK.*)

Šimr (*Bursts out abruptly*).—I say this is too much!

Paroubek (*In a deep voice*).—Come, let's talk about ghosts!

Réza (*Shivers*).—Oh, do hush!

Božena.—Let's rather talk about something else! Mr. Šimr, what really did happen to Dušek?

Šimr.—The Lord only knows! He won't tell! Apparently that—that—what's her name—quit him, that time. But there must be something else in it. A man doesn't go to seed that way for a woman.

Réza (*Merrily pushes him aside*).—Well, I'll not get foolish about anyone!

(*VANIČEK thrums again on the guitar and whistles.*)

Božena.—Pst!

(*All become quiet.*)

(*VANIČEK whistles to the picking of his guitar a popular melody. MALINA stands up and marks time.*) Tramtá, tramdá, tram táda, táda, táda——

Šimr (*Pokes him*).—Keep still!

(*VANIČEK whistles and plays on until he has finished the entire song.*)

Malina (*Succeeding him*).—And now, Vána! (*Giving him the key.*)

When I was going through Putím gate
Two lovely maids there lay in wait
They cried "You little student,
You surely are quite verdant!"

(*VANIČEK accompanies him on the guitar. The rest sing the second stanza with ŠIMR.*)

Maidens, why call me "student"
 Why be so very imprudent?
 To love you, maids, I do not dare,
 To study is my one sole care.

Bozena.—What kind of song is that, pray?

Malina.—That's Aleš's* favorite, don't you know it? (*Sings on.*)

You'll pine for me, my little lass,
 When in Putím church I'm saying mass.
 The very first will be for you
 'Tis really all that I can do!

Šimr.—And now we'll start the side of bacon! (*Stands up and draws out his pocket knife.*) Wait a minute! (*Takes the decorative plate from the wall.*)

(*VANIČEK whistles and plays a sentimental waltz.*)

Paroubek (Shouts out).—Miss Foy! (*Runs to the wall where hang all sorts of costumes.*)

Šimr (Laughing).—Behold, what agility has entered Paroubek!

Paroubek (Standing close to the wall, quickly arrays himself in various pieces of SLOVÁK costume. He wraps a piece of cloth about his head, etc. Then he runs to center of studio).—The Spiral dance, please! Play, Vána! (*Turns and bends in the manner of serpentine dancers.*)

(*VANIČEK whistles the waltz anew.*)

Šimr (Carrying the plate to the little table says to PAROUBEK.—Look out, you'll run into something—! (*Places the meat on the plate and slices it.*)

(*VANIČEK whistles on.*)

(*PAROUBEK dances grotesquely.*)

(*The models laugh boisterously.*)

Šimr (Who has in the meantime sliced the meat and is counting those present).—One, two, three, four, five—and I am six. One piece for each one. Come! (*Reaches into the dish.*) I'll take two.

Paroubek (Stops).—I'll fix you! (*Runs after him.*)

*Mkolás Ales, 1852–1913—A painter of great renown among Slavs, illustrated practically all the rich and common Slavic folk songs and poems, also produced many historical pictures.

Šimr (Dodging him).—Wouldn't you like some gin? (*All scream out.*) Gin?

Šimr (Laughs).—Mushrooms! But, since it's the first of May—wait a minute! (*He takes down a bottle from the shelf.*) Long live Slovakland!

Božena (Cries out).—Good luck to Slovakland!

Šimr (Takes a drink and hands it to the rest).—The one who drinks the last drop has to buy a new bottle!

Malina.—Indeed! (*Takes a long drink.*)

Šimr.—Malina, sing something from Slovakland to that gin. (*MALINA wiping his lips sings.*)

Into the room
Tripped Marie mine
The priest after her
With bottled wine!

(*VANIČEK accompanies him.*)

(*MALINA singing.*)

Marie, drink,
Be in no hurry.
You'll be as ruddy
As a strawberry!

(*Shouts.*)—Huzza!

Vaniček (When MALINA has finished singing. VANIČEK begins playing and whistling another song.)

Paroubek (While VANIČEK plays).—I wonder why Hlaváček doesn't come?

Malina.—He could have been back here from Dušek's twice. He lives just around the corner.

Réza (Shivering).—Ugh! I've got the shivers!

Šimr.—What's the matter, Réza, anyway?

Réza (Uneasily).—Why, I just felt a chill go over me all of a sudden, now—

Božena.—Are you ill, Réza?

Šimr.—Oh, there's nothing the matter with her, at all! You'd drive a man insane! (*Suddenly.*) By thunder, let's have some illumination! (*Draws from the corner a great wooden candle-stick on which is a twisted sheet of paper in imitation of a wax candle. He places the candle-stick in the middle of the studio.*) If there's to be a celebration, let there be light!

Bozena.—Why, it's only paper? (*Laughs.*)

Šimr.—That's the joke of it! That's for Dušek's miserable soul!

Réza (Screams out).—Jesus, Mary—hush, Mr. Šimr! Don't say it—not even in fun!

Šimr.—Don't frighten us every little while by screaming, Réza! (*Goes to her.*) Come on, let's rather have a little dance. Vána will play a gallop. (*ŠIMR dances with RÉZA.*)

Malina.—Come on, Bozena! (*He dances with BOZENA.*)

Paroubek.—Don't stamp! The major downstairs will come up and read you the riot act.

Malina (Dancing).—Well, I'm glad of this, myself.

Šimr (Dancing).—Who says we're stamping?

Malina (Loosens his hold of BOZENA).—I'm out of practice! Come and sit down, Bozena! (*Seats himself beside her on the divan.*)

(*VANIČEK bangs the strings and stops playing.*)

Šimr (With RÉZA in his arms).—Well, what?

Vaniček.—Next year, again!

Paroubek (Draws a cornucopia from his pocket).—Look, what I found at home today. It's a cornucopia full of bengal powder left over from last year when we did that "living pictures" stunt!

Malina (Quickly).—Come, let's do a tableau now!

Šimr.—What shall it be?

Paroubek.—Wait, something improvised! Bozena, you climb upon the table!

(*BOZENA climbs up on the table.*)

Paroubek.—Réza, you take the azaleas.

(*RÉZA gets the azaleas.*)

Paroubek.—Vaniček will sit on the floor and will represent the orchestra.

(*VANIČEK seats himself on the floor.*)

Paroubek.—Now, where'll we put these two stumps? (*Looks around at ŠIMR and MALINA. Just then a bell in the front hall sounds.*)

Bozena (Cries out).—The major is coming!

Malina (Simultaneously).—That's Hlaváček.

Šimr.—He wouldn't ring. (*Looks into front hall.*) Open! (*Goes out.*) Ah, my respects, Mr. Bukač! (*Returns to studio.*)

Paroubek.—Bukač! Girls, call out "Long live the seventh Great Power!" Glory to the editor!

Réza (Simultaneously).—Long live the seventh Great Power!

Božena (Simultaneously).—Glory!

Vaniček (On the floor).—Good luck! (*Noisily thrums on the guitar.*)

Bukač (Enters, very much excited).—Is Hlaváček at home?

Šimr.—No.

Bukač (Quickly).—Don't you know anything?

Šimr.—What?

Bukač.—Dušek shot himself.

Božena.—Jesus, Mary! (*Jumps from the table.*)

Réza (At the same time).—Holy Virgin Mary! (*Drops the azaleas.*)

Šimr, Vaniček, Paroubek and Malina (all at once).—What! Dušek? How? Where? (*They surround BUKAČ.*)

Bukač.—He shot himself just now in his studio. (*Breathing deeply with weariness.*) They telephoned us from the Aid station—(*In the front hall the door bangs.*) I came running here for Hlaváček—I need some facts for the obituary.

Hlaváček (Bursts into the studio, rushes directly to the little table, opens the drawer and feels inside, then cries out).—With my revolver! That's why he came here! (*All completely horrified.*)

Curtain.

JAROSLAV KVAPIL

By ŠÁRKA B. HRBKOVÁ

TO the American public the world of Bohemian literature of the present day is practically a closed book, hence to presuppose an intimate acquaintance with the dramatic writers of the nation of Čechs is an unwarranted presumption.

It is only since 1848 when the nation awakened from its two hundred year swoon resulting from the almost mortal wound inflicted at the Battle of Bilá Hora, that the truly wonderful literary energy of the people has displayed itself. It would be a misappellation to designate the few efforts during the period of the nation's lethargy as literature. A nation which, at the beginning of the Thirty Years' War—that long agony which had its inception in Bohemia—lost by exile thirty-six thousand of its most progressive and best educated citizens and its liberty at the same time could hardly be expected to recover at once.

Physically speaking, it would have been preposterous to look for a literary impetus or development at a time when it was possible for a certain Jesuit priest to boast that he alone had burned sixty thousand Bohemian books.

The quivering throes of the nation during the generations preceding 1830 could hardly be looked upon as anything else but the reflex shudders of a corpse. But the blood, apparently congealed, began once more to course through the stiff veins when the breath of freedom and democracy at first wafted, then like a mighty gale, fairly rushed through the land in 1848, revivifying, renewing, inspiring everywhere.

In the land of the westernmost Slavs—Bohemia—the long suppressed Čechs arose to assert themselves not alone as Čechs—sturdy Slavs and troublesome obstacles in the path of the All-Deutsch policy of their northern neighbors but as men, as citizens of the world demanding their human rights and insisting on the equality of privileges and freedom of thought and expression.

It was at the high tide of reaction that Karel Havlíček, the

patriot editor of the *National News* (*Národní Noviny*) became the leader of the new spirit in Bohemia and set high the standard of literary virility, courage and worth. Mawkish sentimentality in patriotism or letters was so bitterly scored by the forceful statesman-editor that the very causticity of his arraignment fairly seared the edges of maudlin pseudo-patriotism and insured the growth of healthy tissue in place of the old and useless.

Since that time the cuticle of Bohemian literature has many times needed the beneficial cauterizing of a fearless Havlíček. Yet, on the whole, it has had an unusually wholesome and virile development so that few nations indeed can boast of so many productions of relatively high merit as are shown by the literary annals of Bohemia in the latter half of the nineteenth century and in the first decade of the present century.

Each field of literary endeavor has been tilled and well tilled by these awakened dreamers of the Slavic race who have been cradled in the heart of Europe since the fifth century.

František Palacky whose monumental history of Bohemia has been ranked by W. S. Monroe in "Bohemian Language and Literature" as on a par with the works of Freeman in England and Motley in America; Jan Kollar, seer of the Slavonian, poet of "The Daughter of Sláva" and projector of Panslavism; Pavel Šafařík, student of antiquities, working also for Slavonic brotherhood; Hanka, Celakovsky, Erben, folklorists and earlier poets; Božena Němcová, Caroline Světlá, Alois Jirasek, Julius Zeyer, Karel Rais in the field of fiction; Vítězslav Hálek, Svatopluk Čech, Julius Zeyer, Joseph V. Sládek, Jaroslav Vrchlicky*, Joseph S. Machar, Fr. X. Svoboda among the poets who have earned and won renown in later times; Joseph K. Tyl, Václav Klicpera, Emanuel Bozděch, František A. Šubert, Joseph Štolba and Jaroslav Kvapil among the dramatic writers—all these are names of men and women who have produced lasting and valuable literature.

When a man has been occupied in one or more divisions of literary endeavor it is always a little difficult to properly classify him. So, in the case of Jaroslav Kvapil who has been an indefatigable literary worker, who has produced several volumes of lyric poetry, a number of dramatic works and also several librettos and translations, it appears a dubitable question to some whether

*Vrchlicky ranks also among Dramatists. Readers of POET LORE will recall the translations given of "At the Chasm," and "The Witness," and the account of his work by Charles Recht.

Kvapil should be counted as a poet, as a dramatist or as both.

Jaroslav Kvapil was born in September, 1868 in Chudějnice in Bohemia. He completed the Gymnasium in Pilsen and then went to the University of Prague where he studied law. Since the beginning of his university studies he has continuously resided in Prague in Bohemia, making only occasional visits to surrounding European countries.

In his twenty-first year he published a small volume of lyric poems under the title of "Falling Stars" (Padající Hvězdy). This collection was republished in 1897. Soon after the first appearance of Kvapil in his books of lyrics, other collections of lyrical compositions followed, "The Reliquary" (Reliquie) (1890); "The Diary of a Poet" (Bávníkuv Denník) (1890); "Above the Ruins of Charles' Bridge," (Nad Zříceninou Karlova Mostu) (1890); "The Rose Bush" (Ruzový Ker) (1890); "Silent Love" (Tichá Láska) (1891); "Liber Aureus" (1893); "Devotion," (Oddanost) (1896); "The Ruins of the Cathedral" (Trosky Chrámu) (1899); "Andante" (1903); and a cycle, "Veils" (Závoje) (1907). In 1907 the collected poems of Kvapil were published, representing chronologically the growth of his view point between the years 1886 and 1906.

The earlier collections are poems more or less echoing in form and spirit the French lyric poetry of the day, being distinctly erotic with a strong inclination towards melancholy dreaminess. From the stage in which he puts on the mask of blasé weariness he advances to a grateful and devoted love full of joy and happiness; then, experiencing the period of quiet resignation, warming the wounded heart in the glow of the home-circle hearth, he passes to fervent elegiac verse.

Through all these phases, however, he preserves two strong and well defined tendencies. These developed more fully only at a much later date, when he had ceased to produce poetry, after he had left journalism which he had entered through the door of *Hlas Národu* and *Národní Listy*, both Prague publications, and had connected himself permanently with the stage in the capacity of a dramatic writer and collaborator with his gifted wife, the renowned actress, Hana Kvapilová. These two marks of power were his strong inclination towards the poetic tale—really towards the new romanticism and a rare faculty for the symmetrical decoration of the artistic whole.

As a dramatist Kvapil began with the sententious "Twilight" (*Přítmi*) in 1895 and the following year produced the drama of

artist life in Prague "The Will o' the Wisp" (*Bludička*). The influence of Maeterlinck is clearly shown in his next work, a lyrical trilogy "Memento" finished towards the close of 1896.

Most happily did he combine the fascinating humor of fanciful lore with lyric melancholy and delicacy in his fairy drama "Princess Dandelion" (*Princezna Pampeliška*), published in 1897. Seven years elapse before another play is produced, the beautiful drama *Clouds* ("Oblaka") being completed in 1904. The last named is the first of Kvapil's plays to appear in English dress, having been translated by Charles Recht and printed in *Poet Lore*, December, 1910. In 1906 Kvapil wrote his national fairy tale "The Orphan" (*Sirotek*) in which he unites not so successfully as in *Princess Dandelion* allegorical types with genre sketches from life.

In addition to this original work, Kvapil within very recent years has become strongly interested in Henrik Ibsen whose satirical social plays had been given presentation on the Bohemian stage since 1883. Practically all of Ibsen's dramas had been translated into the Bohemian at this time but within the last ten years Kvapil has prepared new translations of these works of the great Scandinavian which especially appealed to him.

In 1906 Kvapil translated "The Lady from the Sea" following it up soon after (1908) with a translation of "Ghosts" whose title, however, he gives as "Spectres." Although G. Eim had translated "Pillars of Society" as early as 1879,—this version being in common use in the Bohemian theaters,—Kvapil in 1910 prepared an exceptionally faithful translation of the same satire. "Hedda Gabler" had twice been translated into the Čech, but Kvapil's version made in 1911 is looked upon as the best. His most recent translation is "The Master Builder" done in 1912.

Mr. Kvapil is publishing those translations in the "World Library" (*Svetova Knihovna*), a very superior series of world-classics which he has been editing since 1897 for the J. Otto Publishing Company of Prague, Bohemia.

Kvapil has also written a number of successful librettos, among them "The Peasants' Rebellion" for Lošták, "Perdita," "Deborá" and "The Water-Sprite" (*Rusalka*).

He has been assistant to Gustav Schmoranz, director of the Bohemian National Opera, for a number of years, being drawn to this work through the great artistic successes of his wife Hana Kvapilová who for many years (1860-1907) played the leading roles in the chief playhouse of the Čech nation. Kvapilová played

Helen in "Will o' the Wisp," *Hedda* in "Hedda Gabler," *Nora* in the "Doll's House" as well as the regular leads in Shakespeare and other classic dramas.

The Memoirs of this gifted and much beloved Bohemian actress were prepared and published by Kvapil. In recent years, Mr. Kvapil has been acting as editor of *Zlatá Praha* ("Golden Prague") the leading art and literary journal of Bohemia.

TO BE, OR NOT TO BE,—AGAIN

BY MORRIS LEROY ARNOLD

IN this age of warfare it is refreshing to find an intellectual antagonist who challenges one to a combat in the Shakespearean arena not for the joy of the fighting, but for the sake of the trophy Truth. Mr. Charles M. Street in a recent article* on Hamlet's soliloquy, 'To be, or not to be,' contends (1) that the speech is overheard by the King and Polonius, and (2) that Hamlet, conscious of their presence, pretends to soliloquize for the benefit of Claudius. Thus, this speech, hitherto regarded as the greatest soliloquy in English drama, is now presented as no soliloquy at all, in the technical sense of the term, but rather as a feigned soliloquy, in which Hamlet, pretending to meditate, purposely plays upon the suspicions and superstitions of the lurking King. Such an interpretation stimulates because of its novelty. Mr. Street courteously reminds me that I have not considered this interpretation in my study,† and he challenges me to answer six points which he makes in behalf of his contention.

Therefore I take up the gauntlet, conscious that there is no glory in my position, as I am constrained to represent that most unpopular of types, a conservative. It is picturesque to be the herald of a new faith; it is a dreary task to champion an ancient tradition. I must needs be spokesman for the ordinary, obvious, generally accepted tradition and interpretation of a famous passage. Further, Mr. Street makes the very unlawyer-like stipulation that I pay no 'undue respect to any array of critics or stage tradition howsoever authoritative.' I must take the traditional view, but not go to tradition for my authority. Granted. Let us go to Shakespeare. But first let us go to Mr. Street.

First—Says Mr. Street, 'Shakespeare has given us evidence that fully advises the audience of Hamlet's knowledge of the

**POET LORE*, Volume 25, page 461.

†'The Soliloquies of Shakespeare.' (Columbia University Press, N. Y., 1911.)

espials (Claudius and Polonius) before he enters.' This is an important point in the argument, for Shakespeare invariably prepares an audience for a big situation, and most certainly he would if the complication were as involved as the one suggested,—namely, that Hamlet, aware that he is overheard, is pretending to soliloquize, so that he may be overheard. Mr. Street buttresses his original assertion with several illustrations. In the first place, the remark of Claudius shortly before Hamlet appears, 'We have closely sent for Hamlet hither,' seems to Mr. Street decidedly significant. 'Closely' he defines as meaning 'covertly.' No one would deny that, but why, if 'closely' means 'covertly' or 'secretly,' should we jump to the conclusion that the errand was clumsily, stupidly or at least obviously performed? The word gives the reverse impression. Claudius has proceeded with stealth to get Hamlet to pass this way. Hamlet does so. True, Hamlet has been suspicious of the attendance of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, but is that reason to assume that when he is walking alone, he believes the walls lined with ears,—to be exact, the pair of ears belonging to Claudius? If Shakespeare had had any such idea he would have said so. Instead, he informs us that the King was secret, covert, in his method of getting Hamlet to walk in this direction. The fact is that our very discussion of this little phrase exaggerates its importance. Its function is merely that of the 'prepared entrance.' The audience expects to see Hamlet appear, and that expectation is forthwith gratified. This dramaturgic device illustrates Shakespeare's usual form of procedure, simple, straightforward.

Again, asks Mr. Street, 'is Hamlet to be deceived by the guileless Ophelia under unnatural conditions after he had just outwitted two astute young men under natural conditions?' That is another story, his suspicions of Ophelia. Many critics believe that Hamlet's question, 'Where's your father?' indicates Hamlet's sudden realization of the presence of the eavesdroppers. Many actors arrange the stage business in order to carry out that idea: just before Hamlet asks the question, he glances back and catches a glimpse of the conspirators lurking behind the arras. Certain it is that throughout the colloquy Ophelia is a very poor actress and that Hamlet, at first gentle and sincere with her ('Nymph, in thy orisons be all my sins remember'd,') is, after Ophelia's falsehood, harsh and wildly satiric. As Mr. Street admits,* the ejaculation at the beginning of the colloquy,

*POET LORE, Volume 20, page 472.

'Ha, ha, are you honest?' is no indication that Hamlet has spied the eavesdroppers. Mr. Street nevertheless believes that Hamlet is cognizant of the eavesdroppers during the entire interview as well as the preceding monolog. Some maintain—Mr. Grant White, for one—that he does not suspect their presence during the whole scene. And others hold that Hamlet realizes the true situation only during the latter half of the dialog. But that is not the question. Our query concerns itself not with the dialog but with the monolog preceding it.

'Finally, as evidence showing that Hamlet was not only conscious of the presence of spies before he enters to deliver the "soliloquy," but that our poet has prepared the King to respond to just such torment in double meanings, subtle hints and picturesque superstitions, all reinforced by rhythmic eloquence, as are contained in the "soliloquy," we have the "aside" of Claudius expressing the effect of a remark of Polonius as his last utterance before Hamlet commences his "To be or not to be."' It is difficult to get the point of this assertion. The King's 'aside,' showing the workings of his conscience, has nothing to do with the eavesdropping. Hamlet has not yet appeared, and before he does, Polonius observes, 'I hear him coming; let's withdraw, my lord.' They withdraw before Hamlet enters. That they linger after his appearance, according to the crude and untrustworthy first quarto edition has nothing to do with the evidence. The first folio text, which all of the best commentators adopt for the reading of this passage, clearly indicates the withdrawal of the conspirators before the entrance of Hamlet. Therefore, it appears, none of the above citations made by Mr. Street—nor any other passage in the drama, for that matter—gives the audience any evidence whatsoever as to Hamlet's knowledge of the spies, Claudius and Polonius, before Hamlet enters.

Second—Says Mr. Street, 'The soliloquy is superstitious. If there is a hereafter that carries forward the consciousness of this life, only the superstitious dread it.' Many will question the truth of this generalization. The majority of human beings, like animals, have an instinctive fear of death—and this quite apart from their mental acumen. One reason that this soliloquy grips the popular imagination is because it immortally phrases the universal dread of death. True, the imagery of dreams is used to convey the feeling, and some consider that indicative of superstition. Hamlet's conception of immortality is not that of

Herbert Spencer nor of Thomas Edison. Hamlet is a thinker, but he is a product of the early seventeenth century, a period when superstition was rife among the keenest intellects,—witness the belief in witchcraft by Elizabeth, Raleigh, Bacon and James. Indeed, Hamlet shows his credence in demonology, not in this soliloquy, but in the preceding one when he reflects:

The spirit that I have seen
May be the devil; and the devil hath power
To assume a pleasing shape; yea, and perhaps
Out of my weakness and my melancholy,
As he is very potent with such spirits,
Abuses me to damn me.

Hamlet is absolutely alone when he makes this assertion to himself. There is no question that he believes it. Accordingly, judged by modern standards, Hamlet is superstitious. His 'To be or not to be' does not reveal the superstitious side of his nature, however, but, if it did, it would not indicate that Hamlet is feigning a soliloquy for the benefit of the superstitious(?) Claudius.

Third—Says Mr. Street, 'Hamlet is not superstitious.' We have just shown that he is. True, Hamlet, is 'intellectual and spiritual.' The great soliloquy harmonizes with these traits. Mr. Street is entirely justified in citing various passages to show that Hamlet at certain crises is not dreading the undiscovered country. Why will twentieth century critics persist in that old-time fallacy of striving to make Hamlet every instant consistent with himself? Hamlet is human, he has temperament. Is there anything inconsistent in the fact that a man dreads death one day and embraces it the next? There are countless instances in the old world struggle at this moment, I have no doubt, of such an heroic change of front.

Fourth—'But Claudius is superstitious.' Is he? He fears the Eternal Judge, as evidenced by those noble lines:

In the corrupted currents of this world
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,
And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law; but 'tis not so above;

There is no shuffling, there the action lies
 In his true nature, and we ourselves compell'd
 Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults
 To give in evidence.

Is not 'superstitious' too strong an epithet for such a sublime conception? Some people today do not believe in a hereafter, and some assume an agnostic attitude toward immortality, but nearly all of us, whether we subscribe to a creed or not, have an instinctive feeling that here or hereafter, some way, some how, there is just retribution for sin. The poet ascribes to the King in beautifully concrete imagery this abstract conception of poetic justice—'the ultimate sanity of the universe,' John Fiske would have called it. You may regard the King's conception as broadly theological, if you like, but I quarrel with the word 'superstitious.' But, for the sake of argument, call it that. Then what? What bearing has that on the controversy? To Hamlet death is an undiscovered country. Claudius has a large conception of retribution for sin after death. Is there any cause and effect here?

To summarize. Mr. Street believes (1) that Hamlet is not superstitious, (2) that the soliloquy of Claudius is superstitious, and (3) that 'To be, or not to be' is superstitious in its dread of death. I have striven to indicate that the reverse of each of these statements is true. So much for superstition. Now for suspicion.

Fifth—'Claudius is suspicious and the soliloquy is specially adapted to aggravate his suspicions.' We have just suggested that it is not so adapted. Mr. Street continues, 'The espials should at all times be visible to the audience in order that the effect of the "soliloquy" may be observed by the expression in their respective faces.' But Polonius has said, 'Let us withdraw,' and they have done so. During the ensuing colloquy between Hamlet and Ophelia, the conspirators are behind the arras, as Polonius had previously arranged it:

At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him;
 Be you and I behind an arras then;
 Mark the encounter.

By what authority does Mr. Street alter Shakespeare's stage directions? He makes the eavesdroppers 'at all times visible'—

before as well as during the encounter.

Mr. Street's theory induces him to read into Hamlet's phrases meanings 'doubly redoubled.' For example, he tells us that 'Claudius does not suspect Hamlet knows he is present till Hamlet refers to "outrageous fortune."' But why this implication in that innocent phrase? Does any one doubt that Hamlet has suffered the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune? What more natural than this plaint in his communing with himself?

Next Mr. Street asserts that taking 'arms against a sea of troubles' 'cannot but suggest to the suspicious mind of Claudius that his own life is in jeopardy.' But why would Claudius, if he were listening, consider 'a sea of troubles' a reference to himself? He would be very suspicious indeed to wrest such a metaphorical meaning from the context. Whereas anyone might hesitate to identify Claudius with a sea of troubles, no one doubts that Hamlet is baffled by a sea of troubles—that is the essence of the tragedy.

Since Mr. Street begins the analysis of the soliloquy in this fashion, we are not surprised that he finds in every phrase of the speech a subtle stab intended for Claudius. He even goes so far, if I understand him aright, as to interpret 'quietus' as the idea of 'suicide' which Hamlet is suggesting to Claudius. Although Mr. Street's interpretation of the whole soliloquy as feigned and overheard is, so far as I know, unique, this extraordinary idea that Hamlet is thinking not of himself but of the King has been anticipated by the practical common sense of Dr. Johnson as well as by the astute scholarship of Professor Charlton M. Lewis, who affirms: 'Hamlet is thinking not of committing suicide but of actively pursuing his revenge.' ('The Genesis of Hamlet,' page 100.) Mr. Lewis admits, however, that 'unless we are misled by printers' omissions, the Hamlet of the first quarto is certainly meditating suicide.' The transposition of the soliloquy in the final version and the alterations of the text do not appear to warrant the complete change of meaning, and I think we may still feel, as the vast majority of readers and critics and actors have felt for the past three centuries, that Hamlet here, as in his first soliloquy, contemplates self-slaughter.

O that this too, too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew!
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter!

This is the first outburst of his anguish in the isolation of soliloquy, and 'To be, or not to be' very naturally continues the theme. It refers to his own living or dying, not the King's.

But how is it possible for Mr. Street and his eminent predecessors to wrest an objective and not a subjective meaning from the soliloquy? Can the entire speech be applied equally well to Hamlet or to Claudius? It may be applied to you or to me. But does Shakespeare give no evidence? Abundant evidence, for either contention—he is like the Bible in that respect. But how can this be great literature, the greatest literature, if the meaning is not clear? It is clear. It is a general reflection on the enigmatic relation of life and death, and yet it is poignantly specific. Therein is the paradox. Therein is the appeal—the same appeal that one feels in the message of the old morality play 'Everyman.' Every man is, for the moment, Hamlet confronting the injustice of life, the mystery of death.

That is the proof, so far as there can be any proof, that this, like all of Hamlet's soliloquies, is subjective. It is at once profoundly introspective and transparently simple. His tense musing takes the form of debate. He puts the question tersely: 'To be, or not to be'—to exist, or not to exist. What more natural than a return to the contemplation of suicide? Then four lines expand the theme,—not, to be sure, in legal phraseology, but in terms of his own overwhelming feeling:

Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them?

Hamlet might have made it personal grammatically, as it assuredly is psychologically. He might have demanded, 'Shall I suffer this outrageous fortune?' and continued in like strain. But he was not making a speech for others. He was sensing, perceiving. By virtue of the convention of the soliloquy, we are transported into the very brain and soul of the protagonist.

Now the negative element of his being makes a moving plea for non-existence:

To die,—to sleep,—
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks

That flesh is heir to,—'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd.

Such momentary moods come to many—such was the impulse of Job. Then the normal element in Hamlet's nature regains its sway, beginning tentatively, apparently granting the negative's point, but proceeding with increasing conviction to develop a line of reasoning to show, not why man should be, but why he is. The conclusion to 'bear those ills we have than fly to others that we know not of' puts an end to Hamlet's idea of suicide; and this decision, or rather lack of decision, is corroborated by the cynical observation:

Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought
And enterprises of great pith and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry
And lose the name of action.

Action quelled by thought—this is Hamlet's oft-repeated accusation of 'thinking too precisely on the event,' as he puts it later in another famous soliloquy. In both of these soliloquies, Hamlet could not be more completely isolated in his reverie. So rapt is he that he is unconscious of the presence of Ophelia until he exclaims, 'Soft you now! The fair Ophelia!' Not at all an unusual situation in Elizabethan drama, this of the entering soliloquizer oblivious to the presence of someone on the stage.

No internal evidence, then, of the eavesdroppers, Claudius and Polonius. What of the external evidence?

Sixth—Mr. Street cites, as corroborative evidence, a group of plays of Shakespeare's in which soliloquies are overheard—a device frequently used before the nineteenth century and occasionally since then. In each case in which Shakespeare makes use of the device, he makes it obvious that the soliloquy is overheard. Not so in the case of 'To be, or not to be.' Further, in no instance does Shakespeare employ the fantastic contrivance of the feigned soliloquy, with the possible exception of Edmund's bit of bravura ('Lear,' I, 2). When Edmund begins to meditate on Edgar, that person appears. 'Pat,' ruminates Edmund, 'he comes like the catastrophe of the old comedy.' Hamlet makes

no such remark about Claudius. In general, Shakespeare, like other English playwrights, abjures such intricate and palpably artificial contrivances as the feigned soliloquy, although it had considerable vogue in Roman comedy, with some survivals in Italy and France—notably in Molière.

That Shakespeare would select a tense moment in his tragic masterpiece for such a grotesque situation as Hamlet's feigning a soliloquy in order that the King might overhear him,—this is unthinkable. That he would, having such a device in mind, give no clear indication of it in word or deed is unparalleled, quite contrary to his dramaturgic practice. Finally, that the soliloquy preeminent in English drama for nuance of utterance, penetrative melancholy and introspective brooding should be regarded as a fake, that the 'soliloquy' should be written in quotation marks—Mr. Street's usage—that it is no soliloquy at all, but rather a clever bit of foolery of Hamlet's in order to hoodwink the King,—to assume all this is to forget the profundity, the sobriety and the sincerity of the utterance. Hamlet has his sportive moods, it is true. He is a creature of moods. Here, for the moment, he is solemnly confronting the issue of life or death.

Mr. Street has presented an ingenious argument and he has deftly elaborated it. I do not question the sincerity of his point of view. I respect it, just as I do the various opinions and interpretations of the famous soliloquy in the Furness Variorum edition (Volume I, pages 204-215). How can we account for these conflicting opinions? The language of Hamlet is similar to that of Jesus in its clarity of purpose and in its symbolic expression. In the speech of both there is an identification of the abstract with the concrete. Every metaphor has its application to the lot of mankind, as well as to the crisis in Hamlet's existence: 'the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,' 'a sea of troubles,' to die—to sleep—to dream. Definite, graphic. But what is the meaning of these conceptions in terms of ultimate reality? Who knows?

I often chuckle when I think how amused Shakespeare would be, if he could have access to Shakespeareana, that immense library which has grown up since his death, devoted largely to critical controversy. Perhaps, if he were here, he would, as Mr. Browning often did in a like dilemma, listen gravely to our conflicting theories, and then diffidently venture an enigmatic opinion of his own.

The truth is—Shakespeare knows it—that the soliloquy ‘To be, or not to be’ requires no elucidation. Here Hamlet balances the injustices of life against the mystery of death, and his speech is the very image of his thought.

THE ART OF PLAY INTERPRETATION

BY G. F. REYNOLDS

THERE is an art of more importance to lovers of drama than most dwellers in the largest cities are likely to consider it—the art of play interpretation. To the great majority of Americans, a new play—and most of the old ones—means not a stage performance with lights and color and movement, but a book merely of black type and unilluminating directions. So far as that goes, in the present state of our theatre, the only chance that most drama lovers in the large cities or elsewhere have of getting acquainted with great plays, except by means of the dead page, is through the dramatic reader, and the overwhelming interest in plays is no better attested than by the large number of persons engaged in this sort of work. As yet, however, there has been very little discussion of the standards, the limits, the methods of this art of play-reading as distinguished from that of play-acting, with the result that the present practise of it is often ineffective and sometimes offensive.

Probably the greatest difficulty of all is the failure to recognize this fundamental fact, that play-reading and play-acting *are* different. People seem to think that the play reader is making an attempt—and a sadly ineffectual one—at being an actor, and that a play-reading is simply a fainter production of a play. The belief has been fostered no doubt by the behavior of actors who, in reading plays, have used the methods of the stage, and by readers who, as a matter of fact, were simply weak actors. The result has been to bring play-reading into undeserved scorn.

For really it is as different from acting as etching is from painting in oils. Like an etching, the reading of a play is most successful when most simple and most suggestive. As the etcher forswears color, the reader forswears movement and impersonation. Perhaps the most decided difference appears in the treat-

ment of the artist by himself. The actor is most successful when he loses himself in his role—when his impersonation is so far as may be complete. If the part requires it, he changes his voice, his facial expression, his carriage. He is aided in this by his assumption of a distinctive costume and of a suitable make-up. His ideal, broadly considered, is to do in any circumstances what the assumed character would do under such circumstances. He is for his audience no longer himself, he is somebody else; and he is completely successful only when he recalls not himself, but his assumed character to his audience.

But a reader is in an entirely different position. He stands before his audience always as himself: dressed in his usual garb, looking as he usually does. His audience never can forget that he is himself, and if he bows and smirks and prances about the stage, indulging in the tricks we are all only too familiar with, he is still himself, not his assumed character, and he is simply making himself ridiculous, and his intelligent auditors uncomfortable. Women who screw up their faces, talk in a hoarse voice to imitate old men, shriek wildly in blood-curdling tones, or go through all the motions of arranging their coiffure, or powdering their faces; men who squeak in a high falsetto to convey the impression of a lovely heroine, or who kneel in agonized prayer, or—we see strange things on the Chautauqua platform—squirm over the stage like eels in “The Bells,” or fall sonorously asleep in an easy chair for the amusement of the Sunday School kindergarten on the front seat—all these are public pests, and whatever their prominence, libels on an essentially beautiful art. They are obviously playing a part, and that is always a painful or ridiculous performance. Roughly speaking, a reader has no business doing anything on a stage which he would not himself do in a parlor, for he is himself, and he is in a parlor, or its equivalent. Impersonation is impossible, and anything but the merest suggestion of it a violation of good taste.

Perhaps this is the reason that so many, not all, good readers insist on using a book in their performances, even though they have perfectly memorized their texts. Of course, the book is in itself of no consequence, but it is a convenient symbol. It reminds the audience that it is being read to and must not expect acting and, what is more important, it reminds the reader that he is reading and not acting. When a reader recites instead of reads, he is likely also to impress his hearers more by his “mar-

vellous" memory, which can retain a whole play rather than by the strength and compelling power of his conception. The book adds dignity to the performance, keeps reader and audience at the proper point of view, and is a hindrance only to readers with wrong ideals, or with too little force to overcome this slight barrier between themselves and their audiences. As a matter of fact, the use of a book is the only justification for the word *reader* anyway. One who does not use a text is an impersonator, or a declaimer. One reads, in anything but elocutionary jargon, only from a book or manuscript.

Of course, this limitation, that a reader must not do what he would not do in a parlor, is perhaps too strict: a somewhat greater liberty of gesture or variety of tone is not objectionable, provided it does not become obtrusive. This is indeed the real test: whenever the means used in arousing an emotion impresses us rather than the emotion itself, artistic effect is lost. And because readers do so often use obtrusive means, so many people dislike elocutionists and all their breed. Our first thought should be not of the reader's graceful gesture, or charming appearance, but of the thing read. The reader should be forgotten in the reading, otherwise the whole business is simply a personal exhibition, which some performers, it would seem, really want it to be.

What is the place, then, of the mimicry and impersonation? Perhaps a return to our figure may assist us. If a play is like an oil painting, a reading like an etching, an impersonation—that is, mimicry without change of costume,—is like caricature. Impersonation has no doubt its place, in the presentation of short, humorous pieces, analagous to the newspaper cartoon. The ludicrousness of the conception overcomes the absurdity of the means used: what business has a gentleman in evening clothes to twist his face and disarrange his hair? And this becomes an unspeakable affront to one's intelligence in serious pieces: the impersonation sometimes perpetrated by the country declaimer and some others, in "The Convict's Soliloquy," or "The Tell Tale Heart" justifies all the scorn heaped upon elocution and elocutionists. To call oneself a reader or a teacher of public speaking and carry over the same old methods, is not to improve things in the least, but only to ruin the reputation of more good English words. In any case, impersonation, however useful in short humorous bits, is as out of place in the rendition of serious plays, even for the comic characters, as to introduce the methods of Cæsar's cartoons into the etchings of Whistler.

Reading, then, has its limitations, both of methods and effects. But it has its resulting advantages. A good reading, unencumbered with distractions of scenery and costume and movement, centers the attention of the hearer upon the beauties of the text itself. Just as an etching renders supremely the charm of light and shade, of form, and of pictorial composition, so the reader, by subtle variation of tone or by significant pause, can exhibit delicate shades of emotion and meaning, which are completely lost in the more highly colored, dramatic performance. Then too, the absence of expensive settings and costumes makes production relatively easy. Readers can go to places where plays are impossible and give plays which no company would profitably attempt. That I suppose is the chief reason for the art at all, because most people would prefer to see a play acted rather than hear it read. But there is another side to this than the financial one. Anyone who has heard Dr. R. G. Moulton knows that even the Book of Job—hopeless as an acted play, makes a memorable reading, and certain plays—Hardy's "Dynasts" is a conspicuous example—can never be properly appreciated unless they are read aloud, dramatic performance, in spite of their unquestioned dramatic power, being out of the question.

Finally, reading like etching is supremely suggestive. As in the one a single line represents a river bank or a mass of clouds, so in the other a single gesture symbolizes a whole procession across the stage. There is a peculiar pleasure in the enjoyment of such an art, a pleasure in the achievement of much by little, of interpretation, of sympathetic imagination. Most people will prefer the acted play to even the best possible reading of it, and this is probably quite just. But one need not commit himself to any such discrimination. For the pleasure derived from the one is different from that found in the other, and we may without contradiction or subterfuge, appreciate both, each in its own way.

But if we are not to judge a reader by his ability as a gymnast nor as a facial contortionist nor by the strength of his memory what standards are we to judge by? First of all, is it not, by his conception of the play as a whole, its atmosphere, its currents, its crises. The justness, the sureness of this conception and the clarity and force with which it is presented are fundamental. What is true of the play as a whole is true also of each scene and of each character. Each scene has its crisis and its definite

emotional effect; each well wrought character has a certain air which must permeate every words he says. This air is not a matter of grimace or distorted posture; to make us feel it does not require physical impersonation, so much as mental understanding and sympathy. Then there are the contrasts of tone, of spirit, and of movement; especially disregarded are those of movement, tempo, powerful aids toward rendering the play alive. Finally there are the "points"—burning phrases, beautiful lines, striking aphorisms. They are the lines which when properly delivered pierce one like an arrow, summing up a situation or embodying a character in a single phrase. As nothing more thoroughly tests the genius of the playwright than the ability to create such crystallizations of insight and emotion, so nothing so much exhibits the brainlessness of a reader as to clatter heedlessly over them. It is not thundering and rant, but the quiet intonation and just tempo which marks effective reading. Perhaps the most compelling of all is lifelike intonation; it is remarkable how effective are the tones of every day speech, and how seldom we hear them either from platform or stage.

There is one more quality present in every great reading—and it distinguishes public from private reading—intensity. Given two readers of equally intelligent appreciation and equally adequate physical equipment for its expression; one may succeed only in a parlor, the other in a large auditorium, simply from the difference in intensity of conception. It is the same as with lyric poems: the thought may be equally fine, the form equally beautiful, but the presence or lack of a peculiar fire and heat of emotion distinguishes the song that will live forever from the stopgap for a half filled page. This intensity of conception is not easy to analyze either in the lyric or in a reading; but it comes fundamentally, does it not, from a vivid mental imagination and an emotion concentrated for the moment on the thing in hand? The second rate reader recognizes his lack of this power and to make up for it rants and shouts and indulges in all the antics of the elocutionist's trade. The reader of real power, using none of these methods but keeping to a quiet tone and to a minimum of gesture, stirs our hearts all the more for not bursting our ear drums or wearying our eyes. It may be that I have seemed to present reading as a dull, drab sort of art; nothing could be further from the truth. It is capable of profound effects and delightful contrasts, and its very simplicity of means makes its results all the clearer cut.

Of course much depends on the matter read. Not all interesting stories, not even all interesting plays, are suitable. Indeed I am disposed to think that the average modern play is essentially ill adapted for public reading, looked at from the reader's point of view. If it uses a flat diction—and most of them do—,if it employs a large number of undistinguished background characters, or depends much for its appeal on the beauty of its stage pictures, the reader, no matter how popular it is, has a thankless task on his hands. And of these a flat diction is the most damming; minor characters can usually be eliminated, scenery and settings described, but nothing can relieve uninspired or artificial dialogue. As a matter of fact public readers demand a form of literature written all for their own use. Unfortunately the old ballads and epics,—almost exactly that—, are dead literary forms. The reader thus has to make his medium for himself and he does so by “cutting” plays, poems, and stories to suit his needs. “Cutting” would otherwise be a pretty indefensible operation for it can present at best only a mutilated masterpiece, and at worst a mangled and distorted one. But “cutting” seems a necessary evil and its judicious employment is almost an art in itself. A good cutting does not destroy the proportion, the emphasis, or the implications of the original; especially it does not falsify its values. The cutting of a play, it seems to me, should be done with especial care. All references to its theatrical production would better be minimized—to the curtain, the stage, etc.; but its settings, its lighting, its sounds, its movements, all should be made clear through effective descriptions, not always to be found in the conventional stage directions. Thus some cuttings require an almost complete rewriting of the play in order properly to represent it.

But the reading of a great play cut judiciously and presented with intelligence, taste and intensity of conception is and so long as good stage performances are rare will continue to be, a pleasing form of art, not perhaps so impressive nor so popular but in its own way equally artistic.

THE TYPOGRAPHY OF PLAYS

BY ARTHUR SWAN

THE innermost soul of any literary creation," the lamented Harry Thurston Peck once remarked, "can never be seen in all its clarity and truth until one views it through the medium of the printed page, in which there must be absolutely nothing to divide attention, to interrupt the thought, or to offend one's sense of form." Professor Peck had here no special reference to the typography of plays, but his words are nevertheless more pertinent to dramatic publication than to that of any other branch of literature; and this is today a question of considerable importance to our adolescent drama.

Offend one's sense of form and interrupt the thought, the cheap acting-editions,—which until a few years ago were virtually the only style of plays printed in the United States,—unequivocally did. These buff booklets, hideously typed, on inferior paper, were indeed so uninviting that it wanted a heroic reader to venture attack upon them. They were directed, of course, primarily to the actor. Now serious American plays, as well as translated drama, are printed, with an eye to the reader in the library, in a larger type, 'leaded,' on good paper, and are bound in cloth. And yet these new volumes differ from the old in degree rather than in kind: the typography remains essentially the same.

In itself a drama is easily read; its art-form is closer to life than the novel; but as they are generally printed today, plays are often almost difficult to read. When several pieces are included in a single volume, and sometimes otherwise, the text is printed 'solid,' too fine—perhaps even double-columned,—and the stage-directions invariably appear in the straining italic type. Introductory descriptions of scene may now and again be written in the weariest of stage terminology; but it is not that circumstance so much, or firstly, that incites in the reader the desire to skip: when the eye meets a whole paragraph, even page, of solid italics, it balks instinctively.

The typical play printed here and in England follows this

plan.—The stage-directions, within parentheses, are typed in italic, and as a rule, however long they may be, are unparagraphed. When the name of any character in the play occurs in the description, however, capitals are resorted to; which is anomalous esthetically and has the further disadvantage of distracting the reader's attention. Before their speeches, on the same line, the persons' names, usually in abbreviated form, are printed in small caps, or italics, or (rarely) full-face.

Thus is the average play made into a book. Of course there are variations. The names of the speakers may begin paragraphs by indentation, or by reverse-indentation; or they may be printed above the colloquy, in the middle of the page, with the 'direction' following on the same line, or set off alone immediately below, or in line with the text. Sometimes the names are not capitalized in the descriptions when merely acted upon, and sometimes not at all, though this is infrequent. The directions may be printed in the body of the dialog, or set apart; and they may be enclosed in parentheses, or in brackets, or be minus either protection. Descriptions having to do directly with the character speaking may be set differently on the page from general statements of the action.

Now how does it actually look? The 'curtain' of the first act of Bronson Howard's *Saratoga* is printed in this manner:—

Enter GUESTS. *The ARTIST comes in* R. Z. E. LIVINGSTON and OGDEN R. and S.
 SACK. (*turns each way*). Ah, Effie!—Virginia!—Olivia! Benedict—Benedict—you have never loved as I love!
 BEN. Heaven be praised, I never have!
 [SACKETT *Stumbles over a dress, and he falls through the picture of "Cyrus the Great"*. *General Commotion; the ARTIST strikes an attitude* R. SACKETT *scrambles to his feet with his head through the canvas, and the frame resting on his shoulders.*
 CURTAIN.

What possible sense of life can a reader derive from that?

His last play, *Kate*, Howard went to the extreme of having printed in the form of a novel. But a play is not a novel and there seems no avail in dressing it up as one. Mr. Howells, in his farces, prints the expository passages without parentheses in the same sized roman-face as the conversation, which is set off by quotation-marks. In a collection of Strindberg's dramas [Stockholm, 1903] the directions appear in a like type with the dialog and are enclosed in parentheses; for emphasis, not italics, but spaced lettering is used; and the character-names are in roman caps. In the first edition of *Rosmersholm* [Copenhagen, 1886] both capitals and italics are eschewed: the names of the

persons being printed in the type of the colloquy with spaced lettering, and the descriptions appearing in a smaller roman-face. This manner of printing the stage-directions is rather common in French and German plays, and it is doubtless preferable to the italic method, provided always that the type be not too fine.

One salient shortcoming of our play publishing lies in the apparent effort to straddle, as it were, two horses, with a resultant hybrid of prompt-book and reading-copy—unsatisfactory as either. The acting-edition of Mr. Jones's *Hypocrites* [New York, 1908], for illustration, is for its overt purpose excellent: spaciouly printed, with wide outside margins having detailed directions; setting-diagrams; property and lighting plots,—in brief, everything that actor and stage-director require.

A recently produced English play is advertised in a literary magazine as "Miss——'s great stage-success, in a reading edition specially prepared by the author." Should the playwright, perhaps, prepare two versions for the printer; or should he simply leave the prompt 'script to the disposition of his agent? (Ideally, of course, the minor directions are given orally to the actor, at rehearsal, by the dramatist himself.) In the original type-written 'scripts of plays intended for representation, the directions are either printed or underlined in red. The effect of this rather drastic procedure may indeed be unsightly, but for the use of stage-folk—who principally, and often solely, view a drama as nothing more than a histrionic vehicle—it is undeniably efficacious.

For the general reader, however, this typographic method is not only without benefit, but actually harmful. He is not concerned, in the quiet of the study, or near to nature, with the hero's *crossing to R. C. down*, as he exclaims, "Great Heavens!" The minute information about the external action that is pre-requisite for the player serves but as a hindrance to the reader. In reading a play, one should never be recalled to the theatre: the directions must be set forth in the terms of life, not of the stage. Even the words *Act* and *Curtain* might advisably be excluded; and for the unvarying, characterless *Exit*, "goes out," "leaves the room" and the like could well be substituted. The personal note affected by Sir James Barrie, and possibly venial in him, is scarcely good dramaturgy. It is questionable, also, whether Mr. Shaw and Mr. Barker are quite justified in omitting the conventional prefatory list of the Persons of the Play, which is helpful as a reference both while perusing the drama and after-

wards. But now we are entering upon ground beyond our present province.

It is auspicious, though the hybrid style still is in wide vogue, that there is an increasing diversity in the typography of plays. And, as poetry and prose-fiction are variously printed even now, it is not likely that dramatists and publishers will ever unite on any one style as definitive; nor would that, perhaps, be desirable. Tastes differ, as well as plays. Stingy of space, in any event, one must not be in the printing of drama; with the exception of one-acters, a play should always be given a volume to itself.

Putting the names in the middle of the page has this detriment, that the eye travels from the end of one speech to the beginning of another so swiftly that it often fails to take in the name of the interlocutor; whereas placing the name in line with the text gives a crowded effect, with its attendant disadvantage. *Italics* should be sparingly used, preferably only for particular emphasis; spaced lettering is perhaps advisable in less forcible instances. Frugality might well be exercised also with regard to the dash and the quadrupled period. The stage-directions, which nowadays not seldom are as important and eloquent as the speech itself, may be variously set, of course, but they must be easily legible and readily distinguishable from the colloquy; putting them in italics and within brackets seems unjust.

The following specimen has been rearranged from Mr. Galsworthy's tragedy, *Justice*,—the dialog appearing in '9-point,' the description in '6-point' and the names in roman CAPS:

RUTH, leaping to her feet.

No, no! No, no! He's dead!

The figures of the men shrink back.

COKEBSON, stealing forward: in a hoarse voice.

There, there—poor dear woman!

At the sound behind her Ruth faces round at him.

No one'll touch him now. Never again! He's safe with gentle Jesus!

Ruth stands as though turned to stone in the doorway staring at Cokebson, who, bending humbly before her, holds out his hand as one would to a lost dog.

But wherefore all this pother about the *printing* of plays? Is not a play composed to be performed by actors in a theatre?

Avowedly: and yet in France, in Germany, in Scandinavia, where dramatic literature, classic as well as modern, actually has its being on the stage, we know that play reading is general; in fact, a playwright whose works are not published receives there no serious consideration. It must never be forgotten that drama also is literature.

In this land of the free, where the Theatre is in control of long-run speculators who neither know anything nor care anything about the dramatic art, printing is virtually the sole means whereby the sincere dramatist is enabled to address his public. And even those few worthy plays that somehow succeed in getting on our lucre-ridden stage are as a rule altered and vulgarized by the stage-director, so that it is for the printed form only that the author can be held wholly responsible.

Readers there are, too, elderly readers more especially, perhaps, who for some cause or other dislike theatergoing, and may agree with Mr. Howells, who said recently of a certain play of M. Brieux's that he had "merely seen it on the stage, where no play has really its best chance. . . . In my armchair at home I do not have to suffer any waits between the acts; nobody crushes across my knees coming in or going out, or makes me rise to let him by. The dramatist has not me at his mercy, but I have him at mine, and I can shut him off, or up, at an instant's notice. . . . With a really good play one really does not need the stage."

Perhaps Mr. Howells is not entirely serious in all this (and from the Theatre of Tomorrow, of course, these arbitrary annoyances will be absent!); but even so, there are estimable persons who prefer reading a drama to seeing and hearing it. It is not any more to such, however, than to those who delight in studying the text of a play both before and after attending it in a theatre that this matter of a better dramatic typography is significant.

For even after the dawn of that millennial day when *Künstler* and *Stadt-theater* are to be found in every American city, the publishing and reading of drama will be more common and discriminative than ever before. Printing is the supreme, the final test of a drama—a test, of course, that the overtly commercial play makes no pretence of meeting. Here there is no stage director's ingenuity to beguile; no actors' artistry or actresses' charm to falsify characterization; no scenic or electric 'effects' to bolster inherent weaknesses; and here mob applause of fustian and claptrap does not enter in: the play must be judged in its relation to life.

THE FLIGHT AND THE PASSING

BY MARION COUTHOUY SMITH

I have risen to the verge of cosmic space;
The infinite Light has touched the edge of my wing;
I have looked over the round rim of the world,
As it circled my magic flight.
The fields and the rivers have vanished,
And the cities have melted away beneath me;
For an instant they sparkled like jewels,—
Then the white ocean of cloud rolled over them,
Making a sea-path for my burning keel.

The wind has struck me and stung me,
And laughed, and sung in my ears, and flung away;
Returning now in wrath, it buffets and rocks me,
And eddies in whirls about my swaying flight.
Eyes look out of the infinite waste of blue,
And pierce me with mockery!
The cold is a living thing,
To cling about me, and press me,
And drive the life in me back to my burdened heart.
Lifting—lifting—I go from verge to verge,
Till mists of mighty wings are beating around me,
And I hear their music arise, a deep diapason,
And feel the Presences of space.

The great angels are jealous!
They who guard the flight of the eagles,
And tread the paths where only the winds have run.
They have drawn the air from beneath me.
And made vast chasms under my fragile wings.
. . . . I drop—I fall!
The eddies suck me down to the depths of air. . . .
They are lifting, with giant hands,
The soul away from my flesh.

Lo—now there are wings no longer,
 No longer the clamor of flight,
 Nor the rush of wind,
 Nor the terror.
 Wings and body are flung like wandering leaves,
 Rocking and swaying through billows of yielding mist,
 To the cruel breast of the waiting earth!

But I stay—I lift—I lift—!
 Arms under me—eyes above me—
 Warm, warm and still—I lie—
 And drift—and drift away—
 Into infinite rest.

THE POET

BY GERHARDT HAUPTMANN

Translated from the German by L. M. Kueffner

Like a harp for the wind be thy soul, O poet!
 If a breath steal over the strings but ever so lightly,
 Yet in the world-woe's breathing
 They must vibrate forever.
 For the world-woe is the root of the heavenward longing.
 Thus the root of your songs is grounded
 Deep in the woe of earth;
 But their leaf-crowned tops reach upward
 Into the light of Heaven.

THE TEMPLE STEPS

By J. T.

I

There loomed a Dream at Slumber's lonelier Gate,
I live, and hold the symbols of a dream
Desires inviolate,—
Unshaken through the Ages' troubled thunder
No death shall rend my dream and soul asunder,—
I trod where suns by hoaried myriads gleam
Like starlit sand around the shore of Space;
There dawned my deathless dream—
In Regions all-transcending human wonder,
Was't empty vision, sinks that awful Place—
In Time, in Space, akin to God or Fate
Or either's Unseen Face?
Eternal as the Worm that dieth never,
Outblazing Milky Ways that flame forever—
Through fire it visioned forth a vaster State,
Create in Thought who mingles all, begot
Alone, without a Mate;
No night shall ever mind from dream dissever.

II

Eternity was but a flowerful Plot
Whereon I knelt,—the Ether distant haze
And Space a vale forgot;
The pillared firmament showed shallow-founded—
An atom circumscribed and death-surrounded;
Unsunned, Immensity's immortal rays
Pulsed swiftly through the star-dust, throbs of Time,
(His aeons died but days
Upon that Place no age has ever bounded):
'Twas not the Heart of Light, white fire sublime
Enkindling Chaos, twinkling clouds of suns
Like midnight's wintry rime;

104

'Twas surer life than beats with dull pulsation
 Through nebulae that blind each constellation—
 It slew the sudden Dawn whose breaking stuns
 Void Darkness into motion; through Night's veins
 Light's life but sluggish runs—
 Inevitably creeps to slow cessation.

III

A swifter Day than stealthy Time attains
 Broke blazing down in torrents more than light,—
 Besprent the starry Plains;
 Thus brake the Dawn that fired my living vision—
 A flame that mocked the suns with proud derision;
 Celestial rains ne'er freshened Heaven's sight
 For seraphs' eyes as leaped those Plains to Day
 From dull and day-like white—
 Then night was cleft from Day with keen decision;
 Before that Dawn the face of Light went gray,
 'Twas absolute, all days departed thence—
 Their false fires flamed away;
 I left that Place, and lonely, sought a Higher
 (The Dayspring would have spoken, 'Soul, aspire');
 I poised above a vaster Imminence
 Than sheer Space rears against the cinder-wrack
 Of ruined clusters dense
 With blackened stars and globes of titan fire,
 With galaxies and unborn worlds yet black,
 I paused, until the Farther Crag unseen
 Should hurl the Day-Tide back;
 Alone I waited, watched and never trembled,—
 The spirit of a thought my dream resembled,—
 What hoped my soul to see,—the sudden sheen
 Of life on tombèd systems, or the sum
 Of all grim Time hath been—
 The marching of a Universe for Death assembled?

IV

Perchance deep Everlastingness I'd plumb—
 Reach under perished shoals of dawns, and sound
 Infinities to come;

No dream it seemèd, else had terror taken
 Wing, and left my soul by hope unshaken;
 What epoch, ere one boundless wave swept round
 All vaulted heavens that gemmed the blazing Plain
 Like jewels on frosty ground—
 What lapse awaited I by years forsaken
 Is compassed not by any vision's brain;
 The slowly numbered aeons since Time began
 Delay its name in vain: . . .
 From Crags unseen I saw the Day-Tide brighten,
 Flung high in riot billows, poised to frighten
 Back to Night the puny mind of man—
 Irrevocably drown his soul in sleep
 As only light-floods can,—
 Down Slumber's depths no Dawn shall ever lighten.

V

An opal is an image of the Deep,
 A sudden sea of lustrous green and blue
 Where skyward billows leap—
 Where wizard waters welter flaming-crested
 O'er crags and pools by demon-dreams infested,—
 Where ever blooms the smouldering foam anew
 In multitudes of wandering moons aflame
 Through clouds of glowing dew,—
 An opal is an Ocean fire-invested.

VI

'Twas as a Sea of seas the Day-Tide came,
 Each drop an opalescent Ocean, vast,
 Devouring Number's name;
 Should He who knows all Oceans, rise and shatter
 Their mountained waters down to drops and scatter
 Flame-rains of opal down the vacant Past,
 Then will each drop a Sea inseparate—
 The Day-Tide would outlast
 In Fire that Universe of Light-born matter.

VII

Should all fair years that ever rose, belate
 Their dawns to one supremest hour, should all
 The tides one moon await
 To flow and glow in unisons eternal—
 A harmony of orbèd flames supernal
 O'er time and agèd Time's lone fall,
 Their mingled fires might not outflame the Tide
 Or their swift greens recall
 On changing azure any field so vernal
 As one Tide-Blossom, shimmered, opened wide
 And calm in amethystine scintillance—
 Infinity's bright Bride;
 My vision sprang to birth, the Tide swept nearer,
 Its cloud-hewn beauty blazed in symbols clearer;
 I saw Day's luminescent Armies glance
 Through sinuous evolutions, folding spheres
 And fires in mazy dance—
 'Twas more than movement,—Motion's Mind austerer.

VIII

O lonely tomb that lonelier Thought uprears
 Against the tyrant Night, what tongue may tell
 Thy mystery to Dream's e'er-wakeful ears,
 For, in thy womb, unborn those Lights must wander
 Forever lost, unquenchably they squander
 Their mighty meanings o'er thy blackened hell
 Where Chaos broods his undisputed way,—
 All desolate the swell
 Of thoughts a Universal Soul might ponder;
 Return, immortal-visaged Day—
 Thy Tomb a Temple was, an undreamed fane
 Outlasting quick decay
 Of ageless marble myth and god-beclouded,
 Whose every atom spins a richly crowded
 World of memories; flow back again,
 Eternal Day-Tide, ebb within my reach
 On yonder deathless Plain
 Where first I knelt, all sense and sleep-enshrouded,—
 Build up once more those Temple Steps, ah! teach

My eager dream what feet have ever trod
 Infinity's calm beach—
 What Beings ever watch the Day-Tide breaking,—
 What Pilgrims leave the Temple Steps, forsaking
 Light, to tread with holier feet unshod
 Those hallowed Halls that glowed as dreams beyond
 And shadowed into God,
 Perfect, mystical, serene awaking.

IX

Alas! My dream fell faint; as Day-Tide dawned
 The marching symbols ranged Immensities
 As if a ghostly wand
 Appointed all to Order, slowly bringing
 Purpose out of Chaos, dayward flinging
 Flocculi that blazed their opal seas
 In level lines of clouded fire ablush
 With Dawn's bright mysteries;
 Then swift as Thought, all leaden dreams outwinging
 I saw the Temple Steps leap out, a rush
 Of vision absolute from tumbled smoke—
 Aflame their crimson flush;
 And down those Steps the Universe descended—
 A moment seen, a moment comprehended;
 In soundless majesty pure Time awoke
 And showed one Face; the Steps of ALL alone
 I saw: frail vision broke—
 I fled an end of what has never ended.

X

Why should my sleep be troubled with a moan
 For One I saw not,—life go bowed with care
 For fateful hope unknown;
 I dreamed the pulse that stunned to moving being
 Stars and dust of stars was Thought's Decreeing,—
 Imagining sublime of God's despair—
 The very Mind of minds creating Fate,
 And Beauty everywhere
 Brake as the Day Unseen yet ever seeing;
 So when the Dawn at Death's last solemn Gate

Outfires all stars and blasts their beams to gray
Shall I, disconsolate
Gaze back upon my soul with chill regretting—
Curse impotently clouds of dull forgetting
Enshadowing all, save one reluctant Ray
Where still those Temple Steps fling back full Day
And Reason waits her Mate,
Bright in the risen Sun that knows no setting?

'TIS SHE

BY EDUARD MÖRIKE

Translated from the German by P. H. Thomson

Spring now lets her azure band
Flutter on the breezes gaily;
Sweet familiar odors daily
Roam presageful, through the land.
Violets unblown
Dream they'll soon be coming.
—Hark, I hear a distant harp's low tone!
Spring, ah yes, 'tis you!
I have felt you coming!

REFORM

BY MARY CAROLYN DAVIES

A child's soul dwelling in a man—
(They call such poets here)—
With puzzled wondering began
To look about the sphere.

Why is there food of misery,
And coverlid of sin?
Why should a world so fair to see
Be foul, he said, within?

The wee stars twinkling answered him,
Their laughter swelling out:
It's such a joke upon the world
For neighbors round about.

The earth-folk will not make earth fair,
They're such a curious race:
They're waiting for some God to come
And tidy up the place.

THE MAKERS

BY MARY CAROLYN DAVIES.

God looked down wondering, where men groped and fought,
And struggled that they might put down the beast
Within them and be masterly and new;
One groaned and beat himself for sore despair,
One fell and rose and bleeding climbed to light
Only to fall. They built but to rebuild.

And God looked musing down, and pondering said,
"You made me, can you not then make yourselves?"

ON A FIGURE OF FRANCE CRUCIFIED

(Painted by Romaine Brooks)

BY GABRIELE D'ANNUNZIO

Translated from the Italian by Laura Fullerton Gilbert

Have they raised the bitter sponge upon the lance
to thy fair fallen lip, O Holy One?
The Cross without a Christ, who yet hath won
to this the second wound's still sufferance.

Yet is her eye as clear as clear Provence,
yet is her breast soft as Messinian spring,
at her pierced feet is patience fashioning,
And sweetness drops on girdling violence.

the wind of combat, and the day's young gold,
and unseen Aprils, and the love of love,
and songs as yet unsung, breathe with her breath.

While on her brow the fire that leads to death
gleams whitely. From her mantle spread above
the shadow of a god falls, dark and cold.

II

O eager face, O pity without sleep,
 courage that never yet refused the cup,
 and strength thine own fair flesh to offer up
 and with thy crimson blood libations keep!

Beneath what sign, upon what pyre piled deep,
 for what alarum, what Advent sang thy faith
 in torment? Higher than a lark, unscathe
 swift toward the sun we saw thy spirit leap.

For as one man the good race doth awaken.
 'Twixt helmet bars, Duguesclin's smile doth glint
 down there, where all the new-made heroes are.

In holy vestments clad, thou hast partaken
 of earthly elements. But, crowned with lint
 Thy brow seems suffering for a future star.

III

France, gentle France, most blessèd heroine,
 love of the world, ardent thy cross to bear
 as at Antioch, when Godfrey chose to wear
 the crown of thorns beneath his capuchin,

upright before thy God as at Bouvines,
 as at Rocroi, thy glory finds thee kneeling;
 immortal, like the grass thro ruins stealing
 or bordering thy tombs with living green;

fresh as the sprays of thy white poplar-trees
 engarlanded tomorrow for the feet
 of those arisen in Christ, thy Pleiades,

their songs unsung. He makes thy winding-sheet
 a coat of mail, a gonfalon high-hurled,
 "France, without thee how lonely were the world!"

IV

Behold the spring-time of our love. Now gloat
o'er thy shed blood, exult in this thy sorrow,
What though the flowers pluck'd for many a morrow
shall be thy heroes sprung from hidden root.

"I'll wind my horn" says One, and at the note
they die. O wind-tossed oaks, O glorious guest!
And dead, each carves his image in thy breast,
high on thy hills, or deep in vales remote.

O combatants, hark to the signal, hark!
Souls held in bodies as in vines the spring,
As flag to staff, in scabbard as the sword.

The horn of Roland sounds, and all is dark;
With bloody mouth and temples clamoring
"Strike, France, oh, strike!" he cries, "It is my word."

SONGS OF THE SLAVE

BY SVATOPLUK CECH

Translated from the Bohemian by Otto Kotouc

I

Slaves.—Good it is to rest the weary body in the light of the moon
'Neath the palms here. Feasting over, our custodian sleeps now;
Sit down 'mongst us, tuneful comrade, and thy sweetly sounding
strings tune;
Let thy song reveal the golden thoughts spun in your dreamy
brow.

A Slave Girl.—Sing of flowers and stars!

A Young Slave.—Praise sing thou to a maid's fair form and eye.

Another.—Ring the bells of jest.

An Old Man.—Disclose the deeds of ages long gone by.

The Bard.—Other themes by far today resound through my un-
happy soul,
Like the roar and rumble of the storms that o'er the heavens roll.
Far from these are flowery adornment, girlish grace, and heroes'
pride:
Sighs, groans, gnash of teeth and clash of chains now in my themes
abide.

Slaves.—Clash of chains is but a common strain to us, yet play
and sing;
Subdue thy voice, lest our sleeping lords and guard the whip
to you bring.

III

Of a slave begot, gave
Me birth likewise a slave;
Childhood's lullaby song
Was but clash of chain,—
Through my life extended
Rusted shackles sounded
Morn till nightfall along
Life's deserted main.

Scarce felt my nape at length
Youthful power and strength,
Yoke of steel was firmly
Bound about my neck:
Taught to bow my head low,
Kisses did I bestow
On the lash that smote me:
Brow beat earth at beck.

I, a weakly slave, grew
'Mongst my brother serfs true;
Chains for jewels clinked just
At each sister's side;
And where'er my gaze dwelt
Anger, shame, pain I felt,
As with heads bowed to dust
Slaves dwelt nation wide.

Ill did I bear my fate—
My bond's music grate,
Chasing from my cabin
All the charm of life.
When with stormy feeling
I sought my lyre's healing,
In my song accursed, din
Of my chains was rife.

Still my eye would often beam
With a flickering gleam:
I would strain my ear past
Woods and streams along:

I deemed that yon somewhere
Triumphs 'neath the heav'ns there,
Flies our hallo at last,
Freedom's sunny song.

When my head I would lift,
Low again would it drift;
On in shame and sorrow
Years succession gave.
Clings the yoke still to me
And the eye waits vainly
Dawn's redemptory glow:
I will die a slave.

My head e'en now bends low,
White locks my temples show;
Hopes no longer attain
Autumn's riper hue,—
Shackled my hands I know
Cursèd the yoke I'll never o'erthrow,—
In my grave shall that chain
Rest beside me too.

THE GOLDEN PLOVER

BY RICHARD BUTLER GLAENZER

A song for you, golden plover:
Not the song of a lover
Who dreams of a blush,
Nor the song for a thrush
Whose music is tremulous, sweet;
But a song for a heart that dares tempest or hush,
A measure for wings that are fleet.

Fleet . . . fleet . . . fleet . . . !
Who but the winds can trace you, chase you?
Flutter of lightning, you southward sweep,
To the wonder of thunder you overleap.
Faster . . . faster . . . faster . . . !
Who but the winds can face you, pace you?
Fearless of foaming and booming and crash;
Scorner of breeze, adorer of zephyr;
Come . . . gone . . . in a flash!
Speedier . . . speedier . . . speedier . . . !
Who but the winds can overtake you?
Who but a gale can check and shake you?
Who but a hurricane can make you
Drop to the earth whose worth shall wake you
From your frenzied trance of flight?

Like a volley of shot your flocks alight,
Scattering gracefully over the sedge,
Palled in spume from the cauldron's edge.
Surer than furrow's is breaker's pledge:
Whom the welter of sea and sky invite,
On the lands of man show sudden fright.

A song for you, golden plover:
Not the song for a lover
Who dreams of a flush
Of delicate plumes that gleam as they hover
Over a flower they make less fair;
But a song of wings whose miraculous rush
Is measure atune with the air.

Warriors, not courtiers you,
 Your courting season through,—
 Dotterel darts, befeathered sober,
 Mellowed with yellow by brisk October,
 Who, from his Nova Scotian post,
 Hurls you over the swirled Atlantic—
 Hurls you, pipers corybantic—
 Straight for the Venezuelan coast:
 Two thousand miles! Two thousand miles!
 While the gods of Air crowd heaven's aisles,
 With loud-fleered taunts for the vaunting boast
 That man is peer of their wing-born host.

“Aie! . . . Aie! . . . Aie! . . .”
 Moans the rancorous Sheol of winds.
 Out of the ooze of the sulphurous Gulf
 Springs into fury the Mocker of Masts,
 Snarls through the Caribs and harries with blasts:
 Shrieking seeks you, sprites from the North;
 Ruffles and buffets you, grapples to check you;
 With maniac might would baffle and wreck you
 But for the froth of sabre-reefed isles
 Which, faint through the smoke of desolate miles,
 Whispers, encourages, beckons you forth,
 Calls you to fall from the maelstrom of wiles:
 “Oh-èh! . . . Oh-èh! . . . Oh-èh! . . .”
 Safety we promise and shelter and rest
 From the howling Fiend of the foul Southwest!”
 Out of the fray of reeking grey
 Whines the cheated Harpy of winds:
 “Aie! . . . Aie! . . . Aie! . . .”

On the shoulder of Night expires her rage;
 So melts to calm the ocean's wrath:
 Day blooms like a rose on a beryl path
 In the Garden of Peace of the Golden Age.

Wee-o-wee! Wee-o-wee! Wee-o-wee!
 Joy but no peace for you, golden plover:
 Only in June may you play the lover,
 Satined in wooing black and gold.
 Till then the leagues that you will cover,—

The lands beneath your wings unrolled—
 Are all the leagues of land that stretch
 North and south of the western Line.
 Wee-o-wee! Wee-o-wee! Wee-o-wee!
 From Labrador of the fog-wreathed pine,
 Down through Bermuda's salt-stained vetch;
 Over the Amazon's maze of vine,
 Into the pampas of Argentine:
 Above the earth, across the sea,
 You follow the summer's ascendant sign,
 You shun all scenes by the sun bereft.
 Wee-o-wee! Wee-o-wee! Wee-o-wee!
 Spring of the north is astir, golden plover!
 Up and a-wing to its glad decree!
 Back, with a ridge of the world to your left,
 You mottle the length of a continent's chine
 To weave through Alaska's tundra-weft
 The gold of your yearly jubilee:
 There joy and peace to love combine!
 Wee-o-wee! Wee-o-wee! Wee-o-wee!

Coodle! . . . Coodle! . . . Hist!
 Your golden rest is over:
 Off with your splendor! Away, away!
 On with the coat of the rover!
 Dip it and dye it in eastern mist!
 Plunge again over the dun Atlantic,
 Blaze again southward your cycle frantic!
 Away with you, loiterers, darts of October,
 Shafts that are swift as the light but more sober,
 Wraiths of the sea's or the sky's autumn grey!
 Away from the love of the north that elates you!
 Off to the feast of the south that awaits you!
 Flutter and rise with the joy that translates you
 To sprites of the air from creatures of clay!
 Onward, onward, spirits of fleetness! . . .
 Faster . . . faster! . . . speedier . . . speedier!—
 Gone! Vanished! Lost like the sweetness
 Of dawn in the ripening power of day!

GLIMPSE OF A CHILDHOOD

BY RAINER MARIA RILKE

Translated from the German by Margarete Münsterberg

The darkness in the room is pregnant, seeming
To fold about the boy who hides himself;
And when his mother enters, as if dreaming,
A glass is trembling on the quiet shelf.
She feels that now her entrance is betrayed,
And kisses her small boy: "Oh, you are there!" . . .
They glance at the piano where she played
On many evenings the beloved air
That strangely on the child its magic laid.

He sits quite still. With wondering eyes he sees
Her hand weighed down beneath the ring and slow,
As if it walked against a gale in snow,
Move on the snow-white keys.

RENUNCIATION

(*Ensagung*)

BY ISABELLE SCHWARTZ

Translated from the German by E. W. Triess

And tho God never gave me
Thy spring, yet let me be,
In the golden peace of autumn,
The evening glow to thee!

And tho I may not rest me,
O soul of mine, by thee;—
The quiet of thy slumbers,
Thy dream, O let me be!

Tho other songs may soothe thee,
And slumber bring to thee;—
When sinks the night in silence,
Thy prayer, O let me be!

THOU SHALT NOT PASS

BY FELICE CAVALLOTTI

Translated from the Italian by Margaret E. N. Fraser

But if one day in paleness of hoar-frost,
Your splendid hue, O lovely rose is lost,
If, shattered by the chilling blast,
You bend your dying stem at last
And one by one your leaves let fall—
Poor yellowed leaves—and scentless all—
Grieve not—those leaves upon my heart
I'll gather up—nor from them part—
Bright days and years may fade, alas!
Sweet love of mine, Thou shalt not pass.

SPRING AND WINTER

BY GRETCHEN WARREN

There's nought like spring
When the first travail of the drowsy earth
Stirs the warm pools, and brings green leaves to birth;
Child-leaves that ever prattle to the trees
Of how the breezes played:—no storm know these,
No weary age, nor death: yea, spring is best.

But winter comes
And with the ancient healing of her ways
The broken leaves in quiet graves she lays,
While o'er the earth a spotless, solemn shroud
Spreads wide. Then she waits patient, with head bowed,
Sure they will rise again:—nay, that is best.

SACRIFICE

BY GRETCHEN WARREN

How long, O Lord, wilt Thou Thy secret keep
From us, who, groping up the cruel steep
Of darkened bitter years
Still cry to Thee for light before we sleep?

Is it a war Thou wagest with some foe
Beyond the power of mortal mind to know,
And in Thy lonelier night
Art Thou too toiling as we toil below?

I dream that in Thy hidden battle-world
Hang solemn bannered gleams of Hope unfurled—
And, slaying Death and Sin
Men's souls, like quivering piteous spears are hurled.

If dreams be true, then may Thy will be done
In me, who of that endless army one
Now give one life the more:
Use it, O Lord, before my course be run.

Take up my loving will, yea lift this blade
Of trembling steel which in Thy forge was made—
Fling it on Sin and Death:—
Though broken, lost, I shall not be afraid.

THE BEST OF THE NEW BOOKS

In this list we shall include only such books as in our opinion are really worth while. No extended reviews will be given, only the briefest description. The fact that a book is listed is the highest commendation we can give.

THE MONEY MASTER, by Gilbert Parker is a delightful story of modern Canadian life, being the curious history of Jean Jacques Barbile, his labors, his loves and his ladies. (Harper's, \$1.35 net.)

THE LITTLE ILIAD, by Maurice Hewlett is an unsolved story told in a delightfully naïve and refreshing manner. If you wish to immerse yourself for several hours in a world of wit, felicity and humor, you must follow in *The Little Iliad* the adventures of this modern Helen. (Lippincott's, \$1.35 net.)

AROUND OLD CHESTER, by Margaret Deland is another collection of delightful tales of Dr. Lavendar's community. (Harper's, \$1.35 net.)

HEART OF THE SUNSET is Rex Beach's latest, a lively story of adventure on the Texas-Mexican border. (Harper's, \$1.35 net.)

PLAYS FOR SMALL STAGES, by Mary Aldis is a group of five one-act plays written for a small theatre. (Duffield, \$1.25 net.)

The latest addition to the Windermere Series is Stevenson's **TREASURE ISLAND**, excellently illustrated with fourteen full page color plates by Milo Winter. (Rand, McNally Co, \$1.35 net.)

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THE OLDEST AND LARGEST REVIEW IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
DEVOTED TO POETRY AND DRAMA

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A Magazine of Letters

Spring Number

Gringoire, A Comedy in Eight Scenes
By THEODORE de BANVILLE

An Incident, A Play in One Act
By LEONID AUDREYEV

Sunday On Sunday Goes By, A Play in One Act
By HENRI LAVEDAN

Giovanni Pascoli, An Appreciation
By ANNE SIMON

An Hungarian Poet, Alexander Petöfi
By ALICE STONE BLACKWELL

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MARCH-APRIL, 1916

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Poet Lore

VOLUME XXVII

SPRING, 1916

NUMBER II

GRINGOIRE

COMEDY BY THÉODORE DE BANVILLE

Translated from the French by Arthur B. Myrick, Ph. D.

Dramatis Personae

LOUIS XI, *King of France (forty-six years old).*

PIERRE GRINGOIRE, *poet, (twenty).*

SIMON FOURNIEZ, *merchant, (forty-eight).*

OLIVIER-LE-DAIM, *the King's barber.*

LOYSE, *daughter of SIMON FOURNIEZ, (seventeen).*

NICOLE ANDRY, *sister of SIMON FOURNIEZ, (twenty-four).*

KING'S PAGES, SERVANTS OF SIMON FOURNIEZ, OFFICERS AND
ARCHERS OF THE SCOTCH GUARD

*Scene at Tours, in the house of SIMON FOURNIEZ, in the month
of March, of the year 1469.*

*The stage represents a fine Gothic chamber, furnished with the
serious luxury of the wealthy bourgeoisie. The rear of the stage is
occupied by a large stone fireplace with fluted columns in clusters,
ornamented with three figurines set on brackets. On each side of the
fireplace a door with two panels, forming a part of the oaken wains-
coting covering the walls half way up. These doors open on a stair-
landing lighted by two trefoil-shaped windows, rather low set,
with little lozenge panes. Ceiling with painted beams, studded
with pewter rosettes. In the side-walls two windows with deep
embrasures, hung with serge curtains. To the left, a large dresser,
with three shelves and projecting canopies, laden with silver plate*

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and dishes delightful to gaze upon. To the right, a brass clock, whose works, hammer and chime are visible. On the floor, a thick mat of esparte grass. High-backed chairs, square table and oaken stools.

As the curtain rises, OLIVIER-LE-DAIM is standing by the window to the right. Two of the King's pages stand motionless before the dresser. LOUIS XI, sitting in a large carved chair, stuffed with scarlet and gold cushions. SIMON FOURNIEZ and NICOLE ANDRY are sitting about a table still laden with fruits and silver wine-jugs. NICOLE, as she finishes a tale she has just been telling, rises to pour the King some wine.

SCENE I

Nicole.—Yes, Sire, so it is that in the reign of the late King your father, the demoiselle Godegrand married a man hanged, whom some scholars had cut down by way of jest, and deposited in the old spinster's chamber while she was at vespers.

The King (laughing).—An excellent jest. Master Olivier-le-Daim, what do you say to this merry story?

Olivier.—I should say, Sire, that the young man had been badly hanged.

The King.—Naturally. Thou dost ever hit the nail on the head at once. (*To NICOLE.*) Never mind, 'tis a merry enough tale. It is a pleasure to listen to you, fair Nicole. Why do you stand so far from me?

Nicole.—For respect, Sire.

The King.—Come here.

Nicole.—I should not dare.

The King.—Well! I shall dare!

Nicole.—Oh! Sire!

The King.—About how old are you?

Nicole.—I am twenty-four, Sire.

The King.—'Tis no good age to be left a widow. Especially when one is the most blooming beauty in our good city of Tours. Are you not called everywhere the fair draper's wife?

Nicole.—Oh! Sire! so they call me because I was hailed by that name in a song that has become famous in the long winter evenings.

The King.—And who wrote this song? Some lover of those sly eyes?

Nicole.—A lover! Oh! no, Sire. 'Twas Gringoire!

The King.—What do you mean by Gringoire?

Olivier.—A nobody, Sire.

Simon.—An actor, a very jovial, droll fellow. Upon my word, he's the wildest and the hungriest of all starveling poets.

The King.—Which apparently does not prevent him from being a good judge of lovely women and praising triumphantly the fairest of all.

Nicole (to SIMON FOURNIEZ).—Don't you see that the King is making love to me? Defend me, brother!

Simon.—Oh! our lord King loves to jest, but thou art an honest woman and thou canst defend thyself.

Nicole.—Then, Sire, permit me to drink to him who punishes expressly in this realm all cheats of good repute and thieves of honour!

The King (pressing NICOLE).—Ah! this is treason, I must avenge myself.

Nicole (kneeling before the King and raising her glass).—I drink to the King's health! to his long life!

The King (checking himself).—Against a woman's wit, the devil's wiles are weak.

Nicole.—To his triumph over all his enemies!

The King.—By heaven! the cruelest of all, are those eyes that burn me like the fire of hell! But what stratagem can I use against an enemy that paralyses both my attack and pursuit? Will it be said that King Louis was afraid?

Nicole.—If any one should say that, the English of Dieppe and the Swiss of Bâle might answer that he lied.

Simon.—Well said, sister. And if the King is the most valiant captain in his realm, he is also its justest lord, and perhaps most modest. That is why I dare to thank him for the favour he has deigned to grant us in sitting down at table in the house of one of his burghers.

The King.—Say, of one of his friends, Simon Fourniez. Thou art for me no mere burgher and chance acquaintance. I have not forgotten the pleasant hours that I have passed in thy garden, that very garden about this friendly house, when I was as yet but Dauphin of France. At that most cruel moment, when, at my own expense, I served the hard apprenticeship of life, thou, faithful and humble servant, helped me with thy purse; nay further, thou didst risk thy life for me. And how, I know! These are memories that nothing can efface, good and worthy

friend Simon. To say nothing of the fact that thy daughter Loyse is my god-daughter!

Simon.—Ah! Sire, pardon me. I weep with joy. *I* did not wait to devote myself to you, until you were King and all powerful master, for it took us but a moment to understand each other! A burgher born among the people, feeling and thinking as they did, I guessed with what ardour you loved our poor quarrel-rent land. Now, a chief was needed, a chief with a heavy but valiant hand, who should be a father to us all, an inflexible master to the shepherds that sheared our wool too close. You were our man and we understood you!

The King.—’Tis the right way to speak. By Heaven! Simon Fourniez, thou art right, my people and my burghers are what I prefer to all. If I have come to-day to ask thee a supper, it is because, thank God, I may at last snatch a bit of rest: I have won the right to it! Till this evening I desire to rejoice freely in your company and treat myself to the pleasure of no longer being King. The sorry days of Péronne and Liége have passed, my friends! (*Rubbing his hands.*) Mon cousin of Burgundy is wasting his time in the duchy of Gueldres and the landgraviate of Alsace!

Nicole.—But men swear the sly fellow desires to establish in Champagne my lord your brother of Normandy—

Simon.—To provide himself a road between his Ardennes and his Burgundy!

The King.—Yes, there has been talk of that. Oh! duke Charles is shrewd and crafty!

Simon (with a glance at the King).—But they may find a shrewder and craftier one than he!

The King.—What wouldst thou say, friend Simon, if by renouncing Champagne, my brother should receive from me in fair exchange the provinces of Guyenne and Aquitaine?

Simon.—I should say that it would be an excellent trick!

The King.—And a good exchange! For a young man, a lover of pleasure, as is my lord brother. So he will certainly not refuse.

Olivier (stepping forward).—You believe so, Sire?

The King.—Do I think so, Olivier? (*Taking a swallow of wine.*) La Balue I charged with the business. I count on La Balue: A faithful servant, he.

Olivier.—So faithful that the King will not be long in being surprised by him!

The King (setting down his glass).—What dost thou mean?
Olivier.—I, Sire? Nothing. (*Aside*) Let us leave him his good humour. I need it.

The King (rising and approaching him).—What is it then, Master Olivier? What have you to mutter thus between your teeth? Will you deny perchance that I hold the cards in my own hand, and that the advantage has turned to me?

Olivier.—No, Sire. It would have been unnatural for the shrewdest player to lose forever!

The King.—So I shall sweep the board, my friends. Come, let's rejoice, Simon, and pour us thy good old wine which is the ruddy blood of fair Touraine.

Simon (filling the King's glass).—'Tis yours, Sire!

(*Servants and pages carry the table to a corner of the hall and prepare the King's arm-chair.*)

The King (after drinking).—And now I shall show thee that, if thou lovest me, thou hast not to deal with any ingrate.

Simon.—Ah! Sire!

The King.—War is not all, my friend. Commerce, you know, is as well the might of a nation. Now, I have important interests to discuss with my friends, the Flemish.

Simon.—Good!

The King (seating himself).—And it has occurred to me to make thee my ambassador.

Simon.—Ambassador! I! Your Majesty has deigned to think of me for such a mission! Why! it is impossible; I cannot talk in proper terms to lords.

The King.—It is not with nobles that thou art to negotiate but with hosiers and brass beaters. Better than any other shalt thou do my business.

Simon (embarrassed).—Yes—but my shop, Sire?

The King.—Good! It is the best patronised in the whole town! At a pinch thy goods should sell themselves.

Nicole.—Sire, I can hasard a shrewd guess at my brother's thought. It is not his trade that disturbs him; it is Loyse whom he would dare confide to none, not even to you, not even to me.

Simon.—If only Loyse were married!

The King.—She need not be an obstacle. Let's marry her.

Simon.—If Your Majesty thinks that it is easy! I have never cherished any desire but that. But Loyse is obstinate about it and until now she has resisted.

The King.—Perhaps I shall have more influence over her.

Simon.—But besides we should have to find her a husband!

Olivier (approaching).—But that is not the difficulty, Master Simon. Is not the demoiselle Loyse as pretty as a little fairy?

The King (looking at Olivier).—Thou hast noticed it?

Olivier.—Who would not, unless he were blind?

The King.—A just observation. And to this charm of gentleness and beauty, Loyse adds others still. She has a father who owns fields——

Simon.—Superb fields!

The King.—Vineyards——

Simon.—That produce the best wine in Tours!

The King.—And on the neighbouring hillsides——

Simon.—Many a fine mill that the wind will never leave still.

The King.—Then, too, Loyse is our god-daughter. She is a good match.

Simon.—A splendid match for some rich burgher of our good town. That is what I tell her every day. But she will not listen to me.

Olivier.—Suppose you should offer her something better?

Simon (offended).—Better than a burgher!

The King (ironically).—Thou dost not guess, Simon? Master Olivier, to be sure, who after a youth, filled with toil and adventure, seems, I think, very desirous of making an end!

Simon (affecting modesty).—Such an end is not worthy of your barber, Sire! Providence, doubtless, holds a better in store for him.

Olivier.—Eh!

Simon (good humouredly).—I say what everyone says.

The King.—Well! We shall consult Loyse herself. Be easy, friend, I have done more difficult things. But, by the way, what has become of my gentle Loyse? Is she out of patience with us? I long, however, to see her smile, and to listen to her dainty chatter!

Simon.—Here, Sire, here she is. It seems as if she had guessed Your Majesty's desire—and mine.

SCENE II

The King (smiling benevolently at Loyse who enters).—Thou art here, my Loyse?

Loyse (kneeling on a cushion at the King's feet).—Yes, Sire. I did not forget you!

The King.—Dost thou know what friend Simon was saying to me? He claimed that thou wert as completely devoted to me as to him, and that, just as to him, thou canst not refuse me anything in the world.

Loyse.—Try, Sire.

The King (taking her head between his hands and looking at her affectionately).—Listen. I desire that thou shouldst be content. There is no one thing to which I attach more weight, for (*confidentially*). I have never told thee, (*gravely*) if the stars lie, not, I have good reasons for believing that my happiness is bound up with thine.

Loyse (enthusiastically).—Then make *me* happy at once!

The King (apart).—Dear dove-like soul! (*To LOYSE.*) Wilt thou obey me?

Loyse.—Oh! with all my heart.

The King.—Well! my darling, thou must marry.

Loyse.—So that is what you wanted to ask me?

The King.—Yes.

Loyse (regretfully).—Oh! what a pity!

The King.—And why so, dear child? Thou art a grown girl, pretty and rosy as flowering April; such a treasure cannot remain without a master. Say one word, and thou shalt have the most generous merchant in Tours! Thou dost smile? I think I understand thee. The drapers and merchants of our good town have lands, sunny vineyards, but they have too, for the most part, white hair and stooped shoulders. And he of whom thou dost think when thou art all alone, is a young apprentice with blond hair who has nought but his yardstick! That is no hindrance. By the Virgin! I shall so enrich the apprentice that he may feast his old master on a thick napped cloth, in good and solid plate. So, name him fearlessly.

Loyse.—Sire, I care no more for an apprentice than a merchant.

Simon (angrily).—Perhaps thou dost think us of too base lineage for thee!

Loyse.—It is not for me to depreciate the calling that my father follows so honourably.

Simon.—Well, then?

Loyse (continuing).—But I see no difference between a shop and a prison. What! to sit so in this darkness, in this vexation of spirit, when the world is so wide, when there are so many skies and lands, so many rivers and stars!

The King.—Thou wilt not have a merchant?—Thou art silent?

Loyse.—Sire——

Nicole.—Fear not, Sire. Loyse tells me everything and I shall question her well.

Loyse.—I have no secrets, aunt. The King knows well my mother was the daughter of a draper of Tours. As a little child, playing along the banks of the Loire, she was carried off by gypsies. Twelve years later they found her as by a miracle, still good, virtuous and sweet, but the love of living in the open air and a yearning for infinite space was hers for the remnant of her wandering life. My good father married her with sincere love and made her happy——

Simon.—My poor wife!

Loyse.—And yet she died young, although surrounded by care and love. She was always thinking of those happy countries where fruits and flowers burst forth together in the light. I have in *my* veins my mother's blood: that is why, Sire, I will not marry a merchant.

Simon.—Princess!

The King.—Wilt thou have a soldier?

Loyse.—No, Sire. To stay at home when my husband might be meeting the risks and dangers of battle! Would that not be basely enduring a separate torture every moment?

The King.—So thy heart says nothing?

Nicole (to the King).—Nothing, Sire.

Loyse (simply).—Yes it does. But what it tells me is very confused. (*She quietly approaches the King and pensively rests her head on the chair in which he is sitting.*) It seems to me that I love a man who, of course, has no existence, since I would have him as valiant as a captain and capable of heroic deeds, but gentle as a woman. Fancy whether my day-dreams are mad! When I think of this unknown lover, I often see him ill and wretched, needing my protection, as if I were his mother! You see certainly that I am a little girl, not even knowing what she wills, and you must give me more time to read my mind more clearly.

Simon.—As well give a cat time to unwind a ball of yarn! Ah! thou wilt not have a husband! Well, I promise thee one thing, that thou shalt have one before long.

Loyse.—No, father, leave me free, with my flowers, in the open air and broad sunlight!

Simon (outraged).—In the broad sunlight! (*To the King.*) Sire, order her to obey me.

The King.—Ah! Simon, here I am not the King!

Loyse (coaxing).—Good father, keep me here, do not drive me away.

Simon.—There! Do you know what I shall finally do, some fine day? I shall lock thee safely in thy chamber, and thou shall come out only when thou hast submitted to my will.

Loyse (with a curtsey).—Don't be angry, father. I shall go myself. I shall go immediately, but (*clasping her hands*) do not marry me. (*To the King.*) Good-bye, god-father!

The King.—Poor Loyse! (*Exit LOYSE with a childlike and mutinous grace.*)

SCENE III

The King.—Thou hast put her to flight, Simon!

Simon.—I will exact obedience from her! It is for me to show firmness, since Your Majesty would persuade your god-daughter to be happy!

The King.—Bah! People no more like to have happiness from other people's hands than eels to be skinned alive!

Olivier.—Those of whom Your Majesty speaks are ingrates!

The King.—You might as well say everybody!

Simon.—Ah! Sire, I am a mistreated father. Farewell my embassy! I shall never see your coppersmiths.

The King.—Calm thyself. Loyse's refusal depends merely upon the fact that as yet she loves no one. We need only seek the man she can love.

Nicole (to the King).—And our Loyse will hardly be so anxious to see far away lands on that day when some one has become the whole world to her!

The King.—Good! But still we must find this some one. (*Outside is heard a great uproar and prolonged bursts of laughter.*) What is this tumult? (*SIMON FOURNIEZ goes to the window at the right, and suddenly bursts into laughter.*) What is it then?

Simon (laughing).—Sire, it is Gringoire!

Olivier (aside).—Gringoire! Here! The clowns let him come near this place!

Simon.—Oh! there he is in front of the shop of my neighbour, the pastry cook. His eyes seem as if they would take the well-browned chickens from their hooks. He devours their aroma, Sire! My faith, Gringoire is an odd fellow, to be sure.

Olivier (to SIMON FOURNIEZ).—Yes, and this odd fellow often stops beneath the windows of your house, especially under your daughter's.

Nicole.—Where is the harm?

Simon.—He has such good songs! (*He sings.*)

“Satan with us plays “Satan chez nous s'est fait barbier!
the barber! Il tient le rasoir—”

The razor he

(*Meeting the glance of OLIVIER-LE-DAIM, and finishing between his teeth.*)

“grips in his claw!” “dans sa griffe!”

(*Aside.*) Oh! the devil! I forgot!

Olivier.—So it seems that these songs are listened to here?

Nicole (*boldly*).—Of course.

Olivier.—Take care. You should not boast of it too much.

The King.—Why so?

Olivier.—Because among these brazen songs that have respect for none——

The King.—Ah! I see.

Olivier (*continuing*).—There is a certain “Ballad of the Hanged,” as it is called, which should win the rope for him who wrote it.

Nicole (*aside, in terror*).—The rope!

The King.—What! Nicole, is it this good fellow of whom you told me who so arouses the whole populace?

Simon (*to the King*).—Does he even know what he does? Gringoire, Sire, is a child.

Olivier.—A wicked and a dangerous child like all his ilk! Rhymers are a sort of madmen not shut up, I know not why, although the sanest of them sups on moonshine, and behaves with less judgment than a tame beast.

Nicole (*indignant*).—Oh! (*To the King.*) Is it true, Sire?

The King.—Not quite, and Master Olivier-le-Daim is a trifle too proud. You seem, Nicole, to be keenly interested in this rhymers, who has sung your charms?

Nicole.—Yes, Sire. I admit boldly that I like him.

The King.—You like him?

Nicole.—Cordially. And if Gringoire were not as proud as the emperor of the Turks, he would have always a seat by the hearth and a good meal in our house. When I saw him for the first time, it was three years ago, in the harsh winter we had then, when for two months, the ground was all white with snow. Grin-

goire was sitting under the porch of a house in the rue du Cygne; he had on his knees two little lost children, whom he had found crying for their mother and shivering with cold. He had stripped his own sorry doublet off his shoulders to wrap them in, and half-naked as he was, he was lulling the little ones to sleep, singing them a hymn of the Holy Virgin.

The King (after reflecting).—I will see this Gringoire.

Olivier.—Ah!

Nicole.—Ah! Sire! 'Tis a kingly thought you have. Poor fellow! See now, he is already triumphing over his star!

Olivier.—Call such a mountebank before the King!

The King.—I have said! I wish it.

Olivier (changing his mind).—So be it! (*He bows before the King, and goes and gives an order to the officers placed in the next room.*)

The King.—This diversion is as good as another. And I think there is no feast excellent, an it come not to an end with some good drollery and jest.

Simon.—That is my opinion. Gringoire will recite one of his farces—one of the spicy ones! The farce of Pathelin, for example,—Baa, baa, baa!

Olivier (to the King).—Your Majesty will be obeyed. Gringoire will come and I shall make him repeat a few rhymes. Only, I cannot be sure that they will amuse Your Majesty!

The King.—We shall see! and provided his songs be less evil than thou dost pretend, since Gringoire is so starved, we have enough here to feast him. (*Dishes are placed on the table.*) That will not displease him.

Simon (going to the door).—Here he is.

SCENE IV

Enter GRINGOIRE escorted by archers, pale, shivering and almost staggering with hunger.

Gringoire.—Ah! come now, master archers, where are you taking me? (*To the archers.*) Why this violence? (*The archers are silent.*) These are Scottish men at arms who have no French. (*At a sign from OLIVIER-LE-DAIM the archers release GRINGOIRE, and go out as well as the pages.*) Eh? They loose me now! (*Perceiving the King and OLIVIER-LE-DAIM.*) Who are these gentlemen? (*Sniffing the aroma of the repast.*) All-powerful

God, what fragrance! So I was brought to sup? I was brought by force to eat a good dinner! Force was idle. I should have come with a good will. (*Admiring the arrangement of the repast.*) Pasties, venison, jugs full of good sparkling wine! (*To the King and OLIVIER-LE-DAIM.*) I guess it, you realised that these archers were haling me off to prison without my having supped, and then you sent for me to get me out of their clutches—their hands I mean, and to give me hospitality as the potters did to Homer!

The King.—Do you tell the truth, Master Gringoire? You have not yet supped?

Gringoire.—Supped? No sir. Not to-day.

Nicole (approaching the King).—That is evident. See his lean, wan face.

Gringoire.—Madame Nicole Andry!

Simon (stepping forward).—He is starving to death.

Gringoire.—Master Simon Fourniez! In my confusion I did not at first recognize your house.

Olivier (to GRINGOIRE).—You have not supped? Well then, will you please accept a wing of this fowl?

Gringoire (as if in a daze).—Yes. Two wings. And a leg!

Olivier.—There's a vineyard wine that would enliven a dead man.

Gringoire (moving up to the table).—That's what I want.

Olivier (stopping him with a gesture).—One moment! Would it be civil thus to sit at table without paying your scot and share of the supper?

Gringoire (out of countenance).—Pay? I haven't a red farthing.

Olivier.—If the Muses dispense but little gold and silver, they have contrived to lavish other treasures on you. You have imagination, noble thoughts, the gift of rhyme.

Gringoire (sadly).—Such gifts serve no purpose when one starves, and that is what has happened to me to-day. What do I say? to-day! Every day.

Olivier.—Understand me. I mean that before satiating your appetite, you must recite to us one of those odes whose inspiration the Muses gave you.

Gringoire.—Oh! my lord, my appetite is more hasty than your ears. (*He starts to approach the table.*)

Olivier (stopping him).—Not so. Your verses first. Drink and eat afterward.

Gringoire.—I assure you that my voice is very ill.

Nicole (to GRINGOIRE).—Good courage!

Gringoire (*aside*).—Well, the shortest way is to yield, I see well enough. (*Aloud.*) Will you have me recite some fragment from my poem of the “Folles entreprises?”

Olivier.—No.

Gringoire.—“La Description de Procès et de sa figure?”

Olivier (*interrupting*).—No. A ballad rather. Something that smacks of Gallic soil?

Gringoire (*agreeably surprised*).—Well, that one whose refrain runs: “Car Dieu bénit tous les Miséricords!”

Olivier.—No. Declaim rather that ballad—that one—you know—so popular in the town, so delightful to those to whom it is sung under the breath?

Nicole (*aside*).—Ah! I guess him now!

Gringoire (*uneasily*).—I don’t know what you mean.

Nicole (*aside*).—What a wicked man!

Olivier.—Good! Will you say that you don’t know the “Ballade des Pendus?”

Gringoire (*checking a start*).—What is that?

Olivier.—The last ballad that you composed.

Gringoire (*much frightened*).—It is not true.

Nicole.—Certainly not.

The King.—Leave them alone, dame Nicole. Listen.

Nicole (*aside, looking at GRINGOIRE with pity*).—Ah! The poor fellow! The barber won’t leave a crumb of him.

Olivier.—Who nowadays, if not the illustrious poet Gringoire, could compose a ballad like that, whose notes fall so exactly from one couplet to another, like blasts of the horn in the forest?

Gringoire (*flattered*).—It is certain that the rhymes are worked in with tolerable congruity.

Olivier.—Ah! you know it?

Gringoire (*aside*).—My renown betrays me. (*Aloud.*) I should be, I assure you, at a great loss how to recite it. I do not know it.

Olivier.—I thought you, as ourselves, a faithful servant of the sovereign, but having the courage to think aloud, and tell the truth to all, even the King,——

Gringoire (*somewhat shaken*).—Ah! those are your compliments!

Olivier.—But since I have been mistaken, God keep you, Master Gringoire. This is the street door.

Gringoire (regretfully).—What! leave this house and these odours! without having eaten!

Olivier.—It is your desire, you know.

Gringoire.—This is the punishment of Tantalus, who had stolen a golden dog in Crete. I am a hundred times hungrier than a moment ago. (*With despair*) Sirs . . .

Olivier.—Let's say no more about it. Let us part without rancour. (*Pushing him toward the door.*)

Gringoire (in despair).—Yes.

Olivier.—Our poor supper, to be insulted in this way. Admire this goose.

Gringoire.—It makes my mouth water.

Olivier (picking up a dish from the table and showing it to GRINGOIRE).—See what fat and succulent flesh! (*He approaches GRINGOIRE and holds a dish for him to smell.*)

Gringoire.—Sweet odour! this gentleman is right. He takes liberties in his thought, but he has a good heart. (*Overcome by hunger.*) Well, since you insist——

Nicole (in terror).—What is he going to do?

Olivier (stopping NICOLE with glance. Severely.)—Dame Andry!

Gringoire.—Would you care to hear it too, Madame? Well, since everybody desires it——

The King.—Of course.

Gringoire.—I will recite to you the “Ballade des Pendus.” (*To the King, proudly and confidentially.*) It is my own. (*Simplify.*) It is an idea that came upon me in crossing the forest of Plessis, where there was many a man dangling from the branches. Perhaps they had been put there for fear that the morning dew might wet their feet!

Nicole (aside).—He will not be still!

The King (to GRINGOIRE).—Well?

Gringoire.—Here it is.

BALLADE DES PENDUS

“Sur ses larges bras étendus,
La forêt où s'éveille Flore,
A des chapelets des pendus
Que le matin caresse et dore.
Ce bois sombre, où le chêne arbore
Des grappes de fruits inouïs
Même chez le Turc et le Moore,
C'est le verger du roi Louis”*

Olivier.—A good beginning!

Nicole (turns to the King in supplication).—Pity!

The King (tranquilly, to GRINGOIRE).—And the rest?

Gringoire.—

Tous ces pauvres gens morfondus,
Roulant des pensers qu' on ignore,
Dans les tourbillons éperdus
Voltigent, palpitants encore.
Le soleil levant les dévore.
Regardez-les, cieux éblouis,
Danser dans les feux de l'aurore,
C'est le verger du roi Louis."*

Olivier (repeating ironically the refrain.)

"Le verger du roi Louis!"

The King (unmoved as before).—Very good. (To GRINGOIRE.)

Continue.

Gringoire.—The third stanza is still more diverting

The King.—Is it possible?

Gringoire.—You shall see.

"Ces pendus, du diable entendus,
Appellent des pendus encore.
Tandis qu' aux cieux, d'azur tendus,
Où semble luire un météore.
La rosée en l'air s'évapore,
Un essaim d'oiseau réjouis
Par-dessus leur tête picore
C'est le verger du roi Louis."*

Nicole (aside).—Oh! unhappy man!

(GRINGOIRE turns around. All are silent.)

Gringoire.—Well, what say you to that. (Aside.) They

*THE BALLAD OF THE HANGED

On its broad arms swung, the forest where Flora awakes, has chaplets of hanged men that the morning caresses and gilds. This sombre wood, where the oak tree bears clusters of fruits that are strange even to the Turk and Moor. This is the royal orchard of Louis.

All these poor chilly people, thinking thoughts that we know not of, dizzily swing with many a throb, in the sweeping gusts of wind. The rising sun devours them. Watch them, dazzled heavens, dancing in the glow of dawn. This is the royal orchard of Louis.

These hanged by the devil heard call for still more hanged. While to Heaven in azure draped, where a meteor seems to shine, the dew melts away in the air. A swarm of merry birds, pecks away above their heads. This is the royal orchard of Louis.

certainly are not cheerful. Only the old man seems to have been pleased. Doubtless he's a good judge.

The King (to GRINGOIRE).—But isn't it customary to have an envoy after the three couplets?

Gringoire.—Yes! I saw at once that you were not of the uninitiated.

The King.—The Envoy should begin, I fancy, with the word *Prince*.

Gringoire.—Oh! that is indispensable, like the eyes of Argus in the peacock's tail. *Prince!* Only, you understand, I know no prince.

The King.—That's provoking!

Gringoire (with an air of shrewdness).—I know, however, I might easily offer my ballad to the duke of Brittany or my lord of Normandy.

The King.—To be sure. What hinders you?

Gringoire (simply).—Just this, that I am much too fond of France, and even of King Louis—in spite of all! But I am like you. I tell him the truth about himself as well! He who loves well——

The King.—Punishes well. It is right. Let us hear the Envoy.

Gringoire.—

ENVOY

“Prince, il est un bois que décore
Un tas de pendus, enfouis
Dans le doux feuillage sonore.
C'est le verger du roi Louis!”*

Olivier (to GRINGOIRE).—Master Gringoire, one cannot polish verses with a more delightfully comic turn.

Gringoire (modestly).—Ah! Lord!

The King.—You may appreciate this praise. People agree in praising the taste of Olivier-le-Daim!

Gringoire (terrified).—Olivier-de-Diable!

Olivier (to the King).—That's a nickname I owe to you, Sire.

Gringoire.—The King!

The King.—Yes, the King!

Gringoire (overwhelmed).—The King! I shall not sup at all now. (*Stands still in dismay. All are silent.*)

*ENVOY

Prince, there is a wood that is garnished with beavies of hanged men, buried in the soft and rustling leaves. This is the royal orchard of Louis.

The King.—You have nothing more to say?

Gringore.—Sire, though I am struck dumb, I think none the less.

The King.—You think perhaps that after having so well sung the hanged—

Gringoire.—Nothing can prevent me—

Olivier.—From being hanged yourself.

Gringoire (choking).—Ah!

Nicole (imploring the King's mercy).—Sire!

(*The King looks at NICOLE with an air of understanding.*)

The King (pointing to OLIVIER-LE-DAIM.).—He spoke without my order. But he may have told the truth.

Nicole (whispering to the King).—I saw you smile. The King pardons.

The King (good-humouredly).—I did not say that.

Gringoire.—Hanged! (*Ingenuously to the King.*) Without a supper?

The King (looking at him).—Couldst thou?

Gringoire.—Yes. I might very easily. But the King might not.

The King (laughing frankly).—Bah! What a fancy is that. That is attributing to me a spirit of vengeance unworthy of a christian and a gentleman. I do not send my friends to bed fasting. Thou shalt sup.

Gringoire.—At last!

The King.—Eat and drink to thy heart's content,—if thou hast a fancy to!

Gringoire (his face illumined, approaching the table).—To be sure I have!

The King.—Dame Nicole, you have at hand all that is necessary for the best drinking. You will fill his glass.

Nicole.—As for that, yes, poor lamb! (*Aside.*) His good day* has come!

Simon.—He must have plenty of drink at least.

The King.—You, Olivier, will serve our guest.

Gringoire.—Oh! I can help myself.

Olivier (humiliated).—I, Sire!

The King.—You may do so without belittling yourself. I do not forget that I ennobled you. But a lord may serve a poet.

Gringoire (proudly).—Is it so? Well, Sire (*Kneeling*) grant me pardon! I have offended you, but you take my life, I can give you no more!

*Conceded to criminals before they were executed.

The King (aside).—Good. (*Motioning GRINGOIRE to the table.*) Seat thyself and be quick.

Gringoire (rising).—It is right, I have no time to lose, (*He sits at the table and eats, OLIVIER-LE-DAIM serves him, NICOLE ANDRY pours his drink.*) if this feast which I am to enjoy is to be the last I ever shall enjoy! (*The King has seated himself in an arm-chair by GRINGOIRE's side and amuses himself by watching him; GRINGOIRE eats and drinks with desperate avidity.*) The last, did I say! 'Tis really the first. (*He cuts into an enormous pasty.*) O what a marvellous pasty with its donjons and towers! Will you believe me? Well, that is what I have dreamed of since my entrance into this world. Understand! I have always been hungry. It has been going on for a year, two years, ten years! but in the long run one is always nothing but hungry just the same. Every morning I would say to the rising sun, every evening to the white stars: "So then, to-day is a fast day!" They would answer me, the kindly stars, but they could not give me bread. They had none. (*To OLIVIER-LE-DAIM, who passes him a dish.*) Many thanks, my lord. (*To the King.*) How easy it must be to be good, when there are such good things to eat! I am very good, believe me, I care for the most wretched creatures,—

Nicole (to the King).—Good innocent soul!

Gringoire (continuing).—And yet, that is the first time that I have touched, even with my eyes, such victuals as that. (*To NICOLE ANDRY, who pours him a drink.*) Thank you, Madame. Oh! what nice clear wine! Ah! (*He drinks.*) That inspires joy, sunlight and all virtues in your heart. How well I shall live! Who then would have it that I should be hanged? I assure you I do not believe it at all now. (*To the King.*) What good would it do you to hang a nursling of Calliope and the holy Parnassian choir, who, Sire, can recount your exploits to the future race, and make them as durable in the memory of men as those of Amadis of Gaul and the chevalier Perseus?

The King.—Thou hast made such a good beginning!

Gringoire (piteously).—Not very good.

The King.—

“Ces pendus, du diable entendus,
Appellent des pendus encore.”

Gringoire (with an expression of doubt).—Oh! they call them!

Mark you, Sire, good sense is not my strong point. (*Modestly.*) I have naught but genius. Besides, if you hang me, what matter! I am very good to concern myself with it. (*He rises.*) What have I left to do on this planet, now turned cold? I have loved the rose and the glorious lily, I sang like the grasshopper, I played mystery-plays to the glory of the saints, and I see no omission of mine, save leaving some little Gringoures to shiver with hunger and lie on the hard ground. Now frankly, it isn't worth while. The only thing I had neglected until now was to sup. And I have supped well. I had offended the King our lord, I begged his pardon on my knees. My affairs are settled, everything is for the best, and now Master Simon Fourniez, I bless the summer evening when for the first time I passed your house.

Simon.—What summer evening.?

(GRINGOIRE first rests his elbows on the King's arm-chair, then without noticing what he is doing, seats himself in it. OLIVIER-LE-DAIM rushes at him in a fury, but with a glance the King stops the barber, and with a smile signs to him not to molest GRINGOIRE.)

Gringoire (giving way to the ecstasy of his reverie, and gradually completely forgetting the presence of those about him).—You see, a hungry poet is much like a giddy-pated moth. The evening I mean (it was the time when the setting sun clothes the sky in rosy red and gold), passing through the Mall du Chardouneret, I saw your window-panes glistening in their leaden settings, filled by the sun with flashing darts of light, and without knowing why I flew to the flame! I approached and through those beautiful blazing panes, I saw the sparkle of ruddy fruits, I saw the glint of plate and the sparkle of silver porringers, I realized that there was to be eating there and I stood in an ecstasy. Suddenly, just above this room, a window opened and a young maid's head appeared, graceful and timorous as the head of Diana, the great nymph with the silent heart, when she breathes deep of the free air of the forest. The golden rays playing about her hair and her rosy brow made her a celestial halo, and I thought at once that she was a saint out of Paradise!

Nicole (in a whisper to the King).—It was our Loyse!

Gringoire.—She seemed so honest and so proud! But afterwards I realised that she was only a child, seeing a smile stamped with ineffable kindness flitting in the light of her rosy lips. Then, you may understand, my feet were riveted to the ground, and I could not take my eyes off this house, in which just then were gathered all that I was destined never to possess,

a good supper served in rich plate, and a young maid, worthy the adoration of the angels!

The King (whispers to NICOLE).—Well! Nicole, there's a poor dreamer who properly admires my dear god-daughter! what sayst thou to that?

Simon (aside).—A fine treat for my daughter to be stared out of countenance by this phantom, himself as transparent as a pane in a lantern!

Gringoire.—I returned every day, for nothing draws us on more than the deceiving smile of the fancy! But, as the sage has said, everything comes in the end, even those we desire. To-day, at last, I have feasted like Belshazzar, prince of Babylon. But I was shaping another wish, for man is insatiable.

The King (rests his elbows on the chair in which GRINGOIRE is sitting).—What is this wish?

Gringoire, noticing his mistake and rising hastily).—That I might once more have seen that fair young girl of the window—

Simon.—No, not that.

Olivier (aside).—Good.

Gringoire (who has not heard SIMON FOURNIEZ, continuing).—But I shall see her again, since you send me away before her to await her in Heaven where all the angels are. Well, then, I care for nothing more, and if the moment of your whim has come, I can die gayly and bravely.

The King (aside).—There's a man!

Nicole (aside).—The King does not yet say that he pardons!

The King (in a whisper to NICOLE).—Nicole, tell me: dost thou believe that Loyse—could love this Gringoire?

Nicole.—What!

The King.—Do not be amazed. Could she love him?

Nicole.—Would to Heaven! But—

(*She points to GRINGOIRE'S lean face.*)

The King.—I understand thee. (*Aside.*) She is right perhaps. (*After reflection and as if to himself.*) 'Tis all one, in this little world that might fit within the hollow of my hand, I see man and the cords that move him, just as in more illustrious intrigues and it will amuse me to see the story's end.

Olivier.—Sire, may I now lead hence Master Pierre Gringoire?

The King (annoyed by OLIVIER'S persistency).—No. Let him stay. I desire to speak with him alone a moment.

Olivier.—Eh! What!

The King (severely).—Did you hear me? Away with you, and do not return until I call you.

Olivier (aside).—The King is foolish when good-humoured. He will do something foolish. But, patience! (*Bows to the KING and goes off in a mute rage.*)

The King.—My dear Simon, and you, dame Nicole, leave me alone, I pray you, with Master Pierre Gringoire. I must have a word with him.

Gringoire (aside, while SIMON FOURNIEZ and NICOLE ANDRY take leave of the King and go out).—Speak to me! Good Saint Peter my patron saint, what can he want to say to me?

SCENE V

The King.—Pierre Gringoire, I like such men as thou, when they speak well in rhyme and rhythm. I pardon thee.

Gringoire (falling to his knees).—Ah! Sire! “God blesses all the merciful!”

The King.—Yes, I pardon thee. On one condition.

Gringoire.—Do with me what you please.

The King.—I shall find thee a wife.

Gringoire.—Oh! Sire, why not make my pardon complete?

The King.—What! hungry poet! Can it be so pitiable a state to have a good housewife by thy fireside?

Gringoire (rising).—Sire, do you not desire to punish me more cruelly than I deserve? I feel I have no heart to marry some dowager who was a contemporary of Charlemagne.

The King.—She of whom I speak is seventeen this day.

Gringoire.—So then, it is because Heaven has afflicted her with some queer and supernatural ugliness?

The King.—She is as fair as she is young, and very like a blowing rose.

Gringoire (turning pale).—I guess it Sire. But free and spotless under Heaven’s arch, I think myself too poor to do without my virtue and good fame.

The King.—Silence! The maid whose husband thou shalt be is pure as ermine, whose sacred whiteness naught should soil.

Gringoire.—In good earnest? (*Seriously.*) But I have no other bed than the green forest and no other cup or bowl than my closed hand: I cannot begin my housekeeping with such poor furniture.

The King.—Take no thought of that. Thou must remember that I am not generous by halves.

Gringoire.—Sire, you are generous as the southern sun! But who is to persuade the maid to be my wife?

The King.—Who? Thyself. Thou shalt look at her as but a moment ago, thou didst look at Master Simon's supper, and thou shalt say to her: "Will you be my wife?"

Gringoire.—I shall never dare.

The King.—Thou must.

Gringoire.—As well propose an accompaniment to the Iliad on a reed-pipe.

The King.—It's only a matter of pleasing.

Gringoire.—Precisely. With this face I have! I feel ugly and poor and when I *have* tried to stammer words of love, they have been so harshly received that I have sentenced myself forever. Mark you, Sire, one day (it was in the forest near by), I saw passing on her spirited steed some young huntress who had strayed far from her retinue. Her face shone with a light divine and she was covered with gold and sapphires. I threw myself before her stretching out my hands to this heroic nymph and cried: "Oh! how fair you are!" She stopped her horse and began to laugh, so loud and long that I feared she might die on the spot. Once more I dared to speak of love to a peasant maid, as poor as I, with hardly more than a few tattered rags to clothe her. *She* was different, looked on me with an air of profound pity, and was so grieved that she could not think me fine, that without saying a word, she shed two great tears. The angels, doubtless, saved them.

The King.—So, thou dost abandon thyself. When I give thee the means of life!

Gringoire.—Fantastic means!

The King.—O cowardice! Rare cowardice of a halting man when he has at his service a stronger weapon than lances and swords! What! thou art a poet, consequently skilful in all the wiles and caresses of language, and the love of life inspires thee not! Know this: while our salvation depends on any living being, and our tongues have not been cut out—nothing is lost. A year ago Gringoire, where was this King who now speaks to thee? Dost thou remember? At Péronne, in the palace of duke Charles, prisoner of a vassal whose interest demanded his destruction, violent, not knowing himself whether he would or would not slay him: those are our experiences in the obscure beginnings of great

temptations! Whom did he see about the duke? His own enemies, turncoats all! His jailer persisted in thinking himself offended. For pleasure house, he had a sombre turret in which had flowed the blood of a King of France, slain by a Vermandois! His gold! They thought him so thoroughly ruined that those by whom he sent it to his creatures put it in their pockets. Nothing could win his way out but his agile thoughts; but, thank Heaven, he found opportunity to speak to his enemy, and here he is, the conqueror, feared, master of himself and others, and taking his revenge. And thou Gringoire, thou who hast tasted the sacred honey, whom hast thou to convince? A child, a capricious little girl, a woman, a varying and changing being who can be moulded like soft wax! and thou art fearful!

Gringoire.—Yes.

The King.—And so thou wilt find it easier to die!

Gringoire.—Yes, Sire. For if I speak, as you desire, to this strange young girl, I know well enough what will happen. She will begin to laugh heartily, like the young Diana of the forest of Plessis.

The King.—She will not laugh.

Gringoire.—Then she will weep like the beggar girl. It is one or the other. None love *me* nor shall I love either.

The King.—Thou art not sincere. But I guess thy meaning. Thou dost fear her to whom I shall affiance the hope of thy life. Thou sayest that she cannot love thee, Gringoire? But then, why hast thou kept in thine eyes the living reflection of her angelic beauty? Why is thy heart filled with her? Why did thou desire to see her again but a few moments ago?

Gringoire.—Whom do you mean, Sire?

The King.—She, by Heaven! The maid of the window, whom thou hast loved at sight and whom thou wouldst refuse, Loyse, daughter of Simon Fourniez.

Gringoire (in amaze).—What!

The King.—Well yes, the two are but one. Dost thou fear her still? Wilt thou still die?

Gringoire (almost swooning).—Oh! Sire! do not tell me that it is she, for then I should die at once.

The King (observing GRINGOIRE curiously).—I thought thee braver. What will it be when thou dost see her here, presently!

Gringoire.—At the very thought my knees shake and my heart is in my throat!

The King.—Come, come we must make an end of this. (*Goes to the door and calls.*) Ho! friend Simon! Dame Nicole! (*Laughing, to GRINGOIRE.*) My faith, I thought thou would'st fall in a swoon, like a woman!

SCENE VI

Nicole (entering).—He has pardoned!

Simon (bringing LOYSE whom the King does not see at first).—Sire, here we are.

The King (to SIMON).—Well, Simon, thy daughter.

Simon (piteously).—Sire, I had not the courage to leave her imprisoned in her room. I was foolishly touched, like the old goose I am. (*The King smiles.*) You think me weak, do you not?

The King (laughing).—On the contrary. Bring her in.

Gringoire (aside).—It is she. (*He leans on a piece of furniture almost ready to swoon.*)

Loyse (to the King).—Sire, I am delivered with all the honours of war! (*She embraces SIMON who lets her have her way and wipes away a tear.*) The gates of the citadel have been opened to me and I did not surrender my arms.

The King (gaily).—Good! But you must still obtain the King's pardon.

Loyse (laughing).—Oh! the King, I have no fear of him! (*In a whisper, to the King.*) He is just!

The King.—Thou art right. (*He takes LOYSE aside and speaks so as to be heard only by LOYSE and NICOLE.*) Tell me (*Pointing to GRINGOIRE*) How do you like that fellow?

Loyse (looking about her).—Where do you mean?

The King.—Over there.

Loyse (after gazing at GRINGOIRE).—He is not beautiful. He appears sad and humiliated.

Nicole (whispers to the King).—Did I not tell you, Sire?

The King (to NICOLE).—I shall have it off my mind. I shall find out whether the inner light of the soul cannot sometimes embellish a poor face, and whether the subtle flame of a mind may not suffice to awaken love! (*To LOYSE.*) Pierre Gringoire, my servant, has something to ask of thee in my name. You must grant him a moment's hearing.

Simon.—He—Sire, that starveling speak for you! (*Laughing.*) Ha! ha! ha! what a merry madness!

The King (to SIMON).—Thou mayst well, not so, upon my faith as a gentleman—leave our Loyse alone with him for a few moments?

Simon.—Oh! as for that, Sire, as long as you like! There's no danger in that. Gringoire is a cajoler of girls whom I might very well put out in my orchard, as a scarecrow for the birds!

Gringoire (aside, dolefully).—She hears that!

The King (to LOYSE).—Listen, to this young man, I beg thee. Wilt thou Loyse?

Loyse.—Oh, gladly!

The King.—Good my daughter. (*Seeing the door open.*) But who comes here without my order? Olivier!

SCENE VII

The King (to OLIVIER).—Did I not forbid you, sir, and out of regard for yourself to interrupt at a moment when I intend to decide the future of Loyse?

Olivier (aside).—I come in time. (*Aloud.*) When Your Majesty's interests are at stake, should I not at need, infringe your orders?

The King.—I know these hypocritical pretexts. You must obey and nothing more.

Olivier.—Even when my King's dearest plans are menaced?

The King.—What plans? Speak, sir.

Olivier (pointing to the persons present).—In their presence?

The King.—Before them all! Speak, I tell thee, and woe to thee if thou dost alarm me to no purpose!

Olivier.—Would to Heaven, Sire, that Your Majesty had only to punish the disobedience of his faithful servant. But you will have to punish other crimes more dangerous than that.

The King.—What dost thou mean?

Olivier.—That exchange of Guyenne for Champagne—

The King (trembling, with a gesture motioning LOYSE away).—Well, that exchange?

Olivier.—The exchange will not be made.

The King.—What do you say?

Olivier.—My lord your brother refuses.

The King (beside himself).—He refuses!

Olivier.—Did you desire the Duke of Burgundy to be ignorant of your intentions?

The King.—Yes.

Olivier.—He knows them.

The King.—Who is the traitor?

Olivier.—The traitor, Sire, is he who by his letters warned Duke Charles of your plans! I finally succeeded in intercepting one of his letters. Read, Sire! (*Presents him an unfolded letter.*) and Your Majesty may say whether I have done my duty.

The King (after glancing at the letter).—La Balue! He, my creature! (*Reading.*) “Believe in all truth My Lord, a discreet servant who is much less the King’s man than yours!” Ah! La Balue! to regret this letter that thou hast written, *thou* shalt have a night so long, so dark and so profound, that thou shalt need an effort of the memory to recall the splendour of the sun and the light of day!

Loyse (unable to hear, but frightened by the King’s anger. To SIMON).—What ails the King? I have never seen him thus.

The King (rising).—But what am I saying? Doubtless he has fled!

Olivier.—Not so far that I could not reach him.

The King (breathing more freely).—The fool! We have him. I thank thee, Olivier, thou art a good servant, a faithful friend. I shall not forget it. (*With increasing rage.*) Ah! my anger slept and now ’tis waked. So then, this is not the end, master rebels and you need profitable examples: you shall have them! You thought that France was but a blooming garden about your close-locked donjons? No, my masters: France is a forest whose woodsman I am, and I shall lop off every branch in my way, with rope, sword and axe!

Olivier.—My lord de la Balue is a prince of the Church.

The King.—I know it, his life is sacred. I shall not touch La Balue’s life. (*Paling with rage.*) But I am saving him a retreat—Come!

Simon (approaching the King).—Sire!

The King.—What? What is it? What dost thou desire?

Simon.—The King goes without telling me—

The King.—What have I to tell thee? Have I not wasted time enough in the gossip of thy shop?

Simon (choking).—My shop!

The King.—To thy yardstick, good man, to thy yardstick!

Simon (unconscious of what he says).—I go, Sire. It is below

Olivier.—But Gringoire—

The King (as in a dream).—Gringoire? What do you mean by Gringoire?

Olivier.—That rebel who jeers at Your Majesty's justice.

The King.—Jeers? Hang him!

Nicole.—Sire, Your Majesty forgets that you have pardoned him.

The King (collecting himself).—It is true. I was wrong. I followed my first impulse, which was worthless. For a just King, indulgence is a crime. Kindness and pardon breed ingrates.

Nicole.—Oh! Sire!

The King (to NICOLE).—Leave me. (*To GRINGOIRE, harshly.*) I had laid a condition upon thee for the redemption of thy life.

Nicole.—Suppose he cannot fulfill it!

The King.—So much the better: God does not will that I should pardon. (*To GRINGOIRE.*) However, it is thy concern. In an hour thou shalt have decided thy fate. Princes and lords are not enough? So be it: even in the mire shall I seek rebels to chastise. (*NICOLE offers to speak; the King, with a gesture, imposes silence upon her.*) Enough! Enough! (*Exit.*)

Loyse (to SIMON).—What in the world is the matter, father? What is the matter? (*Watching the King with terror.*) What a change!

Simon (shaking his fist at GRINGOIRE).—To thy yardstick! And it is for that scoundrel that the King has so treated me. A hatless and shoeless beggar!

Olivier.—Master Simon Fourniez, and you dame Nicole Andry, do you retire, and let the demoiselle Loyse (*pointing to GRINGOIRE*) remain alone with this man.

Simon.—That barefoot rascal with my daughter!

Nicole (drawing SIMON away).—The King wills.

Simon (to GRINGOIRE).—Buffoon, mountebank! (*Tearing himself from NICOLE's grasp and turning backward.—Furiously.*) Actor!

Loyse.—Farewell, father. (*Exit SIMON and NICOLE.*)

Olivier (to GRINGOIRE).—In one hour. (*Going to the door, addressing the officer standing outside.*) See to it that your soldiers guard each exit of this house and let no one issue from it under penalty of death. (*He disappears—The door closes behind him.*)

SCENE VIII

Gringoire (aside).—Come, Gringoire, that is the simplest thing in the world. Covered, as thou art, with their insults, to win her love! In how long, my good sirs? In an instant, at once! Well and good! they should have said it sooner: it is so easy!

Loyse (aside).—What is the matter? Who is this man. The King wills me to listen to him and at the same time scourges him with his anger. What is he going to ask me? What can I do for him? (*Aloud to GRINGOIRE.*) You have to speak to me?

Gringoire.—I? not at all.

Loyse.—That however is not what the King told me.

Gringore.—Ah! yes, the King has ordered me to put before you a strange and facetious proposal.

Loyse.—Make it then!

Gringoire.—You will refuse.

Loyse.—Tell me, however.

Gringoire.—The King has ordered me to ask you—

Loyse.—What?

Gringoire.—If you would— (*Aside.*) The words will not come.

Loyse.—If I would—

Gringoire.—No, if, I, could—no, I am mistaken! In short, the King—desires to get you a husband.

Loyse.—I know it. The King has already told me. But whom does he command me to marry.

Gringoire.—He leaves you free. You have still the right to refuse. It is the *man* the King proposes who would be obliged to win your love.

Loyse.—But I ask you again, who is this man?

Gringoire.—What difference does it make to you? (*Shrugging his shoulders.*) You cannot love him.

Loyse.—What difference does it make to you also? Come, now, who is he?

Gringoire.—Who and what is he? Oh, I shall explain to you at once. Imagine this. You are dainty and enchanting, he is ugly and sickly. You are rich and well attired, he is poor, hungry and almost naked. You are gay and joyous; and he, when he needs not to rouse the laughter of the passers-by, is melan-

choly. You see very well that to offer you this wretch, is really to offer the night owl to the meadow lark.

Loyse (aside, with naive terror).—Is it he? Oh! no! (*Aloud.*) You are laughing at me. The King loves me; so it is impossible that he has made such a choice for me!

Gringoire.—Really, it is impossible. But it is true, however.

Loyse.—But how can this wretch that you have described to me have attracted the King's attention?

Gringoire.—The King's attention? You say well. He has attracted it to be sure and more than he wanted. How? By making verses.

Loyse (astonished).—Verses?

Gringoire.—Yes, lady. An idler's recreation. It consists in fitting together words that fill the ear like an insistent strain of music, in which, one way and another, they paint all things to the life, and among which from time to time are coupled twin sounds, whose accord seems to tinkle playfully, like little golden bells.

Loyse.—What! a sport so frivolous, so puerile, when there are swords, when one may fight! when one may live!

Gringoire.—Yes, one may live! but, what would you have, this dreamer, (and in all ages there has been a man like him) prefers to relate the actions, the loves and deeds of prowess of others in songs in which the false is mingled with the true.

Loyse.—Why, that man is a fool or a coward.

Gringoire (aside, with a start).—A coward! (*Aloud, proudly.*) This coward, lady, in days that are far behind us, led armies at his heels, and he gave them the enthusiasm that wins heroic battles! This madman, had a lute that a people of sages and demigods listened to as to a heavenly voice, and they crowned his brow with green laurel!

Loyse.—Ah! of course, among pagan idolaters. But among us to-day!

Gringoire (sadly).—To-day? It is different. People think as you do yourself.

Loyse.—But who can have persuaded the King's—protégé to follow such a trade?

Gringoire (simply).—No one. The trade followed by this idle singer, this poet (so they called him once), no one advises him to follow. God gives it to him.

Loyse.—God! and why so? Why should he condemn human beings to be useless, and exempt from all duty?

Gringoire.—God has none of this cruel scorn! All have their duty in this world: the poet too! Look you, I shall speak of a thing that perhaps may make you smile, you who are all youth and all grace! for certainly you have never known that bitter torment that consists in suffering the woes of others, in saying to oneself every moment when one feels happiest: “At this very moment when I feel this joy, there are thousands of beings who weep, who groan, who undergo unspeakable torture, who, in their despair, see the lingering death of the objects of their dearest love, and feel a strip torn bleeding from their hearts!” *That* has never happened to you?

Loyse.—You are mistaken. To know that so many beings sob, bow beneath their burdens, succumb, and yet feel myself strong, brave, and yet of no avail, that is what often makes me hate myself. That is why I should like to be a man, to hold the sword, and redeem with my own blood those who have been devoted to unjust misfortune!

Gringoire (uplifted).—So then, you have a heart! Well, will you know? On earth there are, even in the richest lands, thousands of beings who are born in misery and who will die in misery.

Loyse.—Alas!

Gringoire.—There are serfs bound to the soil who owe their lords all the labour of their arms, and who see hunger, fever, sweeping away from their sides, their wan and shivering little ones. There are weavers, cold and wan, who all unconsciously weave their own winding-sheet! Well, what makes the poet is this: all the sorrows of others he suffers; every secret tear and every secret plaint, every unheard sob are fused in his voice and mingled with his song, and once this winged and fluttering song has escaped his heart, neither sword nor torment can arrest its flight; it flies afar off, with untiring wing, forever, in the air and on the lips of men. It enters the castle and palace, it bursts out in the midst of a merry feast, and it says to the princes of earth:—Listen!

“Rois, qui serez jugés à votre tour,
 Songez à ceux qui n’ont ni sou ni maille;
 Ayez pitié du peuple tout amour,
 Bon pour fouiller le sol, bon pour la taille
 Et la charrue, et bon pour la bataille.
 Les malheureux sont damnés,—c’est ainsi!
 Et leur fardeau n’est jamais adouci.

Les moins meurtris n'ont pas le nécessaire.
Le froid, la pluie et le soleil aussi,
Aux pauvres gens tout est peine et misère.”*

Loyse (sadly).—Ah! God!
Gringoire.—Listen again!

“Le pauvre hère en son triste séjour
Est tout pareil à ses betes qu'on fouaille.
Vendange-t-il, a-t-il chauffé le four
Pour en festin ou pour une èpousaille,
Le seigneur vient, toujours plus endurci.
Sur son vassal, d'épouvante saisi,
Il met sa main comme un aigle sa serre,
Et lui prend tout en disant: “Me voici!”*

Loyse (falling to her knees with a sob).—Ah!
Gringoire (with a mad joy).—You weep!
Loyse (exalted).—“To the poor all is pain and woe.”
Gringoire.—Oh! God!

Loyse (approaching GRINGOIRE and regarding him with emotional curiosity).—And he who speaks so with a voice so proud, so eloquent, so tenderly indignant, is the protégé of the King! Why then did you think that I could not love him?

Gringoire (bitterly).—Why?

Loyse.—And this warrior, so resigned, so bold, who braves all dangers for others needs to be sustained and consoled in his own misery! This man I would know. Who is he?

Gringoire (on the point of betraying his secret).—You desire to know him?

Loyse.—Yes, and save him from himself.

Gringoire.—Save him?

Loyse.—You still hesitate.

Gringoire.—Save him from himself—and from the King—
(*Aside.*) Ah! coward! Canst thou think such a scoundrelly

*Kings, who will be judged in your turn, think of those who have neither *soin* nor *maille*; have pity on the loving people, good to delve in the soil, good for the tax and the plough, and good for battle too. The wretches are damned—'tis so! And their burden is never lightened. They that suffer the least have not what they need. Cold and rain and the sun as well. To the poor all is pain and woe.

The poor wretch in his sorry hole is like to his beasts that they scourge. Does he harvest or heat his oven for a feast or a wedding, the lord comes forth with his hardening heart. On his vassal, terror-struck, he puts his hand as an eagle his talon, and takes all from him saying “Here I am!”

thought. Borne with her to paradise by the angels, canst thou think of dropping into thy ignominy and dragging her with thee! Die! To be worthy of a happiness that will never come again. Die! To be no less generous than she and save her in turn.

Loyse.—What answer will you have me make the King? This man's name? I have a right to know.

Gringoire (aside).—Why should I, if she has not guessed!

Loyse (aside).—Ah! I hoped that he would name himself!

Gringoire (aside).—Someone comes. (*Seeing OLIVIER enter.*) It is Olivier! It is deliverance! Thanks to Heaven, my rope will really be my own, for I have won it!

SCENE IX

Olivier (entering, to GRINGOIRE).—The hour has passed.

Gringoire.—So much the better!

Loyse.—So soon!

Olivier.—Let us go then! (*Aside.*) The King would only be sure to have some foolish fit of clemency.

Gringoire.—Farewell, lady. May all the saints keep you!

Loyse.—But your mission has not ended!

Gringoire.—Pardon, my lady. Master Olivier does not like to wait.

Loyse.—And where does he intend to take you then?

Gringoire.—To a festivity at which they cannot do without me!

Loyse (seeing the pages enter preceding the King).—The King! Ah! all will be explained!

(*LOYSE, GRINGOIRE and OLIVIER-LE-DAIM stand on either side of the door. The King enters without seeing them. He is rubbing his hands and his face wears a joyous expression. He crosses the stage and drops into a great arm-chair to the left.*)

The King.—If there is on earth one complete and unmixed joy, if there is one pleasure that is really divine, it is that of punishing a traitor. Above all when the treason has come to naught and can no longer harm us. Ah! now I feel well. There was no danger—on the contrary—and I am still master of events. (*Perceiving OLIVIER-LE-DAIM.*) Thou here, my brave and faithful servant? What art thou doing?

Olivier.—Sire, I was carrying out your orders.

The King.—My orders? (*Perceives GRINGOIRE and remembers all.*) Gringoire? (*Remembering.*) Ah! one moment!

Olivier.—But——

The King (without listening to him).—Thou hast served me well, Olivier. I shall be grateful to thee.

Olivier.—Sire, Your Majesty already rewards me in deigning to approve my zeal.

The King.—We shall do better still. (*Dismissing him with a gesture.*) Go, Olivier, let me arrange things. Thou shalt lose nothing by it.

Olivier (bowing).—Sire, there is every advantage in relying on you. (*Exit.*)

The King (to himself).—The captaincy of the bridge of Meulan and I shall be quits with him. (*Perceiving LOYSE.*) Loyse! There thou art, my dear! Why stand there? Do I frighten thee?

Loyse.—A little. You have been so cross!

The King (as if waking from a dream).—Cross? Ah! yes. Let us say no more of that. The sight of thee refreshes me. Come. (*He kisses LOYSE on the brow.*) But I do not see thy father.

(*A moment or so before SIMON and NICOLE have entered by the door to the left. They stop a moment at the rear of the stage, looking curiously at the King.*)

Loyse.—He is hiding from you. You treated him so well!

The King.—I! What could I have said to that good, dear friend?

Loyse (pointing to SIMON).—There he stands yonder, not daring to come forward.

The King (to SIMON).—Why then? come near, come near, friend Fourniez. Where wert thou then?

Simon.—Where was I? (*Bitterly.*) With my yardstick.

The King.—With thy—(*Smiling*) Good Simon, have I hurt thee? Thy hand! I hold no ill-will against thee. I pardon thee.

Nicole (coming forward).—'Tis very kind. Your Majesty has deigned to treat my brother so ill, that you should hold no grudge against him.

The King.—Nicole! I was wrong to be absent-minded in the presence of a witty woman. Come here, my friends, to my side. Thou too, Gringoire. There is something we must settle, here in this family circle of ours. (*To GRINGOIRE.*) Well, my master, I hope thou hast succeeded in winning thy happiness!

Yes, I am sure that my god-daughter must have appreciated the man that I offered her.

Simon.—What man?

The King.—Is it not so, Loyse?

Loyse (slyly feigning absent-mindedness).—What do you mean, Sire? Of whom are you speaking?

The King.—Of the husband I have chosen thee.

Simon.—What husband?

The King.—Dost thou accept?

Loyse.—No.

The King (amazed).—No!

Loyse (aside).—This time, he will have to speak.

The King.—Thou refusest! Thou, Loyse!

Loyse (slyly watching GRINGOIRE).—I cannot marry a stranger—whose very name they wouldn't even tell me!

Nicole (to the King).—Ah! I was sure of it! He was brave to the end.

Loyse.—I knew well enough that he was in danger!

The King (to LOYSE).—Gringoire did not tell thee that he had offended the King his Lord by composing a certain—"Ballade des Pendus," and that to redeem his life—

Loyse (guessing).—In one hour, in one moment, he was to—

Gringoire.—Win thy love!

Loyse (uttering a great cry of joy).—Ah! (*Advancing to GRINGOIRE whom she takes by the hand.*) Sire, this morning I demanded of you a husband capable of heroic deeds, a brave man with hands unstained by spilled blood: Well! there he is, Sire. Give him to me. I love him. I demand the fulfilment of your promise, and I shall be proud to be his companion forever, in life and death!

The King (to SIMON FOURNIEZ).—Well, Simon?

Simon.—I understand, Sire. You wish my consent?

The King.—Wilt thou give it?

Simon.—You know, Sire, we are not accustomed to refuse each other anything.

The King (laughing).—Thank you, friend. (*To GRINGOIRE.*) And thou, Gringoire, what hast thou to say?

Gringoire (beside himself with joy).—Sire! She does not laugh!

The King (gaily).—Nor does she weep either! (*Whispers to GRINGOIRE.*) Must I tell her now the reason thou hadst for being so timid?

Gringoire (sadly indicating his poor face).—What is the good, Sire, if she does not perceive it?

The King (to SIMON).—My dear ambassador—

Simon (radiant with joy).—Ambassador!

The King.—Now thy daughter is provided for; prepare thyself to start for Flanders. (*Taking NICOLE and LOYSE by the arm.*) Art thou satisfied with me, Nicole?

Nicole.—Yes my Lord. You are a true King since you can pardon. And what is there sweeter? A man hanged can be useful to no living soul—

Loyse.—While a wood bird or a singing poet is good at least to announce that dawn is breaking and that spring is coming!

CURTAIN FALL.

THE PATH OF THE RUSSIAN THEATRE AND "LE COQ D'OR"

BY ALEXANDER BAKSHY

GREATLY bewildered, though obviously pleased, the English public has been watching for the last few years the display of wonderful theatrical wares which the fascinating Russian dancers and singers have chosen to bring over to this country.

Not only has the spectacle been a startling revelation of the wealth of artistic treasures possessed by that land of snow and vodka and downtrodden "moujicks," but the wares themselves have been dazzling with colours that seemed to overshadow everything of the kind produced at home. First came the ballet, with its feast of gorgeous scenery and transporting dancing, and the public abandoned itself to its Baksts, its Fokins, its Pavlovas and its Karsavinas. Next the opera came, and the melodies of Moussorgsky, Rimsky-Korsakov and Borodin and Chaliapin's most remarkable impersonations captured another corner in the public mind, previously so completely occupied by the Germans and Italians. The season which has just ended has provided the latest wonder: a kind of a cross between ballet and opera which has resulted in the striking production of "Le Coq d'Or." Finally we are promised a season of Russian drama as produced by the famous Moscow Art Theatre, and one can safely predict that it will meet with the same unreserved admiration which has been so generously bestowed upon its other Russian precursors on the English stage.

Admiring however as it does all these various manifestations of the newly discovered Russian Art, the English public seems to be completely in the dark as to their mutual interdependence, their inner significance and the bearing they have on the development of the Theatre, which nowadays everybody professes to take so closely to heart. Taken separately, as isolated phenomena, the Russian productions that have passed before the eyes of the London audiences have betrayed no signs of their origin: of the history of the various movements in Russia appertaining

to the theatre, their defeats and victories and the great research and experimental work of which these productions have been the copingstone. "Le Coq d'Or" is perhaps the most significant of them all, being the latest indication of the new principles which are now gradually gaining ground in the Russian theatre. It would, for this reason, be interesting to follow from whence this production has come, and whither it leads.

For the starting point of the modern theatrical movement in Russia one must go back to the end of the 'nineties when the Moscow Art Theatre was born at the initiative of the genius of M. Stanislavsky.

The essential feature of the new theatre was embodied in its peculiar name—"The Moscow *Art* Theatre." Why an "Art" theatre? one may ask. One does not hear of "art painting" or "art music." Music or painting can be good or bad, but "art music"—! The words seem redundant.

Yet there was sense in the appellation of the Moscow Theatre. The end of the last century found the Russian theatre drifting into a state of provincial commonness with slovenliness and vulgarity of detail, pretending to be realistic, flourishing side by side with an exhibition of real dramatic genius evinced by a few gifted actors of the old temperamental school. The backslidings were so obnoxious to the taste of the better educated and more cultured members of the public, that a thorough reform of the theatre seemed to brook no delay. The way of reforming it for the moment was quite clear: the inconsistencies of the scenery were to be vigorously eradicated, and the choice of plays was to agree with the higher intellectual demands of the "intelligentsia." As will be seen, in this respect the Moscow Art Theatre was pursuing the same object as the Repertory movement in England. The merit of the first lies in the thoroughness of its methods and the peculiar course it has adopted in carrying them out. The application of "art" principles to the inconsistencies of the scenery resulted in the substitution of the naturalistic imitations (if not the real things themselves) for the badly painted and conventional canvasses of the traditional theatre. The greater discrimination in the choice of plays brought to the stage the chief representatives of the modern drama, Tchekhov foremost amongst them, and with them the whole host of problems that characterize the world of the modern intellectuals.

These two essential factors, the naturalistic method of staging and the allegiance to the intellectual play, have ever since been

determining the development of the Moscow Art Theatre. Their joint course, however, has not been running very smoothly. The second factor contained elements that have been for the Theatre a source both of its strength and its weakness. If we look closely into the meaning of the naturalistic method (of which natural scenery and acting are of course essential components) we can easily see that it aims at establishing on the stage an objective world existing independently of and externally to the audience. But to realize any world objectively and at the same time externally is possible only in the terms of the natural phenomena which surround us in our daily life. Thus, however unreal the plot of a play may be, if we wish to give it a semblance of independent existence we are bound to materialise its ideal scenery and to substitute human psychology for its vague spiritualism.

And such has been the method of the Moscow Art Theatre. Whatever the world pictured in the play, the sole ambition of the Theatre has been to make it appear as something objectively given and independent of the audience. Tchekhov in his plays portrayed the world of soft and subtle emotions, in which his heroes appeared to move weak-willed and powerless, reflecting every impulse that came from any close source of disturbance. And the Art Theatre's method of producing Tchekhov's plays has been to create a semblance of a real world in which life is an all pervading stream of gentle emotions. It must be admitted that in these productions the Art Theatre has often been most successful, though not infrequently it has been guilty of attempting to materialize things which were naturally opposed to such a process. But its failure has been made more manifest in its productions of Maeterlinck and Ibsen. There is an atmosphere about the plays by these authors which absolutely defies any attempt of materialization on the stage. The only place where it can be fully realized is in the imagination of the audience, but to achieve this result one must resort to other methods than those employed by the Art Theatre.

The first amongst the Russian stage-managers to recognize the fact was M. Meyerhold who started as a collaborator of M. Stanislavsky, but soon parted ways with him, having come to the conclusion that naturalistic methods are inartistic in themselves and utterly unsuitable for production of symbolical or more or less abstract plays.

During one year of his association with the late Vera Kommissarjevskaja, the famous Russian actress, M. Meyerhold created a new school of the theatre, based on the principles which have since received the name of "stylisme" and "conventionalism." These names, however, though appropriate in themselves, fail to indicate the fundamental difference which distinguished the new movement from the Moscow Art Theatre. This was not so much an opposition between realism and conventionalism as that between the objective attitude towards a performance and the subjective one. The Art Theatre placed the centre of gravity of the production on the stage, M. Meyerhold transferred it to the audience. It would have scarcely made an atom of difference to the self-sufficiency and completeness of the Art Theatre's performance if the audience were to be entirely removed. On the other hand the very life would have been taken out of M. Meyerhold's productions if this experiment were applied to them.

Having, so to speak, taken sides with the audience, M. Meyerhold could not help rejecting the naturalistic methods. It was no longer a question of picking and choosing whatever one liked out of a complete reproduction of the world on the stage, but rather of evoking a fuller vision of the world by showing a glimpse of it on the boards. It was this subjective vision held by the audience, to which the stage production had to appeal and with which it was indissolubly bound up. And thus the ideas of "stylisme" and "conventionalism" were born to life.

There is a good deal of misconception prevalent with regard to the inner significance of these terms. They were coined to denote something departing from the methods of the realistic school which were supposed to give the only adequate expression of real life. But as was indicated above, all forms of the theatre, as well as of art in general, derive their significance from the attitude taken up by the spectator. So far as "stylisme" and "conventionalism" are concerned they are not more conventional, in the strict sense of the word, than realism itself. The Russian name for "conventionalism" is "conditionalism," and in this form it at once reveals its real nature. This may be expressed in a few words: "certain premises admitted, corresponding conclusions must needs be drawn." If one agrees to assign certain powers to various cards, or chess figures, or mathematical symbols, or government officials, the combinations which may arise in the course of play or calculation or political strife would

be neither arbitrary, nor unreal—they would be merely “conditional.” In the same way if one attempts to view the world from some peculiar standpoint according to the sentiment or attitude of mind, that dominates one at the moment, or is one’s individual peculiarity or national characteristic, the vision of the world one obtains is as real and inevitable in its logic as, say, the indisputable fact that the sky looks dark after the sun has set.

In other words “conventionalism” means an admission of legitimacy of various other standpoints besides the objectively external or realistic one. And “stylisme” gives expression to this admission by subjecting all the sentiments embodied in a work of art to the control of one principal sentiment chosen.

This method accepted, the success of a production will depend on the sensitiveness shown by the producer in discovering the leading sentiment of the play and his cleverness in finding appropriate forms for the expression of this sentiment. The task is by no means an easy one as has unfortunately too often been proved by many who have ventured to tackle it before they have acquired the necessary qualifications. M. Meyerhold himself has been perhaps one of the most successful regisseurs in productions of this kind. The same way be said of M. Fokin, who has applied M. Meyerhold’s methods to the domain of the ballet. There is however a difference between the two men. M. Meyerhold has inclined to mystical experiences, as has been shown by his partiality to Maeterlinck. The disposition of M. Fokin on the contrary has been more towards the elementary emotions of passion and love, only refracted through a prism of exotic exuberance and sensuality. Another point of difference between the two is that whilst M. Meyerhold, the originator of the school, has long ago modified his views to such an extent as to form an entirely new conception of the theatre, M. Fokin is still following the method of “style,” though in the application of it to his productions he never fails to impress one by the magnificence of staging *the originality* of his conceptions and the supreme mastery of all the subtleties of that radiant and elusive medium—the human body.

It has been left, however, to M. Alexander Benois, the eminent painter and historian of art, who has often declared himself as an opponent of M. Meyerhold’s latest theories, to lead the way in the introduction of the new principles into the domain of ballet. To his genius the amazing production of “Le Coq d’Or” owes its origin, marking a change in the history of ballet

that is fraught with consequences of tremendous magnitude and importance. It is to be hoped that other productions will further develop the features that are only tentatively indicated in this, the first experiment.

However, to understand the latter, one must again revert to the productions of M. Meyerhold. As was pointed out before, the one or another glimpse of the world (the "style") to be revealed on the stage has to find for itself a special form of expression. What forms are there at the command of the play-producer? There was no exhaustive answer to this question at the time when M. Meyerhold entered upon his research work. To gain any knowledge was possible only by experimenting, and this M. Meyerhold actually did. He produced a number of plays by Maeterlinck and found that the best form for expressing their intense religious feeling was to stage them in one plane with the actors playing close to the footlights against flat decorative scenery. The effect aimed at by such staging was to dematerialize the stage and to merge the action of the play in the sway of emotions of the audience. It was soon however discovered that the stage possesses certain properties which are by their very nature opposed to their being tampered with in any arbitrary way. Thus the attempt to create on the stage a space of two dimensions proved inwardly contradictory, since the principal element, the actor, is a being of three dimensions. Further, the pictorial appeal of the decorative scenery seemed to have an adverse effect on the unity of impression, detracting the attention of the audience from the acting. These and further observations led M. Meyerhold to the conviction that the peculiarities of the stage must frankly and unreservedly be admitted and that the only honest way of using the medium of the theatre is never to try to disguise the fact that it is a theatre. Thus the representation of life, realistic or conventional, has been subjected to a higher principle—of the "style" of the theatre—and "theatricality" has become the motto of the new movement. The evolution of the idea has not stopped at this. Its further development led to the recognition of the actor's personal dexterity, of the "mask" and the "grotesque" so characteristic of the Medieval Booth and the seventeenth century's Italian "Commedia dell'Arte," as the fundamental forms of the art of the Theatre. In a number of M. Meyerhold's productions in the Imperial and private theatres in St. Petersburg these principles

have been put to the test and proved a source of vital power that has infused fresh blood into the life of the Russian theatre.

We have now arrived at the point at which it will be possible to see in what relation "Le Coq d'Or" stands to these developments. The peculiar feature of the production—the division of parts between the singers and dancers—is an obvious application of the principle of "theatricality." The producer made no attempt to disguise the fact that it was an artificial device specially put up to enhance the scenic effect of the action. The expedient had nothing to do with the demands of realism or of the style of the plot. It was purely and frankly theatrical.

The question arises: How far has it been successful? The producer has been of course bound up by the form of the opera, but taking the production as it has been given, it is easy to find its shortcomings. In the first place, the chorus openly placed on the stage with the evident object of acting as chorus, during the performance soon lost its independent position, as the audience quickly learnt to overlook the discrepancy and to regard the dancers as the actual singers. If this was the desired effect then the whole arrangement, as everything sham, militates against good taste. It would be more appropriate in this case to regard the singers as a part of the orchestra and to treat them as the latter is treated, *i. e.*, hiding them from the audience so that the singing should appear as a mere accompaniment to the movements of the dancers. If on the contrary, as was alleged above, the singers were brought on the stage to act separately and independently the experiment has not been carried on to its logical conclusion. Having come near to the fundamental problem of the chorus and proscenium as connecting links between the stage and the audience, in which form it dominated the Ancient theatre, the producer of "Le Coq d'Or" has not ventured to face it or endeavored to find an appropriate solution. Instead he has preferred to go only half way—satisfied with the extent of originality already achieved and with the indisputable quaintness and poignancy of its effect, enhanced, as it has been, by the conscious use of grotesque scenery and acting. However, the boldness of the experiment, and the vistas of new theatrical forms it opens up before the public, greatly overbalance its shortcomings and fill one with confidence that further progress along the lines of the theatre-platform will not be long delayed.

AN INCIDENT.

BY LEONID ANDREYEV

Translated from the Russian by Leo Pasvolsky

Two persons take part in the action: a merchant, KRASNOBRUHOV, who confesses his crime, and a police official. There is also a policeman, GAVRILENKO, who brings in the repenting merchant, and some other living automata who carry him out.

The room resembles an unfurnished factory. The official barks abruptly into the telephone; his voice expresses anger and astonishment. GAVRILENKO leads in the merchant, holding him respectfully, with two fingers only. KRASNOBRUHOV is a fat, healthy-looking old man, with a red beard. Appears to be very much excited. He wears no hat, and his clothes are in suspicious disorder.

The Official (at the telephone).—Who? What? Why, of course, I can hear you if I am speaking to you. . . the murdered? Oh, yes! Yes, yes, two of them. . . Of course I can hear you. What is it? What are the motives? Well? I can't understand a thing. Who ran away? The wounded man ran away? Say, what are you talking about? Where did the wounded man run to?

Gavrilenko.—Your Honor, so I brought him. . .

*The Official.—Don't bother me! Oh, yes, so one ran away, and you're bringing over the other . . . and what about the murderers? What? Ran away also? Look here, don't you try to get me all muddled up with those motives of yours! What's that? I can't make out a blessed thing. Listen to me! If you want to make the report—Do you hear me?—Go ahead and make it! Don't whistle through your nose at me. I'm not a clarinet. What? What music? No, no, I say, I'm not a clarinet. Do you hear? Hello! Oh, damn you! Hello! (*Hangs up the receiver, throwing an angry side-glance at KRASNOBRUHOV. Then sits down.*)*

The Official.—Well? What do you want?

Gavrilenko.—So, your Honor, if you will permit me to report,

he blocked the traffic and the wagons. He came out in the middle of the market place, right in the middle of the traffic and hollered out that he was a merchant and had killed a man, and so I took him along. . . .

The Official.—Drunk? You old goat, drunk as a pig?

Gavrilenko.—Not at all, your Honor, quite sober. Only he stopped in the middle of the market place, right in the road and started hollering out, so that, your Honor, not a wagon could pass, and a big crowd collected. He hollered out ‘I killed a human being, brethren, I confess!’ And so I brought him over. It’s his conscience, your Honor.

The Official.—Why didn’t you say that at the beginning, you blockhead! Let him go, Gavrilenko, don’t hold him like a dog. Who are you?

Krasnobruhov.—Prokofi Karpovich Krasnobruhov, a merchant. (*Kneels down and says in a repentant tone.*) I confess, brethren! Take me, bind me! I killed a human being!

The Official (rising to his feet).—Oh! So that’s what you are!

Krasnobruhov.—I confess, brethren, I confess! Let me atone for my sins! I can’t stand it any longer! Take me, bind me—I killed a human being! I’m an unconfessed scoundrel, a criminal against nature! I killed a human being! (*Lowers his head to the ground.*)

Gavrilenko.—That’s the way he was hollering out there, your Honor, right in the middle of the traffic. . . .

The Official.—Shut up! Stand up, now! Tell me all about it. Whom did you kill?

Krasnobruhov (getting up heavily and smiting himself on the chest).—I murdered a human being. I want to atone for my crime. I can’t stand it any more. It’s too much for me. My conscience won’t let me live, brethren. Come on, shave me!¹

The Official.—Shave you!

Krasnobruhov.—Shave my head, put me in irons! I want to atone for my crime. (*Sobs aloud.*) I killed a human being. Forgive me, brethren! (*Falls on his knees again and bows to the ground.*)

The Official.—Up with you! Now talk like a sane man, will you?

Gavrilenko.—That’s just the way he did up there, your Honor, and started hollering. . . .

¹In Russia, half of the head of a convict is shaved just before he is deported to Siberia.—Translator’s Note.

The Official.—Shut up! What's your name? Is this your trunk?]

Krasnobruhov (gets up again and wipes his tears and perspiration).—What trunk? I don't know about any trunk. We deal in vegetables. Oh, Lord! In vegetables. . . .

The Official.—What trunk! Don't know anything about the trunk, hey? But when you stuffed him into the trunk, you knew all about it, eh? And when you shipped his body by freight, you knew it, eh?

Krasnobruhov.—I don't know about any trunks. Wish I could get a drink of water. (To GAVRILENKO.) Give me a drink of water, boy, I'm all hoarse. (Sighs heavily.) O—oh.

The Official (to GAVRILENKO).—Stay where you are. And you don't know which trunk it is? Gavrilenko, how many trunks have we here?

Gavrilenko.—Four trunks, your Honor, and one suit-case. We've opened three, your Honor, and haven't had time for the fourth yet.

The Official (to the merchant).—Did you hear that?

The Merchant (sighing).—I don't know about any trunks.

The Official.—Where is yours then?

The Merchant.—My what?]

The Official.—How should I know whom you killed there, or cut, or strangled? Where's the body?

The Merchant.—The body? Oh, I guess its all rotted away now. (Falls on his knees again.) I confess, brethren, I killed a human being! And buried the body, brethren. I thought I could deceive the people, but I see now that I can't do it. My conscience won't let me. I can't sleep or rest at all now. Everything's dark before my eyes and all I have now is my suffering. I want to atone for my sins. Strike me, beat me!

The Official.—Up with you! Speak plainly now!

The Merchant (gets up and mops his face).—I am speaking plain enough, I reckon. I thought that after some time I'd forget it, perhaps, and find joy in life and burn candles to the poor soul. But no! My torment is unnatural. I haven't a minute of rest. And every year it gets worse and worse. I thought it might pass away. And now I confess, brethren! I was sorry for the property. We deal in vegetables and I was ashamed for my wife and children. How could it happen so suddenly? I was a good man all the time, and then, a scoundrel, a murderer, a criminal against nature!

The Official.—Speak to the point, I tell you!

The Merchant.—But I am speaking to the point. Every night I cry and cry. And my wife says to me, says she, ‘What’s the use of crying here, Karpich, and shedding tears on the pillows? Better go to the people and bow down to the ground and accept the suffering. What difference does it make to you?’ says she. ‘You’re pretty old already; let them send you to Siberia, you can live there, too. And we’ll pray for you here. Go on, Karpich, go on!’ So we cried together, and cried, and couldn’t decide it. It’s hard, it’s frightful, brethren! When I look around me. . . . We deal in vegetables; you know, carrots, and cabbages and onions. . . . (*Sobs.*) And she says to me, ‘Go on, Karpich, don’t be afraid. Drink some tea, have a little fun, and then go and bear your cross!’—And I tried doing it once. She gave me a clean shirt, and treated me to tea with honey, and combed my hair with her white hand,—but I couldn’t do it! I was too weak! Lost my courage! I got as far as the market place and came out into the middle of the street, and suddenly a car came up . . . So I turned into a saloon. I confess, my friends, instead of repentance, I spent three days and three nights in the saloon, polishing the bar and licking the floor. I don’t know where all that drink went to. That’s what conscience does to you!

The Official.—Yes. That’s conscience for you, all right! But I’m very glad, very glad. . . . Gavrilenko, did you hear?

Gavrilenko.—That’s just the way he was hollering there, your Honor.

The Official.—Shut up! But go ahead, my friend.

The Merchant.—I’m no friend, I’m an enemy of mankind, a criminal against nature. Take me, bind me! I killed a human being! I’m a murderer! Come now, bind me! Shave me!

The Official.—Yes, yes, I’m very glad to see you repenting. Gavrilenko, do you happen to remember this case? What cases have we?

Gavrilenko.—Don’t remember, your Honor!

The Merchant.—Bind me!

The Official.—Yes, yes, I can understand your noble impatience, but . . . And when did it happen? Of course, we know everything, but there are so many cases, you know! Look how many trunks we have. It’s like a freight station . . . Whom did you . . . when was it?

The Merchant.—When? Oh, I guess it must be about

twenty-one years. Twenty-one and a little extra may be. About twenty-two, you might say.

The Official.—Twenty-two? What do you want then?

The Merchant.—I thought I'd get over it. But no! It gets worse and worse every year, more and more bitter every day. In the beginning I didn't have any visions, at least. And now visions come to me. I confess, brethren, I'm a murderer!

The Official.—But, but allow me . . . Twenty-two years . . . What guild² do you belong to?

The Merchant.—The first. We sell wholesale.

The Official.—Yes, yes, Gavrilenko, a chair. Take a seat, please.

The Merchant.—Wish I could get a drink, I'm all hoarse.

The Official.—And so you had tea with honey again?

The Merchant.—Yes, of course.

The Official.—Gavrilenko, two glasses of tea—make one weak . . . You take your tea weak, don't you? Your name, please?

The Merchant.—Prokofi Karpovich Krasnobruhov. But when are you going to bind me, your Honor?

The Official.—Take a seat, please. And, Prokofi Karpich, isn't that your store on the corner? A wonderful sign you have there! That's real art. You know, sometimes, I am astonished at the artistic beauty of our signs. Why, sometimes my friends ask me, why I don't go to art-galleries, the Hermitage, and so on, you know . . . And I say, 'Why should I go there? Why, my whole district is an art-gallery.' Ye-es! (GAVRILENKO returns with the tea.) I'm sorry, but we have no honey here. The office, you know.

The Merchant.—I'm not thinking about honey now. I left the business to my children. Let them have it now. But when are you going to bind me, your Honor? I wish you'd hurry it up.

The Official.—Bind you? Gavrilenko, get out of here! And next time you see a dignified person on the market place, treat him with more respect, do you hear? Where is his hat?

Gavrilenko.—It was lost there in the street. The people left nothing of it. So, your Honor, when he came out there, hollering and . . .

The Official.—Get out! Yes, there's people for you. How

²Russian merchants belong to one of three "guilds" according to the size of their business. The first is the highest and requires the largest license-money.—Translator's Note.

can you ever make them understand the fundamentals of law and order, so to speak? I'm sick and tired of them. My friends sometimes ask me, 'How is it, Pavel Petrovich, that we never hear a pleasant word from you?' And how can you expect anything like that? I'd be glad myself, you know, I'm just dying for society conversation. There are so many things in the world, you know! The war, the Cross of St. Sophia, and,—in general,—politics, you know!

The Merchant.—I wish you'd bind me now.

The Official.—Bind you? Why, that's a pure misunderstanding, Prokofi Karpich, a pure misunderstanding. But why don't you drink your tea? Your worthy feelings do you honor and, in general, I'm very glad but—the time limitation. You must have forgotten about the limitation! I hope it wasn't your parents.

The Merchant.—Oh, no, no, not my parents. It was a girl . . . in the woods . . . and I buried her there.

The Official.—Now you see! I understood right away that it wasn't your parents. That's not the kind of man you are! Of course, if it were your parents, you know, well, your father or mother, then there's no time limitation. But for your girl, and in criminal cases generally, murders and so on, everything is covered by the ten years' limitation. So you didn't know that? Is that so? Of course, we'll have to make an investigation, a confirmation, but that's nothing. You shouldn't have excited yourself so. Go back home and sell your vegetables, and we'll be your customers. . . What about the tea, though?

The Merchant.—How can I think about the tea, when I feel as if there were hot coals under me?

The Official.—You shouldn't have tormented yourself so, no indeed! Of course, you weren't acquainted with the Law. You should have gone to a lawyer, instead of to your wife . . .

The Merchant (falls on his knees).—Bind me! Don't make me suffer!

The Official.—Well, now, now, please get up! Why, we can't bind you. You're a queer fellow! Why, if we were to bind every one like you, we shouldn't have enough rope to go round! Go home now and . . . We have your address . . .

The Merchant.—But where shall I go to? I've come here. Why don't you bind me, instead of saying that? There is no rope, you say. What's the use of mocking me? I came to you in earnest and you make fun of me! . . . (*sighing*) But,

of course, I deserve it. I repent. Bind me! Beat me! Mock me, brethren! Strike this old face of mine; don't spare my beard! I'm a murderer! (*Falls down on his knees.*)

The Official (impatiently).—But look here, that's too much! Get up! I'm telling you to go home; I've no time to waste with you. Go home!

The Merchant (without rising).—I've no home, brethren, no asylum except the prison! Bind me. (*Shouting*) Shave me!

The Official (also shouting).—What do you take me for? A barber? Get up!

The Merchant.—I won't get up! I'm repenting before you and you can't refuse me! My conscience torments me! I don't want your tea. Bind me! Tie my hands! Shave me!

The Official (calling).—Gavrilenko! (*The policeman enters.*) Just listen to the way he shouts here! With that conscience of his, eh? As if I had time to bother with you . . . Gavrilenko, raise him!

(*GAVRILENKO attempts to raise the merchant, who resists him.*)

Gavrilenko (muttering).—That's just the way he was hollering . . . I can't raise him, your Honor, he won't get up.

The Official.—Ah, he won't? Petruchenko! Sidorenko! Youshchenko! Raise him!

(*The policemen run in, and the four raise the merchant, while the official becomes even more angry.*)

The Official.—Just listen to this! He goes to the very market place and blocks the traffic! Just wait, I'll teach you to block the traffic; I'll teach you to shout in a public place!

The Merchant.—You don't dare! Bind me, or I'll send in a complaint. I don't care! I'll go to the minister himself! I killed a human being! My conscience won't let me live! I repent!

The Official.—Your conscience? My goodness, he's happy about it! And where was your conscience before this? Why didn't you come sooner? Now you are ready enough to go into the market place and create a disorder! Why didn't you come sooner?

The Merchant.—Because I hadn't suffered enough before. And now I can't stand it any more; that's why I came! You daren't refuse me!

The Official.—Hadn't suffered enough? Listen to that mockery. Here we are looking and searching for them, we've got five trunks here and a special bloodhound, and he . . .

He hid himself, the rascal, and not a sound. As though he weren't there. And then he gets out into the market place and starts shouting 'My conscience. Bind me!' Here we are, breaking our heads over the new cases and he comes around with that girl of his . . . Get out! Get out of here!

The Merchant.—I won't go. You daren't drive me back! I've already said good-by to my wife. I won't go!

The Official.—Then you'll say 'Good-morning' to your wife again. My goodness, he said 'Good-by' to his wife, and drank some tea with honey, and put a clean shirt on! I'll bet you had to pour twenty glasses down your throat, before you filled up. And now he comes around here! Get out!

Krasnobruhov.—And did you see me drink it? Maybe only half of it was tea and the other half my bitter tears! I won't go! Send me to Siberia! Put me in irons! Shave my head!

The Official.—There's no prison for you. Go and hire a room in Siberia, if you want to. We've got no prison for you.

The Merchant.—You'll send me to prison! I won't go anywhere else, do you hear me? Brethren, I want to suffer for my deed; I want to go to Siberia for twenty years. I'm a murderer. I killed a human being.

The Official.—No Siberia for you, do you hear? Why didn't you come sooner? We can't send you to prison now. We haven't room enough for real ones. And he comes around here with his conscience! He suffers, the scoundrel! Go ahead and suffer. There is no prison for you.

The Merchant.—So you won't send me . . . ?

The Official.—No!

The Merchant.—You'll shave my head, all right.

The Official.—Go and shave yourself!

The Merchant.—No! You shave me. (*Attempts to kneel down; bends his legs at the knees, but is held in the air by the four policemen.*) Brethren, have pity on me! Bind me! Haven't you got a piece of cord somewhere? Any old piece. I won't run away even if you tie me with a piece of twine. My conscience won't let me. Any old piece. Isn't there any room for me at all in prison, your Honor? I don't need much room, your Honor. Please bind me and shave off my gray hair! [Please let me walk at least over the edge of the Vladimir³ trail and get

³The trail through Russia and western Siberia, over which gangs of convicts are led into the penal colonies.—Translator's Note.

covered with its dust.] Give me the shameful badge⁴ Cain's badge! Lead me to the hangman, let him torture me!

The Official.—Gavrilenko! Take him out! Sidorenko! Help him!

Krasnobruhov (resists them).—I won't go! I won't go if you drag me! Shave my head!

The Official.—Youshchenko! Give a hand! You'll go, all right.

Krasnobruhov (struggling).—Shave me! I'll complain. You have no right!

The Official.—Gavrilenko, carry him out!

Gavrilenko.—Get him by the leg! Catch him under the arms!

Krasnobruhov (struggling).—You won't carry me out!

The Official.—Go on, now!

(The merchant is carried out with care and respect. The official smooths out his moustache and raises up his glass of tea, which proves to be cold.)

The Official.—Vasilenko! A glass of hot tea! Oh, the deuce . . . Hot tea! Yes . . . Is the wounded man here?

Vasilenko.—He's dead now, your honor, dead and cold.

The Official.—Get out of here!

CURTAIN

⁴On the back of each convict's coat there is a badge, that resembles the ace of diamonds.—Translator's Note.

ANARCHY IN THE THEATRE

BY ALFRED CAPUS

Translated from the French by Barrett H. Clark

DURING the past fifteen years our dramatic literature has lost its appearance of regularity, so that to-day it is scarcely recognizable. We can discover no general end toward which it is striving, no school, no dominating influence. As a result, methodical souls are profoundly perturbed. There are people who insist that a play, a book, a picture, must immediately fall into some distinct category: the picture must belong to some school of painting, the book or the play to some definite literary genre. A work of art which does not so fit into their scheme of things appears to them an inferior creation. They are possessed by the mania for exact valuation and definite judgment. These people will never know the sweet joy, the poetry, of uncertainty. They are naturally very severe on the question of the contemporary stage, and it is they who have circulated the report that the drama is in a decline. Certain of them, less prompt to lose hope, are satisfied with saying that it is in a period of transition.

Since it is universally acknowledged that Corneille, Molière, and Racine will never again be equalled, and since every Frenchman is educated with this exasperating idea, it is evident that the decadence of the theatre began with the death of Racine, who was the last of the three in point of time. In proportion as we get away from these great masters does this decadence become apparent, and periods of transition succeed one another with regrettable haste. We must either take our stand in this matter, or else make up our minds not to repeat expressions which have been so abused that they have lost their original force.

What is and will always remain true, is that no classification of contemporaneous works is possible: there will always be a confusion of *genres* and an apparent disorder. Among the many principles which have recently suffered is that of the separation

of *genres*. It was, however, a harmless principle and very convenient; it was a sure and ever-ready guide, enabling us to distinguish tragedy, tragi-comedy, comedy of character, comedy of manners, topical comedy, light comedy and vaudeville. Somewhere in the intervals between these *genres*, place was made, as a sort of refuge, for the thesis play and the family drama. Hard and fast rules for the drama were on the point of being formulated: order reigned in the halls of dramatic art. But suddenly anarchy made its appearance and, when it was least expected, the various forms were thrown into indescribable confusion. Comedies of manners appeared bordering on tragedy, and thesis plays that seemed at times like farces. These startling mixtures seemed made to disconcert; they gave place to new classifications: the social drama, the play of ideas, which served only to obscure the situation. If, for instance, a social drama is a play which portrays only the struggle between capital and labor, then there is not a play on marriage, the family, divorce, finance, which is not also a social drama. The term therefore is of no possible use in this new matter of classification.

Is it necessary to remark that the term "a play of ideas" is still more vague? Whenever a writer has some idea which he believes to be original on the subject of philosophy, politics, art, history, or science, he must impose on that idea the burden of lies and conventions of the stage, bend and torture it until it fits the rigid frame of the theatre, with all its tinsel, its trickery, and its false light; and he must of necessity lose his respect for his original idea. When the idea is not new, when the dramatist wishes to make it known to the public at large, his task is, I shall not say any less noble, but more personal, more intimate, as he is the go-between of the philosopher or the moralist. His business is to do what the philosopher cannot do, what the philosopher does not pretend to do: show men life with the aid of living beings; stir in them every sentiment, every passion, by means of the dramas of life which these sentiments and passions call forth; stir them in masses and force them to look at life for a little while in a sympathetic mood.

This does not mean that the dramatist should remain indifferent to the great realities of everyday life; if he wilfully ignores these, he will lose the greater part of his influence over the public of to-day. The various ideas and intellectual developments of the day, the ebb and flow of our ethical ideals, he must know and take into account. He must study with care the

efforts which his generation is making to penetrate into the mysteries of knowledge, even though they be apparently foreign to his own art. But the ideas which are floating about him should rather impregnate his work than become the principal end of it. They should likewise float about his characters, augment the intensity of their "scenic" life, and make them more "shaded," more real.

The oldest definition of a play is that it is an "animated representation of life." That definition will never lose its significance. But this representation, in order to be exact and in order to exercise the influence it should over a modern audience, has of recent years faced problems of all sorts, problems which dramatic art has not up to the present been forced to face. Hence this appearance of hesitation and anarchy; for the first evidence of an irruption of this kind in the life of our time is to be observed in the contemporary stage; hence the incoherence and disorder. As I have said, the first of the time-honored principles to fall has been the principle of the separation of *genres*; nowadays *genres* are mixed, and so they shall remain, or if they are again separated into distinct groupings, the groupings will be far different from those of the past. This principle was like a rigid frame which kept the writer well within certain defined limits. It possessed the advantage of making unity and harmony easy to attain. It indicated to the audience at once the precise direction in which the play was going and what way it was to end. The spectator came to the theatre knowing what sort of play he was going to see; to-day that spectator is no more. He was a being more distinct and recognizable than any we have to-day: he was either an aristocrat, merchant or tradesman, artisan, or workman. He felt himself separated from his neighbor by differences of education, class, and customs and manners. In the theatre he occupied a place corresponding not only with his fortune, but above all, with his social status. I shall not, however, pretend to assert that there are no longer any class distinctions or barriers between the classes. The family that sits in the top gallery on a Sunday, and the group of fashionably-attired ladies, and gentlemen in dress-suits, who sit in one of the downstairs boxes, are undoubtedly separated in actual life by something far subtler and more complicated than a mere difference of fortune, but that difference is not the irreducible social difference. In the course of a single generation, chance, education, and the continual metamorphoses of modern life can leap the gap, and that family

in the top gallery in the next generation might well sit, not in the least surprised, as refined spectators in that main-floor box.

The mind of the theatre audience has profoundly changed during the past twenty years. What unexpected thrills run through it! What new contacts are felt! What subtle inter-communication between the different sections of that audience! What new types, what new states of mind, what mystery, are there! And how impossible it is to move them all with the same old tricks and the same old speeches!

Is it to be wondered at, therefore, that the drama, which is so impressionable, has radically changed its aspect? There is nothing more natural than that this public, the elements of which are constantly undergoing such marked changes, which has forgotten or nearly forgotten its class prejudices—which feels at least that it is on the point of forgetting them—which lives haphazard amid the tumult of changing ideas as naturally as it used to live in order and regularity—there is nothing more natural than that the public should not demand of dramatic art the same order, the adherence to outworn formulas, the facile division into *genres* and fixed forms. As it has forgotten its class prejudices, for the most part, so has it forgotten its prejudices against fixed forms. It judges now according to the personal and immediate emotional effect. It is willing to see on the stage any form that the dramatist chooses to employ: comedy or tragedy—or both at once. It is no longer superstitious on this point. Every possible conception of life, every point of view, is accepted beforehand, for the audience is aware that life to-day may present many aspects of itself at the same time. It cares little for schools and methods, provided the dramatist furnishes it with the sensations that are necessary, or those which surprise and interest, in a real and living play.

Provided you fulfil this requirement, you may mix your *genres*, violate every law, —no matter how many beautiful master-pieces have been written according to these laws. It must be borne in mind that the rules did not owe their origin to esthetic considerations alone: the theatre is bound by greater rules, by the very social laws which are so fatally intertwined with the stage. I might almost say that as the classes tend to intermingle more and more, and as individuals assume greater importance in life, so do the dramatic *genres* intermingle; and the drama tends to follow only such rules as are imposed upon it by the temperament and personal methods of the dramatist.

The theatres of Paris have undergone the necessary changes in quick order. Just consider for a moment, and you will see indications everywhere of this anarchy of which I speak. Where is the "Gymnase" style of play? Where is that of the "Palais-Royal?" Where are the special styles that were once seen on every boulevard? The Odéon has lost its distinction, and the Comédie Française, in its turn, has received and is now nobly bearing up under, the violent shock of the new generation.

This general anarchy of the theatre, which is an indubitable fact, cannot, without injustice, be considered a sign of decadence. It is the result of the prodigious efforts which have been made in every department of the theatre; efforts which will soon, I doubt not, evolve a new method of construction, a new way of developing; they will also reform the art of the actor and every branch of the mechanics of the stage.

New laws, new formulas, new *genres*, will probably take the place of the old ones; we shall soon be clear of this "transitional period," and once again order will reign for a time in the realm of the theatre.

SUNDAY ON SUNDAY GOES BY

BY HENRI LAVEDAN

Translated from the French by Mary Sibyl Holbrook

The FATHER, *a man of seventy-two, very erect, wearing the decoration of the Legion of Honor.*

The SON, *just twenty-four.*

In the month of August, on a bright sunny day. Both the above dressed as tourists, are standing on a little plateau out in the country: on either side, rather steep slopes, somewhat wooded, run down to a narrow river.

Father.—You know, my boy, I promised you that at the beginning of your twenty-fifth year, I would take you on a great journey.

Son.—It's my first one.

Father.—I am keeping my promise. We are in Alsace. We've done at a stretch, without stopping except to sleep a bit, the distance from Paris to Strasbourg, from Strasbourg to Niederbronn, by way of the Haguenau crossroads. Here we are at the gates of a village called Froeschviller. Look.

Son.—Yes.

Father.—And don't miss a single one of my words.

Son.—I am listening.

Father.—You know that place we came through an hour ago without getting out? The one you asked me the name of? It was Reichschoffen.

Son.—Reichschoffen.

Father.—That town over there in the plain is Woerth: the line of silver is the river Soultzbachel, flowing into the Sauer.

Son.—Oh! So it was here!

Father.—It was here, boy, in this place, twenty-seven years ago, on a Sunday morning, the seventh of August, that, after very nearly dying, I was taken prisoner.

Son.—You are going to show me the spot?

Father.—Yes. You were not born then, for I did not get

married until after I was out of prison and back in France. I had you very late. I wanted a son. For the revenge-to-be. When you were born I prayed God to let me live long to bring you when you had grown up to manhood, to the places where I had suffered the most. . . . He has spared me. I thank him for it.

Son.—So do I, father.

Father.—I have told you the story of the battle. I won't go over all that again. Under what goes by the name of Reichshoffen there are three phases, Woerth, Froeschviller and Reichshoffen.

Son.—I know Woerth was the battle—

Father.—And a desperate one—desperate—

Son.—Froeschviller was the defeat—

Father.—It was, but a heroic one; defeat contested every inch of the way—our troops turned back on both wings, forced to give up one stand after another. And then from Froeschviller to Reichshoffen—

Son.—That was the rout.

Father.—Don't call it that. Say the retreat. And it was frightful, I can tell you. No more ranks kept—all arms confused and lost in the disorder and panic . . . the dying falling on the dead, the artillery passing over the dying at a gallop—ghastly!

Son.—And what about the cuirassiers?

Father.—The cuirassiers?

Son.—Yes. Just what did they do in the fight?

Father.—The cuirassiers represent two struggles, understand? Two supreme efforts risked, lost in advance, useless, sublime, two efforts that only Frenchmen make, one at Morsbronn. . . .

Son.—And the other?

Father.—At Elsashausen. But we'll come to all that later . . . don't be impatient. I am going to take you over the ground of the manoeuvres. Our trip is young yet. It has only begun.

Son.—I wish it were done.

Father.—Why so?

Son.—Because it makes me feel sick already.

Father.—You are too sensitive, lad. You were talking of cuirassiers . . . you need to put some buckram in yourself. You aren't through yet.

Son.—Go on.

Father.—I was in command. My regiment was a part of the Third division, which was fighting the fifth Prussian Corps. The sixth of August fell on a Saturday—that spire you see is the Froeschviller church . . . but not the same one . . . it has been rebuilt. I'm telling you all this higgledy-piggledy, the memories fairly choke me. Look at that knoll over there—see it?

Son.—With a cross on it?

Father.—Yes. Oh! how it takes me back. It was there I stationed my main guard, the night before the battle. Nearly all night it rained steadily. (*He looks through his glasses*) And over there—what's that? More crosses? Your eyes are good.

Son.—Two, yes, three crosses. And still farther off, others still. What a lot there are.

Father.—Oh! You all but walk on them, here. They are a proverb, the crosses in this region. Not to mention the pyramids and the memorial statues. How many of my comrades are there! Poor old chaps. Friends I made at St. Cyr, where we trained—Anglade, who was Captain of the Turcos: De Bonneville—What's-his-name—that jolly dog that played the piano like a woman—I can't think of his name. Isn't that ridiculous? It will come to me. Yes, a lot of nice boys met a brave death here.

Son.—But what about you? That time you were in danger. You have never told me about it.

Father.—Purposely. I was keeping it to tell you when you were grown up, a man capable of understanding. Besides, it is nothing very serious. I'll tell the story now in a couple of words. Wounded by a bullet in the forehead, I lost consciousness and was left for dead on the battlefield, and not till next day did I come to my senses—the morning of the seventh. Stretched out in a furrow at the edge of the road, I was dreaming dimly of victory—of some glorious encounter or other—when a violent commotion shook me out of the torpor in which I had been sunken for the last sixteen hours. All at once I remembered. I opened my eyes. The sky was clear. I felt the earth damp with dew . . . when suddenly I heard shooting. It was going on around me, almost on me. I expected to get my death-blow on the head close to the muzzle. I raised myself up and saw a Prussian kneeling and firing, with his gun resting on my chest, and as far as I could see, there were others—hundreds of them. Had the battle started up again? For a moment that was what I thought. But no. I may as well tell you right off, because you would never guess. Oh! what a nation! They were out

for practice. Do you get me? Training, if you please! Yes, on the day after the victory, after hardly any rest at all they were out manoeuvring on the field, on the real thing, still warm and smoking, among the wounded, the dead, the debris, the severed limbs. In the charnel-house, in the pools of blood mantled by the chill of the night . . . those gentlemen were wading about training their marksmen with blank cartridges, just for nothing—merely not to get rusty. . . .

Son.—How disgraceful!

Father.—But what a lesson.

Son.—And then what happened?

Father.—I thought it was fighting. I stood up clutching a cavalry-sword that I had found lying beside me, and had picked up. The Prussians surrounded me, and I was bracing myself to sell my skin for more than its worth, for all the world as if it had been the skin of a major. I intended to stand my ground. The fusillade had stopped. There were eight or ten of them upon me—when, all at once—the clatter of a galloping horse. Up rides a superior officer, who cries, “Hold on, there.” They draw aside. He salutes me: “Your sword, Captain. Allow *me* to ask you for it.” It was the Crown Prince. He was really very decent.

Son.—And then?

Father.—I gave it to him, to be sure. I did not want to die.

Son.—Why not?

Father.—Because I wanted to have a son. Well, that’s the story. Stow it away in your knapsack. You know that afterwards, when I was a prisoner . . . there were some rough times too. (*At this moment the noise of drums is heard: the speaker’s features contract.*) But God forgive me—listen! One would almost say . . .

Son (who is also listening intently).—Drums?

Father.—Yes . . . and the fifes. Those cursed fifes!

Son.—It must be they!

(*A peasant goes by.*)

Father (accosting the man).—Do you speak French?

Peasant (coming up and guessing that he is speaking to a soldier).—Yes Captain.

Father (to his son, referring to the peasant).—Here’s one now—a genuine one. (*To the peasant, looking searchingly at him.*) So it’s still going on, is it?

Peasant.—All the time, Captain.

Father.—You're the right sort, my man. That's what we hear, I suppose?

Peasant.—Yes. Just now they are having manoeuvres.

Son.—They are coming nearer.

Peasant.—Here they are.

(They come into sight at the end of the road. Their pointed helmets—the little flat drums—their booted thighs—now their brutal faces—can be seen—bull-dog jaws, green eyes with red lashes. And the sound of the fifes—sharp as knives that tear at the heart-strings.)

Son.—Come on, father. Let us go.

Father.—No, stay? To-day, we can let them pass, but Sunday on Sunday is going by—

Son.—But with a difference.

Peasant.—Good-day to you.

Father.—Till we meet again.

(The column marches away.)

GIOVANNI PASCOLI

BY ANNE SIMON

“The roses live by eating of their own beauty, and then die:
His song is the funeral chant for his own death of every moment.”

AS I was reading for the first time Gabriele D’Annunzio’s exquisite tribute to his brother-poet Pascoli, this couplet from Noguchi’s poem, “The Poet,” flashed through my mind with persistent recurrence. After longer meditation, I knew why the analogous association revealed itself to me. The Japanese poet and the Italian poet are intimately related by their love of Nature, and by their ability to see life always through eyes of wonder and surprise. Both of them seem reverent and almost breathless before the miracle of a blade of grass, the upward flight of the lark, the cry of the wind, and the exquisite beauty of each moment. It might not be quite clear to the casual reader, but nevertheless it is true that Pascoli’s poetry was woven with the threads of sorrow; and it is equally true that his “funeral chant” reverberates through the structure of many of his poems. One realises that he felt this world was not his home; he seemed to suffer from a world-strangeness. Constantly searching for the inner reality, the soul of things, and being conscious of his inability to lay bare the reality behind the exterior, the inner soul, he was consumed by the “eating of his own beauty,” and died. He was happy in touching visible things, yet always seemed to be looking for a casement out of which his soul might fly.

Quite accidentally I came across D’Annunzio’s “Contemplation of Death.” The book is divided into four sections, the first one being reminiscent of Pascoli. D’Annunzio, the exotic poet, pays to Pascoli, the gentle poet, a kind of homage that is both acute and affectionate. D’Annunzio’s contemplation on Pascoli’s death is written with a limpidity and charm that is most unusual. Something far more subtle and impressive emanates from this

appreciation than has ever been evoked by any other biographical analysis of him. It is interesting to see that although it is D'Annunzian in treatment, yet it is surrounded by a distinctly Pascolian nebula. He writes with great nobility of word and phrase, and shows a deep sentiment in his friendship of which many considered him incapable. The entire essay is not only a beautiful thought, but is equally beautiful in its literary workmanship, and in the original, offers the reader many flawless pages. He has accomplished that most difficult and elusive thing; he has described a "state of soul," and surpassed even himself in the acquirement of a certain sort of admirable restraint.

Undoubtedly Giovanni Pascoli was one of Italy's greatest poets. He was born in 1855, at San Mauro, near Rimini, and on the last day of the year. If it is true that temperament is influenced or determined by the month of one's entrance into the world, then we can easily understand his pre-disposition to a gentle sort of melancholy and his intimate understanding of the anguish of the world.

He studied at Bologna under Carducci, and later had the honor of being his successor in the chair of Literature in the University of Bologna. He taught Greek and Latin, yet always with uneasiness and discomfort, for it seemed almost a profanation to be compelled to analyse the sacred pages of Virgil and Homer to mere children who looked upon them only as bridges necessary to education. D'Annunzio has called him "*Il Virgilio di nostro tempo*," and also "*L'ultimo figlio di Virgilio*."

The following beautiful poetic tribute was written on the eve of D'Annunzio's exile from Italy, and evidently after Pascoli's death.

TO GIOVANNI PASCOLI

BY GABRIELE D'ANNUNZIO

(From "*Alcioni*," *Libro III delle Laudi*)

My song, before I depart for my exile,
go along the Serchio, and ascend the hill
to the last son of Virgil, divine
offspring,

the one who understands the language of
the birds, the cry of the falcons, the
plaint of the doves, the one who sings
with a pure heart to the flowers as well as
to the tomb,

the one who dared to look earnestly
in the black and azure eye of the eagle
of Pella, and who heard the song of Sappho the beautiful
on the monsoon wind.

The son of Virgil rests silently
under a cypress and waits not for
thee. Fly! Thou art not brought by
the woman of Eresso, but thou canst go alone;

he will receive thee with his generous
hand; he who perhaps was intent
on the alternation of his woof, or on
the bees, or "the late hour of Barga,"
or on his eternal verse.

Perhaps he has the book of his
divine parent on his knee (does he gather
now the lucky four-leaved clover

and use it to mark in his
book where Titiro sings, or where
Enea hears the response of Cumea
in the maze of the mountains?)

His sister with the smooth
hair has dropped her needles now
that it is late, and put away the linen
in the chest which is fragrant with
lavender.

Perhaps she is with him, sad because she
saw an ominous group of swallows on the
eaves. And thou O song, wilt say to him, "Son
of Virgil, here is the palm.

As an immaculate guest, thy dear brother, who is
about to depart, sends me to thee; for thy
noble head he shaped a garland with
his art."

And who today should crown the poet,
if not I myself, the poet of solitude?
The ignorant Scita and the masked
Medo are the sycophants of Glory;

and, if barbarity generates new monsters
on the wind, no more shall Febo Apollo
descend against this horror as castigator,
with his silver bow,

because thou, Poet, art the custodian
of the purest forms. With unflagging
pulse thy ancestral gentle blood
lives in all thy images.

Thy thought nourishes and illumines
men, just as the placid olive-tree
produces for man its pallid berry
that is both food and light.

Therefore accept this fraternal garland
that I, as messenger, bring thee.
It is not heavy . . . it is made of the
eternal frond, but it is very light.

It is made of a slender branch
that grew between the Alps and
the sea where that Heart of Hearts
found its savage pyre, and where
Buonarotti found his inspiration.

In the bending of the stem the
Artificer saw the ancient wounds
shine upon the Sagro and upon the
Altissimo the desired peplus of Nike.

Another invisible Mountain
ascend and that thou also ascendest but on the
opposite cliff. Alone, and far-away, an
immortal anxiety impels us both.

And did not our brave hearts
promise to meet one day,
on the summit? That
day, we will sing the same song
from the summit.

So, my song, tell him this. And
to his sister, whom thou mayst see
crying softly, give the last lily
of the sea that I gathered.

Pascoli was undoubtedly a great Latinist, and Virgilian in spirit as well as in his scholasticism. He was the acknowledged leader of the Classicists, but through no claim of his own. Although he was permeated by classical tradition, yet he held the people by his choice of subject as well as by his technique. He was thirty-seven years old when he published his first volume of poems.

In personality, he was modest and gentle; mentally he was healthy and robust, and for this reason found himself secure in his literary position, for at that time people were weary of trying to penetrate the so-called obscurities of Carducci, and just as impatient with the eroticism of D'Annunzio. He loved truth and sincerity, passionately. D'Annunzio gives us a vivid picture of his shyness, his reserved speech, and the simplicity of his tastes. His most dominant trait was his love of Nature. His

love for birds is easily seen by scanning the titles of his poems in the index. We may change slightly one of Hawthorne's utterances and say, "his feeling for flowers and birds was very exquisite, and seemed not so much a taste as an emotion."

Pascoli is not the poet for those who crave the delineation of erotic things, but appeals strongly to those who care for simplicity. He is thoroughly wholesome. He writes about humble things, but he had that mystical power the real poet must have—the power to invest these commonplace things with an aura hitherto unseen by us.

THE NEST

From the wild-rose bush hangs the
skeleton of a nest. In the Spring what
joy used to come from it, making the
shore resound with the rapture
of the birds!

Now there is left only a feather, that
hesitates at the invitation of the wind. It
palpitates lightly, like an ancient dream
in an austere soul, always vanishing and
not yet vanished.

THE WHITE POPLARS

I see you again, O silver poplars,
bare in this autumnal day;
the morning mist foams lazily,
adorning each bud and branch.

The same wind that once opened the
buds, now whirls the yellow
leaves around. And I, at that time, cried,
"Go!" Now, my heart is full of tears.

Now the inert snows are on the mountains.
Now are the days of squalid rains.
Now the long anger, of the north wind pushes
against the door in the night.

Now are the brief days that seem
like infinite sunsets. Now are the days of
fading and fallen blossoms, and chrysanthemums,
the flowers of death!

THE SEA

I open my window and gaze
on the sea. The stars move
and the waves tremble. I see the stars fade away
and waves disappear. A gleam calls,
a throb answers. The water sighs, the wind breathes.
A beautiful silver bridge
suddenly appears over the sea. Bridge
arched over serene lakes, who made
thee, and whither dost thou lead?

After reading "Myricae," one feels that a new vision has
been created for the perception of the beauties of nature. In
one of his poems he said:

"I would like to spend my life clinging to the stem,
and reposing like dew on each petal."

He was truly a man of sorrow. In one year he suffered the
concentrated sorrow of a life-time. Nothing bitter ever permeated
his poetry. He was the poet of the soul that suffers, but the
soul that has freed itself through suffering. One feels that he
was able by the alchemy of his art to fuse his sorrow and his
experience into his poetry.

ALL SOULS' DAY

How gloomy and sad is this day! In my
heart, I see a cemetery with a dark cypress tree
high above the walls.

And the haughty cypress now bends
before the sirocco; from time to
time the mass of clouds dissolves itself
in tears of rain.

O home of my people, my sad and only
home, O home of my fathers, my silent
home disturbed by tempest and flood;

O cemetery, cold and rough winters dost thou
give to my pale delicate mother, but
today I see immortelles

and chrysanthemums everywhere.
On each rust-stained cross hangs, as
if embracing it, a garland, from which
tears of rain are gently dropping.

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REMEMBRANCES

I

RIO SALTO

I know the sound that I heard
in the deep valley was not that made by
moving palfreys: it was only the water that
poured from the dripping tiles and
resounded in the gutter of the eaves.

And yet on the endless strand
I could see the knight-errants pass.
I discerned shining cuirasses,
and the shadow galloping upon the waves.

After the wind ceased, I no longer
heard the sound of galloping palfreys,
and I no longer saw flickering
distant flights in the uncertain light;

but you only I saw, my friendly poplar trees!
You rustled gently, waving
along the bank of my beloved river.

II

(To Severino Ferrari)

ROMAGNA

In my heart, Severino, there is always a
village and a field that smiles or weeps:
and the azure vision of San Marino
is always with me.

My heart constantly returns to that country
where reigned Guido and Malatesta,
and also the courteous Passator, king
of the street, king of the forest!

My heart always returns to the stubble
where the turkey-hen wanders with
another brood, where the rainbow-
colored duck paddles in the shining pool.

Oh! if I might be there!
And if I could lose myself
again in the verdure, 'midst elm-trees
full of nests and the birds, calling to each
other the cry that is lost in the
languor of noon,

when the peasant removes the scythe
from his shoulder and goes home to his
bowl of porridge, and the ox
in the dark stable enjoys his coarse
food.

From the scattered villages the bells
meanwhile answers each other with
silvery cries: they call to
shady places, to repose, to blessed
tables flowered with infantile eyes.

In those burning hours the lace umbrella
of the mimosa-tree, that flowered

my house in summer days with its plumes of
rose color sheltered me:

and thick bushes of rose and jasmine
were intertwined on the sheltered wall;
a tall and slender poplar watched
over everything, sometimes as noisy
as a street gamin.

It was my home: there I galloped often
with Guido Selvaggio and with Astolfo,
and when I imagined I saw before me the Emperor
in the hermitage.

And while I rode the
hippogriff in my dream, the words
of Napoleon resounded in my quiet room.

At the same time I heard amidst the fresh cut
hay the perpetual chirping of the crickets;
I heard from the frogs
in the ponds a long interminable
poem.

And long and interminable were those
poems that I meditated, beautiful to dream:
the rustling of leaves,
the song of birds, the smile of women,
the tumult of the sea.

But from that nest, like tardy
swallows, all of us migrated
one black day; for me, my country
is where I live; the others are
not very far away: in the cemetery.

And so I shall always
see on sultry days,
amidst the dusty hawthorne
the little ones of the lazy cuckoo.

sunny Romagna, sweet country,
 where Guido and Malatesta reigned;
 where the courteous Passator was
 king of the street, king of the forest.

But he sings about Homeral things, also. His voice was always gentle, and although he often touched depths, it was only the depths of the lake—the silent lake, crossed by shadows. It is true he used a very slender form, and he painted little things, but his workmanship was very fine, and it was because of his patient training in the really big issues of life—the training of sorrow, endurance, and discipline.

He preached the independence of the soul, being himself unwilling to be confined in a cage of any definite creed or philosophy. In his "Ode to King Humbert" (who was killed while reviewing the athletic societies, in the environs of Milan), he wrote in the preface, "I dedicate this hymn to the young men without party. I want to beg them to remain free . . . life is not dearer than freedom. I want them to fight for the eight-hour law . . . to abominate political murders . . . to raise the same hymn to the mason who falls from the scaffolding, as to the soldier who dies embracing his cannon . . . Be worthy of Dante, O ye sons of Dante!" He loved young Italy, and implicitly believed in it.

FROM "THE FUNERAL HYMN OF KING HUMBERT"

Thou hast died standing, 'midst the sounds of the
 hymn, for whose good one dies: with
 good thoughts in thy heart, thou wert
 struck in the heart:

thou hast passed away 'midst vivas shriller
 than trumpets. In the wind amongst the
 other banners, was the banner of Trent.

In that last evening on the field amidst
 joyous enthusiasm, thou, O dead King,
 didst review the young athletes.

Thou hast died on the field with thy hand
raised to thy austere forehead, seeing,
near and far, in that last evening,

in that last moment, with eyes
suddenly dimmed, a light shining
on the lances of the Uhlans with
eyes veiled by the shadow of Busca,

seeing a star shine midst the
menace of the storm; seeing New Italy
before thee.

With eyes so proud and sad thou
didst not see before this youthful
legion of athletes, the nocturnal Chimera
thirsty for blood,

that came hissing and panting and turning
towards the dead. Thou, King, wast
saluting the Italy of the Free and
the Strong,

sun-loving Italy, that demands
its perils and its praise, the
pickaxe and the trumpet, the
schools of thought, and the sonorous factories,

the Italy that hopes and works united
towards its bright goal, the Italy that shapes
its fate on the anvils,

the Italy that already opens up its
path towards the great future, that presses
always forward, be it towards peace or
war, San Giorgio or San Marco!

Thou did'st not see him: thou sawest only
the youthful athletes. The cry, "Do
your duty," ran serenely in their midst.

Thou sawest the stagnant marshes,
conquered by squalid heroes who
were brought back like war heroes
of old, only not on shields, but on hay.

And far away in a distant sea,
under harsh constellations, thou sawest
three ships fighting with perilous monsoons

Go! . . . steer for the Ideal!
Go! to the Ideal, whether it be a point
or a nothing; even if death bars the
way to it: but when thou arrivest . . . thou
art there.

Go, youthful prince of young Italy!
Into the labyrinth go, but seek thy
Pole; go find thy goal in the
infinite world!

Go, in the midst of the gray hurricane,
which seems like evening
but is suddenly transformed into a golden aurora.

August, 1900.

Pascoli wrote around very few root-ideas. He never lost the divinity of the visible in striving to penetrate the poet's true kingdom of vision. He craved quiet and solitude for his daily work. An artist must seclude himself for a time in the caves and deserts of the world of spirit or fantasy, and there, in his isolation, is happy, and becomes finely creative. He had like Mallarmé, a gift for the use of the most fitting word. He wrote with exquisite lucidity and freshness of impression. He was somewhat austere in his design and structure, and spoke in his poetry with "the cloistral voice." He infuses into all his work a silvery repose that is truly Virgilian. Was it Keats who said

"They shall be accounted poet-kings
Who simply tell the most heart-easing things."

If it is true that every work of art is a mirror in which we may see the image of its creator, then it is quite easy for us to see the real Pascoli in his poetry.

He was master of his art. He was equally master of himself. He found his own centre, and dwelt there, and looked out on the world from an inner window, seemingly undisturbed by passing occurrences. A disillusion to him was only a fresh spiritual impetus.

I always have the feeling in reading his poetry that he had constantly before him a thought that Victor Hugo once expressed: "We are all condemned, under sentence of death, but with an indefinite sort of reprieve." In his "reprieve" he strove for two things—to touch Nature as intimately as possible, and to construct fairy palaces of exquisite thought for his refuge from the *Weltschmerz*.

He died April 6, 1912. He was one of those souls whom Dante describes as "being made perfect by the workings of beauty." Many people believed in him, and he was "a central fire descending upon many altars."

AN HUNGARIAN POET

BY ALICE STONE BLACKWELL

WILL some of the European monarchies become republics after the war? The hope is often expressed in America that this will be the case. There is a general belief that wars of conquest and aggression will seldom be undertaken by a nation which is democratically governed.

In one of the countries now at war, the songs of a republican poet have long been the delight of the whole people.

One of the most romantic figures in history is Alexander Petöfi, the beloved national poet of Hungary. It has been well said that his short life was one long romance. He sang and fought, like the troubadours of old; and he died fighting for freedom, in the flower of his youth. He was the idol of a brave and chivalrous nation while he lived, and now, two generations after his death, his songs are still household words in every home in Hungary.

The same songs sing themselves in the dumb hearts of the Hungarian workmen in America, as they toil in the factories and mines, cut off from the comprehension of their fellows by a little-known tongue.

Petöfi was born in 1823, in the early hours of New Year's morning. His parents were poor, his father having lost most of his possessions in an overflow of the Danube. The father was a good, simple-hearted man, a butcher by trade. Petöfi's mother has been described as "one of nature's noble ladies." Her son said: "She was full of poetry. I drank it in the milk of her bosom. I learned it from her smiles and tears."

The boy was educated in the evangelical parochial schools. He began early to write verses, but did not distinguish himself as a student. From his childhood he had a passion for the drama. While at boarding school, he slipped off and went to see a band of strolling German players. This was a flagrant breach of the rules, and the head of the school wrote to Petöfi's father that his son was "a hopeless dunce and good-for-nothing."

After this disgrace, the boy ran away. He went to Buda Pest, hoping to enter the National Theatre, but could get employment only as an obscure "supe." For a time he tramped the country as a vagrant, and finally enlisted in the Austrian army. He thought the regiment was about to be ordered to Italy, and he longed to see the country of Horace. Instead, it was sent to the Tyrol. He saw years of hard service, during which he suffered from want, abuse, and the petty despotism of narrow-minded superiors. Still his head was full of poetry, and he scribbled verses all over the walls of his room, and constantly recited them. In 1841 the regimental physician, a great admirer of Petöfi's poems, delivered him from this life of slavery by declaring him invalided. He went home, and was received with joy by his parents; but he could not fall in with his father's wish to make him a butcher. He went to college for a time, and took a prize for a lyric poem; but still the theatre allured him. For years he roved the country, acting with strolling bands of players, and always, having poor success. He almost starved. Meantime he was beginning to be known as a poet, and at length he got a position as editor of a literary journal. He made one final struggle for success as an actor, in the National Theatre, and failed decisively. From that time on, he gave himself to his true vocation, that of a poet. In rapid succession he sent out volume after volume of poems, which went straight to the hearts of the people. His songs were sung everywhere, in the palace and in the hovel; by college students and illiterate peasants; by the artisans in the workshops, and the farmer ploughing his field. It is said that Petöfi seldom woke in the morning or lay down at night without hearing the people singing his songs in the streets.

Petöfi was showered with honors. He was given the freedom of ancient cities. In the National Theatre, where he had suffered fiasco as an actor, he saw the whole audience rise on his entrance and cheer him till he had taken his seat. His arrival in any town was the signal for a fête or a torchlight procession. These demonstrations were trying to his modesty, and when he saw that a big crowd had turned out to receive him, he would often enter by back streets to avoid them.

Petöfi's character was as lovable as his genius was uncommon. Through all the vicissitudes of his roving and adventurous career, he kept a clean heart and an upright life. In his more than three thousand poems, there is not a word offensive to purity.

He was incorruptibly honest, brave and sincere. In his

mind, integrity of character was closely linked with his political principles, which he cherished with passion. He wrote in his diary on April 19, 1848:

"I am a republican, body and soul. I have been one ever since I learned to think, and I shall be one till my latest breath. These strong convictions, in which I have never wavered, pressed into my hand the beggar's staff that I carried for so many years. During the time when souls were bought and paid for in hard cash, when a devoutly-bent body secured a man's future, I shunned the market, and bowed to no one, but stood erect, and froze and suffered hunger. Never have I hired out even a string of my lute or a stroke of my pen. I sang and I wrote that to which the God of my soul prompted me; but the God of my soul is liberty."

Again in the diary he wrote: "The motto of a true republican is not 'Down with kings!' but 'Pure morality!' Not the crushed crown, but irreproachable character and upright honesty are the foundations of the republic. With these, you shall fell monarchies to the earth as David felled Goliath."

Petöfi fully believed, however, that crowns ought to be crushed. He has a very fiery poem, the burden of which is "Hang up the kings!"

"I am a republican out of religious conviction," he wrote. "The men of monarchies do not believe in the development, the advancement of the world, or else they want to check them; and this is infidelity."

In 1846 Petöfi married Julia Szendrey, a beautiful girl, of a rich and distinguished family. She accepted the butcher's son against her parents' will, and gave up wealth and ease to live with him in a plain little lodging adorned only with portraits of the leaders of the French revolution. These pictures, handsomely framed, were Petöfi's one luxury.

The marriage was ideally happy. The great Hungarian novelist, Maurus Jokai, an intimate friend of the poet, has given a sketch of their domestic life in "Eyes like the Sea," a story in which Petöfi appears as one of the characters:

"The furniture was very primitive. Mrs. Petöfi had left her father's house without a dowry; she had not so much as a fashionable hat to bless herself with; she had sewed herself together a sort of head-dress of her own invention. They had nothing, and yet they were very happy. Julia's sole amusement was to learn English from Petöfi. At dinner (which was

sent in from 'The Eagle'), we spoke English, and laughed at each other's blunders."

Petőfi joined with heart and soul in the war for national independence. At the beginning of the revolution, in the spring of 1848, he wrote his "Talpra Magyar!" ("Up, Magyar, up!") which became the foremost war song of Hungary:

Up, Magyar, up, your country calls!
This is the fateful day.
Shall we be freemen or be serfs?
It is for you to say!

We take an oath of freedom,
We swear it o'er and o'er;
We swear by the God of the Magyars
We will be serfs no more!

Our sires were free in life and death,
Their souls are not at ease;
They suffer; in a land of serfs
They cannot rest in peace.

A vagrant with no fatherland
Is he who now shows fear—
Who than his country's honor holds
His worthless life more dear.

The sword is brighter than the chain,
Yet chains till now we wore;
The good sword decorates the arm—
Be ours our sword of yore!

The Magyar name shall shine again
Worthy its ancient fame;
The long disgrace of centuries
We'll wash from off that name.

Our grandsons, where our green graves rise,
Some day shall prostrate fall,
And, breathing blessings in their prayers,
Our sacred names recall.

We take an oath of freedom,
 We swear it o'er and o'er;
 We swear by the God of the Magyars
 We will be serfs no more!

Petőfi was elected a member of the National Diet, but soon enlisted in the army. He became secretary and aid-de-camp to General Bem, who loved him enthusiastically, and asked to have Petőfi's poems read to him on his death-bed. Petőfi aided the revolution by drawing up calls and manifestos, as well as by writing war songs, which were read to the soldiers, and received with acclamations. He fell in the battle of Segesvar, July 31, 1849, at the early age of twenty-six.

Petőfi's poems have been translated into French, German, Italian, English, Polish, Danish and Flemish. One of his biographers says that there are good translations in every language but English. The fact that the English versions have not been considered very successful warrants another attempt to bring some of these poems within the reach of English-speaking readers. The music and grace of Petőfi's verse are necessarily lost in translation; but it is hoped that something of the beauty and originality of his thought may shine out, even through the imperfections of the English rendering.

Petőfi wrote many love-songs. The following are examples:

ACROSS THE WATER

The river has o'erflowed its banks;
 Beyond it stands thy cot.
 The countryside is flooded wide—
 My rose, expect me not!
 The causeway and the bridge are gone,
 They vanished like a dream;
 Now the last fragments of the bridge
 Are floating down the stream.

Upon a hill I stand and gaze
 Far to the other side.
 A dove is flying on swift wings
 Across the waters wide.

I know not if that flitting thing
 A real dove may be,
 Or if perchance it is a sigh
 Breathed from my heart toward thee!

THE WHEAT IS RIPENING

The wheat is ripening in the field; hot, hot the bright days grow.
 On Monday I shall start to reap, with morning's earliest glow.

My love is ripening too, because my heart is hot in me.
 My dear, my one and only dear, do thou its reaper be!

FALLOW IS MY STEED

Oh, fallow is the color of my steed!
 His hair is like the gold that glitters bright.
 "Star" is the name of this good steed of mine;
 His feet are swift as falling stars at night.
 Heigho, my beauteous horse, my fallow steed!
 One of your shoes, where is it gone? Who knows?
 Come, let me take you to the smith, my steed,
 And then do you take me to see my rose.
 Oh, fiery is the charcoal of the smith!
 In my love's eyes a glow more ardent lies.
 Soft is the iron before the charcoal's fire,
 Softer my heart beneath my truelove's eyes.

A LOVERS' QUARREL

My rose, she gave me deep offence,
 And oh, my wrath was sore!
 Yes, I was angered, I was grieved,
 As many a time before.
 I thought the grave-digger alone
 Could cure the hurt she gave;
 I thought my wound would not be closed
 Till opened was my grave.

AN HUNGARIAN POET

My pain, how long did it endure?
 Until her first sweet kiss.
 Soon as my angel kissed my lips,
 My grief was changed to bliss.
 A pointed poniard is her word,
 Her lip a balsam sweet.
 So are these girlish creatures made;
 Their power how can we meet?

CLOUD AND SUN

High, high the cloud is flying;
 Far, far is she, my rose.
 The cloud flies westward, westward;
 Westward the warm sun goes.

Fly o'er her, cloud, and say I bear
 A mournful heart, like you!
 Haste, burning sun, and say to her
 My heart is burning too!

HAPPY NIGHT

O happy night! I now am with my rose.
 Together in the little garden-close
 We find the time fleet swiftly. All is still
 Save for dogs barking. In the sky o'erhead
 The moon and stars their magic lustre shed,
 As in a fairy tale, o'er vale and hill.

I never should have been a good star, I;
 God knows, I could not have remained on high!
 I should not ask in heaven's realm to be,
 But when the twilight shadows gathered brown,
 As soon as evening fell I should come down,
 My rose, my rose belovèd, unto thee!

A LOVER'S HASTE

Come, let me saddle you, my trusty steed;
 This very day I must be with my love.
 My left foot scarce is in the stirrup yet,
 But even now my heart is with my dove.

Yon bird is flying—to his mate, perchance;
 Fleetly he flies, and he outstrips our gait;
 Let us o'ertake him swiftly, my good steed,
 Not even he can better love his mate.

I LOVE YOU

I love you, my sweetheart, with depth and with might!
 I love your dear figure, so little and light;
 I love your black tresses, your forehead of snow,
 Your dark eyes, your cheek with its roseate glow;
 That lip, sweet and red, so delightful to kiss;
 That soft little hand, whose mere touch is my bliss;
 The flight of your soul, soaring lofty and free,
 The depth of your heart, like the deeps of the sea.
 I love you when merry, and when you are sad,
 Your teardrops as much as your smiles blithe and glad.
 Your virtues' pure brightness I love, yet 'tis true,
 The eclipse of your failings is dear to me too.
 I love you, my sweetheart, all others above,
 As much as a human heart ever can love.
 No life and no world exist for me save you;
 In the warp of my thoughts you are woven all through.
 Of each feeling, awake or in dreams, you are part:
 You speak in each pulse, in each throb of my heart.
 All glory for you I would gladly resign;
 All glory for you I would win and make mine.
 No wish and no will remains to me to tell,
 For whatever you will, that is my will as well.
 The costliest sacrifice, e'en of my all,
 If pleasure it gave you, would seem but too small;
 And the veriest trifle to me were a cross,
 And would fill me with pain, if you grieved for its loss.
 I love you, my sweetheart, I love and adore

As never, no, never has man loved before.
 I well nigh am slain by this love, great and true;
 And I in one person am all, all to you,
 Who ever can love you, and for you live on—
 Your husband, your brother, sire, lover and son;
 And you in one person are all to my life—
 My daughter, my mother, love, sister and wife.
 I love with my soul and I love with my heart,
 With a love mad and wild, that shall never depart.
 If there be any praise for this love deep and true,
 It still is not I who deserve it, but you.
 The praise and reward should be yours, O my dove,
 For 'tis you that have taught me this great, mighty love!

Petőfi had a keen feeling for the beauties of nature:

IN AUTUMN

The autumn has returned once more to earth,
 As beautiful as ever to mine eyes.
 God knows the reason why, but in my heart
 The autumn days I always love and prize.

Upon the hilltop now I sit me down,
 And let my glances wander far around,
 And listen to the leaves that from the trees
 Are dropping with a faint and gentle sound.

Smiling, the Sun upon the Earth beneath
 With mild and tender beam looks down the while;
 So on her infant, as it falls asleep,
 A loving mother gazes with a smile.

Falling asleep, not dying, is the Earth,
 In mellow autumn, with its silence deep;
 And even by her eyes we may perceive
 She is not ill, but heavy with soft sleep.

She has but laid aside her rich attire,
 Unrobing slowly, without haste or pain;
 She will re-clothe herself when breaks her day—
 When to the world the spring returns again.

Sleep on, O Nature, fair and beautiful!
 Until the morn, sleep on and take your rest,
 And in your slumber dream upon the things
 That in your waking hours you love the best!

Just with a finger's tip I touch my lyre,
 Softly I play, scarce louder than a sigh.
 My gentle, slow and melancholy song
 Sounds on the still air like your lullaby.

Sit down beside me, angel of my heart!
 Sit here by me in silence for my sake,
 Until my song shall drift away and die
 As dies the whispering wind across a lake.

And when you kiss me, on this autumn day,
 Press your lips gently, slowly upon mine.
 Oh, let us not, by sudden word or sound,
 Wake sleeping Nature from her dream divine!

There are many poems of sentiment:

THE FLOWERS OF THE VALLEY

The flowers of the valley, they still are in blossom,
 The poplars outside of the window are green:
 But look how the winter is touching the landscape!
 White snow on the peaks of the mountain is seen.

Within my young heart there is fire-flaming summer,
 And all the spring blooms there, in purple and red;
 But, see, my dark hair is beginning to whiten;
 The frost of the winter is touching my head.

The blossom is falling, and life too is passing.
 Come sit here, my wife, on my knee, in your bloom!
 Oh, you that to-day rest your head on my bosom,
 To-morrow, perchance, will you kneel at my tomb?

Oh, tell me, if I should die first, will you cover
 My face, while the tears from your eyelids shall break?

And will a youth's love, on some day in the future,
Persuade you to give up my name for his sake?

If ever you cast off the widow's veil, place it
That day on my grave, like a dark flag, I pray;
From the world of the tomb I shall come back to get it
At midnight, and with me shall bear it away,

To wipe my tears, flowing for you who thus lightly
Forgot your true liegeman, so faithful of yore,
And to bind up the wounds of this heart, which will love you
That day as it now does, and will evermore.

THE OX TEAM

What I shall tell you did not chance in Pest;
Things so romantic do not happen there.
Once an aristocratic company
Within a cart were seated, free from care.
'Twas in an ox-cart that they jogged along;
Four oxen made their team, and they were gay.
Along the high road, followed by the cart,
The oxen, pacing slowly, took their way.

The night was bright. Above them shone the moon;
Pale 'mid the wind-rent clouds she wandered slow,
Like a sad lady in a graveyard lone,
Seeking her husband's grave with face of woe.
A merchant breeze called on the neighboring meads
And bought sweet scents where'er its wings might stray.
Along the high road, followed by the cart,
The oxen, pacing slowly, took their way.

Amid that company I too was there;
Elizabeth was seated next to me.
The other members of our little band
Were talking loud and singing merrily.
I mused; then to Elizabeth I said:
"Shall not we choose a star? What dost thou say?"
Along the high road, followed by the cart,
The oxen, pacing slowly, took their way.

“Shall we not choose a star to be our own?”
 Dreamily to Elizabeth I said.
 “The star will lead us back to happy thoughts,
 To memories of days forever fled,
 Should fortune part us in the years to come.”
 And so we chose a star our own to be.
 Along the high road, followed by the cart,
 Went the four oxen, pacing stolidly.

A PLAN THAT FAILED

Still, as I journeyed toward my home,
 I thought, “When I shall see
 My mother’s face, so long unseen,
 What shall my first words be?”

“What beautiful and tender thing
 Shall first of all be said,
 When she holds out to me the arms
 That rocked my cradle bed?”

And thoughts, each lovelier than the last,
 Come flocking manifold,
 Till time with me seemed standing still,
 Though on my carriage rolled.

Into the little room I stepped;
 My mother flew to me—
 And speechless from her lips I hung,
 Like fruit upon its tree.

THE BELLS HAVE CEASED

The evening bells have chimed and sunk to silence;
 Their notes died long ago.
 Who is it that at this late hour still wanders,
 Mute, sad and slow?
 Alone I wander through the silent village;
 I roam at will.

I wander, looking for my dream! The vision
 Eludes me still.
 The moon is up above me in the heavens,
 And in the skies
 The stars are shining, shining, like so many
 Fair maidens' eyes.
 Two storks upon the roof-tree of yon dwelling
 Have built their nest;
 Two persons sit below them in the doorway,
 Together pressed.
 A youth and maid, one fair, one dark, they sit there
 Absorbed, and take no note.
 The lad around his little lass wraps gently
 His sheepskin coat.

I passed them by; they did not even mark me,
 Nor hear, nor see.
 O Lord my God, how happy and how blissful
 Those two must be!
 I grudge them not their bliss—yet notwithstanding,
 Would I were he
 Who puts his arm around that small brown maiden
 So tenderly!

I WALK ABROAD

I walk abroad this autumn day,
 But o'er the land is thrown
 A veil of cloud; in vain I gaze—
 The church-spire shows alone.

Nature is a forsaken church;
 Its worshippers, the flowers,
 Are gone, and hushed its organ tones—
 The birds amid the bowers.

But Nature's silent church again
 Shall ring with music high,
 As 'twere an echo of the spring,
 When autumn days draw nigh.

The vintage is a merry thing!
 Oft would my heart repine:
 "I too would pluck the ripened grapes;
 Why is no vineyard mine?"

One cluster now would be enough;
 For vineyards naught I care.
 You would suffice me, little girl,
 Cluster most sweet, most fair!

Petőfi has been called "the Burns of Hungary." Many of his poems illustrate Hungarian life and character, like "A Little Tavern:"

Where the village ends, a little tavern
 Stands beside the Szamos, flowing clear.
 It could see its image in the water,
 Only that the night is drawing near.

Night is falling, with its dim gray shadows;
 All the world is growing hushed and still.
 By the shore the ferry boat is resting,
 Darkness fills it, silent, mute and chill.

But the inn is noisy, and the player
 Smites the cimbalon with might and main,
 And the lads so lustily are shouting
 That the windows quake in every pane.

"O my hostess, golden flower of women!
 Bring me your best wine, that brightest flows.
 Let it be as aged as my grandsire,
 And as ardent as my youthful rose!

"Play up, gipsy,* play up louder, better!
 I am in the mood to dance to-day.
 Madly now I dance away my money,
 Madly now I dance my soul away!"

*In Hungary the gipsies are the musicians of the people.

Somebody comes knocking at the window:
 "Don't make such a noise! More quiet keep.
 'Tis his lordship sends this message to you;
 He has gone to bed and wants to sleep."

"Oh, I say, the devil take his lordship!
 You may follow too, the selfsame way.
 Never heed him, gipsy, keep on playing,
 Even if I sell my shirt to pay!"

"Lads, God bless you!"—Somebody comes tapping
 Once again before the hour takes flight—
 "Please amuse yourselves a bit more softly;
 My poor mother is not well to-night."

No one answers, but they drain their glasses,
 And they bid the music cease to play;
 And, as quickly as their wine is finished,
 All the lads are on their homeward way.

GREEN LEAVES

Green leaves and snowy blossoms
 On the acacia tree!
 Below, a little fair-haired girl
 All dressed in blue I see.
 A shower of rain is falling,
 She waits till it be o'er;
 Meanwhile I cast sheep's eyes at her
 From under our porch door.

Come in, my little pigeon!
 Enter our room and rest.
 Until the rain be over
 Sit down upon our chest.*
 On to the chest I'll lift thee up
 If 'tis too high for thee;
 Or, if the seat shall seem too hard,
 I'll take thee on my knee.

*In Hungary a large chest is part of the furniture of every peasant house.

Petöfi's chivalrous spirit toward women is shown in "Cloud and Star:"

When God the Father had created man,
 His brow grew very dark, I know not why;
 And from His forehead's darkness there were born
 The clouds and thunders of our earthly sky.
 But when the woman God our Lord had made,
 Ah, then he wept with tears of pure delight!
 Those tears of joy, you may behold them now,
 The myriad lovely stars that gem the night.

Love and war are dominant themes in Petöfi's poems. He placed as motto on the title page:

Freedom and love, these two I prize
 All other things above.
 For love, I sacrifice my life;
 For liberty, my love.

Love and patriotism sometimes had a hard struggle in his breast:

WHY DO YOU FOLLOW ME?

Why do you follow me at every step,
 O ever-busy love of fatherland?
 Why do you show me always, day and night,
 Your mournful face, and still before me stand?
 You haunt me evermore, in sorrowing guise;
 I see you even when I close my eyes.

Let me forget I am a citizen!
 The spring has come, the world is blooming fair,
 The flowers are fragrant, and the glad some birds
 Fill earth and heaven with song that thrills the air;
 The golden clouds, benignant spirits, spread
 Their bright shapes joyously above my head.

Let me forget I am a citizen!
 Youth and a worshipped sweetheart I possess;
 Hours set in pearls are offered to me now

By youth and love, a gift my heart to bless;
 And every hour I do not take and kiss,
 I waste a whole eternity of bliss.

Ah, Youth and Spring and Poesy and Love!
 How many fairies all together stand!
 And shall I let them fly away from me?
 Yearning for them, to them I stretch my hand.

Come to me, reach to me your arms, I pray;
 Embrace me, fairies, I am yours today!

Many of Petöfi's poems are exceedingly martial. While the revolution was brewing, he wrote:

I dream, I dream of bloody days
 That whelm the world in ruin dread,
 And on the old world's ruins drear
 Create a bright new world instead.

Would they but shout, would they but shout,
 The trumps of war, the voice of fate!
 The battle sign, the battle sign
 My eager heart can scarce await.

How merrily upon that day
 Shall I into my saddle spring,
 And 'mid the scores of warriors go
 With wild joy swiftly galloping!

And if the foemen pierce my breast,
 There will be one the wound to dress—
 One who will close it with a kiss,
 And heal it with a sweet caress.

If in a prison cell I lie,
 Someone will come, past bolt and bar,
 To make the prison's darkness bright
 With eyes that match the morning star.

If I shall die, if I shall die
 On scaffold or on battle plain,
 There will be one who with her tears
 Will wash my corpse from bloody stain.

The martial note in Petöfi's poems may jar upon those who recognize in the call to "war against war" one of the supreme appeals to twentieth-century chivalry. But it was characteristic of the time, the country and the man. Petöfi speaks of freedom as the only thing worth fighting for, and declares that all men have been insane who ever gave their lives in battle for any other cause. His creed on the question of war and peace is summed up in these stanzas:

Peace, peace be unto all the world,
 But ne'er by tyrants' will!
 Only from Freedom's holy hands
 Let peace the broad earth fill.

If universal peace on earth
 In this wise there may be,
 Then let us cast our arms away,
 And sink them in the sea.

But, if not so, arms, arms till death,
 A never-ending fray!
 Yes, even if the war shall last
 Until the Judgment day!

Petöfi longed to die for freedom:
 The thought of war has ever been
 The dream most dear to me—
 War, where this heart might sacrifice
 Its life for liberty.

This idea recurs again and again:

One thought alone brings sorrow to my heart—
 To die upon my pillows, in my bed!
 Slowly to fade away, as fades a flower
 On which a worm in secrecy hath fed;

Slowly to perish, as a candle dies
 That stands within a lonely, empty room—
 Give me not such a death, O Lord, my God!
 Let no such pathway lead me to the tomb!

Let me be like a tree by lightning struck,
 Or from the earth uprooted by the blast—
 A rock that from the mountain to the vale
 By some terrific thunderbolt is cast!

When all the peoples that in slavery groan,
 Tired of their yoke, flock to the place of swords,
 With flushing cheeks, and banners red unfurled,
 And bearing on those flags the sacred words:

“Freedom for all the world!”—when this is cried,
 And shouted far and wide, from East to West,
 And tyranny encounters with their hosts,
 There may I fall, there may I sink to rest!

There let the young blood of my heart gush forth,
 And let the clash of swords, the ring of steel,
 Drown the last shouts of joy that pass my lips,
 Lost in the trumpet's note, the cannon's peal!

And over my dead corpse let snorting steeds
 Gallop to victory, rushing like the wind,
 And, crushed beneath the trampling of their hoofs,
 Let me upon the plain be left behind.

There let them gather up my scattered bones
 When the great burial day shall come at last,
 When, to slow, mournful music's solemn notes,
 And with veiled banners waving in the blast,

The soldiers shall be carried to their rest,
 And to one common tomb consigned shall be
 The heroes who have fallen in the fight,
 Oh, sacred Freedom of the World, for thee!

This poem seems prophetic. Petöfi's body was never found.
 It was believed to have been trampled beyond recognition by the

charge that swept over him after he had fallen. He was buried with the unrecognized dead.

The following poem written not long before his death, has especial interest in this year of battles:

THE BATTLEFIELD

Oh, who would think or who would say
That this was once a battlefield—
That here, a few short weeks ago,
Blood flowed and war's loud thunder pealed?

'Twas here we fought; around us here
The foe his armed legions spread;
'Twas death before and death behind,
An awful day, a day of dread!

Then, like the sorrow of a man,
Morose and gloomy was the sky;
Now it is mild and purely blue
As is an infant's limpid eye.

Then, like an old man's wintry head,
The earth was white with snow's chill sheen;
Now, like a youth's upspringing hope,
'Tis bright with hues of living green.

Then the deep clangor of a bell
Was booming in the atmosphere.
Now in the air above my head
The lark is singing blithe and clear.

Then here upon the field we saw
The blood-stained corpses of the slain;
But where the dead were lying thick
Now flowers are blooming on the plain.

Oh, who would think or who would say
That this was once a battlefield—
That here, a few short weeks ago,
Blood flowed, and war's wild thunder pealed?

Petöfi fully realized that courage is needed not in war alone. While Hungary was still at peace, he wrote "Ragged Heroes:"

I too could dress my verses up
 In rhymes and metres fair,
 As fits when we go visiting
 In fashion's pomp and glare.

But my thoughts are not idle youths
 Who for amusement live,
 To go, in gloves and well-curled locks,
 Calls to receive and give.

No sword rings now, no cannon booms;
 Dim rust has quenched their rage;
 Yet war goes on; instead of swords,
 Ideas the battle wage.

Among your warriors, O my Time!
 I combat as I can.
 'Tis by my poems I contend;
 Each is a fighting man.

Ragged but valiant lads are they,
 All brave in battle's press.
 A soldier's duty is performed
 By courage, not by dress.

Whether my poems will survive
 I do not ask at all;
 If in this battle they perchance
 Must perish, let them fall.

This book that holds my dead ideas
 E'en then will sacred be,
 Because of heroes 'tis the grave
 Who died for liberty!

But the poems have lived, and will live while the Hungarian people and Hungarian literature survive. Nor has their influence been confined to the poet's compatriots. They have helped to arouse the spirit of liberty in many lands. Béranger admired

them; Heine declared that Petöfi's "rustic song is sweeter than the nightingale's." Every lover of freedom, of poetry and of chivalry feels the richer after making acquaintance with Petöfi.

As eloquence is more telling when there is "a man behind the speech," so Petöfi's songs of freedom are the more inspiring because behind them stands that youthful and knightly figure, "without fear and without reproach." He shines like a star in the history of that dark and bloody time.

THE TOWN

BY THEODOR STORM

Translated from the German by P. H. Thomson

By the gray shore, by the gray sea,
The old town lies alone;
On its roofs the fog weighs heavily,
And round the silent town the sea
Sounds its dull monotone.

No woodland murmurs, no May-sprite
Sings on with never an end;
Only the migrant geese in flight
Honk shrilly through the autumn night;
The reeds bend in the wind.

Yet all my heart is on thy shore,
Gray town beside the sea;
Light of my youth forevermore
Lies over thee and thy lone shore,
Gray town beside the sea.

BLOOD

BY MARY CAROLYN DAVIES

God of death, Let my breath
To sword and spear belong!
(But ever the cry of the people saith, a song, a song!)
Lord of life, give me strife!
Make my right arm strong!
(But the cry of the people day and night, a song, a song!)
Strike the blow, hate the foe, never cease from smiting,
For blows the hands of a man are made, fighting, fighting;
And the shoulders high of a man are good as they press on through
the throng
(But ever the lips of the people cry, a song, a song!)

God on high, See they fly!
God, thy ark is here!
(And ever the moan of the folk is blown, a song, a song!)
God! To you, praise anew,
For strength behind the spear!
(And the cry of the people gaunt with woe, a song, a song!)
Swing the sword, say no word, never cease from swinging,
Men we be, blood is free, where is use for singing?
For the lips of a man are sold to blood and his eyes to hate belong.
(But ever the hearts of the people cry, a song, a song!)

FAIR ROHTRAUT

BY EDUARD MÖRIKE

Translated from the German by P. H. Thomson

King Ringang's daughter, what is her name?

Rohtraut, Fair Rohtraut.

What is she doing all the day,

Who dare not spin as others may?

She's fishing and hunting.

Oh, would I might her huntsman be!

Fishing and hunting were joy to me!

—Hush, heart of mine, hush thee!

And it came to pass ere many a day,

Rohtraut, Fair Rohtraut,

In Ringang's castle served the lad,

A huntsman's coat and a steed he had,

To ride with Rohtraut.

If I were a king's son it might be,

Rohtraut, Fair Rohtraut would marry me.

—Hush, heart of mine, hush thee!

Once they were resting beneath an oak,

Then laughed Fair Rohtraut:

Why look you so fondly at me there?

Come hither, kiss me if you dare.

Ah, the boy was frightened!

But he thought: I may, she will not resist.

The mouth of Fair Rohtraut he kissed.

—Hush, heart of mine, hush thee!

Then home they rode, nor spake a word,

Rohtraut, Fair Rohtraut;

But a song in his young heart sang of her:

Today, were you wed to the Emperor,

It would not grieve me:

Ye thousand leaves on the branches wist—

The mouth of Fair Rohtraut I have kissed!

—Hush, heart of mine, hush thee!

THE SEVENTH SOLITUDE

FROM NIETZSCHE'S DIONYSOS-DITHYRAMBS

Translated from the German by L. M. Kueffner

Great day of my life!
the sun sinks.
The smooth sea lies
all gilded now.
Warm breathes the cliff:
slept there, at noon,
Life's joy its noonday sleep?
In green lights, still,
Joy dances up the abyss.

Golden serenity come!
You, O secret
O sweetest foretaste of death!
Have I wended my way too fast?
For not until now, when weary my foot,
has your glance found me out,
has your Joy found me out.

All around me but waves and their play.
And whatever seemed heavy once,
Into blue forgetfulness now it has sunk—
and idle stands my skiff.
Passage and storm—no longer it knows—
Drowned are wishing and hoping,
smooth lie soul and sea.

Seventh Solitude!
Never before have I felt
sweet security nearer,
or warmer the sun.
Are not my peaks still a-glow?
Silvery, light, a fish,
sea-ward my skiff swims now. . .

THE POOL

BY ANNETTE VON DROSTE-HÜLSHOFF

Translated from the German by P. H. Thomson

How still it lies in the sunlight there,
Like a good conscience, self-complacent;
If zephyrs kiss it, banks adjacent
And the little flowers are unaware;
Dragon-flies hover over it,
Slender, blue-gold and carmine-lit;
Across its sheen the spiders go
In fitful mazes, to and fro;
The yellow iris lifts aloft
Her coronal, to catch the whisper,
The crooning in the grasses, soft:
Peace, seems the burden of each lisper.

Oh, hush, it sleeps, be quiet, quiet
Whir softly, golden dragon-fly,
Temper your pinions shrilling riot;
Reeds on the bank, keep watchful eye,
And let no pebble fall to waken.
On a fleecy cloud it has its bed,
And lullabies are lightly shaken
Out of the old tree overhead;
A little bird, on pinions slow,
Sails high above in sunlit spaces,
And like a darting fish, below,
Its shadow through the water races.

Hush, hush! the little pool has stirred,
A twig has fallen from the bird,
A twig the linnet homeward bore;
Sh! branch, spread your green canopy o'er—
Sh! now it is fast asleep once more.

FORSAKEN

BY EDUARD MÖRIKE

Translated from the German by P. H. Thomson

Before the break of day,
Ere the star beacons dwindle,
The hearth-sticks I must lay,
The fire kindle.

Bright is the fire's blaze,
The crackling and blinking;
There I stand and gaze,
Rapt in my thinking.

Comes then the thought of you
Suddenly streaming:
Last night, you, boy untrue,
Came in my dreaming.

Ah! then the teardrops run
Down unforefended;
So is the day begun—
O were it ended!

THE SONG

BY ARNO HOLZ

Translated from the German by L. M. Kueffner

Over the earth, white clouds are wandering.
Green through the forest
flows their light.

Heart, forget!

In stillest sunlight
weaves soothing magic,
'Twi'x't wind-kissed blossoms blooms thousand-fold balm.

Forget! forget!

From a distant vale pipes, hearken, a bird. . . .
It sings its song.

The song of bliss!
of bliss.

ON THE LONELY HALLIG

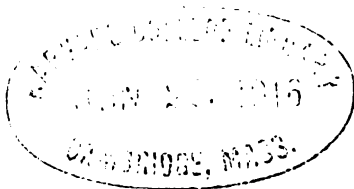
BY DETLEV VON LILIENCRON

Translated from the Low German by P. H. Thomson

My man is away,
The sea goes high,
My child is sick;
No one to help,
I am alone.

Her man is home,
The child is dead,
Now in the house
The sick wife lies,
They are alone.

No doctor near,
No one to help.
The little wife
Is with her child,
He is alone.



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ALWAYS RIDICULOUS*

A DRAMA IN THREE ACTS

BY JOSE ECHEGARAY

Translated from the Spanish by T. Walter Gilkyson.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

EUGENIO
DON PABLO
DON COSME
JUAN
DON HILARION
TERESA
REMEDIOS
MARIA (*a child*)
SERVANT

Time—The Present.

ACT I

The drawing room of the country house of DON PABLO DE AZOLA in Andalusia. Open doors at the rear of stage through which the garden can be seen. The room is furnished simply and with refinement, with light curtains, porcelains, flowers and wicker rocker chairs. It is day and the garden is filled with sunlight.

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SCENE ONE

(*REMEDIOS and DON COSME both seated. COSME is asleep, but REMEDIOS has not noticed it.*)

Remedios.—You may say what you like, Don Cosme, I can't agree that Teresina is quite as complex as you think she is, and I'm certainly not subject to illusions. I know the World; I'm not an ingenuous child; I say I'm not because, good Lord! no widow has any business to be one. Although I must admit that as far as years go, and in looks and manner, I am still something of a child. But that's because of certain characteristics. Don't you think so? Why don't you speak? You understand my character? (*Turning toward DON COSME and looking carefully at him.*) Good Lord! the man's asleep again! Up at ten this morning, it's now eleven. And he sleeps! No, sir! I must have somebody to talk to. Teresina is in the garden flirting with the two of them—spinning like a little planet between her two poles, Juan and Eugenio. Don Pablo has gone on his usual walk. Don Hilarion? No one knows where he is! Here I am left alone with Don Cosme, and he sleeps, leaving me in full monologue. I won't stand it! I came to this house on the express condition that I should not be bored, and the condition is not being fulfilled. The place is beautiful—*Art*, Oh! plenty of *Art*—pictures, tapestry, statues, bronzes, porcelains; and *Nature*, Oh! a great deal of *Nature*, woods and flowers and lakes and water-falls and sunsets! But all that's not enough. There is no *Life*! No warmth! As they say nowadays, the warmth of humanity. And he goes on sleeping! This life is giving that man softening of the brain. Don Cosme! Oh, Don Cosme! (*Getting up*) By San Cosme and San Damian, open your eyes! (*Striking him with her fan.*)

Cosme (Waking up).—What's the matter? Who's calling? Who's hitting me? Why won't you let a man rest? Oh, it's you, is it, Remedios?

Remedios.—For heaven's sake, man! Don't you remember that we were talking?

Cosme.—Yes, I remember now—about things that were sad—human misery, profound disillusion, and the sombre drama of *Life*.

Remedios.—No, sir! We were talking of Teresina and her flirtation with Eugenio and Juan. I don't think that's sombre drama!

Cosme.—It is, Remedios, it is, although it may not seem so. Don't trust appearances. The smiles of a girl, the joys of youth, the tranquillity of age, the peace of family life, in fact all the calm and joy of mortals, does not really exist. It is merely the surface. Beyond the gleaming blue sky is infinite blackness; below the transparent crystal of the lake, lies the dark mud; inside the marble sepulchre, all is gray dust, and in the pure water the microbe lurks. There is no cure for so much evil. It is best to shut one's eyes, and, wrapped in shadow and silence, sink into oblivion, fall into nothingness, vanish, and sleep. (*He settles himself in the chair as if to sleep again, and shuts his eyes.*)

Remedios.—Now see here Don Cosme, I won't allow this! Don't you go to sleep again!

Cosme.—Lady—Life is sleep. Calderon said it—who was wiser than we are.

Remedios.—But if he slept as much as you do, he could not have written so many beautiful plays.

Cosme.—Merely the inconsequence of genius. He preached, I practice.

Remedios.—But I won't let you. I want to talk. Man, be polite!

Cosme.—Very well, I will be polite, since you insist.

Remedios.—But be pleasant too, and amusing.

Cosme.—Pleasant I will be.

Remedios.—Then tell me something interesting.

Cosme.—All right. I read last night in the Correspondence that a fearful disease has appeared in Smyrna. Terribly contagious!—very much like the plague. Ten thousand cases in ten days; ninety percent of them die—the rest remain useless for anything.

Remedios.—For Heaven's sake, keep still—don't talk of such things! You said you'd be pleasant—That's a cheerful thing to tell me!

Cosme.—Very well.—Have you read of the crime in Arganda? Horrible! Horrible! A child of twelve killed his brothers and sisters, his parents, his grand-parents, the collector of taxes, the faithful supervisor of weights and measures, and the school teacher. It makes one shiver.

Remedios.—For God's sake, Don Cosme, don't talk about crime.

Cosme.—Then what do you want to talk about?

Remedios.—Something diverting, exciting, cheerful!

Cosme.—Something diverting and exciting? I'll get that book of statistics.

Remedios.—Statistics! Do you think statistics are light and cheerful?

Cosme.—Just wait! In that book there's a table of mortality. We can see how many years remain to my Lady Remedios. Does not even that interest you?

Remedios.—Yes, that is interesting. How long *will* I live?

Cosme.—It depends upon how old you are. Let's see, you are forty-eight or fifty—?

Remedios.—Nonsense!—You're not awake yet. Fifty years! My goodness!

Cosme.—Don't get upset, you're very well preserved indeed!

Remedios.—I suppose you've got it all settled?

Cosme.—In which case you would have some twenty years of probable life.

Remedios (In bad humor).—Well, I'm not fifty! I'm sixty.

Cosme.—Then you have about *ten* years.

Remedios.—But I'm not sixty. I'm a hundred!

Cosme (Very calmly).—Then you die to-night.

Remedios.—Well, you may be right about that—above all if you keep making the days at this romantic country estate of Don Pablo pass as pleasantly as you have so far. There's nobody here—nothing happens—no one knows anything—it is Purgatory, Don Cosme.

Cosme.—Don't be in a hurry to get out of Purgatory, you may fall into Hell.

Remedios.—What worse hell is there than being bored!

Cosme.—I don't see that! There are delightful walks here?

Remedios.—Very delightful, but lonely. What good is a walk with no one to walk with?

Cosme.—Don't you enjoy the dinners?

Remedios.—Without animation—without cleverness—almost without people!

Cosme.—The house is delightful? Aren't you comfortable?

Remedios.—But there's no one here; I mean we are half a dozen close intimate friends, who have said everything to each other, and therefore in this delightful house reigns absolute, overpowering monotony.

Cosme.—Well, here comes Don Hilarion. He's as lively as a dozen ordinary people. You ask for diversion; here it comes!

SCENE TWO

(*Remedios, Don Cosme and Don Hilarion.*)

Hilarion.—Tremendously amusing! Absolutely exquisite! The way she plays them both. (*He remains standing in the door at the rear of the stage and looks out into the garden.*)

Remedios.—Thank Heaven, there is some one who wants to laugh! Come over here, Don Hilarion, and tell me what pleases you so!

Hilarion.—With a thousand-fold love I come, most beautiful Remedios.

Remedios.—No, sir! No love, if you please. Simply in charity share a little of that placid smile, that excellent humor and that little private joy of yours.

Hilarion.—With all my heart, everything I possess.

Remedios.—Why don't you learn to do it like that, Don Cosme?

Cosme.—It's all put on!

Hilarion.—Thanks! You honor me!

Remedios.—Don't pay any attention to him—tell me, why were you laughing so?

Hilarion.—That Teresina is a little devil! She's dancing along between Eugenio and Juan, balancing herself most wonderfully. Do I fall toward Juan? I reach for Eugenio. Does Eugenio conquer? Oh! save me, Juan! Who would ever say that such a perverse being as Teresina was the daughter of a man as correct, straight-forward and simple as Don Pablo!

Cosme.—Those are the tricks of the Fate which enmeshes everything, and enjoys fooling us miserable mortals. Are you dark? Your child will be light! Are you light? Your child will be dark! And the father stands with his mouth open looking for light and dark ancestors through all the family tree.

Remedios.—To tell the truth, Teresina is the one and only cheerful note in this house.

Cosme.—I am sorry to hear you say that. So you really believe that Teresina is happy?

Remedios.—Why yes—it seems to me—

Hilarion.—I think so too.

Cosme.—Well, you are seriously mistaken. Teresina is mortally unhappy.

Hilarion.—What's he talking about?

Remedios.—What! Unhappy?

Hilarion.—Yes, Lady. Some night in the moonlight we shall see her body veiled and garlanded, floating on the waves of the river, another Ophelia.

Cosme.—Who knows.

Hilarion.—Who can doubt it. Those brilliant eyes! (*In a mocking tone.*)

Cosme.—Tears make eyes bright.

Hilarion.—That ever present smile.

Cosme.—Because it is ever present it is forced.

Remedios.—Yes, that smiling face—

Cosme.—Especially when she looks at her father or at Eugenio, but it is pale when she looks at Juan.

Remedios.—Well, listen. Now I think of it, I have sometimes imagined that I have seen in Teresina something like—flashes of sadness.

Hilarion.—Ah! the lightning flashes over here. A storm is coming up.

Cosme.—Teresina loves Juan madly. What does madly mean? Well, she loves him madly.

Remedios.—And Juan?

Cosme.—Juan has been Don Juan until now, but this time he is really in love, that is, he is not *in love*, but he *loves* with passion and with frenzy, leaping over every obstacle. What does leaping over every obstacle mean? Well, he leaps.

Hilarion.—If they love each other so much, let them marry.

Remedios.—Certainly, let them marry.

Cosme.—Ah!

Hilarion.—What a bitter smile! What a sinister look! Ah! the chasm yawns before us.

Remedios.—But why shouldn't they get married?

Cosme.—It's impossible. Don't ask me more—it's impossible.

Remedios.—And does Teresina know it's impossible?

Cosme.—She suspects something. And in the end the devoted and knightly Don Juan will have to say—what he will have to say—

Remedios.—You know what it is? You have fathomed the mystery?

Cosme.—I was in Chili—six years ago—and there I happened to know Don Juan de Vargas.

Hilarion.—The chasm widens.

Remedios.—And what—?

Cosme.—I can't say more.

Hilarion.—The chasm closes.

Cosme.—Believe me—it is best to know nothing, to forget.

Hilarion.—The chasm sleeps!

Remedios.—So Teresina is to be left unmarried?

Cosme.—There is always Eugenio. To be sure Teresina doesn't love him, or rather she loves him like a brother, but he loves her deeply. He's gentle, trusting, generous—a saint in fact—rich and acceptable to Don Pablo. So if you need a victim, there is Eugenio. It would be hard to find a better husband in such a case.

Remedios.—You say “in such a case.” What case do you mean?

Cosme.—The case of Teresina.

Hilarion (In a doubtful tone).—Marry Eugenio and Teresina? But let's see, who is this Don Eugenio de Fuente Santa?

Remedios.—Don Cosme has just told you, a fine fellow.

Cosme.—I don't say that. You say that yourself.

Remedios.—Everybody says it—a fine fellow. I don't take back one word. Besides he's good, so good that he's almost ridiculous.

Cosme.—Be good, eh! and the World promotes you to be a fool!

Remedios.—Ah! he's way beyond that. Just as you, through your black and yellow glasses, see everything colored with death and bile, so he, through rose colored, rainbow glasses, sees everything filled with light, splendor and joy.

Hilarion.—Is that all?

Remedios.—He's rich. He has lots of talent and lots of sense. Don Pablo educated him in the United States, he graduated, went to California, and made an enormous fortune with some sort of invention. There you have Don Eugenio de Fuente Santa. Good looking, kind, rich, and a bit of a fool for all his talent. If, with all those qualities he is not fitted to marry Teresina, who is brilliant, winsome, wayward and most wilful, I say there's no sense in any one's getting married.

Cosme.—It would be better.

Remedios.—And if the World comes to an end?

Cosme.—What a pity that a fountain of tears should dry up.

Remedios.—Oh, that's enough Cosme! Put on crape, why don't you?

Cosme.—Consider it put on.

Hilarion.—But you haven't answered my question yet, that is, who is Eugenio? Who are his parents? At least, who was his father? Who knew his father? Did you know him, Remedios?

Remedios.—Not I.

Hilarion (To DON COSME).—Did you?

Cosme.—Nor I, either.

Hilarion.—We know nothing at all about his parents. We know that Don Pablo took him out of charity and raised him as a son. But what I ask is: Will Don Pablo consent to this match?

Remedios.—He will. He wants it very much. The marriage of Teresina and Eugenio is likely, very likely.

Cosme.—It is.

Remedios.—And will it be happy?

Cosme.—Stop there! How happy, we will see when we reach the end of the story. Now will you let me rest? May I shut my eyes for five minutes?

Remedios.—Ask Don Pablo.

SCENE THREE

(*Remedios, Don Cosme, Don Hilarion. Don Pablo entering at rear.*)

Remedios.—Good morning, Don Pablo.

Pablo.—May God give us many good mornings. So far, this morning has been most delightful.

Hilarion.—Your customary little stroll?

Pablo.—Before lunch it is a good thing. It clears the head, starts the blood and whets the appetite. Thus one goes through life, and becomes old with health and strength.

Cosme (Waking up).—If you are old, why do you want health? It is only a question of a few days.

Pablo.—Or of a few years. I have not surrendered. I hope to bury you all, notwithstanding that I love you greatly.

Remedios.—Why do you want to bury us?

Pablo.—Merely a little figure of speech, my dear.

Cosme.—It is the spontaneous cry of human nature. It is the civilized man showing himself as he is, unclothed. It is the eternal struggle to bury all, to remain solitary in universal ruin, a grinning face, gloating over a vast tomb. And yet, Don Pablo is our best.

Hilarion (To DON PABLO).—Thank him. You are the best gentleman with the grin and we are in the tomb.

Remedios.—Don Pablo doesn't want to bury me! It is different with the rest of you. You deserve it, I don't.

Pablo.—No, my child. You know that I care a great deal about you. Your husband was one of my best friends, and you remember what they say in France, and even in Spain: "The friends of my friends are my friends."

Hilarion.—Since we are not dealing here with the friends of my friends but with the wives of my friends, why not change the proverb and say: "The wives of my friends are my wives."

Pablo.—Good Heavens, Don Hilarion, what a terrible jest!

Cosme.—Don Hilarion talks rather well at times.

Remedios.—Gentlemen, let us respect Don Pablo! Don Pablo is a most godly man!

Pablo.—Provided you say I am a good man, I am satisfied. Say what you like of me, if you aren't greatly bored in my house I am still satisfied, and if you promise to come next year, I am most content.

Remedios (With mock solemnity).—I will return, I swear it!

Hilarion.—I will return, I promise.

Pablo.—And you, Don Cosme? Will you come back?

Cosme.—The dark swallows ever return.

Pablo.—Ah! we will have the company complete, Eugenio does not have to either promise or swear. He will never leave me.

Cosme.—You are forgetting Juan—will he come back?

Pablo.—If he wants to. I will have the greatest pleasure in receiving him. He was Eugenio's friend at college in the United States, and they have been friends ever since. Eugenio brought him to me two years ago, when Juan de Vargas came to Europe. You know my saying: "The friends of my friends——"

Hilarion.—Well, we don't have the danger here that we had before as to the "wives of my friends," seeing that Vargas is a bachelor!

Remedios.—And a good catch besides!

Cosme (Having got up and walked to the rear).—Ha! Ha! Ha!

Pablo.—What's the matter?

Cosme.—Why, Teresina and Juan are walking under the arbor—a branch caught at Juan's hat—the hat came off—and Don Juan is revealed, revealed as if the little branch had given him a blow saying: "Let us see that face!"

Pablo.—And that amuses you?

Cosme.—It makes me laugh, which is not the same thing.

Hilarion.—Ah! you see there are laughs tragic, laughs

sarcastic, laughs sardonic and sinister laughs. And these make up the repertoire of Don Cosme.

Remedios (To DON PABLO).—We have agreed that Don Cosme is a reprobate, you know.

Pablo.—Stop there! Don Cosme is a good man, as good as I am and almost as good as Eugenio, who is the most perfect one of all of us.

Remedios.—Of all us angels.

Pablo.—Yes Lady, angels. Why make the World worse than it is. Here we are, a few excellent people, all dear friends, and without offending God or our neighbors, we spend the summer months in innocent pleasure. Angels could do no better, nor conduct themselves with more propriety. By virtue of these presents I declare myself an angel.

Cosme.—An excellent man and optimistic.

Pablo.—Practical above all. I have always been that, and my parents and grand-parents were the same. The body sane, the conscience clear; with the first, one never lacks appetite, and with the second, one sleeps tranquilly. Thus one waits in peace the disposition God may make of us. What more do you want? It is the system of my family, thus to grow old. Surely there is nothing more sensible than being a good man—wouldn't you say that I am one?

Remedios.—When will the beatification take place?

Cosme.—All in due time. We know now that he is holy—we will have to wait to see whether he becomes a martyr.

Pablo.—Who is going to make me a martyr?

Hilarion.—We, for example.

Pablo.—Very well then, martyr me all you like.

Cosme.—How simple it is as you see it! So you believe that if you are good you will be happy?

Pablo.—Why man—it seems to me—it seems to me—that conscience—eh—is it not?—

Cosme.—But do we ever in Life depend entirely upon ourselves? I any more than the rest of you? Don't we have wives, children, fathers, brothers, family and friends? Does not society surround us? Do not the passions, vices and miseries of every one enter into all of us? Undeceive yourself, Don Pablo, we are even as sponges sunk in the current of the World, and we absorb what is around us through all our pores, be it what it may—sweet or bitter, but bitter nearly always. The roots of our being extend far beyond us and strike into the hearts of our fellow-men.

And so we live the life of all, we feel with all, and we sin with all. The sufferings of others makes us suffer, not because of our sympathy, but because of our fate, and we are dying little by little, in the death of those who are dying around us.

Pablo.—Come, Don Cosme, let's drop philosophy. God will keep him who really wishes to be good. And he shall be good and happy in so far as he is able.

Cosme.—Poor man, you will be good if they let you—if the torrent does not sweep you away. But suppose it does. Or, if not you, those who are dear to you—a brother, a father, a child. And if in these there is some guilt, some stain, some great sadness, will you not share in that guilt until the end of the journey? That stain, will you not feel it on your forehead? That sadness, will it not tear you silently and in secret through all your being?

Pablo.—In our family there have been sinners, as all human beings have been since Father Adam became one. But our sins are those which are absolved and do not leave stains for the World to see. Don Pablo de Azola and his family, I tell you, live honorably or don't live at all—God forgive me!

Remedios.—Look at your handiwork, Don Cosme! Don Pablo came in here happy—now he is echoing the tragic note you have struck.

Hilarion.—Don't pay any attention to him, Don Pablo. Don Cosme is in a bad humor, because he has not slept more than twelve hours.

Remedios.—Never mind, you had your Teresina.

Pablo (Becoming cheerful again.)—My Teresina! It's true, is it not, that she is very beautiful and very good?

Remedios.—And also your adopted son.

Pablo.—Eugenio, Ah! truly he is good. And Don Cosme says there are no good people! My dear Eugenio—better than Teresina, between us better than Teresina. Good as she is—well—he is better! What a heart! And what talent! What wonderful love for everyone! What all embracing kindness! I believe that if he stumbled on a stone, he'd go back and smooth the stone and ask if he had hurt it. Ha! Ha! I don't believe there is any one like him. At times he makes me laugh, and at other times I almost cry for pity at seeing a soul so clean of all impurity, so full of sweetness. And besides he's no mere dreamer, he's a practical man. At twenty-six I sent him to California, and in a few months—a fortune! He's nothing if he's not an angel. He walks through the World and God always puts in his path

those who love him, marvellous things to stimulate him, stones of gold on which to stumble. He has an enormous fortune. I am rich also, but by grace of inheritance, through no fault of my own, but he, no, sir! He thinks and plans, he throws out this line and that. He scans the horizon and all he sees is etched into his mind. Look at him and see how, by force of talent and worth, God orders all things. The days we live in are the days we live in, and in the beginning it was said: "Thou shalt earn thy bread by the sweat of thy brow." But to-day we say rightly: "Thou shalt earn thy gold by the cudgelling of thy brains." There Don Cosme! do you say now that I'm not a modern man? In short, Eugenio is my idol.

Cosme.—Behold the idol comes to the aid of his conjurer.

SCENE FOUR

(*Don Cosme, Don Hilarion, Don Pablo, Remedios and Eugenio*)

Eugenio.—Hail to this noble group! How are you Remedios? (To DON PABLO putting his hand on his shoulder.) How did the walk go? Feel all right?

Pablo.—Excellently. I am hungry and the fields—

Eugenio.—Yes, the fields! And the sky too! Have you ever seen anything like it?

Hilarion.—What's happened to them, Eugenio?

Eugenio.—Ah! the blue of the sky. A blue, deep, so deep—turquoise—velvety. It was never like this before!

Remedios.—Ask Don Cosme about the blue sky.

Hilarion.—I think he also has noticed it and is meditating on what you have said.

Eugenio.—Truly, it is something that leaps to meet the eye. (To DON COSME.) Do you think as I do?

Cosme.—About what?

Eugenio.—About the color of the sky?

Cosme.—Pshaw! pure illusion!

Eugenio.—But an illusion very pure, and above all very blue and most beautiful.

Cosme.—I look up sometimes and see grey space, leaden, livid and dark with clouds, and on nights of torment, deep black.

Eugenio.—That's true, quite black, but it is only that the lightning may flash more brilliantly. It is like a dark curtain, a background for great shafts of light. It is the sublime scheme of decoration which the sky offers us when it suspects that the placid monotony of its blue is tiring us.

Cosme.—It may be! But it seems to me that the impresario of the atmosphere does not always give us as entertaining performances as you imagine.

Eugenio.—But you aren't interested in anything. You spend the night and day in sleeping.

Cosme.—Indeed, I see and understand everything, and it seems very bad to me.

Eugenio.—Everything seems bad to you? Lord, man! How can you say such things! Have you seen the meadows to-day and the sky? Have you gone down to the river, and have you climbed to the top of the hill? Have you seen the riot of color? Have you walked with eyes and soul uplifted? Why, Don Cosme, the day is one of the beauties of God. There are no colours, brushes, words nor sounds that could reproduce it. Why Nature to-day is *en fete*. One cannot see what I have seen and not feel beauty flowing in through all the senses, filling the soul with light and joy. It makes me wish to embrace the trees and say: "Thank you for being so beautiful," to throw myself into the stream and feel the smooth touch of the water; to give great leaps towards the skies and shout with gladness.

Hilarion.—Now he's off.

Cosme.—What a creature! How he talks!

Remedios.—Very pretty talk.

Hilarion.—And so gracefully put.

Cosme.—And quite fantastic.

Pablo.—And quite true, above all quite true.

Cosme.—So for you, modern young Pangloss, immovable optimist with the soul of a child in a man's body, all is good in this World?

Eugenio.—I should say so. Everything is as good as possible. Some things are very good, and many almost divine. One thing that I know is divine from head to foot.

Remedios (To HILARION).—He means Teresina.

Hilarion (To REMEDIOS).—I thought he meant you.

Remedios.—No doubt!

Cosme.—To resume then. For you, most happy mortal, destined to Limbo, or most unhappy one pre-destined to be sacrificed, evil does not exist?

Eugenio.—No, sir! Things *less good* exist, but this less is what you ponderously called evil.

Cosme.—Pride, Vice, Crime, Ignorance, Wrath and Plague do not exist?

Eugenio.—They exist, but how? Hear my philosophy which is still new. All human beings and all inanimate things work slowly and silently but constantly upward, and by successive evolutions acquire greater and greater perfection. But those in the first grade are imperfect, they need much to reach our height, and we who surprise them in this initial moment, in this step upward, say implacably: “How bad these things are!” When we ought to say: “Poor little things that are below us,” and give them a hand up.

Cosme.—“Poor little Asiatic Cholera which is down in the depths, give me your hand so you can at least ascend to bilious colic!”

Hilarion.—A good hit!

Remedios.—Good!

Pablo.—There are fearful problems that we cannot understand. How can you expect Eugenio to solve them off-hand.

Cosme.—I don’t expect him to solve anything. I know that they can’t be solved.

Eugenio.—And why can’t they be solved? What a man you are, Don Cosme! (*He stands looking at him.*) I can’t help thinking that some little cell in Don Cosme’s brain was a microbe of the Black Death back in the Middle Ages, which by successive evolutions has come to form a part of Don Cosme de Montenegro, conserving through its biological evolution the sadness, the bitterness and the blackness of its first origin.

Cosme.—It may be. But in any event I congratulate myself on its ascent. What I should not like would be to have it stop evolving and go back to the microbe class.

Eugenio.—Make fun of me all you like. You affirm evil, I affirm good. Look out in the garden—see who is coming—and then deny that beauty, innocence, goodness and grace exist—above all the grace of God.

SCENE FIVE

(*Remedios, Don Pablo, Eugenio, Don Cosme, Don Hilarion and later Teresina.*)

Hilarion.—You are right, Eugenio, beauty and grace without equal. (*Looking back toward the garden.*)

Remedios.—Let us sing like the chorus: Without equal! Without equal! (*Looking at the garden.*)

Pablo.—Indeed it's true, isn't it? But what a girl!—She might walk in the shade so she walks in the sun. Ho! Teresina, get under the arbor! I say, under the arbor! No, she will walk in the sun.

Cosme (Within hearing of REMEDIOS).—Walking in the sun burns the face and paleness shows less. The heat of the sun paints joy over sadness.

Remedios (In a low voice to COSME).—What refined malice! What suspicions! You were born to be destructive.

(TERESINA enters with apparent gaiety.)

Teresina.—Here I am. (*Runs to embrace her father.*) How are you? Did you get a good walk? Do you feel well? Did you find a good appetite?

Pablo.—I am most comfortable, I have had a long walk and I feel very well. I will eat like a hungry wolf. So all your questions are answered. And now tell *me*, little head without brains, why do you walk in the sun?

Teresina.—To come more quickly—and besides I stayed a long while under the arbor—I got cold, quite cold. I feel it yet—And I said to myself: “I will run in the sun.” And so—you see—I ran in the sun!

Pablo.—And if it makes you ill?

Teresina.—Don't think of that! I never felt better nor more cheerful. Isn't that so, Eugenio? See what Eugenio says. How we laughed—you remember?

Eugenio.—I should say so! Juan is so romantic and so mournful and he says such exaggerated things! Teresina can't stand it and always fights him. He says one thing, she contradicts and sometimes they get angry. If I say anything Teresina laughs, and when she heard me compare Juan to Tediatus of the sad nights of Cadalso, she laughed so hard that she almost cried. Didn't you?

Teresina.—Yes, father, I almost cried—Eugenio! My! he's funny!

Eugenio.—Oh, don't say that! Don't make fun of me!

Teresina.—I'm not making fun of you. Every one knows that you have a great deal of talent, that you are very good and very witty.

Eugenio.—Witty, am I?

Cosme.—The modesty of man! He accepts the statement that he has talent, and is a good man, without a murmur, but he doesn't want to make people laugh. The position of jester doesn't

please him. He doesn't want to be ridiculous.

Hilarion.—This is the day of specialities and each one has his. Some make us laugh and others make us cry.

Pablo.—Well, be careful, don't you make my Teresina cry.

Eugenio.—She came very near it.

Cosme.—I wasn't the cruel one, I didn't make her cry. Those young men—Juan and Eugenio—are responsible.

Teresina.—Eugenio—Eugenio was saying something about the sad nights—that I couldn't stand.

Cosme.—Yes, Eugenio spoke of the sad nights of Juan, and so the whimsical Teresina cried.

Teresina.—That's it. I cried for laughing—indeed—now—I can hardly keep from—

Cosme.—The most bitter cry is that which follows the laugh.

Remedios.—How mean Don Cosme is! He hasn't made Teresina cry yet, but see how pale she is!

Eugenio.—Why!—What's the matter?

Pablo.—What's the matter, my child?

Teresina.—Nothing, I'm just a little cold—I felt cold under the arbor. Don't be frightened. (*To her father.*) I am very cheerful. I will always be very cheerful so that you will be happy, father. But this room is cold—Oh, very cold! And Don Cosme has such a sombre face! (*Making herself laugh.*) You frighten me! Look father, he wants to make me cry! He is bad, a very bad Don Cosme. Take charge of him Eugenio, you who are loyal, brave and gentle. Punish him; don't let him sleep—pay him back for me, make him laugh—If he laughs I am revenged. I trust you, Eugenio, no one more than you. Eugenio is good, isn't he Remedios? (*The two talk in a low voice, laughing, but TERESINA is nervous and plainly excited.*)

Eugenio.—What a little flatterer. She's an angel—and how she loves me! Good, loyal, affectionate, constant, sympathetic—how many good things she has called me! (*Turning impetuously to DON PABLO*) Don Pablo, I must talk with you!

Teresina.—Oh!—I forgot—the royal mail carrier of this our Kingdom has arrived. So! Ladies and gentlemen, on to the mail! A black edged envelope came—mourning—it must be for Don Cosme. Don Hilarion, you and father got two just alike—they must be the announcements of Serafina's wedding.

Remedios. Didn't I get a letter?

Teresina.—Yes, you got one. It looks like a business letter—may be your dressmaker's bill. I got one like it—I feel for you!

Pablo.—Good-bye, crazy child. Don't walk in the sun.

Teresina.—Don't worry. (*In a low voice.*) I love you a great deal. Don't worry even a little about me. I'm all right. Good-bye.

Pablo (Detaining her).—Really, do you love me a great deal?

Teresina.—I do indeed, very, very much.

Pablo.—How much—for example, more than you love Eugenio?

Teresina.—A great deal more. He's a dear—indeed I know it. But to save you a single tear I would sacrifice him without hesitation, and yet—I do love him.

Pablo.—Come here, Eugenio, we are talking about you.

Eugenio.—About me? *Teresina*? What's she saying?

Pablo.—That she loves you very much.

Teresina (Escaping to her father).—You big tell-tale!

Eugenio.—Divine! I said so before and I say so now. (*With renewed impetuosity.*) I must speak to you to-day, right now! Look at her, Don Cosme, and become an optimist like me. Good does exist, beauty, love, virtue and happiness. Ah! that wonderful blue, those fresh rose tints, and all the rainbow in its perpetual luminous curve! Cosme, say with me—Divine, Divine! Divine!

Cosme (In a low voice).—Yes, divine, but too divine to be human, and too human to be divine.

Eugenio.—How twisted that is. It turns like a screw. Human, divine—divine, human. Don Cosme, I don't travel in spirals, I go in a straight line.

Cosme.—Where are you going in a straight line?

Eugenio.—To the altar!

Cosme.—Do you burn your boats to-day?

Eugenio.—That's out of date! To-day I cut loose the moorings of my airship and ascend to the seventh heaven.

Cosme.—May you get a good wind.

Teresina.—To the hall, my friends, the mail is waiting! There are letters for every one.

Cosme (In a low voice).—Also for Juanito?

Teresina.—Also for Vargas.

Cosme.—Possibly from America?

Teresina.—I don't know—I think so—How do you know, Don Cosme? Don Cosme—it doesn't do any good to look at me so hard—you don't frighten me! (*With a forced laugh.*) You took me by surprise before—but now I'm ready for you.

You're bad—very bad—But sometimes I laugh and sometimes I cry—Sometimes I am afraid, and sometimes—Oh, I have great courage! Don Cosme— I feel strong enough for anything. I'm brave, Oh, very brave. Remedios, *En avant!* On to the woods, to the fields, to the sun! To the Winds—! To attack the mail. Don Cosme!—Don Cosme!—Oh!—I can't stand any more.

(They all go out with a great bustle and laughter.)

SCENE SIX

(Don Pablo and Eugenio)

(EUGENIO is standing entranced following TERESINA with his eyes.)

Pablo.—Well, Eugenio?

Eugenio.—Well?

Pablo.—Didn't you say you wanted to talk to me?

Eugenio.—Very seriously.

Pablo.—Ah, then begin.

(PABLO seats himself. EUGENIO stands before him smiling and quite excited.)

Eugenio.—Look me over—How about me?

Pablo.—My boy—You are not what one would call an Apollo, neither are you exactly grotesque. A good active body, strong but not a Hercules, an intelligent face, gentle, affectionate, altogether an attractive combination.

Eugenio.—I don't mean that! I know I am neither good looking nor ugly. All that does not interest me for the moment.

Pablo.—Oh, you want me to tell you the color of your soul? Well, something like that color you were talking about, the blue of the sky, a deep, deep blue.

Eugenio.—It isn't that—No—But there is something that you must tell me, if you love me.

Pablo.—You mean that you are—

Eugenio.—Oh, I know I'm all right. If I wasn't I couldn't stand myself. I'd have stopped knowing myself long ago. But once again, it isn't that.

Pablo.—As you have told me to look at you carefully—

Eugenio.—I should say so. This moment is solemn, or Life holds no solemn moments.

Pablo.—Well, then, what shall I look at you for?

Eugenio.—So that you may tell me what you think of my clothes.

Pablo.—Man, what a thing to say! (*Laughing.*) I know nothing of fashions, and you've never paid attention to such trifles. But I will try to please you. (*Looking at him with mock attention.*) They look all right to me, but there's a wrinkle near the shoulder, and another over here to the left, and this sleeve—let's see—I think it's too short.

Eugenio (Laughing).—Worse and worse. You haven't got it yet.

Pablo.—Well, what in the devil do you want me to tell you?

Eugenio.—I want you to tell me if I am all right in these clothes, or whether I had better dress formally for our conversation.

Pablo.—Ah, I see! Is our conversation going to be so solemn?

Eugenio.—I told you before that it was the most solemn of all the solemn things of this Life.

Pablo.—Ah!

Eugenio.—Should I dress in black?

Pablo.—Oh, no, not in black! It would suggest duels or funerals and we would have to call in Don Cosme.

Eugenio.—That means that I may speak without formality just as I am?

Pablo (Impatiently).—Go ahead—speak! And in any clothes you like as long as it's not a bath-robe. I don't suppose that would do for such a solemn occasion.

Eugenio.—Well, I begin. Don Eugenio de Fuente Santa, twenty-eight years old, formerly mining engineer in the great American Republic, possessed of some millions, honestly earned, thanks to good fortune, hard work and ingenuity, and even though I say it myself, an honest, upright man, as most respectable persons can testify, with excellent references so to speak, among them that of Don Pablo de Azola who stands sponsor for his good conduct—let me get my breath—Don Eugenio de Fuente Santa I repeat—of whose illustrious family I will speak as soon as you tell me about it—has the honor to ask of the aforementioned Don Pablo, the hand of his adorable daughter, Teresina. If it is given to him he will fly with the angel of his love upon rose colored wings, across the azure sky to the seventh heaven. If it is refused, he will embrace Don Cosme and hurl himself with him into the seventeenth abyss of gloom and sadness. I have spoken and await profoundly moved, that which you may decide.

Pablo.—Well, I decide that I have been wanting it with all my heart—I have been hoping constantly that it would happen.

I am very, very happy. At this very moment I challenge Don Cosme, grand impresario-in-chief of mourning to make me sad! Marry Teresina? Well, I should say so! Oh! Eugenio, how you repay for all I have been able to do for you!

Eugenio.—You mean that—Teresina is mine?

Pablo.—Most certainly. That is, if she loves you. Of course you know I could not oppose her own wishes, nor would you want me to either.

Eugenio.—Ah, I'm sure Teresina loves me. I've been sure for some time. Am I a fool?

Pablo.—In such things men of ability are the biggest fools. To discover love in a woman is not the same as discovering a vein of gold.

Eugenio.—Teresina's love is true, profound and passionate—I will answer for that with my head.

Pablo.—Have you told her that you love her?

Eugenio.—Directly?—No, sir! Without telling you, without permission from you it would have been an abuse of confidence unworthy of me. But in an indirect way, yes—quite often, very often—in fact all the time.

Pablo.—What do you call an “indirect way?”

Eugenio.—Indirect? Well, like everything indirect.

Pablo.—Let's have an example.

Eugenio.—Well, for example I say: “Oh! Teresina! if we were married the angels in Heaven would have to come down to look at me to know what it is to live in Paradise.”—Of course I say it with expression.

Pablo.—You call that indirect?

Eugenio.—Well, you see I did not say: “Marry me.” I spoke in the conditional. “*If we were* married.” There's a difference, a big difference.

Pablo.—And what does she say?

Eugenio.—She laughs a great deal and teases me, and confides in me a lot and tells me that she really cares for me, and I know that when I am not there she praises me more than she does any one else. To Juan she says things about me that——

Pablo.—Bad! Bad! Bad!

Eugenio.—Bad?

Pablo.—She laughs with you? Have you never made her cry?

Eugenio.—I—make Teresina cry?—What an atrocity! Never! No, sir! Make my Teresina cry? What a thing to ask!

Pablo.—Fool! Big fool! Until a woman has cried because of a man, she does not love him. You are a wise man, but in love affairs you begin to look to me like a good deal of a fool.

Eugenio.—I don't know—may be she has cried for me—may be she cries when I don't see her. (*Somewhat confused.*) Now I think of it—a little while ago—when she seemed quite happy, suddenly there passed over her face—something like a wave of sadness. On some days she has been very pale—and yesterday—yes, sir—yesterday—she cried—I am absolutely certain.

Pablo (Laughing).—A good sign, she is in love.

Eugenio.—I should say so. It is clear she is in love.

Pablo.—Just wait a bit though. She may be in love, and not in love with you.

Eugenio.—With whom then?

Pablo.—How do I know. Someone else.

Eugenio.—You mean (*In a jesting tone*) Don Cosme or Don Hilarion?

Pablo.—Or your friend, Juan.

Eugenio (Laughing).—How absurd! How could that be!—It's impossible!

Pablo.—Why is it impossible? He is poetic, good looking—better looking than you are—fascinating.

Eugenio.—I should say so, he is all that and much more. Affectionate, charming, a heart of gold—and imagination—Oh! what imagination. And an artist! He would have been a painter of the first rank—he is almost. He inherited it—all of them were that way, from fathers to sons—they all had a special talent for painting. And his character—How frank he is sometimes, how cheerful—and then at other times, how poetic and how romantic! One is never bored with him. Indeed, I love him like a brother.

Pablo.—Well, you bear me out in all that I have said. If Teresina finds in Juan all these perfections, you're lost. You a wise man, he an artist—women understand art better than science. A sweet note, a brilliant stroke of the brush, a phrase full of feeling, turns their heads. A theorem of geometry, leaves them cold, and me too.

Eugenio.—That may be so—but she can't marry him.

Pablo.—Why?

Eugenio.—Because I know. There are reasons—

Pablo.—Ah! Let us have these reasons.

Eugenio.—In the first place Juan knows that I love Teresina,

because I've told him so.

Pablo.—That's a fine reason isn't it?

Eugenio.—Absolutely conclusive. Juan is a life long friend of mine—ever since we were children—ever since we went to college. Don't you remember?

Pablo.—And what of that?

Eugenio.—Juan is a loyal friend and a gentleman, and knowing that I—don't you see?—don't press me further!

Pablo.—Listen, wise child, angelic and innocent boy, you don't know that in dealing with women, friend knows not friend, nor brother, nor is there loyalty, honor, trust nor nobility, but only passion, passion, passion!—Isn't history full of examples of this, and what's worse, isn't Hell full of them?

Eugenio.—Juan is different. I'd stake my life on him and my head into the bargain. I haven't two friends like that in the World!

Pablo.—I believe you—you certainly haven't two friends like that—nor one either.

Eugenio.—Juan owes his life to me. It's ancient history. We were bathing in the sea—Juan was drowning, and I—zas! zas! zas!—four strokes and I had him. But it was work, a little more and we'd both have drowned together—I dragged him out by the hair—

Pablo.—And when was this?

Eugenio.—Ah, years ago; we were just boys.

Pablo.—Tut! Tut! Tut! Well, he doesn't even remember it now; it was a mere incident of childhood.

Eugenio.—Don't talk like that, Don Pablo. It seems to me that you are getting infected by Don Cosme. (*Solemnly.*) Juan remembers that he owes his life to me, and his gratitude is eternal. For him—for him, I'm a Sacred Being.

Pablo.—Does he say that? Have you reminded him of it?

Eugenio.—For God's sake, Don Pablo—He doesn't say anything nor have I reminded him of it. We understand without speaking. For Juan, believe me, Eugenio *is* a Sacred Being.

Pablo.—Well, in spite of all that, I tell you, sometimes—I think I have observed—that Vargas contemplates Teresina—in a manner—er—scarcely satisfactory—er—scarcely respectful, to the Sacred Being.

Eugenio.—You are dreaming.

Pablo.—I'm not dreaming. Your reasons don't convince me.

Eugenio.—I have others.

Pablo.—Let's hear what they are?

Eugenio.—Unless Vargas were the most infamous man on Earth, and you know he isn't, he couldn't fall in love with Teresina, he could not and he cannot, and there's nothing more to be said. (*With a certain mystery in his voice.*)

Pablo.—Why?—Why couldn't he?

Eugenio.—Because Juan—Oh! I'll tell you, then. Juan is not free, he has a rope around his neck—a rope in the shape of a woman—a woman who dishonors him and drags him down. It was because of this that he fled from America, to free himself from that yoke.

Pablo.—Juan is married then?

Eugenio.—Don't you understand? Married, separated from his wife, desperate and wandering. Now you see why Juanito cannot be my rival. You see I have no rival. Teresina loves me, and you don't reject me, and I am the happiest man in the universe!

Pablo.—May be you're right.

Eugenio.—Of course I am! But let's go slowly. I'm the one now who says "wait a bit." There is one delicate point yet to discuss. I'm a man of honor, and I don't deceive any one, least of all Teresina. Does Teresina know that I have no parents?

Pablo.—She knows you have me.

Eugenio.—Of course. But let's have things clear, in these matters the clearer we are the better. Does Teresina know I have no other name than the one you invented; that I have no family, and that out of charity you took care of a poor abandoned child?

Pablo.—She knows it.

Eugenio.—To the very letter? Exactly and unsparingly?

Pablo (Laughing).—And superabundantly.

Eugenio.—And she did not show any scruples, any repugnance, any aversion, when you told her of my origin? That is, that I have no more origin than the meteorites, that come from anywhere and fall anywhere and are found anywhere, with the difference that others find meteorites of iron and you found a meteorite child?

Pablo.—Teresina has too much heart to let herself be influenced by such futile speculations. A man is the child of his acts. You are a good man—what difference does it make what your parents may have been—whether they were good or bad, what of it?

Eugenio.—But wait, Don Pablo! There is no reason to suppose that my parents were bad. One always presumes a soldier to be brave. Every man is presumed to be honest. My parents—my poor parents—I am sure they were good and very unfortunate! (*With great warmth and conviction.*)

Pablo.—Don't get angry. I suppose so too. I don't blame them, possibly some misfortune—

Eugenio.—Well, I don't even suppose, I *know* it. They were very good and very unfortunate, and their misfortune separates us, and not their wrong-doing. I'm sure of it. You say I'm a saint? It is something I couldn't say myself, but I'm not a devil. You say I am brilliant; that's merely an exaggeration of yours but, between ourselves, I'm not a fool. Well, my saintliness or my sense of honor, whichever you choose to call it—my brilliancy or my ability, as you please—my love of everything fine, in short, came from some one. Some one gave me all that—It was they! I am their flesh and blood, their spirit was in mysterious communion with mine. They passed on to me all the good which I now have in me. I could not have given to myself, that which is I. My parents! I do not know who they were or what misfortune separated us. It does not matter—I came from them—I am of them—I do not deny their love. I do not need to see them to love them with all my heart. It is enough for me to see them in spirit, and in spirit I see them by day and by night, as often as I suffer, as often as I am happy.

Pablo.—Don't be angry with me. You are—you are a saint come down from his niche to stay a while with us.

Eugenio.—Angry with you? How could I be angry with you, to whom I owe everything? For you—for you I could give my life—and it would seem little to give. For you—!

Pablo.—That's enough. I know it. Let's talk of Teresina. We must tell her.

Eugenio.—Yes, at once! Let's call her. But you tell her—see—I'm afraid now—you—you see her alone—but hurry!

Pablo.—We don't have to call her, she is coming. (*Looking out to the garden.*)

Eugenio.—Yes, she seems to be talking quite excitedly. How sweet she is! She treats Don Cosme with the same kindness that she does every one else, though he is far from lovable. He's good at heart though, really quite good at heart!

Pablo.—The conversation must be interesting. Teresina

is not laughing as she usually does—She's serious—She seems upset.

Eugenio.—I know what it is now! Splendid!

Pablo.—You know what they're talking about?

Eugenio.—Surely. I told Don Cosme when I came in that I was going to ask you for Teresina, and Don Cosme, bless him, is preparing her.

Pablo.—He's preparing her? Don Cosme is better fitted to prepare her to die well.

Eugenio.—This time he prepares her not to die but to marry. Listen, I can imagine the dialogue between Teresina and Don Cosme:

"*Don Cosme:* Teresina, at this instant your fate is being decided.

Teresina.—How?

He.—Something very grave is taking place.

She.—Something—Good or bad?

He.—Who can read the future?

She.—What do you think it is? Good or bad?

He.—Good? Is there such a thing as good? Bad? why torment one's self in anticipation." (*Imitating the tone of DON COSME.*)

Pablo.—What! You hear them from here?

Eugenio.—No! But it is as if I did hear them. Don Cosme is doing us a favor. Let's leave him a free hand and go to the garden. Behind the shrubbery we will observe, and at the psychological moment, enter the lover and the father—"Eugenio loves you." "I love Eugenio." An embrace and the day is won! Come, they do not see us yet!

Pablo.—I never saw you like this before. You're crazy.

Eugenio.—Yes, father mine, I'm crazy because I love her with all my heart. Without her! Oh, without her! Don Cosme would be right. Without her how black the World would be and how sad! But it isn't sad—it isn't black. Oh, how much light and how much joy there is in the World!

SCENE SEVEN

(*Don Cosme and Teresa*)

Teresa.—No, Don Cosme, I can't stand this mystery—finish—tell me everything!

Cosme.—To what end—that you may lose the happiness which is the delight of everyone in the house; that your smiles may vanish and the shadow of your eyes grow even deeper, and your pale face still more pale. Cruel Don Cosme! you would think—how he delights in tormenting me!

Teresa.—I wouldn't think it—I am thinking it—God! What a man!

Cosme.—Poor Teresina! I am not as cruel as you think. I bring bad tidings and the messenger of evil always seems cruel.

Teresa.—Tell me then! You see I'm conquered. I'm not acting, I'm not laughing, I can't fight with you any longer. You strike fear into my heart. You read the very depths of my soul. (*Changing tone.*) That is, I don't know whether you read or seem to read that you may go on tearing the truth out piece by piece. Oh! If I were sure of that, you'd only see my mask of smiles, my sun painted color, and my little whims of the spoiled child! You would still be ignorant of everything—and you are, right now, because you really don't know anything at all. You don't deceive me with your air of the marvellous magician. (*Laughing but without spontaneity.*)

Cosme.—Very well, then, I resign myself to ignorance. I wanted to advise you. You don't thank me and you don't accept it. It's natural. The marvellous magician returns to his cave. (*He goes to the rear.*)

Teresa.—No, for God's sake, Don Cosme!! Don't leave me! If you knew how I am suffering. God!—

Cosme (In a low voice).—Do you love him?

Teresa.—Who?

Cosme.—I asked you.

Teresa.—If you ask, you don't know.

Cosme.—Or I want to put to proof your own belief.

Teresa.—For curiosity?

Cosme.—Or for pity, or for duty, or for sympathy—who knows!

Teresa.—Then divine my thoughts, read in my eyes!

Cosme.—I don't ask now. You love him greatly, too greatly.

Teresa.—Yes, I love him, I don't deny it.

Cosme.—And you have doubts; you suffer horrible agonies, and you dissemble so that your father will not be hurt. Ah! What a pain you carry in your heart!

Teresa.—All that's true, it is easy to see that.

Cosme.—Well, your doubts are well founded, believe me Teresina.

Teresa.—My doubts are well founded? How? Why?

Cosme.—Because that man is infamous!

Teresa.—Oh, no! Not that! Never! Prove it! Not infamous, it's impossible.

Cosme.—It is infamous of him to ask love from you.

Teresa.—Ask love from me? (*Making herself laugh.*) What a phrase, Don Cosme. You're going back to your youth, you're almost poetic.

Cosme.—Unfortunately Don Juan has seemed more poetic to you.

(*TERESA falls into a chair and covers her face.*)

Teresa.—Why do you say that he is infamous? (*Getting up.*)

Cosme.—Because he should never have looked at you.

Teresa.—And if he did, what was the harm?

Cosme.—There was harm, great harm—for that man to look at you was to profane you.

Teresina.—Profane me? Am I something sacred?

Cosme.—You should be for him.

Teresa.—Ah, finish, Don Cosme!—Juan? The deceit? the infamy? the profanation?—You mean another woman?

Cosme.—You have said it, and you have thought so before now.

Teresa.—Another woman—where is she?

Cosme.—In America.

Teresa.—Oh!—In America—that's very far.

Cosme.—Nearer than you.

Teresina.—Because he loves her?—Because he loves her more than me?

Cosme.—No, he hates her!

Teresina.—If he hates her!—If he hates her—I don't understand—what more can I ask!

Cosme.—Poor Teresina!

Teresina.—What's her name?

Cosme.—I make no mystery of it, I'll tell you her name, her name and that of her husband.

Teresina.—She's married?

Cosme.—Yes.

Teresina.—Poor thing!—But then there's an abyss between them—It's impossible.

Cosme.—Exactly! There's an abyss between them. It's impossible.

Teresa.—Her name?

Cosme.—Dona Carlota Alvarez de Vargas.

Teresa.—De Vargas? What did you say, De Vargas? No, not that! No, for God's sake, Don Cosme!! My God!!

Cosme.—Yes, De Vargas.

Teresa.—That name?—

Cosme.—is the name of her husband.

Teresa.—He?—Holy Virgin!! Oh! My Father! (*Falls on the sofa.*) My father!—Father of my heart. (*She bursts out crying.*)

SCENE EIGHT

(*Teresa, Don Cosme, Don Pablo and Eugenio.*)

Eugenio.—Teresina!

Pablo.—My child! My child! (*TERESINA embraces him crying bitterly.*)

Teresa.—Father of my heart!

Eugenio.—But what's the matter, Teresina? (*To DON COSME.*) Lord, man! what have you done?

Cosme.—Told her the truth and talked of a wedding.

Eugenio.—But the devil, man!—such things one tells little by little! Teresina, my Teresina!

Pablo.—There! There! Now—you're all right.

Cosme.—Yes— it's over now—

Pablo.—But what happened?

Eugenio.—Don Cosme told her too suddenly, it's clear, and—the poor little thing—

Pablo.—Why, what a child you are!—But hadn't you suspected?

Teresa.—I, Father? (*Raising herself.*)

Pablo.—Give me a kiss, and another one for poor Eugenio.

Teresa.—Eugenio—poor Eugenio. (*She begins crying again.*)

Eugenio.—Teresina! Don Pablo!—She's crying for me!

Pablo.—Come now—Don Cosme, what did you say when you told her of the marriage? (*In a joking manner.*)

Cosme.—That she loved him with all her heart.

Teresa.—What is this man saying?

Eugenio.—“With all her heart”—Teresina—Don Pablo—

Remedios—Don Hilarion—come here! Every one must know! And you said the sky wasn't blue, and that life wasn't beautiful, and you doubted the existence of good? Ah! what is it I feel in my heart! Teresina, all the joy that I owe you at this moment, I will repay with a lifetime of love.

ACT II

The scene represents a most luxurious salon in EUGENIO'S house in Madrid. In the background a door opening on the park. On each side of the door two windows through which the trees are seen. Doors at the side. To the right a table with writing materials, but without blotting paper. It is day.

SCENE ONE

(Teresa and Maria, a child about six years old. Teresa reading, and Maria walking from one side to the other.)

Teresa.—I can't read any more. How tiresome this novel is. *(She drops the book.)* Everything bores me. *(Gets up and looks out at rear of stage.)* Yes, the park is very beautiful, there is no other like it in Madrid, but it's always the same, I know every tree, one by one, and every branch, leaf by leaf. *(Goes towards front of stage.)* I don't know what to do, truly, I don't know what to do! If I were a child I would play with her. Poor Maria! *(Looking at her daughter.)* But those days have passed. Now I'm neither happy nor able to pretend I'm happy, or if I do pretend, it's such an effort that I think my heart will burst and my nerves tear in pieces. What disgust! What weariness! I'm twenty-five years old. I feel as if I were fifty. When Eugenio and Father come they must not notice anything. I will practice my smiles in the mirror again. *(Looks into mirror.)* This way—No!—this way. *(Trying to smile.)* That's not a smile, that's just a grimace of weariness and discouragement. No! The smiles don't flourish. I must laugh hard. The force of it will hide the pain. *(Ha! Ha! Ha!)*

Maria.—How gay you are, Mama dear?

Teresa.—Oh! very! *(Laughs again Ha! Ha! Ha!)* Everything is so funny. *(Laughs again Ha! Ha!)* Now you see how to amuse yourself in this life. *(Keeps on laughing and ends almost crying.)*

Maria.—That makes me want to laugh.

(*TERESA laughs again and ends sobbing.*)

Maria.—Oh, stop! It sounds like crying.

Teresa.—I laughed too hard—it is always that way—ever since I was a little girl—I laugh till I cry.

Maria.—Oh, I do that too. (*MARIA returns to her toys.*)
(*TERESA is agitated and nervous.*)

Teresa.—What's the matter with me? I feel restless through and through—I must be ill. Year after year this restlessness grows and grows. Poor Eugenio! He's good, Oh, so good!—a wise man and a saint, as my Father says, but in life on this earth, the saints—Oh, one can't live with saints, and even less with the very wise. Let the wise men live in their academies and the saints go up to Heaven, or stay in their little corners, and leave the field of life free to other beings less perfect, but less wearisome and more within our reach, (*Fretfully*) our little modest reach. Oh! these ideas, these ideas! I must be very bad. I wasn't bad before, but little by little I am getting worse and worse. Not little by little, no—all at once—when I loved Juan—Oh! No!—I said I would never say that name.—God! What wicked thoughts!

Maria.—Mama?

Teresa.—What, child?

Maria.—I don't want to play any more. I'm going to cry. Come laugh, like you did.

Teresa.—I can't, the laugh is all gone.

Maria.—Laugh! If you don't I'll cry.

Teresa.—Be quiet now; don't be fretful, let me alone.

Maria.—Then I'll tell Father.

Teresa.—You're irresistible! What a child! What a child! Come on then, give me a kiss and sit very quiet. (*Gives her a kiss and seats her in her little chair.*)

Maria.—Do you love me very much?

Teresa.—Much, angel! Ah, my little child!—You could be my consolation, my pot of honey on the grave, but you are put far from me, out there on the sands of a bitter sea, and the waves have washed you with their bitterness.

Maria.—Mother, I am very quiet.

Teresa.—Yes, my child, I see, so very quiet.

Maria.—But I don't like it—It makes me want to cry.

Teresa.—Cry then, cry as much as you want. No! No! don't cry my angel. Do whatever you like, run, jump, play,

make a noise, lots of noise so that I hear nothing but you rushing about, my child.

Maria.—I don't want to make a noise.

Teresa.—Well, then, be quiet!

Maria.—But I don't know what to do?

Teresa.—Nor I, either, child, nor I either.

Maria.—Then we'll both get tired together.

Teresa.—We two, there is no one else, only you and I.

Maria.—Look! Put a chair up to the table.

Teresa (Putting a chair up).—There it is!

Maria.—Now fix me in the chair.

Teresa.—Now you are fixed. All right?

Maria.—That's nice. Now give me a pen and some paper.

Teresa.—Why?

Maria.—To draw little faces. I want to draw every one.

Teresa.—But my child, you haven't left anything here. No papers, no pens, no ink—not even a leaf of blotter. Just see how you waste things. Suppose your Father has to write a letter and wants to blot it.—He can't.

Maria.—Because I used it all up this morning. It's so pretty—little blots come on it and they spread, they spread—My! How little blots spread!

Teresa (Fixing the table).—God help me!

Maria.—Look! Didn't you say—There's still some paper—that—that—

Teresa.—All right, take it and let me be just a little while—No?—My darling!

Maria.—I won't bother you.

Teresa.—All right, but don't get ink on your frock. (*Kisses her.*)

SCENE TWO

(*Teresa, Maria and Don Pablo. Don Pablo to the right and in the background.*)

Pablo.—Lord! Why should we have this unpleasantness! It's clear everything will come out all right—but it is unpleasant. I wonder if she knows anything. *Teresina!*

Teresa.—Ah! Papa, it's you? I didn't know you were here, you came in so quietly.

Pablo.—You seemed deep in thought.

Teresa (Pretending great cheerfulness).—What an idea! Thoughtful—why?

Pablo.—It seemed to me—But now I see, you are quite cheerful.

Teresa.—As always, except when I'm tired of laughing. It's my nature, Maria and I have laughed so much—like two children—Haven't we little one?

Pablo.—Why did you laugh so much?

Teresa.—How do I know—over nothing—natural cheerfulness. What is being cheerful? Well, just that.

Pablo.—I like to see you cheerful and happy. The truth is that you haven't had a day of sadness since you married Eugenio.

Teresa.—Not even one. He's so good. He loves me so much. My smallest whims are supreme laws for the poor man.

Pablo.—One word of yours is an imperial ukase, eh? He is a good man and a gentle one. Take a carven saint and make a mold of him—then make in the mold a saint of sugar, pour in for brains juice of six academicians, give him the heart of a child, and the song of a bird, and add to the creation two handfuls of clown and you'll have your husband to the life, made before your very eyes.

Teresa.—It's true.

Pablo.—He loves you a great deal, a great deal. But see how he loves Maria. It's madness.

Teresa.—It's madness.

Pablo.—Well, I'm happy as long as you three are happy. I don't laugh much now because I am old for laughing. But see how placid my face is! Just as on a tranquil summer night one goes out on the balcony to see the serene and starry sky before he goes to bed, so my heart looks into your eyes to see your joy before I go to sleep—the sleep that never ends.

Teresa.—What things you say Papa! Be quiet for Heaven's sake. You know I love you more than any one, so why do you hurt me? To spare you any pain I would have been capable—Don't talk of the sleep that doesn't end. It makes me want to cry.

Pablo.—Hush, foolish one! I was only saying it. Indeed, I'm going to bury you all, and Don Cosme and I are going to preside at the ceremony. Really I am stupid. You were so happy and now I've made you feel badly. It's because I'm not in the best of spirits myself.

Teresa.—Why?

Pablo.—Nothing. (*To himself.*) Now it's all coming out.

Teresa.—It must be something.

Pablo.—Because—How do I know!—I mean—it's clear. Why, look—you're not any too well, you're pale, delicate, nervous, sensitive, yes, very sensitive. Eugenio says you grow more beautiful every day. But I don't like it, I don't like to see you so pale and so delicate.

Teresa.—But why does this strike you to-day? Has anything happened?

Pablo.—How absurd. I am a little pre-occupied though.

Teresa.—Pre-occupied and nervous. Now I see it; more pre-occupied and nervous than I am.

Pablo.—Pre-occupied, yes. Because I say—ah—think—seven years of complete happiness without the slightest ripple or the smallest cloud, and all that without taking the least account of it—without even remembering that we are happy—no thought of it at all. Just living like idlers. We ought to remember it and thank God, lest He should get angry with us and say: "Ah! ungrateful unbelievers! So you don't thank me? Well then, there you go," and strike us flat.

Teresa.—Yes, indeed, that's true. Don't let Him get angry with us. I want my father happy always—father of my heart. I will never give you any trouble. Isn't that true? And I want Eugenio to be happy too. He deserves it! There is no one like him, and I want Maria to be happy.

Pablo.—Well, Maria is the happiest of all right now. What are you doing, Baby? (*Approaching her and looking at what she is drawing.*)

Maria.—I'm making pictures.

Pablo (*Observes the pictures of MARIA and turns to speak to TERESA*).—Now! Now!—how curious! Really that child has extraordinary talent for drawing, and she makes things—

Teresa.—For Heaven's sake Father, what are you talking about? They're mere childish daubs. Poor little angel—changed to a painter of fame by the love of her grandfather!

Pablo.—Well, now you know a little creature like that couldn't have the correctness of line of Rafael, and I'm not saying so—

Teresa.—If you did it would be pathetic.

Pablo.—No—it's clear that the first attempts of a child must be full of faults.

Teresa.—But Father, you don't call those daubs attempts? You don't see anything but faults in them do you? I'd have to

be feeling very badly not to laugh at them.

Pablo.—Very well, let them be daubs, if it does you any good to call them that. (*Somewhat offended.*) But I tell you that at times, in a stroke—in an attitude—in an outline—she shows genius.

Teresa.—Yes, she shows genius, but it's a pretty bad genius. Her genius—it is the result—the result—of the training you give her.

Pablo.—No, indeed! Not at all. Genius! Genius! The sacred fire, the something divine, the gift of Heaven! In the old days we used to say God is enveloped in a burning cloud. The flames which surround the Great Maker throw out sparks, and a spark falls into that little head (*Pointing to the child*) and we have a marvellous being. I think this is quite sensible, and thus one understands things perfectly. But now we arrange things in another way. We say, if Maria has genius for painting, it is because she inherited it—qualities transmitted through her parents—nothing but the law of inheritance. But I don't know where she gets such an inheritance, because neither I, nor you, nor Eugenic—Well, to be sure he works with straight lines and angles, but he can't even make an attempt at a picture.

Teresa.—Have it your own way, but don't talk about it any more. Let's leave our great artist undisturbed. (*Trying to assume a joking tone, but extremely agitated.*)

Pablo.—When you agree with me that Maria has inspiration—that's the word—latent inspiration. It's like a little bird that leaves the nest—to-day a little bunch of feathers—it flutters its little wings close to its mother's side—but to-morrow—

Teresa.—Yes, indeed, we know all about it—to-morrow she will fly off into space.

Pablo.—I think so, out into space—we will see. That is, I won't see but you will—and remember my prophecy. Why there's proof beneath your very eyes. Look! Yesterday she brought me a paper, to make sure it was an old one—and in four strokes that little rascal drew the head of a donkey braying. "What have you made here?" I asked her, and she answered: "Your portrait, Grandfather." Eh! How about that?

Teresa.—That's fine. I give in, in the face of such evidence.

Pablo.—And what are you drawing now, little monkey? (*Approaching MARIA.*)

Maria.—Pictures.

Pablo.—Whose picture have you made?

Maria.—That's Mama.

Pablo.—Let's see! Let's see! (*Takes out his glasses, puts them on and takes paper which MARIA gives him.*) Well, here's something! Here's something! (*Laughing.*) The nose—especially the nose, isn't that true? (*Handing the paper to TERESA.*)

Teresa.—But how do you look at it? (*Turning it around.*)

Pablo.—So, woman! But don't you see, I say, the nose! Eh! Eh!

Teresa.—Where is it?

Pablo.—Here!

Teresa.—And whose nose is it, do you say?

Pablo.—Yours.

Teresa.—For Heaven's sake, Father. It's certainly turned up enough!

Pablo.—So you want to convince me that you have a Greek nose. You are very pretty, yet your nose is just a little turned up, eh! And Maria, with that instinct which God has given her, instantly got your dominant characteristic.

Teresa.—All right, we'll resign ourselves to the dominant characteristic.

Pablo (*To MARIA, giving her back the paper.*)—What else have you drawn?

Maria.—I have drawn a picture of Father.

Pablo (*Taking another paper which MARIA gives him.*)—Let's see—clearly it's badly done—but a kindly face—what an imp—always the dominant characteristic. (*Gives the paper back to her.*) And now, what are you doing?

Maria.—A picture of that nice man who came from a long way off, a little while ago.

Pablo.—Oh, yes; Juan De Vargas. What a devil of a youngster!

Maria.—He's beautiful, that's why I draw him.

Teresa.—You're encouraging that child in her foolishness. Come on—that's enough—give it to me! (*Taking the paper.*)

Maria.—Don't tear up my paper.

Teresa.—Be quiet!

Pablo.—Don't tear it up, woman!

Teresa.—Nothing more was needed! (*Tearing up the paper.*)

Maria.—Oh, my picture! My picture! I want my picture! (*Crying.*)

Teresa.—Be quiet!

Pablo (To TERESA).—That's a nice thing to do! (*To MARIA*).—Don't cry little one!

Servant (Entering).—Senor De Vargas asks whether you are at home to-day?

Teresa.—Tell him no!

Pablo.—(*To the servant.*) Wait! (*To TERESA.*) See him Teresa! Eugenio cares a great deal for him, and it's an affront not to receive him.

Teresa.—I don't see why?

Pablo.—In a little while Remedios, Don Cosme and Don Hilarion will be here to spend the afternoon and dine with us, and you will see them and not Vargas. That's not right. (*To the servant.*) Tell the gentleman to come in! (*Servant leaves.*)

Teresa.—Father——

Pablo.—If you are going to see three people, what difference does it make to see one more? He's an old friend—and after seven years' absence—come now! I don't like these affronts.

Teresa.—As you like, but take the child out—and come back at once.

Pablo.—Now why? Maria pleases Vargas a lot, he always kisses her over and over again. She loves him too. Don't you think so? Look my dear, she is drawing a picture of you.

Teresa.—For Heaven's sake take Maria out I implore you. She's been crying—right now she's getting ready to cry again. Her face is stained with tears and her hands are all black with ink. Take her out before he comes in!

Pablo.—All right. Want to come to my room, little one?

Maria.—Will you let me draw?

Pablo.—All you want. We'll draw every one in the house beginning with the pointer dog and ending——

Maria.—With grandpa.

Pablo.—Fine! That's the thing, the pointer dog and grandpa. What a little rascal! (*They go out laughing.*)

Teresa.—Courage, courage. It had to be some time.

SCENE THREE

(*Teresa and Juan.*)

Juan (After looking around and seeing that she is alone).—At last after four days, you're alone—Teresina.

Teresa (Speaking to him).—Senor De Vargas!

Juan (Checking himself and looking around).—Aren't we alone?

Teresa.—I believe so. Sit down!

Juan (Coming over to her and speaking in a low voice).—What is it? Is there a chance of any one's hearing us?

Teresa.—I don't think so. But don't stand.

Juan (Coming close to her).—Then, Teresina—

Teresa.—Ah! (*Stopping him with a gesture*). I don't understand, Senor De Vargas. Have you anything to tell me? But first, please—? (*Pointing to a chair.*)

Juan.—No; Senora. I've nothing particular to say, nothing but dreams—Just a belief that—Inconceivable isn't it? I'm an unhappy devil. You see—

Teresa.—You seem happier. I've noticed it! (*Smiling.*)

Juan.—Ah! Senora! Happier! In these five or six or seven years—I've forgotten how many—I have changed a great deal. You also, isn't that true? Paler, more sad, a little harder, more indifferent, and more cruel—but more beautiful, far more beautiful than ever—able to condemn a saint or save a sinner.

Teresa.—How clever—to condemn a saint or save a sinner—I think I read something like that a little while ago in a magazine.

Juan.—Ah! But there's a difference between what's written for the sake of writing, and what is said because it is felt.

Teresa.—Don't be offended. There are some very attractive magazines. Have you travelled very much in these six or seven years, Senor De Vargas?

Juan.—No, Senora. I went to Mexico and shut myself up in my house—in the old house of my fathers, like some mole in his burrow, and there—each day was like the other—all yesterdays and no to-morrows—the hours that came were like those that had gone—as the ripples on the water at evening are like those that pass in the day. And so I have lived these years—if you tell me it was a week I will believe it. If you say it was a century, I will believe it also.

Teresa.—And you have lived in that desolate old house all this time?

Juan.—Yes, Senora, in that desolate old house, with its age, its sadness, and its dark shadows. Sometimes I feel as if I were a woven figure on the fading old tapestries that swing on its walls.

Teresa.—And you have lived those seven years—alone?

Juan (Restraining himself).—Completely alone Senora—with two or three old servants—they don't count in one's loneliness;

the old creatures are no more companions than the family portraits or the old effigies in armor, which from time immemorial have loomed solemnly from the corners of the hall, glories of other centuries which the spiders festoon with their webs and which yield their iron emptiness to the rats.

Teresa.—That's very good, Senor De Vargas, better than the magazine. An old house filled with romance and poetry. And did you say completely alone?

Juan.—Yes, Senora.

Teresa.—But I thought—I mean I imagined—that there would be some one—some one with you in all this loneliness—your wife?

Juan.—No, Senora; not a day nor an hour nor a minute; that woman never passed my door, and now she never will because she died some months ago.

Teresa.—She died? So you are free?

Juan.—I? Yes—you, no.

Teresa.—Ah, Senor; no one is when it comes to that. And you intend to go back to your lonely castle?

Juan.—Yes, Senora; very soon!

Teresa.—But—you will be mortally bored? (*Laughing.*) The old, old house, the old servants, the old pictures and the rusty armor. Poor Vargas, it's like falling into a tomb!

Juan.—My dull life amuses you. Well, I am never bored, I have a most entertaining pair of companions—a remorse and a memory. Remorse every night calls me the lowest of men, dishonorable and vile, and bites me and stings me, and does to me all the things that remorse does. The other, the memory, Ah! God! what matters to me all the remorse of this life while I have that one memory—Terésina!

Teresa.—Ah! you remember my old name! That's curious—you have a good memory. Yes, Terésina; that's what I was called when I was a girl. No one calls me that now. To-day my intimate friends call me Teresa, and the rest Senora. In a little while they will call me Dona Teresa. Only my Father and Eugenio—they call me sometimes, not often, Terésina. You see, Senor De Vargas, how time passes!

Juan.—Are you happy?

Teresa.—Are you?

Juan.—I? No.

Teresa.—I—yes.

Juan.—It's a lie, Terésina. You're lying; you're not and

you can't be. There is only one happiness for you, and that is with me. (*Getting up and going towards her.*)

Teresina.—Yes, you're right—It all sounds—like an echo from the past. It is true; I have heard it in another time. You have a good memory. Yes, I believe it was you yourself who told me all that. Ah! How strange! How pleasant childish memories are! Because we were only children. I mean—I—I was a girl. Not you—you were a man—a grown man—and even married. But after all, grown men sometimes amuse themselves torturing children—the children can't defend themselves. And human nature is at times despicable, low and cruel—all that which one of the companions of your solitude tells you, while the wind rattles the old armor you were talking about. (*Laughing.*)

Juan.—For God's sake, Teresina—I only want to know one thing—only one thing.

Teresa.—We have agreed, Senor De Vargas, that the name of Teresina belongs to history. Say Senora or Dona Teresa. Don't I say Senor De Vargas? I will say Don Juan if it is necessary. And yet once I called you—I don't know, I don't remember just—I don't remember.

Juan.—As you command. You know Senora why I come?

Teresa.—I don't know. Probably because you got tired of the old house, with its old servants and its shadows, and you said: "To Europe, to toss a hair in the wind and see where it blows." In other words, you came to enjoy yourself.

Juan.—You're not right. Hairs in the wind—I'll toss them soon enough here and there, because I've aged, much Teresina! Look at me!

Teresa.—It's true.

Juan.—What I've suffered you see written on my face, in lines that do not lie. And yet the man who suffers from remorse and memory is not to be pitied, Teresina!

Teresa.—It's true.

Juan.—I don't repent of anything. Even though I suffer, even though you may suffer, what does it matter? What has been, has been. And when I remember (*Coming closer to her his voice filled with passion*) that once in my life—long past—yes, I know—It's far away—but once in my life I heard Teresina say: "Yes, I love you; I love you with all my heart." You did say that once in your life? Well, with that memory I can count as gain all my torture, all my torments, and all your sadness.

Teresa.—It's true.

Juan (Coming closer to her).—Teresina?

Teresa (Stopping him with a gesture).—Nonsense! Senor De Vargas, let's forget all those things. We've talked enough now of old memories. We've talked with all the freedom, with all the cordiality, with all the confidence, and even with all the pleasure that two old friends might have in talking over such things. Now let's come to the present. What are your plans? You will only be in Madrid a very few days—isn't it true? Believe me, Madrid is very dull this season. And where are you going to spend the winter? Paris? Italy? Nice? Or will you go back?

Juan.—Look Teresina, I can't stand it. How can you—how can you talk to me with this indifference, with this self-possession, with this imperturbable calm! You with one disdainful gesture of the grande dame strike out all that has been, as a man strikes out with his pen some phrase in a writing that does not please him. But I tell you, no matter how much we both try, it can't be done.

Teresa.—For God's sake, Senor De Vargas!

Juan.—You—you—to me—treating me with that cold and disdainful ceremony, as if I were just any one! I—I who loved you so much! Don't speak! Wait! You may be able to forget me, to hate me, to despise me all you want, I have deserved it, but you can't deny that once your heart was mine. It was not long—indeed I know it. In woman love endures but a short time. But you loved me at least one day, only one day? No?—Less?—An hour?—You loved me an hour! What! You smile!—It seems too much to you?—Still less? Very well, an instant?—A second?—While the swift flash of the senses lasts? But in that second or in that eternity, you can't deny that you loved me as I love you. If you deny it, Teresina, I shall be desperate. That idea has been my only consolation in these years of trouble and sadness. Teresina has been my Teresina, I have always thought. And this, that Heaven can punish, and Hell, if what they say is true, inflict on us its tortures—but to prevent what has been—Ah, no! Not that! That no one can prevent, neither Heaven nor Hell, nor you, Teresina, who are striving to make me believe that all has been a dream. And it has not been a dream—mark you, it has been a reality, the only reality of my life. (*Falls into a chair and covers his face with his hands.*) Don't deny it; don't deny it, that would be too much.

Teresa (Rising. JUAN rising too).—In truth it is too much—it is too much. Indeed I try, I force myself, but you insist—Oh!

My God! How many things have you said! It seems like a bit of comedy or drama. You are as you always were, and I—I am not the same. What do you want? I'm not the same. I have learned that in real life—one doesn't live that way. I was very romantic—it would be better to say very foolish; I don't deny it, but I am very wise now. "In time gone by" you say, but who remembers those days? And if I want to forget them, is it generous, is it fair, is it even decent, that you, Senor De Vargas, should try to make me remember them? (*Letting her passion get control of her little by little.*) To what end? For what object? To gloat in your triumph? Or possibly to torment me? To lower me even more in my own eyes? Oh! My God! It was hardly worth while to leave the noble mansion of your Fathers, to take such a long voyage, to seek out a poor woman, only to have the pleasure of saying to her: "Do you know that you have no honor? even though you pretend to have it? Have you forgotten? Well, if you have succeeded in forgetting it, I come that we may remember together. Do you remember, Teresina, that you vilely deceived the most honorable man in the World? Do you remember that to save your Father from desperation (*dropping her voice very low*) you soiled and besmirched Eugenio?"

Juan.—Teresina

Teresa.—Let me finish! You wanted me to begin, don't deny it—you came to tell me all this. If by the strength of true and pure affection, if at the end of seven years of remorse and sorrow I have wrought peace out of those memories, and have healed those scars, why should you with your claws of the beast, make them bleed afresh! (*Sudden change, laughs long and loud.*) Now I've caught your note. Now I'm remounting the dark peaks of tragedy! Delirium! Vertigo! Deep shame! Remorse! a whole arsenal of stage clothes! All we need is poison and daggers! I suppose you haven't brought them? How unfortunate! Believe me, Senor De Vargas—let's be good friends—let's forget that which is better forgotten, and let us talk as one talks in a friendly call. In a little while people will be here—yes, we have guests—you'll be one of them, and one of the most welcome, because Eugenio is very fond of you. And so we'll spend the day and the evening, and to-morrow God will dispose. Now then as the waters have recovered their level, tell me, Senor De Vargas, when is the departure? (*A long pause.*)

Juan.—Very soon, perhaps to-day. It can't be to-day—it will be to-morrow!

Teresa.—And you will wait many years before returning, won't you?

Juan.—Many years, perhaps I will never come back.

Teresa.—Never?

Juan.—Haven't you been wanting that? Why are you sorry?

Teresa.—And so you don't want me to be sorry. To lose a good friend forever, never to see him, to know nothing about him—because you will not write—not to know whether he is alive or dead, whether he thinks about those he loved, or whether at last, he has forgotten them, how can you want such things as these not to hurt me a great deal?

Juan.—Now it's you, Teresina and not I. Your voice trembles, your eyes shine—with tears and not with gladness. One word, just one word!

Teresa.—Look, Vargas, my strength is almost gone. I'm not well. As I said to you some friends are coming, and I'll have to look after them all. So I'd like to rest.—You're an intimate friend and you will not be offended. ((*Making a movement to withdraw.*)

Juan.—You put me out of your house, Teresina?

Teresa.—For Heaven's sake don't say that! Wait here! Eugenio will come soon, and I'll go away until Eugenio comes back. You're not offended? Surely you're not?

Juan.—I have no right to be offended.

Teresa.—Then with your permission? (*As before.*)

Juan.—One instant! Only one instant! One question and all is ended!

Teresa.—One question—what?

Juan.—Listen to me Teresina, to-day I will leave this house and forever. I swear to you by everything most sacred. You don't believe me, and I don't know what oath I can give you. I swear to you by my honor—I know what you think—I am a despicable man and the honor of a despicable man—and yet I am an honorable man after all—Forever!—I swear it by the memory of my Fathers.—Am I a monster that I would profane that memory? I swear it by them. I swear it by my only love—so?—you don't believe in that oath! I believe in it, but even more Teresina—I swear it by her—by Maria—

Teresa.—Vargas, what are you trying to do, drive me mad?

Juan.—No, I want you to believe me.

Teresa.—Then I believe you, but finish soon—I can't stand any more.

Juan.—Well, then, answer this question, and your answer will be my consolation, the only one—don't deny me that now you see I'm talking without passion, respectfully, resigned, ready to obey you in everything.

Teresa.—But the question?

Juan.—What do you feel for me, Teresina? Deep scorn, indifference, simply a desire to forget, or do you love me as Teresina loved me? Answer me and I will say nothing, not a word. I'll leave and everything will be over. It's a word that you throw to the winds; alms that I take with me. I will be silent, I will say nothing, not a sigh of sadness nor a murmur of gratitude—I hear and I go. Say to me: "I don't care for you," or say to me: "I love you still," and nothing more. I leave here and for you I'm dead. Can you ask less, Teresina? Nothing more than that. I don't ask anything more than that. Only one thing. Just the words: "I hate you"—"I love you."

Teresa.—No more—it's a trick, an infamous trick. I say to you: "I love you always," and then your passion, flames out: "After hearing that word how can you pretend that I should leave you! No, don't you believe it! I will never leave my Teresina!" Ah! Vargas, I know what you are capable of! We've had enough. Good-bye!

Juan.—Don't deny me this consolation! See that you don't repent!

Teresa (Stopping).—You're threatening?

Juan.—Not you. You're sacred. But I'm not. And you will be sorry if you still have any memory of our love. You will cry bitterly, bitterly because you denied me this consolation, possibly the last!

Teresa.—Heavens! What insistence! I don't know whether to laugh or to cry. You will be romantic! Death—suicide—is that what you give me to understand?

Juan.—You may laugh, and God grant that the fountain of that laugh does not run dry.

Teresa.—Is it a case of death then?

Juan.—Death?—How ridiculous! When one calls and it never comes. But if it comes, how horrible!

Teresa.—Let's finish. Soon Eugenio will be here, you'll excuse me—

Juan (Stepping in front of her).—For the last time, I beg of you, I beseech you!

Teresa.—I beseech you to let me pass!

Juan.—Oblivion, is it?

Teresa.—Oblivion? No—I have you very much with me.

Juan.—Contempt?

Teresa.—One despises the feeble. You are not that. If you were by now I would have put you out of my path.

Juan.—Hate?

Teresa.—Hate you? Why, no—I don't hate you, nor anybody.

Juan.—Indifference?

Teresa.—My God! Indifference! No! I want you to be a good friend and happy too.

Juan.—Love, then?

Teresa.—No, never that, rather the rest, oblivion, hate, indifference, contempt. Stand aside, Senor De Vargas! (*She leaves.*)

SCENE FOUR

(*Juan.*)

Juan.—It wasn't possible, it couldn't be possible. She's fought, she's pretended, but she loves me with all her heart as I love her. My Teresina—how sweet that word is! But I'll fulfill mine. I have said that I would not see her again, and I won't. I have been guilty of infamy, but I am not infamous. If the Visconde leaves me alive, I'll leave Madrid to-morrow. The thing's decided. As for betrayals, one or two are enough. I'm a traitor to her, poor child, and a traitor to Eugenio, my best friend. There are things a man does which he would tear from him even though it rends his very flesh. I have sworn by my Fathers; I have sworn by Maria, and I must bear myself like an honorable man while there is still time. All that is needed to complete my degradation is to make of this a farce, to compel her to confess that she loves me. No! Not that! I'm not a blackguard by profession. To-morrow, and if it's not possible, the day after to-morrow. Unless Nebreda—but then I will not have to worry about my promises; they'll fulfill themselves. Would my Teresina weep for me? Yes—and how beautiful she would be weeping! The Magdalene repentant is more beautiful than the Magdalene sinning, if only she does not cease to be a sinner, and Teresa is more beautiful than Teresina. Passion is worth

more than innocence. Innocence is nothingness. Passion—it is the vital essence of Heaven and Hell. Oh! If it were not so great an infamy to make her love me again, how wonderful it would be! Ugh! I've a legion of devils in my head. Teresina! Teresa! My heart is full of misery! Ah! Well, as I'll despise myself from now on, I'll meet the sword of Nebreda and see if once, at least, I can be satisfied with myself. But when will Eugenio come? He doesn't come when he ought to, and he'd come if he were not needed. A very good man but inopportune and very stupid.

SCENE FIVE

(*Juan and Eugenio.*)

Eugenio.—Hello, lost one!

Juan.—Thank God, I've got you at last. I waited an hour for you, and all the morning I have looked for you everywhere.

Eugenio.—That's right. You complain, so that I can't complain.

Juan.—By what right do you take it on yourself to fight Nebreda before I do?

Eugenio.—Be quiet, man—For God's sake don't let Don Pablo know. He's suspicious already. Yesterday he was very much upset—if he should hear you—

Juan.—Don't worry about that, Don Pablo knows all about it. Early this morning he came to see me and we are agreed, absolutely agreed. Here he comes, he must have been waiting for you.

SCENE SIX

(*Eugenio, Don Pablo and Juan.*)

Juan.—Ah, Don Pablo, I'm glad you've come.

Pablo.—I should say I have come. As soon as I knew this madman had come in, I said: "I will go and talk to him."

Eugenio.—Which means?

Pablo.—That I know all about it. For your first ridiculous act in this life, it's a nice one!

Juan.—So you say I am right?

Pablo.—Entirely.

Juan.—Look here Eugenio, you are behaving badly, very badly in this matter! This sort of thing can't be done between men. Placing yourself without any pretext between Nebreda and me! Protecting me with your sword, when I have my own for these affairs! Treating me like a child, or some incompetent! "This man is not for Nebreda—I am for Nebreda." That's what you say when you act like this. We are very good friends but not enough for that! I know it is affection; you don't think I can stand up to that bully. You have your doubts about me and want to protect me! You want to save my life by risking your own! You saved me when a child, and you want to save me now. Always your debtor—it humbles me, shames me, makes me ridiculous—drives me wild. No, Eugenio—this time it shall not be! I am as good as you with a sword, as good as Nebreda. Above all it is my right—don't deprive me of it.

Pablo (To VARGAS).—Well said! You're right. I would not permit it if I were in your place. (*To EUGENIO.*) You must not make a friend ridiculous, Eugenio.

Eugenio.—But you don't know what happened.

Juan.—Well, tell us, then.

Eugenio.—I'm going to. We'll read the notes of testimony as they say in court. Now look Don Pablo, Juan, I, Nebreda, Louis Monteverde and three or four more friends were together at the club. We were talking about everyone, dissecting and tearing to pieces everybody—that is, they were. I did not open my mouth, nor did Juan either, to tell the truth. He was sitting there glowering—

Juan.—For Heaven's sake, man—

Pablo.—Go on, Eugenio.

Eugenio.—I remember Juan's face, it struck me at the time.

Pablo.—Come to the point!

Eugenio.—All right, I will. Well, the others went on joking and laughing and carving people up. And when they had killed bull and bull fighter, art and artist, state and statesman, and humanity was thoroughly flayed and skinned alive, they began with the women, and as that's the specialty of Nebreda, he took up the chant. Horrors! Then the horrors began! I was nervous by that time. Juan was silent. Finally Nebreda with a terrible voice, striking the table with his fist, cried out: "There is no such thing as an honorable woman, not one!" I—I couldn't control myself—I said: "Not even your mother!" (*To JUAN.*)

You can't deny that. I said those very words to him. I think I insulted him, eh?

Juan.—I don't deny it entirely. But it was not an assertion, it was a question, and that's quite different.

Pablo.—Quite different, I should say so!

Eugenio.—It was an assertion. It was an insult.

Juan.—It's not enough for you to say so. You must prove it.

Eugenio.—I will prove it. I go right on reading my notes. Nebreda checked himself a bit and said: "I was speaking in general." I replied like a flash, like foil meeting foil: "And I was speaking in particular." How about that? Wasn't that driving the nail in? Now isn't it true that Nebreda should kill me—if I let him?

Juan.—You twist things to suit yourself. In a dispute the tone counts more than the words, and the tone you used was not aggressive.

Eugenio.—We did not shout, I admit. But how about the meaning, the feeling back of it—and what followed? (*To DON PABLO.*) Listen! Nebreda who is brave, and a fighter by profession, was sorry in a moment that he'd explained by saying: "I was speaking in general," and when I said in an aggressive tone—you can't deny it was aggressive—"And I was speaking in particular," he looked straight at me and launched this sentence in a jeering, provocative voice: "I said I was speaking in general, but I didn't exclude any mama, no matter how respectable she may be, as I suppose yours must be, whom we have never had the pleasure of knowing—I believe, gentlemen?" Nebreda said this to me knowing that I have never known who my Mother was. There was insult then—insult for insult, mine and his. And you had not mixed in the affair yet. That was a direct insult to me, wasn't it, Don Pablo?

Pablo.—It was. He insulted you. I have to agree with you there. That is if everything happened as you say.

Eugenio.—That's the way it happened.

Pablo (With great energy).—Well, it was an insult—and even though it weighs heavy on my heart—honor is the first thing. You do well. What a vile devil! You're strong—punish him. Insult my Eugenio! If you don't fight him—I'll fight him myself.

Eugenio (To DON PABLO).—Bravo! Give me your hand.

Juan.—Not quite so fast! We have not finished yet. All

that came in the middle of the affair, and not as strong as you put it—you have exaggerated a bit.

Eugenio (*To DON PABLO*).—Don't believe him—I didn't exaggerate at all.

Juan.—Let that go and come to my part of the story. This is where I come in. "Senor Nebreda," I said without giving you time to answer him—

Eugenio.—Without giving me time to answer him! (*To DON PABLO*.) Did you hear that? There you have it. "Without giving me time." Then you got in my road, you took my place, you wanted to protect me with your sword in this affair with Nebreda.

Juan.—For Heaven's sake, Eugenio.

Eugenio.—Oh—I'm not angry because you protect me—I don't feel humiliated, nor piqued, nor ashamed, because between friends—what the devil!—To-day for you—to-morrow, for me. What I did afterward was to take another jump and get the lead, and at five this afternoon, Nebreda and I are to meet face to face. He lunges, I parry, I feint, I drive in—and swish—like lightning I'm through the Alps—I mean through his forearm.

Juan.—You will end by making me desperate. The more man you are, the more child and bigger simpleton.

Eugenio.—Simpleton? Man? I don't know why. (*To DON PABLO*.) What is there foolish in that?

Juan.—Forgive me. I don't know what I'm saying. But for God's sake, listen to me. Knowing what that man would do, I said to him: "Senor Nebreda, to insult a man is insolent, but to insult a woman is despicable, and he who insults all women because he's afraid to insult one, is a coward." (*To EUGENIO*.) Didn't I say that?

Eugenio.—Yes, and you said it with force.

Juan.—And he answered: "Then you choose one woman, one you love, your nearest relative, the one you care most about, the wife of your best friend, and then we'll see whether I refuse to insult her through fear of you." I said: "Well, she's chosen." And he said: "Well, then, she's insulted." I got ready to strike him, you held me and the others got between us. That's the whole story. Seconds were named and the duel arranged for to-morrow, and to-day you are going to fight him in my place.

Eugenio.—Exactly. Possession by better title—isn't that what they say?

Juan.—The insult I gave him was greater than yours. I

struck him by my readiness to strike him.

Eugenio.—Man, if one can be struck by a readiness to strike, half the human race is struck by the other half. Readiness doesn't count, only sounding blows. Readiness is only paper money, the blow that reaches is solid gold. Besides, my offence is older than yours. We must respect antiquity—antiquity, little one, and let's run up the scale.

Juan.—But I tell you there is no insult equal to the one I gave him. "Choose a woman."—"She's chosen."—"She's insulted."—and I (*Raising his hand.*)—I think it does not admit of discussion.

Eugenio.—Wait!—Go slowly!—I'll take that insult to myself, also. I didn't realize it before. It's mine. (*To DON PABLO.*) It's ours. I won't give it to you for anything in the World. That offence belongs to me. And it won't be any prick in the arm either! It will be in the breast! The foul-mouthed beast! What a fool I was not to see!

Juan.—I don't understand?

Pablo.—Nor I, either.

Eugenio.—Why, didn't he say: "Choose in your mind a woman, the wife of your nearest relative, the wife of your most intimate friend, and I will insult her?" You haven't got a married relative in the World, and I'm your most intimate friend—so—he insulted Teresina!—He looks at her a lot in the theatre, he insulted her intentionally. Damn him! If that's the truth I'll strike to kill. At five this afternoon. And you wanted to oust me from my place! Give me your hand, Don Pablo—Ugh! I go to kill a snake! (*He goes towards the door and DON PABLO and JUAN follow him.*)

Juan.—For God's sake, Eugenio, where are you going?

Pablo.—Where he ought to go! (*In the door they meet DON COSME.*)

Eugenio.—Ah!—Don Cosme, you're right, there are some rotten people in the World. For the first time I feel the desire to kill. (*He goes out.*)

Cosme (To DON PABLO).—Where is Eugenio going?

Pablo.—Where I'm going.

Cosme (To JUAN, detaining him).—And where is the respectable Don Pablo going?

Juan.—Where I'm going, too. To punish a vile man and Don Pablo and Eugenio are going to act as seconds if mine fail me. Now you know. Good-bye.

SCENE SEVEN

(*Don Cosme. Remedios entering afterward.*)

Cosme.—There they go, as men always go when bent on some madness—in a wild rush. If anything good is to be done, the pace of a tortoise is quite fast enough. Hm! a duel between Juan and Nebreda. I heard something of it.

Remedios (To SERVANT in the rear).—Tell the Senora I'm here, but tell her not to bother or hurry. (*The servant goes.*) Ah—*Cosme?*

Cosme.—My dear.

Remedios.—Are we early?

Cosme.—I don't think so. It's ten minutes to five.

Remedios.—Have you seen Don Hilarion?

Cosme.—No, but he will come. When it comes to a good dinner, he never fails. As he loses his good humour, his appetite grows sharper.

Remedios.—Why is that?

Cosme.—Why is what?

Remedios.—Why does our charming friend lose his good humour?

Cosme.—He is losing it as you will lose yours. As we all do. Some early, others late. Don Hilarion at fifty—you—at twenty-eight. I lost all joy and happiness five minutes after I was born. As soon as I felt the warm water of my first bath and opened my eyes, I became thoroughly cognizant of what was around me, and I said to my swaddling clothes: "Bad! Bad! Bad! We've fallen in bad ways." There you are. Some grasp the situation from the beginning, others are more slow, and some, and these are the ones who are truly happy, never understand anything until the end.

Remedios.—For example Eugenio, don't you think?

Cosme.—Eugenio is the happiest man alive. He has bound up thirty-four years of his life with threads of gold, and the skein is not yet tangled. But who knows, when he is at his best he may tangle everything.

Remedios.—If he does his friends will help him untie the knots. But with a wife like Teresa, there are no knots, except the holy one of matrimony.

Cosme.—Which at times is a running noose.

Remedios.—Well—knot or noose—

SCENE EIGHT

(*Remedios, Don Cosme, Teresa and later Don Hilarion.*)

Teresa.—Dear Remedios—Don Cosme—I’ve made you wait a long time!

Remedios.—No, child, I’ve just come, and Don Cosme just before me.

Teresa.—Oh, yes, I’m late. But it’s because Maria won’t obey any one but me—she was drawing all morning, and got her hands and face and clothes black with ink. (*Laughing.*)

(*Servant announces DON HILARION.*)

Hilarion.—Teresina—always Teresina to me. (*Afterwards he shakes hands with REMEDIOS.*) (*To TERESINA.*) I don’t ask how your husband is, because I know he is all right, and not at home. I saw him a little while ago going into Monteverde’s house with Don Pablo.

Teresa.—Is Monteverde ill?

Hilarion.—Not that I know, Senora.

Teresa.—I asked because Eugenio before going out sent a message to me by the maid which surprised me very much. “Tell Madam,” he said, “that I have to leave suddenly, and have not time to see her or write. But if by any chance I don’t return to-night, tell her not to worry. I may have to sit up with a sick man.” It is very strange, I don’t understand it. You said you saw him going into Monteverde’s house—?

Cosme.—Yes, Monteverde is one of the seconds.

Teresa.—Seconds?

Remedios.—Don’t you know?

Teresa.—Know what? What is this about seconds?

Cosme.—They know what they’re talking about this time, which is more than they usually do.

Teresa.—But you have me on edge with curiosity—and uneasiness. Seconds—a duel?

Remedios.—Don’t be frightened—it is not your husband. I suppose Eugenio is one of the seconds.

Hilarion.—I understand that Vargas is going to fight.

Teresa.—Juan—is going to fight?

Remedios.—Yes, Juanito as we used to say in the days of little Teresina.

Teresa.—Ah! Senor De Vargas? But how?—why?—with whom?

Hilarion.—For nothing at all. Some unpleasantness that he had with Nebreda.

Cosme.—For good deal—the dispute is a pretext, but the motive is hidden. Do you know Nebreda?

Teresa.—Yes, slightly. He bows to me—he comes to our box sometimes.

Cosme.—Well, he's a libertine. He and Juan had a dispute about a woman, but no one knows her name.

Remedios.—When do you think they will fight?

Teresa.—When? Tell me? (*With anxiety.*)

Hilarion.—Early to-morrow. Eugenio must have gone to Monteverde's house to arrange the details.

Cosme.—I suppose Eugenio will stay with Vargas till late to-night, so that he can give him some points. Nebreda is a great swordsman—it runs in the family.

Teresa.—So you think it is a serious affair? (*Trying to control herself.*)

Hilarion.—Don't look at it that way.

Cosme.—Yes, do look at it that way—Nebreda is nasty and very clever with his sword.

Remedios.—They say he killed a man in America, in some duel or other.

Hilarion.—He's had affairs in all the great capitals of Europe. He killed another man in Vienna.

Cosme.—In India he killed an English army officer. He made love to a lady and the husband said: "Shocking!"

Remedios.—Hasn't he killed any one in Africa? He hasn't circled the globe yet.

Cosme.—Senora, in Africa he killed a lion in anger.

Hilarion.—Absurd!

Cosme.—Well, laugh all you want. The man who probably won't laugh to-morrow morning is poor Vargas.

Teresa.—But they say—I've heard Eugenio say—that Vargas is very skilful. (*With poorly concealed anxiety.*)

Cosme.—He can't compare with Nebreda, and besides it's a long while since he has had any practice. He's spent seven years living like a monk.

Teresa.—Do you think we'll have bad news to-morrow? Oh, it can't be very bad.—When Juan comes this evening (*To REMEDIOS.*)—we don't call him Juanito now—when he comes, I must ask him, even though I ought not. But he won't come to-night—he said never—I mean he never answers directly, he

is very reserved, he is changed. Don't you all think he's changed? Don't you all think he's changed very much? We've all changed. Seven years!—A life-time! I myself—I was so strong—but now—every day I think I've reached the end. I'm talking quietly but I don't feel quiet. Everything spins around—how my head hurts! God! God! (*Hides her face in her hands.*)

Remedios.—Are you ill?

Hilarion.—Is anything wrong?

Teresa.—No, the light hurts my eyes—I'll close them—I'll quiet down in the dark. Go on all of you, go on talking of Vargas and the duel, and don't worry about me. I can hear you.

Remedios.—All right—we'll talk if it will help you. I think Vargas is overreaching himself this time. Just think of his taking on Nebreda.

Hilarion.—Vargas is very brave.

Cosme.—The only advantage he's got in this duel is that his life doesn't matter much to him.

Teresa (*Without being able to control herself*).—How do you know that?

Remedios.—Don't talk child, you'll excite yourself.

Cosme.—A friend of Vargas' who travelled with him from Mexico to Europe told me.

Remedios.—Romantic confidences on board a trans-atlantic!

Teresa (*Raising herself and looking straight at DON COSME and laughing with great effort*).—You talk as if Vargas were going into this duel only for the pleasure of being killed! What an exaggeration, Don Cosme! Everyone clings to life, and tries to save it, when the time comes.

Cosme.—Yes, everyone clings to life except the suicide.

Teresa (*With anguish*).—But Vargas isn't that!

Remedios.—Cosme's like the bell that tolls for the dead.

Hilarion.—I thought we were going to spend a pleasant afternoon talking in the park. It has been delightful so far, hasn't it?

Teresa.—You're right. My heart's beating so fast I can hardly breathe.

Remedios.—It's Don Cosme's fault.

Hilarion.—Yes, Don Cosme.

Teresa.—Yes, Don Cosme.

Cosme.—My dignity resents hearing accusations so unjust as they are reiterated. So I'm going out to the park to walk alone among the trees.

Remedios.—The trees have an excellent dissertation coming to them! Poor Teresina. To-morrow your park will be covered with yellow leaves.

Teresa.—Yes, do go out in the park, Don Cosme, it's delightful.

Hilarion.—My dear Don Cosme, go to the trees.

Remedios.—To the green leaves Don Cosme—and see if it doesn't freshen your blood.

Cosme.—I'm going to meditate on the ingratitude of mankind.

Remedios.—We'll go too—but we'll stay away from you.

Teresa.—I know you'll excuse me—my head hurts so. I think if I lie here on the sofa I may be able to sleep a little. Don Hilarion, will you look after Remedios?

Remedios.—Don't bother yourself child, stay there and rest. Shall we go out? (*To DON HILARION.*)

Hilarion.—I'm at your command.

Remedios.—Shall we get Maria?—Would you like that?

Teresa.—Thanks—no—I would like to be alone.

Remedios (*To HILARION as they go out*).—Poor Teresina, I'm beginning to worry about her.

Hilarion.—Why? You're all like that. Always about to die and always well.

Remedios.—You say that with a good deal of feeling?

Hilarion.—I should say so—it's heartfelt.

SCENE NINE

(*Teresa stretched out on the sofa and then getting up.*)

Teresa.—I thought I was going mad. It can't be true! But it is. God! How hard and cruel I was to poor Vargas, how deliberately cruel! Conscience, you must be satisfied—I'm alone and I say Vargas and not Juan. Senor De Vargas—with all respect, quite in good form. (*Pause.*) God! How restless I feel—I was cruel! Cruel, disdainful, insolent. He was desperate—but there was no reason. Suppose something happens to him to-morrow. I can't think about it. If anything happens it will be my fault. They were right—Juan lives without hope as I do. To-morrow he will get himself killed—he is going to—after what I've said—it's certain. No—I don't want him to die. Is that wrong too? (*As if questioning herself.*) Well, let it be wrong.

I want him to defend himself—to live. Duty—duty—I’ve done enough for duty. My duty now is to save him. He’s a human being like Eugenio—like my Father. If I can save him with a word why not say it? See him? No, not that. It’s not possible. I can’t go and I wouldn’t go if I could. He won’t come—I could swear he won’t. But I could write to him—two lines—only two lines—without giving him hope—hope is dead for both of us, it can’t exist. Just one word of pity—of love—a word of love can do much. Oh! Why do I vacillate? I feel as if I were about to commit a crime. I’ve turned coward in truth. (*Sits at the table.*) “My dear Senor Don Juan de Vargas.” (*Writing.*) No that won’t do. I loved him and he knows I loved him. (*Tears the paper.*) It’s ridiculous. “Vargas, come to-night. We must have a talk.” But he won’t come, and even if he should we couldn’t talk alone, and if we did talk alone, I couldn’t let myself go as I can when I write. No, that won’t do. I can’t get the idea, and I can’t express it. Oh, what a miserable Teresina I am! Sitting here weighing words when his life is in the balance. What an egoist and what a coward! He wouldn’t do that. His honor, his life, would count for nothing if he could save Teresina. I’ll let my heart speak and begin without naming him so that I won’t call him “My Life.” “I know everything”—that—that’s the way I ought to begin. “I know you fight Nebreda to-morrow. You told me that you would not come to-night, and I can’t let things rest as they are. I don’t say give up the duel because I know you would not. And beside I don’t want to make you ridiculous. But, for God’s sake, defend yourself well! I want you to live—if you don’t I will die. You are brave—you are strong—defend yourself. Think of me, think of Maria, think of us both. For me and for your child! Forgive me. Good-bye.” I’ll sign no name—why not a T?—no—Teresa—no—Teresina. (*Looking around.*) Where’s the blotter? Gone—such a little thing to make one nervous—when so much is at stake. I’ll write the envelope while it dries. (*Addressing the envelope.*) “Senor Don Juan De Vargas, personal and most urgent.” There Louisa will take it. (*Lays the envelope down, takes the letter and looks and sees if it is dry.*)

SCENE TEN

(*Teresina and Eugenio.*)

Eugenio (At rear; he approaches without her knowing).—
Teresina. (Embracing her.)

Teresa.—Ah, Eugenio! (*She gets up quickly with the letter in her hand.*)

Eugenio.—Why do you look at me like that—your face is stained with tears. Why are you crying, dear? Who made you cry?

Teresa.—Eugenio—God!—You said you wouldn't come, that's the reason. (*Trying to control herself.*)

Eugenio.—You were writing.

Teresa (*Goes to centre making a supreme effort to control herself.*)—Yes, now you see. (*Showing the letter.*) It doesn't take any great effort to grasp that. I was writing this letter.

Eugenio.—To whom?

Teresa.—To my modiste. Now you've got it.

Eugenio.—You were crying because you were writing to your dressmaker? You ought to leave that to Remedios. It's not true. Who were you writing to? (*Trying to get hold of the letter.*)

Teresa (*Holding it back coquettishly.*)—Oh, I don't want you to see it. It's my secret. Won't you let me have *my secrets*? Are you turning tyrant over me?

Eugenio.—To-day a new era begins. To-day I'm everything—wild man, tyrant and jealous husband.

Teresa.—Jealous? That deserves punishment. No! No! Don't read the letter. (*Trying to tear it.*)

Eugenio (*In a joking manner and holding her.*)—No! No! Don't tear the letter!

Teresa.—Oh! all at once!—tyrant—jealous—brutally maltreating Teresina. (*Laughing and trying to escape from EUGENIO who is trying to keep hold of her.*) Look out you're hurting me!—I mean it, you're hurting me!

Eugenio.—Now little tease, I won't hurt you. In a minute I'll kiss the marks my iron hand has made on your soft little wrists—But I want to see the little letter.

Teresa.—Why?

Eugenio.—To find out what it is that makes you cry.

Teresa.—We all have our secrets. You, yours, and I, mine. You left the house this very day in a bad humor without seeing me, and I was told: "The Senor is not coming back. He may not be home to-night." Very well I said: "Now we've a husband who stays out at nights." You have your secrets—I don't ask you about them, and I keep mine to myself. I write letters that make me cry. There you have it. Now then—let me go.

Eugenio.—Ha! Ha! All husbands are cruel, selfish, brutal.

Teresa.—Oh, don't be silly—Let me go. I don't want you to see this letter. Do you want me to tell you again?

Eugenio.—Well, I want to see it, and I will see it! Do you understand?

Teresa.—Look out, I'll tell Papa. (*All this in a joking tone but with growing terror.*)

Eugenio.—You silly child, I know what's in the letter.

Teresa.—You know—

Eugenio.—I suspect—It can't be anything else.

Teresa.—Ah, then you don't need to see it.

Eugenio.—I want to see what it says. It ought to be quite spicy.

Teresa.—Come now Eugenio, really, can't you see I'm getting angry?

Eugenio.—Indeed, I'm angry too, furious! A melodramatic scene. Outraged husband surprises guilty wife, writing a love letter. Terrible struggle. "Give it to me." "No." "Ah, yes." (*Trying to take the paper away from her.*)

Teresa.—No, never, let me go!

Eugenio.—Fine! Well done! Go on. The letter, ah! Admirable!

Teresa.—For God's sake, Eugenio!

Eugenio.—Marvellous! The letter! At last! Now fall into that chair and say: "So be it; I confess all, kill me!" (*TERESA falls into a chair and covers her face.*) It couldn't be done better in a theatre. Oh, that business of covering the face is very good. I, meanwhile—pale, furious—crush the letter in my hand—but I don't really—and then I spread it out—or act as if I was going to spread it out—and I look at you tragically—then I look at the crumpled paper, I smooth it out and I begin. (*Reading.*) "I know everything." Certainly, it's just what I thought. "I know you fight Nebreda to-morrow." No, silly one, it was to-day. (*TERESA raises her head and looks at him.*) It's all over. Just what I said—I gave him a scratch of no consequence, and the fight was finished. So that's what you cried about? You thought they were going to kill your little husband—that I would let myself be killed, and lose you?

Teresa.—So it was you—who wounded the other man? Oh, Eugenio what a weight you've lifted from me. (*She raises herself slightly and smiles.*)

Eugenio.—But why did you write me? You were going to see me this afternoon—this evening?

Teresa.—No, Louisa said you weren't coming back.

Eugenio (Striking himself on the forehead).—It's true, I ought to have thought of that. It was not probable, but still possible that I should be wounded, and I wanted to keep you calm for a while and explain my absence. That was the reason I sent the message to you.

Teresa.—Now the letter is explained. Now you see why I was desperate and frightened—and yet you wondered why I cried. But it's all over now—Give me the letter. (*Laughing tries to get it.*)

Eugenio.—Poor little thing! How she loves me! And where were you going to send it?

Teresa.—To Monteverde's house. Don Hilarion saw you going in.

Eugenio.—Cold hearted one! You should have gone yourself—dressed in white with your hair down—and thrown yourself in my arms to save me from death.

Teresa.—And made you ridiculous? Never! I say that—(*Going over the letter in her mind.*)

Eugenio.—Let's see—let's see—

Teresa.—Not now. Come you know it all. Give it to me!

Eugenio.—Give you my treasure? The proof of your love? No, I want to taste it, eat it—devour it with kisses.

Teresa (With sadness and loathing).—Eugenio, give me that letter!

Eugenio.—You're ashamed of it?

Teresa.—Yes, terribly, believe me.

Eugenio.—Ashamed because you love me so much?

Teresa.—It's not that. You're worthy—of great love—but I—

Eugenio.—Ah! You say such tender things to me! Now it's easy to let me read it.

Teresa.—Eugenio—

Eugenio.—No—no—no. (*Pushing her away.*) (*She falls into the chair again.*) “You told me that you would not come to-night, and I can't let things rest as they are.” Ha! Ha! Absolutely right. “I don't say give up the duel, because I know you would not, and beside I don't want to make you ridiculous.” For you I'd give up more than a duel—even paradise.

Teresa.—Oh!

Eugenio.—Ridicule! what difference does ridicule make to me.

Teresa.—Oh, enough—

Eugenio.—Let me alone. “But for God’s sake, defend yourself well. I want you to live—if you don’t I will die.” I could never pay you, Teresina, in all my life for this happiness that you give me—look—I’m crying like a child.

Teresa.—No, I don’t want to see your tears. (*Hiding her face in the sofa.*)

Eugenio (Reading).—“You are brave, you are strong—defend yourself. Think of me, think of Maria. Think of us both, for me and for your child. Forgive me. Good-bye.” Yes, for both—living for both, who can kill me?

Teresa.—The evil I’ve done in this World I’m paying for—I’ve suffered much.

Eugenio.—It’s all over—come to me.

Teresa.—No Eugenio, I can’t stand any more.

Eugenio.—Come to me.

Teresa.—For God’s sake go away, some one is coming.

SCENE ELEVEN

(*Teresa, Eugenio and Don Pablo.*)

Pablo.—What’s the matter?

Eugenio.—What’s the matter? Your daughter’s an angel.

Pablo.—I knew that before.

Eugenio.—An angel from Heaven. From Heaven, just that.

Pablo.—My dear boy, not quite that.

Eugenio.—Oh, you don’t know.

Teresa.—For God’s sake, Eugenio. (*In a low voice.*) Now they’re all coming. I beg you—I insist.

Eugenio.—Your slave obeys.

SCENE TWELVE

(*Teresa, Eugenio, Pablo, Remedios, Cosme and Hilarion.*)

Hilarion.—But doesn’t one eat to-day in this house? I’m the echo of public opinion.

Pablo.—We do. Mine was the official part and I forgot. Let’s go to the table.

Eugenio.—Come on, everybody, I’ll go first. You’ll pardon

me to-day, I'll go first with my Teresina. (*Giving her his arm.*) I won't give her up, not even to you, father-in-law. You go in with Remedios. Nor to you Don Cosme, nor you, Hilarion, You go solemnly in together. To-day my wife is mine. I'll be the enamoured husband, the fatuous husband, the ridiculous husband. *Eh bien! Adelante!* Forward, march. All the known languages are not enough to express what I feel—what *we* feel. (*Looking at TERESINA.*)

Pablo.—Good boy!

Remedios.—Poor boy!

Hilarion.—How crazy!

Cosme.—How ingenuous!

ACT III

(*Same setting as the Second Act.*)

SCENE ONE

(*Eugenio, Hilarion, Cosme and a servant to load pistols. They are all grouped just outside the doorway at the rear, facing the park and shooting at a target.*)

Eugenio (*Who has just finished shooting at a target and has his pistol in his hand*).—How's that? Another bull's eye.

Hilarion.—Admirable. Nine bull's eyes—what an eye and what nerves!

Cosme.—To win the bet he needs one more. We said ten. He has a chance of winning, but not a certainty. There is still one shot. He may lose. A man with only one day to live, may find that on that day the machinery of his imagined happiness comes crashing upon him.

Hilarion.—The eternal pessimist!

Eugenio.—You to your philosophy and I to my bull's eyes. And this time without aiming. I'll shoot at your word.

Hilarion.—That's too hard; besides it's getting dark.

Eugenio.—It doesn't make any difference—I'm waiting, Don Cosme.

Cosme.—Get ready! One! Two! Three! (*EUGENIO shoots.*)

Eugenio.—Well?

Hilarion.—You made your ten! (*To COSME.*) Man of

mistrust, of the dark auguries, of the eternal note of sadness—you have lost.

Cosme.—I've lost. Excellent nerve—excellent sight! If you see life as clearly as you do a bull's eye, you are a sharp sighted man, dear Eugenio.

Eugenio.—I said ten, now I say twenty. (*To the servant.*) Load the pistols!

SCENE TWO

(*Eugenio, Don Hilarion, Don Cosme and Pablo.*)

Pablo.—Aren't you ever going to stop? It's a veritable bombardment! A fine desert you've invented! "Now you'll see the capture of Sebastopol." Pum! pum! pum! The ladies can't stand it any longer, Teresina jumps at each shot.

Eugenio.—It annoys Teresina? Then I'll stop. Leave the pistols over there. (*Servant puts them in their case and puts the case on the table on the right to one side.*)

Pablo.—What's the reason for all this shooting?

Eugenio.—Don Cosme asked me with a certain malice whether I was quite tranquil—supposing that the affair with Nebreda had shaken my nerves. It stung me a little—I've got my vanity, like everyone else, and then the devil to tempt me added: "You couldn't hit ten bull's eyes in succession as you did before." And I answered: "I will," and I did.

Pablo.—A very foolish way of amusing yourself—to bore holes in a little piece of cardboard—to knock down a little figure—to hit a little tin rabbit! What a ridiculous proceeding—what an annoyance—and above all how useless!

Cosme.—I don't agree.

Pablo.—You don't agree with anything.

Cosme.—Because all the World talks nonsense. This all seems ridiculous to you but it is something quite serious, useful and even fundamental—perhaps the very foundation of modern sociology.

Pablo.—I don't understand.

Cosme.—Life in our age, as life in all ages, as universal life in space and time—

Hilarion.—Here comes space. (*Putting himself in front of DON COSME to laugh at him.*)

Eugenio.—Here comes Time.

Cosme (*Getting away from DON HILARION*).—Don't stand in front of me, give me some space. (*To EUGENIO*.) Don't interrupt me, give me time to explain myself. I said that Life is an eternal struggle. The strong conquer, and it's of the greatest importance to be strong. According to the profound saying of a great genius: "As between the cook and the turkey, it's better to be the cook." Very well then, the arms of ages past were the sling, the bow, the dart, the sword, the mace, the cross-bow, the axe—

Eugenio.—For God's sake, Don Cosme, you're giving us a catalogue of the royal armory.

Cosme.—The arms of our age are not so numerous, but they are far more subtle and no less deadly—the word, the pen, the pistol, the rapier. Know how to say four shameless things at break of day with a certain eloquence—know how to write appropriately those four shameless things in literary form, and another four if necessary, at the same early dawn—know how to maintain what you've said with pistol or sword in hand, with a certain decorum, and you'll see how the way opens through the crowded multitude of those who, driven by destiny, run hungry to the mean, scanty and badly served banquet of Life.

Pablo.—But man, do I have to go through this World of God, pistol in hand, asking food? Then I won't be a sociologist, I'll be a bandit.

Cosme.—No, sir. You'll be a decent, respectable person, respected and powerful.

Eugenio.—Well, then, I ought to be very respectable and very respected. An affair at five and ten bull's eyes at six. It seems to me—

Cosme.—The dominating law is force, and in the nineteenth century efficient symbols of force may be talent, bravery and a sure aim. But your nature is, so to speak, too sweet, and this sweetness nullifies your vigor. What does it matter if you can strike down your enemy, when everyone knows you'll end by helping him up. You could instill fear, but you don't. You're like a weakling, no one fears you, and no one respects you. You defeat your own aim and I can't help laughing at you.

Eugenio.—Sombre fantasies of Don Cosme! I don't have to kill any one, nor do I need any one's fear. It's enough for me to inspire sympathy, friendship, and sometimes affection. I don't aspire to be a modern Atilla.

Cosme.—You won't be.

Pablo.—Nor does he need to be.

Hilarion.—How horrible!—An Atilla in every home.

Eugenio.—Don Cosme's ideal.

Cosme.—I respect every one's taste.

Pablo.—What I think you don't respect is the fact that the ladies are left alone.

Cosme.—Shall we go in, Don Hilarion?

Hilarion.—We'll go.

Cosme (To EUGENIO and PABLO).—And you?

Pablo.—I'll stay here and rest a little—may be the rest will turn to sleep after awhile.

Eugenio.—I'll stay here and watch him sleep.

Cosme.—Just so you don't sleep—I advise you to stay awake.

Eugenio.—I don't see the meaning nor the cleverness of that—

Cosme.—You can't find what doesn't exist. (*To DON HIL-ARION.*) Shall we go in?

Hilarion.—Whenever you like.

Cosme (From the door).—Eugenio, you are the most happy man alive, you seem predestined for happiness. (*He goes.*)

Eugenio.—You're the most irresistible being alive. You were born to torment.

SCENE THREE

(*Pablo and Eugenio. It has become almost dark. The garden is seen in the moonlight. In this scene Eugenio, little by little becomes sad.*)

Pablo.—Really, Don Cosme is getting a little wearisome as the years pass.

Eugenio.—Don Garcia was always that way—I mean Don Cosme.

Pablo.—Yes, but years always etch a failing in lines more and more distinct. How heavy and sententious he is, but how irresistible!

Eugenio.—Poor Don Cosme. They say his youth was very sad, and that he suffered many disillusionings.

Pablo.—And he wants to disillusion everybody. Let each man carry his own burden. My boy, we're happy, very happy, in fact terribly happy.

Eugenio.—You've said it—terribly happy. Such happiness causes terror. Right now I think I see my cup full—full, so full that it flows over.

Pablo.—Now *you're* infected by Don Cosme.

Eugenio.—I suppose so, I'm infected.

Pablo.—What's the matter?

Eugenio.—I don't know, nothing. My spirits are low.

Pablo.—Why?

Eugenio.—I told you before, because we're too happy.

Pablo.—What an imagination! I've never seen you like this before. We must tell Don Cosme that he can't come into this house again unless he comes chanting glory.

Eugenio.—At times Don Cosme talks sense. Listen. It seems natural that each man should average a certain amount of pain, and a certain amount of pleasure—it's good mathematics. And sorrow and pleasure come alternately through Life, just as black and white beads are strung on a rosary—the law of average must apply. But so far I see only white beads on my rosary. Where are the black?

Pablo.—The devil has taken them to put on Don Cosme's rosary.

Eugenio.—So much the better. And yet, this very day, a handful of black beads might fall in this house. Supposing Nebreda had hit me, and Teresa had to be told that Eugenio was wounded or dead? Poor Teresa! It makes me shudder to think of it.

Pablo.—Well, you did give us a nice day! And Teresa a bad time, so they tell me.

Eugenio.—Was it you who told her I had the duel?

Pablo.—Oh, no, Eugenio. I? Not a word, I wouldn't have said a word, even if the thing had worried me to death. My poor child!

Eugenio.—Well, who did tell her?

Pablo.—How do I know! Probably, Don Cosme. Undoubtedly! What greater pleasure could he have than bringing bad news, and proving that the World's a cave of horrors! Or may be it was Remedios, she likes to show that she knows all that's going on. Or may be, Don Hilarion, he's an indiscreet sort of a chap. Only those three were here to-day—so it must have been one of them.

Eugenio.—I suppose it was Don Cosme.

Pablo.—Certainly.

Eugenio.—No, Don Cosme plays the part of a pessimist without being one—at bottom he's a good fellow. I wonder if it was Remedios.

Pablo.—It may be.

Eugenio.—I know Teresina loves me.

Pablo.—Are you just finding it out?

Eugenio.—I know it now. Such a letter, Don Pablo!—written with her heart! My Teresina! How strange these nervous women are! She didn't want to talk to me about the duel or give me the letter, and she had written it to me! Teresina of my heart! (*Taking out the letter and kissing it.*)

Pablo.—To-day you're positively out of your head. Fighting in the morning, wild with joy in the afternoon, sad and melancholy in the evening, and now sentimental. I could swear your eyes are filled with tears.

Eugenio.—You can't see, it's dark.

Pablo.—But I know that you are troubled over something. I can hear it in your voice—

Maria (*Entering on the right*).—Little grandfather!

Pablo.—Ah! I hear a little voice.

Maria (*Who cannot see him on account of the darkness*).—Where are you, little grandfather?

Pablo.—Here I am. Come here, you little witch. What do you want?

Maria.—They want to put me to bed.

Pablo.—What a mean trick! Who told you to go to bed?

Maria.—Mama, and I don't want to go till it gets late—till they light the lights—till you go to bed.

Pablo.—You're right, when I go to bed. What do they mean treating a little somebody like you that way?

Eugenio.—Just so. The grandfather has just about as much sense as the grandchild.

Maria.—Just for to-night—Only to-night—one night.

Pablo.—Poor little thing! If it's only for one night.

Maria.—Only this one time.

Eugenio.—Well, let it go this time. I'll tell them you can stay up.

Maria.—But Mama says no, and Mama orders more than you. You tell her, grandfather, everyone minds you. You're the most greatest.

Eugenio.—And doesn't any one mind me?

Maria.—Mama, no, that's clear.

Eugenio.—It's dark rather, I should say. (*Laughing.*)

Maria.—Yes, it's very dark. Will they light the lights?

Pablo.—Don't fuss, I'll tell them to.

Maria.—And I'll stay up?

Pablo.—Yes.

Eugenio.—I told you you could.

Maria (*To DON PABLO*).—Now light the lights.

Pablo.—Why do you want the lights? Look how beautiful the moonlight is, the moon's full.

Maria.—The moon isn't any good. I want the lamp—there—on the table.

Pablo.—Why?

Maria.—Oh, dear! (*Impatiently.*) To draw.

Pablo (*To EUGENIO*).—So she shall. She's every bit an artist. Have you shown Papa the pictures you made?

Maria.—Mama tore the prettiest one.

Pablo.—What a shame! Did she tear the picture of you?

Maria.—No, another one. Prettier.

Pablo.—Whose was it?

Maria.—Of Papa, going walking with that man who looks so fine—they each had their hats in their hand—like this—as if they were talking, and they were walking arm in arm.

Eugenio.—A picture of Juan, I imagine.

Maria.—That's it, and with his hat in his hand. (*Getting ready to cry.*)

Pablo.—And why did she tear it?

Maria.—I don't know—she didn't feel good, and she took me this way—and sent me to bed.

Eugenio.—I'll have to scold Mama. She must look out.

Maria.—And can I draw you again?

Eugenio.—As many times as you like.

Maria.—Mama doesn't like it—that's why she put me out when that gentleman came. You remember? (*To DON PABLO.*)

Pablo.—Yes, I remember. (*To EUGENIO.*) What a little rascal!

Maria.—Now let them light the lights.

Pablo.—Not yet. Now you come with me. I'll tell your mother not to put you to bed, and if she doesn't mind, I'll have her put to bed.

Maria.—That's it! That's it! (*Clapping her hands.*) Let's put her to bed. I'll give her a kiss and take away the light.

Eugenio.—Don't be revengeful. You know that isn't nice!

Pablo.—And if your father scolds you, we'll put him to bed.

Maria.—No, we'll let Papa stay up a little while, so he can talk to his friend.

Pablo—What a child, man, what a child! She's a genius. You'll see—she's a genius.

Eugenio.—She's bright—yes, she's very bright, and Teresina is too severe with her. To-day poor Teresina is nervous and sick, and poor little Maria pays for it. Tear her drawing—I'm sure the little thing cried. The best persons, no matter how good they are—and no one could say my Teresina isn't good—are unfair to children. What harm did the poor child do drawing Juan and me out walking with our hats in our hands! I can see it! Most amusing! (*Pauses.*) Is Juan coming to-night? Is he angry with me? Well, if he doesn't come I'll go myself to find him and I'll bring him—I'll bring him—and we'll walk together—with our hats in our hands. (*Laughing.*) With our hats in our hands! What a little rascal she is! (*He repeats mechanically.*) Together! Out walking! Ugh! Now I'm beginning to feel as I do before a good headache comes on. I get hold of an idea and I can't let go. I run round and round it, like a horse going round the bull-ring. It's no use, my brain's beginning to spin round—round and round one phrase—together—we two—and with—to the devil with my headache! I can't shake off this terrible headache. I'll see if the light won't drive it away. (*Rings the bell.*) (*To a servant who comes in.*) Light the lights! (*Walks up and down nervously.*)

(*Enter REMEDIOS and HILARION.*)

Remedios.—Isn't any one here?

Hilarion.—It seems not.

Eugenio.—Yes, Senora. I am here.

Hilarion.—You're so wrapped in shadow we didn't see you.

Eugenio (*To the servant*).—There on the table. Well, now you see me?

Hilarion.—Well, my dear Eugenio— —

Eugenio.—What—you're going?

Remedios.—And I am too. Teresa doesn't feel well, and I think I'll go so that she can rest.

Eugenio.—Nonsense! I won't let you. You can't either of you go at this hour—half past eight or nine o'clock—certainly not. The frontier is closed. The exportation of friends is prohibited. It can't be done.

Hilarion.—I have to see Juan. He's going to-morrow and I've got to tell him about something—a business affair—a draft that was drawn on me in Vienna.

Eugenio.—Where is Juan?

Hilarion.—At Monteverde's. I have an appointment with him at nine—so—

Eugenio.—So—you go over and get Juan and bring him here to me.

Hilarion.—But my dear Eugenio.

Eugenio.—Silence and obedience! If you don't promise solemnly to return within half an hour with Juan, you don't leave this house!

Hilarion.—But suppose Juan—

Eugenio.—Tell him I command it! Tell him you've seen me, and I've become a wild beast, and see if he does not obey. Understand, all of you that it is my desire to dedicate this evening to the sweet and refreshing delights of friendship.

Remedios.—As long as you don't say Juan's to dedicate the evening to love as well as friendship—you know he's married.

Eugenio.—To friendship and love—even though he is married. So, Don Hilarion, back with Juan in half an hour!

Hilarion.—I'll come back, but if Vargas—

Eugenio.—Tell him I want to speak to him about something very serious. The truth is I really haven't anything particular to say—tell him I'm waiting for him impatiently—that's really true. Tell him I'm upset, on edge, irritable, in low spirits. You'll be responsible for everything if Juan does not come.

Hilarion.—Oh, he'll come! Good-bye, Tyrant of Syracuse! Tyrant of Padua! or Tyrant of the Thirty Tyrants! (*Going towards the rear.*)

Eugenio.—Only thirty?

Hilarion (*Hesitating, with a thoughtful, slightly troubled air.*)—I've always heard it was thirty.

Eugenio.—All right, good-bye.

Hilarion.—Good-bye.

SCENE FOUR

(*Eugenio and Remedios.*)

Remedios.—And aren't you going to let me go?

Eugenio.—Not at all. Sit down here by me.

Remedios (*Sitting down.*)—But the fact is, Teresina—

Eugenio.—Exactly, it's so that Teresina won't be alone.

Remedios.—She's not at all well. She has so much spirit

and she's trying to hide it—but she doesn't deceive me. She may deceive others but she doesn't deceive me, I know her too well.

Eugenio.—Poor Teresina, she's incapable of deceiving any one. She's upset and nervous. She would be naturally after all she's gone through to-day. Whose fault do you suppose it is? Let's see if we can find out.

Remedios.—What's she upset about? Whose fault is it? I don't know I'm sure.

Eugenio.—Well, it's yours.

Remedios.—Mine? How? And what's poor Remedios done to destroy your conjugal happiness?

Eugenio.—Don't you know? Ah, you hypocrite! Come here! Poor Teresina loving me so—you know how she loves me—to come and say to her: "Your husband is going to fight Nebreda to-morrow." Isn't that enough to drive her crazy with grief and anguish? Isn't that enough?

Remedios.—I should say so! But who told her that? I thought she didn't know it until you, the conquering hero, told her.

Eugenio.—Don't pretend. She knew. And you know she knew because you were the one who told her.

Remedios.—For Heaven's sake, what an idea!

Eugenio.—I know your intention was good, but you were a little thoughtless—because the poor child couldn't stop the duel, and it gave her a pretty bad time.

Remedios.—Seriously, I tell you she knew nothing about it from me.

Eugenio (In a joking tone).—I'm not really angry—I'll forgive you.

Remedios.—Forgive me, indeed! I'd like to know what I've done! Why, think! I couldn't have told her you were going to fight, because I thought it was Juan who was going to fight.

Eugenio.—The affair was planned that way, but I slipped in ahead of Juan.

Remedio.—Well, I didn't know it. What I told her was that to-morrow Vargas was going to fight Nebreda—I told her here, right here, a little while before you got back. Vargas with Nebreda, do you understand? Not a word about you. Oh, yes—I said probably you would be one of the seconds. Stop! You make me nervous. (*Pauses.*) Why do you look at me like that?

Eugenio.—I don't know how I'm looking at you—quite

naturally I suppose. So you didn't tell her I was going to fight?

Remedios.—No, Eugenio, no; seriously, it wasn't I. One doesn't joke about such things.

Eugenio.—But she knew it—she must have known it. (*Mechanically raising his hand to where he has put the letter.*)

Remedios.—She learned it from some one else then; she could never have imagined it from anything I said.

Eugenio.—Then—it must have been Don Cosme—he enjoys telling bad news, or Don Hilarion who talks without knowing what he says. But whoever did it, gave my poor Teresina a bad fright.

Remedios.—Wait a bit. Don't accuse people—people who are as innocent as I am. It wasn't Don Cosme or Don Hilarion, I can prove that.

Eugenio.—You can prove that? Yah! You couldn't prove anything! You can prove that! A lot you know about it. (*Violently.*)

Remedios.—Don't take it so to heart. I can't see why it's so important.

Eugenio.—Of course—it's mere foolishness, it doesn't matter. But I'd like to know who told Teresina.

Remedios.—Well, as far as Don Cosme and Don Hilarion are concerned, you needn't have any doubt. We came in almost at the same time, and they believed like me, that Vargas was the one who was going to fight. And almost in chorus we told it to Teresina. She was greatly upset to be sure—it was natural—Vargas is such a good friend of the family. Of your duel—not a word.

Eugenio.—But—how can that be possible, Remedios? Only think!—think! How could that be possible, when she knew all about it! (*Taking her hand familiarly and then crushing it fiercely.*) (*They are seated together.*)

Remedios.—For God's sake, Eugenio, what's the matter with you?

Eugenio.—I—I—what's the matter? What do you think ought to be the matter with me? Nothing! (*With a forced laugh.*)

Remedios.—Well, child, you crushed my hand, and gripped my arm so that—Heavens—a little more and—

Eugenio (*Controlling himself and assuming a jocular tone.*)—Give me your hand, let's be friends. (*Kissing her hand.*) Does that cure the little squeeze? You're not angry with me, are you?

I'm a demonstrative sort of chap and very intense—and I'm a little on edge to-day.

Remedios.—So I see. Poor Teresina—if you should ever get angry with her!

Eugenio.—With her? Never. Poor child. (*With tenderness.*) She isn't as strong as you are.

Remedios.—Yes, but I'm not your wife, so pray be a little less prodigal with your attacks of fervor.

Eugenio.—The trouble is when I'm crossed in anything I'm sure of, I can't control myself, and I know some one told Teresina about my duel—

Remedios.—Again! It's getting to be monomania!

Eugenio.—It must have been a letter—an anonymous letter. There *are* people who enjoy tormenting their neighbors—wait a minute! (*Rings the bell.*)

Remedios.—Who do you want? What on earth's the matter with you?

(*Servant enters.*)

Eugenio.—Did the Senora see any visitors this afternoon?

Servant.—Yes, sir.

Eugenio (*Turning to REMEDIOS.*)—Ah! You see!

Servant.—She saw the Senora (*Pointing to REMEDIOS.*) and Don Hilarion and Don Cosme.

Eugenio.—No, afterward—it must have been afterward—after she saw the gentlemen—because when you talked to her she didn't know anything. (*Turning to REMEDIOS.*)

Servant.—She didn't see any one afterwards, sir.

Eugenio.—And she didn't get any letter?

Servant.—No, sir.

Eugenio.—Are you sure?

Servant.—Yes, sir. I've been in all afternoon.

Eugenio.—That's enough. None of you know anything about it. You can go.

Remedios.—But for Heaven's sake, Eugenio—

Eugenio (*Laughing nervously.*)—No, I know it's only obstinacy—it isn't worth while—but I want to get at the bottom of it. Now you see what importance I give to it. Absolutely none. But I've got to know who it was. It's a problem! A riddle! But problems and riddles excite my curiosity in a way that you can't imagine. (*He walks up and down nervously.*)

SCENE SEVEN

(*Eugenio, Remedios and Don Cosme.*)

Cosme.—Teresa doesn't want you to go yet. She commanded me that if I found you I should tell you to come up to her room.

Remedios.—Eugenio holds me prisoner, and here I am thrust in his own private cage. (*Pointing to EUGENIO.*) And I tell you a little more and he would have eaten me.

Cosme.—A very pleasing mouthful for a wild beast, rational or irrational.

Remedios.—Look at him! (*EUGENIO keeps on walking to and fro.*)

Cosme.—What's the matter with him?

Eugenio (*Stopping suddenly in front of DON COSME.*)—Did you tell Teresina this afternoon that I was going to fight Nebreda?

Cosme.—I? For God's sake! I didn't know it, and even if I did, I'm not that foolish.

Eugenio.—So you—

Cosme.—I tell you I didn't know. I thought Vargas was going to fight. We all thought so, that is Remedios, Hilarion and I, and that's what we told your wife. Isn't that true?

Remedios.—Do you hear that?

Eugenio.—Ah! I have it! How foolish of me. She knew it before you came.

Remedios.—No, sir. Not a word. Tell me then, why should she hide it from us?

Eugenio.—Why does any one hide things—just to hide them, I suppose.

Cosme.—But why should she deceive us? I tell you she didn't know a thing about it.

Remedios.—You left before we got here. If Teresina had suspected anything she'd have told you.

Eugenio.—Well, then, tell me—who did tell her?—Because evidently some one told her.

Remedios.—Some mischievous devil.

Eugenio.—Well, I've got to find out. I'll drag that devil out of Hell—I'll ask every damned soul alive—because she—she *did* know it! She knew it—it's certain. Do you understand? About that there is neither doubt nor argument. Neither you, nor the whole World that tries to deny it, could convince me that

she didn't know. There are things which are beyond dispute. Haven't I got the proof. (*Striking the place where he has the letter.*) Haven't I got it? Well, then——

Remedios.—The proof? What proof?

Eugenio.—The evidence.

Cosme.—But don't get worked up this way. Why don't you ask Teresina?

Eugenio.—Ask Teresina—yes—but only when I give myself up as conquered. Besides I don't want to remind her of the unfortunate affair. She's nervous and sick. I can get at the truth of this miserable complication myself.

Remedios.—For Heaven's sake, Eugenio, you look like a jealous husband who has struck the trail of a lover and scents a betrayal.

Cosme.—If we didn't know what it was all about, seeing you so pale and agitated and wrought up—we'd think you were a new Othello.

Eugenio.—Othello? Yes—I know very well the whole thing's supremely ridiculous. I'll be the first to laugh at myself. I'll laugh at myself more than you will. But I've taken the thing to heart—it's my nature. Is there a problem? Solve it! Is there a difficulty? Overcome it! Is there a mystery? Tear it out by the roots! Is there an obstacle? To the earth with it! Ea, a devil of a character to have, isn't it? You thought I was a candied Eugenio, pastry, soft as jelly. Well, now you see me made a man—that is, a fool. Every man's a fool isn't he, Don Cosme? Ha! ha! ha! What idiotic things I'm saying. I was always like that. When I was studying and couldn't solve a problem, what wrath! what despair! It drove me crazy. I threw the book down and stamped on it. Then I squeezed it between my hands like a lemon to drive out the juice. This is the same. I've a problem between my hands, and I'm going to crush every one in the house till the truth, the whole truth runs out through my fingers. So let's laugh—Laugh as I do! Ea! On to the torture of all the authors, accomplices and concealers of this mystery! (*Goes out laughing convulsively.*)

SCENE EIGHT

(*Remedios and Don Cosme.*)

Remedios.—Well, what do you think of that? What's the matter with the man? There's something in the wind.

Cosme.—No, Senora, merely the vaporings of a man of great imagination—highly strung—who's had a pretty serious affair and then has had to suffer his wife's tears, his child's impertinence, and Don Pablo's reproaches. Then some little trifle breaks the nervous tension and—Pst! There you've got the explanation.

Remedios.—It may be, but what he says astonishes me—that Teresina knew that he, he himself—was the one——

Cosme.—Well, are we going to lose our heads also, finding out about it, or not finding out about it?

Remedios.—One madman makes a hundred, and to-night I tell you, Eugenio's crazy.

Cosme.—To me he's always seemed a reasonable mad man, a judicious sort of lunatic, with great imagination and little ballast. His head fills with air, mounts into space, and floats at the mercy of the winds.

Remedios.—He has always been very peaceful, but to-day—if you had seen him grip my hand!

Cosme.—Well, to-day he had his first access of fury. It had to come sometime.

Remedios.—Over mere nonsense.

Cosme.—Well, if it wasn't over mere nonsense, why should we wonder at his getting so excited?

Remedios (Laughing).—Now he'll ask everybody, everybody except his wife. Just see how the thing looks. Any one seeing him carry on this inquisition would believe it was a case of betrayal and jealousy—and after all—it's nothing.

Cosme.—Well, that's the way the World goes, my friend. You can't trust any one nor anybody, neither the appearance nor the reality. Others would believe it was jealousy, we believe it isn't—find the truth if you can. Who can tell what lies hidden in the heart of things? I know nothing, I understand nothing nor do I even see clearly. At each step I ask myself: "Is it now that I am about to face the abyss?"

Remedios.—Ah, now you're launched on your philosophies, and it's my fault this time, because I wound you up. (*Laughing.*)

Cosme.—It wasn't necessary, my dear. Have you seen those clocks that are never wound up and always go?

Remedios.—Yes, because in opening and shutting them to see the hour, one winds them without knowing.

Cosme.—Exactly. Well, I'm like that. Everybody winds me without knowing it.

Remedios.—Just so, and you're always striking the hour, but it's the hour of agony.

Cosme.—It's the only one that my miserable brain can strike.

Remedios.—Be quiet—Eugenio is coming.

Cosme.—He's reading something.

Remedios.—Yes, it looks like a letter.

SCENE NINE

(*Eugenio, Remedios and Don Cosme.*)

Eugenio (Walking slowly and reading).—For me, for Maria, defend yourself well.

Remedios.—It's turned up, has it?

Eugenio (As if awaking from sleep, raises his head and then abruptly puts away the letter).—What?

Remedios.—The letter that told Teresa about the duel.

Eugenio (Coldly).—No.

Remedios.—But the letter that you were reading—

Eugenio.—No, it's something else—

Cosme.—And haven't you been able to find out anything?

Eugenio.—Nothing, and now my curiosity's over. How you must have laughed at me! What a foolish idea, wasn't it? To worry myself over a mere bagatelle!

Remedios.—Oh, no. I can understand your anxiety perfectly. Exactly the same thing happens to me, I'm so impressionable.

Eugenio.—Confess both of you that I've made myself ridiculous through and through.

Cosme.—You've been making inquiries?

Eugenio.—I should say so. But—not a word. No one has said anything, no one has seen anybody. There was no letter, there was no news. A perfect piece of legerdemain. It's most delightful. Look, I enjoy it now. (*Laughing.*) As a matter of fact the thing's of no importance. What absorbs me now is the fact that I'm getting a most hellish fever. (*Letting himself fall into a chair and pressing his hands to his head.*) To-morrow I'll ask Teresina. And how we'll laugh! It makes me laugh to think of it.

Remedios.—Well, why are you sitting like that, staring at the floor as if you wanted to photograph the tiles?

Eugenio.—My head! My head! I feel a terrible hammering there, and I keep saying at each beat: "The two together, the

two together." She didn't know it—no—pum—pum—pum.

Remedios (To COSME).—What's he saying?

Eugenio.—How do I know what I'm saying. Probably some phrase that I've heard that's got caught in the little cells of my brain, as you'd say. (*To DON COSME.*) Imagine some children playing with a tambourine out in the fields—they throw it into the air, and it catches on the branch of a tree, and hangs there. Then evening comes and the night wind blows, and chas—chas—chas—the tambourine beats to and fro. So within me are sounding chaotic, broken phrases that caught a little while ago on some nerves. Now you see how silly the whole thing is.

Cosme.—Well, the best thing for fever is rest.

Eugenio.—It's the only remedy.

Remedios.—I take the hint, I'm going.

Eugenio.—To Teresina then—I won't let you leave the house.

Remedios (To DON COSME).—Let's go out for a bit. (*Apart.*) I want to see how this thing ends.

Cosme.—As you like.

Remedios.—We go from one invalid to the other, eh?

Cosme.—From husband to wife.

Remedios.—We'll be two sisters of charity.

Cosme.—You will—as for me, it would be difficult.

Remedios (Going towards the door).—Charity has no sex.

Cosme (Gallantly).—Charity—it bears the name of woman.

Remedios.—Don Cosme!—This from you? You're about to die!

Cosme.—I think he's asleep. (*Following REMEDIOS.*)

Maria (Coming in on tip toe).—Where's Papa?

Remedios.—There he is. But don't make a noise; he wants to sleep.

Cosme.—An excellent cure for fever. Children! Another harmony of Nature, a fever and a child—and the head bursts open like a ripe pomegranate.

Remedios.—What a man!

SCENE TEN

(*Eugenio and Maria.*)

Eugenio.—Don Cosme thinks I'm crazy and he's right. For years and years I've behaved like a rational man. Ah, one

can never be sure, the disease may be merely in process of germination. But it breaks out suddenly and I've reached the moment of its outburst.

Maria (*Coming close to him*).—No, he's not asleep.

Eugenio.—If I shut my eyes I see such terrible things! So grotesque! At first grotesque—then horrible. Why are they horrible? I don't know—they are horrible!

Maria.—Are you awake, Papa?

Eugenio.—Who is it?

Maria.—Don't get angry.

Eugenio.—Ah, it is you, my little child? Come, come here. Come over to me. Look at me. What pure, clear eyes! Life hasn't had time to cloud them with its breath. Give me your little hands. How cool and soft they are. Put your little hands on my forehead.

Maria.—How hot you are.

Eugenio.—Am I?

Maria.—Wait, don't. (*Taking away her hands.*)

Eugenio.—Don't you want to cool my forehead?

Maria.—But I was drawing in grandfather's room, and I've got them all stained with ink and I'll stain you.

Eugenio.—Such a little child, and already you stain your hands?

Maria.—After a while I'll clean them with lemon—with sour lemon.

Eugenio.—Let me kiss them.

Maria.—But suppose I leave ink on your lips?

Eugenio.—I'll clean them with lemon.

Maria.—But I tell you it's sour—it'll bite your lips and they'll hurt.

Eugenio.—And you don't want them to hurt?

Maria.—No! Not lemon for Papa's lips. Oh, no, caramels, sweet caramels that your nice friend gave you.

Eugenio.—Ah!

Maria.—Why do you hold me so tight? Your hands hurt me.

Eugenio.—Poor little thing. I didn't mean to. I thought you were falling—that we were both falling, and you were underneath and I held you to me.

Maria.—Both of us falling, falling together—what a beautiful game! (*Throwing herself on the floor.*)

Eugenio.—Why are you leaving me?

Maria.—Because I want something.

Eugenio.—What do you want?

Maria.—You know.

Eugenio.—No, really I don't.

Maria.—Look? (*Pointing to the lights.*)

Eugenio.—What?

Maria.—The lights are lit now.

Eugenio.—Very well.

Maria.—I've seen Don Cosme.

Eugenio.—Well?

Maria.—He's very ugly and I want to draw him. I want to do just that—and now my hands are dirty, it's all right.

Eugenio.—As you like.

Maria.—Can I go to the table?

Eugenio.—Yes, and while you're there, I'll rest.

Maria.—That's nice! (*Runs to the table and begins to hunt.*)
But I can't draw—Oh, dear!

Eugenio.—Why not, darling?

Maria.—Because I haven't any paper.

Eugenio.—Look carefully. There ought to be paper on the table.

Maria.—There's nothing but this. (*Takes the envelope her Mother had forgotten and left there.*)

Eugenio.—Very well then, use that.

Maria.—But suppose someone wants it.

Eugenio.—No child, no one wants it.

Maria.—But suppose Mama scolds me—suppose you scold me?

Eugenio.—We won't scold you.

Maria.—I'm not sure, I'm not sure—look and see if it's any good. (*Approaching her father with the envelope.*)

Eugenio.—No, it's an envelope.

Maria.—But it's got writing on it!

Eugenio.—Well, suppose it has.

Maria.—And it's not torn—look at it. See if it's any good.

Eugenio.—All right, give it to me. (*Reading.*) “Personal, Most urgent.” “Senor Don Juan De Vargas.” Vargas? Tere-sina's writing—“Most urgent.” Where was it? Where! (*MARIA backs away in fright.*) Answer! Answer! Where!

Maria (*Standing by the table.*)—Here.

Eugenio.—There!—on the table—and why did she write it—why—do you know!

Maria.—I don't know anything.

Eugenio.—You don't know anything—if I get you between my fingers you'll know.

Maria.—Now you see it was some good after all. (*Crying and escaping towards the door.*)

Eugenio.—Go! Go! I don't want to see you. I don't want to see any one.

Maria.—I'm going—but I'll tell Mama you hit me.

Eugenio.—Go!

(*MARIA cries.*)

SCENE ELEVEN

(*Eugenio.*)

Eugenio.—“Personal” “Most Urgent” “Senor Don Juan De Vargas.” Of that there's no doubt—and it's the writing of Teresa. Come now, calm! Very calm! (*Pause.*) Now I'm beginning to see clearly—but at first—I felt a wave of blood—immense, without end, which suddenly mounted to my head and broke in red foam at my eyes, and all—all red—even Maria. Poor Maria. She ran away terrified. She said I struck her—I couldn't have—Christ—to strike a child—my child—no, not children—not any child. Now—to think it out quietly. I must know many things. If it was only one! But there are so many! And they mingle, they twine in and out. They tangle themselves, they writhe and twist like a knot of vipers. Ah, tell the vipers not to make those tangled masses, those writhing knots, that dark, gleaming net work of flattened heads and cold bodies which coils and uncoils itself. No—no—not this—my thoughts are running wild, and I'm not thinking about the things that I should. It's because the abyss—the abyss—I know it's very close—and I don't want to go near it—not so soon. It's better not so soon. Ah! My head! My head! Now it's lead, now fire, now dark—dark—black. Ah!—to have a head filled and overflowing with ideas so vile. No—no—out! Out! Quiet, quiet. (*He walks to and fro in an agitated manner making a gesture as if throwing ideas from him.*) What! Am I not a man! Am I a coward! A miserable woman, a ridiculous thing? Straight! in this World the honorable man looks straight—straight at loyal friend—straight at traitor, straight at good and evil—at Satan and at God. Ah—to think of this! (*Takes out*

the letter.) This envelope—this envelope—this envelope, it was for this letter? Now it's said—now the question's asked. Impossible! It's Teresina. It's not impossible. When there's a being as miserable as I who thinks such infamy, there must be a woman who could do it. Ah! Ah! If you carry corruption in the mind, soon it flows silently into the heart. Yet it may be that I'm crazy. It would be better that way. But there's no reason for darkening the mind. (*Putting the letter in the envelope.*) How well it fits—like the ring on the hand of a wife. (*Laughs, Ha, ha.*) As dishonor mates with betrayal. Now—to crush it—as if it were Juan. (*Crushes it.*) If this were a wild madness of mine—what a horrible profanation! It would deserve—to be true. But if it's true—what do they deserve for being vile and I for being a fool—What does the Universe deserve for creating such creatures. Ah, now they're coming. Will, help me to pretend—Heart—show for once in Life that you're the heart of a man, that you know how to deceive. Gigantic peals of laughter—of ridicule—sound well in my throat! (*He laughs.*)

SCENE TWELVE

(*Eugenio, Juan and Don Hilarion.*)

Hilarion.—I've fulfilled my promise. Here we are.

Juan.—You seem very happy!

Eugenio.—Ah, miserable traitor! Come here. (*Panting.*)

Juan.—What are you saying Eugenio? I, a traitor? Why?

Eugenio.—You see him? (*To DON HILARION.*) His face changes as if he were conscience stricken.

Juan.—You're joking.

Eugenio.—Now he's frightened! Don Hilarion, many thanks. You brought me back the guilty man. You're a hero. Now join Teresina if you like—she's not in good spirits to-night, you'll find them all in there with her.

Hilarion.—Well, I'll make formal delivery of Vargas and then go.

Eugenio.—We'll be there in five minutes. We'll laugh together—laugh as I was laughing when you came in. The child—my daughter—wants to draw Don Cosme because she says he is very ugly. (*Laughs.*) Ah, we will laugh at that!

Hilarion.—What a wonderful humor Eugenio's in. Good-bye for a time then.

Eugenio.—Good-bye for a minute.

SCENE THIRTEEN

(*Juan and Eugenio.*)

Juan.—What's this you must tell me with such haste and mystery?

Eugenio.—I? Nothing. As you won't come unless I make you, I made you come, and I sent off Don Hilarion so that we could be alone.

Juan.—And for what—why must we be alone?

Eugenio.—Ungrateful one, for what? To chat with you a little. You're not the man you were in the old days. You've changed.

Juan.—Even though it may not seem so, Eugenio, I care a great deal for you, truly. That's the way with human nature.

Eugenio.—Indeed I believe it! I mean I want to believe it. Come here. (*Drawing him to the sofa.*) (*They sit down and EUGENIO takes his hand for a moment.*) If you only knew how it thrills me to grasp the hand of a good friend!

Juan.—Now I feel better. Don Hilarion told me you were furious.

Eugenio.—That was to tease you. I, furious? Have you ever seen me furious?

Juan.—Never—that's true.

Eugenio.—Yes, I'm a simple soul—peaceful—an easy going chap. I pity myself! Eugenio furious? It would be something most extraordinary! Give me your hand. I'm going to crush it in mine.

Juan.—The devil!—you haven't lost your strength. Here! Let go!

Eugenio.—You have a grudge against me?

Juan.—On account of the duel?

Eugenio.—Yes.

Juan.—No. You left Nebreda in condition to handle a sword in a few days, and I'll come to an understanding with him when he's well. But you must confess that I had reason to be angry with you.

Eugenio.—Well, I don't confess it—I don't confess anything? Who is there in this World so stupid as to confess anything. Would you confess?

Juan.—I haven't anything to confess.

Eugenio.—Everyone has something to confess—you the

reason for your sadness, I, the cause of my joy. Joy—always, until to-day. To-day has been bad— —

Juan.—Why?

Eugenio.—Because of Teresina. She knew all about it. I don't know who told her. And as she loves me so much—because she does——

Juan.—Certainly.

Eugenio.—she cried and cried—and wrung her hands! She is really ill—you can imagine——

Juan.—I can imagine.

Eugenio.—Life is a strange thing! One is so happy, and suddenly the World falls heavily on the heart. Ah, you see, the World is so great and the heart is so small. It struggles—not long—but it struggles. And it even seems as if it were going to take the great mass that crushes it and hurl it against—(*Laughing.*) How do I know against what? What could one hurl the World against? But at all events the whole thing's over.

Juan.—Poor Teresina.

Eugenio.—She said her first impulse was to look for me, but she knew it would be useless—and only make me ridiculous. Ah, the woman who really loves doesn't want to make ridiculous the man—that she loves. She, even though she seems very much a child, has a great deal of character, and a great deal of courage. Isn't that true?

Juan.—There's no doubt about it.

Eugenio.—So she stayed at home and cried—but she stayed at home—and the only thing she did—was to write to you—thinking you would be my second. (*Feigning indifference.*)

Juan.—To me? She wrote to me?

Eugenio.—Yes, indeed. Doubtless she told you to take great care of me—(*Laughing*)—to watch over me—and if possible—prevent the duel. I didn't read the letter but that's what she told me, when I found her writing to you.

Juan.—But I haven't received the letter.

Eugenio.—How could you—she didn't send it to you. She had it written and in the envelope when I, the conqueror, came in—then—embraces, tears, sweet moans—post nubila febus—

Juan.—And the letter—you say she didn't send it?

Eugenio.—No, why should she?

Juan.—Where is it? (*Without being able to contain himself.*) You're right though—it's of no consequence now.

Eugenio.—It must have been left over there on the table.

(JUAN without being able to control himself entirely, approaches the table and looks for the letter; EUGENIO, half rising, watches him as the tiger does its prey.)

Juan.—It isn't here—I can't find it—

Eugenio.—Oh, yes, man, look carefully. We left it there. What with the emotion—the joy and the weeping—we forgot there was such a letter.

Juan.—Well, I can't find it. It's not there—I can't find it.

Eugenio (*Approaching*).—How stupid you are—let's see—Yes, it was right here. That Maria—she turns everything upside down in her eagerness to draw. You'd think she came of a race of artists. Well, you're right, it's not there. Now—may be I put it without thinking—(*Looking in his pocket.*)

Juan.—Look—see if possibly—

Eugenio.—No, this isn't it, nor this. (*Taking papers out of his pockets.*) I tell you it was on the table.—No, I haven't it. Oh, yes—wait—“Personal” “Urgent” (*Reading the envelope.*) “Senor Don Juan de Vargas.”—Here it is—Now it's turned up. What a poor head I've got. Look—it's sealed. I deserve to be head of the post office department. I respect the inviolability of public and private correspondence. (*Giving him the letter.*)

Juan.—You, dear Eugenio, have all the virtues.

Eugenio.—All—patience, courage, moderation, justice—Aren't those all? I'm not sure—but they ought to be all.

Juan.—They are. (*Making a movement as if to put the letter away.*)

Eugenio.—No, you can read it.

Juan.—You've told me already what it says.

Eugenio.—No matter—let's see the words in which she begs you to save my life.—It must be very moving, my Teresina speaking of me.

Juan.—If you insist on it. (*Opens and reads.*)

(EUGENIO watches him.)

Eugenio.—Didn't I say so. Moving! You see—it moves you. It takes you by surprise.

Juan.—No. You'd already told me its purpose. But she writes so well, with so much heart—she's an angel, poor Teresina.

Eugenio.—What does she say? Let's see—what does she say?

Juan.—What you already told me, that I should prevent the duel, that I should save your life.

Eugenio.—And didn't she say that if I were killed she'd die? She told me that was there—just that—she would die.

Juan.—Yes, that's there too. "If he dies, I'll die." Those are her very words.

Eugenio.—And doesn't she beg you for her own sake and for the sake of Maria—

Juan.—I see she's told you all.

Eugenio (With terrible accent).—No, not all. She hasn't told me all. Traitors never tell that. And she is—and you are, and I'm becoming one. (*Rushing towards him.*) Miserable man! (*Raising his arms as if to strike him down.*) Ah! I'm miserable too—miserable and accursed.

Teresa (Entering).—Eugenio, what have you done to the child—she's crying—Ah, Juan.

Eugenio.—The truth—I've got it now. The evidence I wanted—I've got it too.—And now—what—what ought I to do with that man? What ought I to do with—her? What ought I to do with myself?

Teresa.—But what's he saying?

Juan.—Eugenio, what's the matter with you?

Eugenio.—You ask what's the matter with me? A ghastly dream, a hellish nightmare. When one has nightmare, and death comes, one awakes. Kill me between you quickly I beseech you. I won't defend myself—stricken with horror, shaken with fear, weeping for shame, with my face covered so I can't see you—I—I'll wait for you so—quickly—out of pity—finish it. My God! Father! What is this that I never felt before—something that seemed to me impossible, impossible, impossible.

Teresa.—But what's happened—what's the matter?

Juan.—I don't know. I don't understand. We were talking together quite cheerfully. He gave me your letter. (*In a low voice.*) Your letter, but sealed. And suddenly—

Teresa.—My letter?

Juan.—The one you wrote me about Eugenio's duel with Nebreda. (*In a low voice.*) The one you wrote me.

Teresa.—I don't understand. (*In a low voice.*) I don't want to understand.

Juan.—Why?

Teresa (In a low voice).—He saw that letter—he thought it was for him.

Juan.—Then it was a trap!

Eugenio.—But it wasn't deadly and it should be. (*Raising*

himself.) I'm not so imbecile, so besotted, so ridiculous, that I wouldn't have come to understand it all sometime, and I understand it all now. And what are you going to do? (*Crosses his arms.*) Come—help me. What shall I do? Now I don't think—I don't feel—not even pain. I feel nothing but a desire to destroy everything, annihilate everything, at least to kill you, to kill everyone, if I believed that all the World was as vile as you two.

Teresa.—You're right, I won't defend myself. Indeed I almost want you to. I won't cry to make you pity me. I've cried much—many years—many nights—that you knew nothing of.

Eugenio.—For love?

Teresa.—No, for shame and for remorse. I know I've no right to say that—nor anything. You don't believe me—I'm not worthy of your belief. You cannot think of me except as the worst—the most abject, the most low—the most despicable.—Kill me, Eugenio, and when I come to my last breath, then I'll tell you the truth, then I'll beseech you to believe me, because then you can't think that it's because I want to save my life.

Eugenio (To JUAN).—And you—have you nothing like that to say? She knows—ah—indeed she knows how to defend herself without making any defence.

Teresa.—Eugenio—

Juan.—I can't say even that. I am waiting, and meanwhile I am silent.

Eugenio.—So I have to decide alone? But what? One does something when one desires something in life. But now—neither illusions, nor desires, nor hopes, nor duties—not even hatred. You don't even inspire me with hatred! An immense solitude, a terrible chill in the heart. I don't know—all is pale—wan—the color of death. I had great love for my Teresina—and I love her still. But she was a lie—she didn't exist—that's not Teresina. That handful of mud took her form and deceived me, made me believe it was she. Away—go—mud—to the gutter!

Teresa.—Wherever you want to throw me, there I'll fall.

Eugenio.—How humble, how humble they both are!

Teresa.—I ask nothing for myself—but think of the old man who has always been your Father.

Eugenio.—My poor Father.

Teresa.—Decide it as you will, we'll obey, but think of the honor and the name of the man who has called you his son.

Eugenio.—I don't wish scandal—I don't want to throw you into the market place. Where I placed my love, no one can place his contempt.

Teresa.—How generous you are, Eugenio—Oh, if I could only ask your forgiveness!

Eugenio.—Be silent—don't say that—it fills me with loathing, and I may repent. I'll pay my Father what I owe him. I know what gratitude and affection are—you haven't made me wholly vile. As for us (*Approaching JUAN.*) I must think what we shall do—what we ought to do.

Teresa.—Eugenio?

Eugenio.—Silence!

Juan.—I've said I would obey your orders.

Eugenio.—Yes, but no seconds, nor witnesses—all that's scandal in disguise, and besides I don't want to expose myself to your generosity. No—in silence—we two—so that you can't cherish any illusions of nobility.

Juan.—I've said that you are the one to decide.

Eugenio.—Not I. You haven't yet changed me into an assassin. You almost did—but I was able to control myself. Chance will decide which of us two must leave the path of the other forever. Chance—he whom she chooses will seek some accidental means. In this World many knots are untied by accident—how imprudent—he died!

Teresa.—Eugenio, I'm afraid—but I can't keep silent—

Eugenio.—If your life's not in danger, nor your honor, nor even the illusions of your father, what does all this matter to you?

Teresa.—Indeed I'm not able—if you only knew what I'm suffering.

Eugenio.—You've been able to do everything—you ought to be able to suffer everything. Silence! Silence! Now they are coming. We three must dissemble, no one shall know what's happening or what must happen.

Teresa.—I haven't the courage nor the strength—let me go.

Eugenio.—No. You had the courage and strength to deceive for seven years—keep it for one more day. As you said just now—for the sake of that father, at least for him—I'll do the same.

Teresa.—For God's sake!

Eugenio.—Sit here. (*Placing her on the sofa.*) You were ill before, say you're worse. (*To JUAN.*) You at her side, attentive, polite, and at ease. And I just a little apart—as

always—genial, talkative, happy, beaming upon the loving wife and loyal friend. Now they can come in—a charming family picture—but smile, smile you miserable creatures! (*He places himself behind the sofa, and violently pushes them together as he speaks the last words.*)

SCENE FOURTEEN

(*Teresa, Eugenio, Juan, Remedios and Don Hilarion.*)

Remedios.—Now we are really going. (*Sitting down by* TERESA.) Are you better?

Teresa.—No—I'm not well.

Remedios (To EUGENIO).—And you?

Eugenio.—I? I've recovered my equilibrium. There's nothing like having a strong will. I willed—and you see the result.

Remedios.—We've been playing with your little daughter.

Hilarion.—She's an amusing little creature.

Remedios.—She says such original things—my, how she answers Don Cosme! She was talking to him and her grandfather like a grown up person.

Teresa.—You will—excuse me just a moment. I'll go to see that sh 's put to bed.

Eugenio.—Not yet—let her come in. How cruel you are to the poor child—you'd think she wasn't your own child. (*Smiling.*) So kind to everyone else and so severe with Maria.

Remedios.—Eugenio's right—he's right in that.

Teresa.—But you see—children—

Eugenio.—Teresa's jealous—she thinks Maria loves me more than she does her.

Teresa (In a choking voice).—Eugenio—

Eugenio.—Before you came we were disputing about that very thing—isn't that true?

Teresa.—Yes, it's true.

Eugenio.—Juan and I made a bet.

Teresa.—A bet!

Eugenio.—I bet that Maria loves me more than she loves her mother, and Juan bet that she loves her mother more than she does me, and the stake was a present for Maria—and the present was a life—the life of San Lorenzo the Martyr. (*Laughing.*) A

delightful book that has just been published. The child will go crazy over it. It has illustrations in color. The saint's there and the gridiron and the tongues of flame and the toasting flesh. (*Laughing.*) Delicious!—Oh, delicious It seems as if the human race were broiling on that gridiron.

Teresa (Apart).—God! No more!

Remedios.—Well, my bet's with Juan, that is, I bet on Teresina.

Hilarion.—I'm betting on Eugenio.

Remedios.—Who is going to decide?

Eugenio.—The child herself.

Teresa.—No! (*Starting up violently.*)

Eugenio.—Yes, Maria—she—she's coming now with your father. Eh! With your father—and mine. (*Coming over to her and making her sit down.*) Quiet yourself—you're too nervous.

SCENE FIFTEEN

(*Teresa, Eugenio, Remedios, Don Hilarion, Cosme, Pablo and Maria.*)

Teresa.—For God's sake—take away the child. (*To her father.*)

Eugenio.—Oh, no! (*Going over to MARIA.*) Come here my child—unnatural mother—let her stay with me.

Remedios (To TERESA).—What's the matter with you?

Teresa.—Nothing—I spoke—because—it's bad that children—you know—to ask them whom they love most. It is cruel. It brings them up in the wrong way—this choosing—and you who are so kind—no—not yet, Eugenio.

Eugenio.—But you see it's a joke—I will never do it again—it's the last time. You agree? (*To JUAN.*)

Juan.—Teresa isn't well—let's leave the bet for another day.

Eugenio.—Ah, coward—you're afraid to lose! You'll pay your life—of San Lorenzo—Oh, I assure you that you'll pay if you lose.

Juan.—As you like.

Eugenio.—But if you lose you must pay.

Juan.—Eugenio—don't press so hard. My debts—which are great at times—I always pay.

Pablo.—You're talking Greek. What's all this about?

Eugenio.—Maria shall tell us—do you hear, my child—whom

do you love best, your mother or me? Now if you tell the truth we are going to give you a fine book of pictures, colored pictures, wonderful pictures!

Maria.—Pictures?

Eugenio.—Yes.

Maria.—How lovely!

Teresa (Making a supreme effort).—No—wait—I won't submit—indeed—no—I won't. It's not possible for her to decide impartially just now—poor little thing—the chances aren't the same—for both. I'm telling the truth even though it means so much to me. It's not possible now—to-morrow—Eugenio—to-morrow. Now—you see—just one night—one night which is soon over.

Eugenio.—Why? Tell me why? Surely—there is—there is—no foundation for what you are saying.

Pablo.—Let her explain. How intolerant you're getting to be! Freedom in the expression of thought, eh!

Teresa.—Listen to me all of you, and you'll say I'm right. A little while ago Maria quarrelled with her—with Eugenio—don't you remember? She came running to find me—to tell me that—Eugenio had hit her. It wasn't true—just the imagination of a child—but she's angry with him now—children remember—every one knows that. Right now—look, all of you, she's restless in Eugenio's arms. It's clear at this very moment she'd say she loves me more than him—and I don't want her to say it—that way—by surprise.

Remedios.—You're right.

Pablo.—That's so!

Hilarion.—I think so too.

Cosme.—Let Eugenio speak, answer them—their argument has weight.

Juan.—So much weight that the bet's impossible. It's not a bet—it's a sacrifice.

Eugenio.—Impossible? You say it's impossible?

Juan.—It's giving me the odds—I won't accept.

Eugenio.—You won't accept! I'd like to see you refuse! (*Containing himself.*) Wait! Listen to me! Maria's mother is the one who usually scolds her, that's certain. She's always with her—it's natural. So, under ordinary circumstances I'd have a great advantage. I've loved her dearly and—to tell the truth I know she loves me more than she loves her mother. But this affection—that she usually has—is balanced by the thing

Teresa's been talking about, and so, you see, the scales are even. Now we'll see—which weighs the more with an innocent child, her love or the anger of a moment.

Teresa.—With children it's always the last impression.

Eugenio.—But Maria is different.

Cosme.—The truth is the chances are about even.

Remedios.—The child will go to her mother.

Pablo.—She loves Eugenio more.

Eugenio.—We'll see. Let her go to her grandfather as a neutral point to start from—Go!

Maria (Very low).—You hurt me.

Eugenio (In a low hard voice).—Go! Obey!

Teresa.—Eugenio—

Juan.—See here—Eugenio—

Eugenio.—Be quiet all of you. You don't know me yet. I said be quiet.

Teresa.—The child's frightened even though you're joking. She won't go to you.

Eugenio.—Then I'll restore the balance. Maria—dear little child—no—I don't want anything bad to happen to you. I love you so much—we both love you so much—your mother and I. Go to her—or go to me—we won't be angry and we won't scold you about it afterward. God decides at times through the innocence of children.

Teresa.—No—even in fun—I can't bear to have such things talked of—stop, Eugenio!

Eugenio.—Come, come right away—with your mother or with me?

Maria.—Who shall I go to, Grandpa?

Pablo.—You choose—they both love you a great deal.

Maria.—But it's not for always?

Eugenio.—It's only in fun—just for this evening.

Teresa.—No—stop—

Eugenio.—Not a word!

Maria (Who starts toward her father—becomes frightened and runs to her mother's arms).—With Mama then.

Teresa (Embraces her, crying in silence).—Maria!

Eugenio.—I lost the bet. (*Every one gets up talking and laughing.*)

Juan.—No—it's not decided yet.

Maria.—I went to Mama to-night—to-morrow I'll go to you.

Eugenio.—Yes, little one—to-morrow belongs to me. Give

me a kiss. Take away the child, Teresa—she's nearly dead for sleep.

Teresa.—Come, Maria. (*In a low voice to EUGENIO.*) It's more than I can bear—I want to talk to you. I'll come back. Will you wait for me? I beseech you—with all my heart!

Eugenio.—I will wait for you here.

Teresa.—Good-bye, Remedios—I'm sorry—I feel so ill.

Remedios.—Take good care of yourself.

Teresa.—Good-bye, Don Cosme—good-bye, Don Hilarion. (*Giving them her hand.*) Let's go, Maria.

Cosme.—Her hand burns, she's feverish.

Hilarion.—I thought so too.

Eugenio.—The emotions of the day—but sleep—if it's long and deep—very long and very deep—heals everything. Not even a memory of the greatest agony—such peace—such rest!

Juan (To EUGENIO).—I want to talk to you—I won't leave. I must talk to you.

Eugenio.—Go out to the garden—as if you were leaving—wait out there and when everyone goes, come back—I'll wait for you here.

Juan.—You're not deceiving me?

Eugenio.—I don't deceive.

Juan (Raising his voice).—Good-bye, Eugenio—good-bye, Don Pablo. (*To the rest.*) I am going, good-night.

SCENE SIXTEEN

(*Remedios, Eugenio, Don Pablo, Don Cosme and Don Hilarion.*)

Cosme.—We'll go to Eugenio—our work is over.

Eugenio.—Don Cosme—my work—my work is done. Tomorrow I give your revenge. Not ten bull's eyes—twenty—in full! (*Strikes the box of pistols which lies on the table.*)

Pablo.—I wouldn't leave the pistols there. The child is awake early and plays about down here.

Eugenio.—That's true—how careless I am.

Remedios.—Good-bye, Eugenio.

Eugenio.—Wait a minute—I want to take you to your carriage myself in return for all the bad treatment you've had, but first I'm going to put those dangerous things away in my room.

Remedios.—Lock them up lest the Devil load them.

Eugenio.—And the Devil runs loose, as Don Cosme says, in search of souls and in search of lives—and life is very beautiful—very beautiful, and so, the Devil hungers for it. And I'm on the best of terms with life! (*Goes out to the right carrying the box.*)

SCENE SEVENTEEN

(*Remedios, Don Pablo, Don Cosme and Don Hilarion.*)

Remedios.—How cheerful Eugenio is—and think how he was! He's had his up's and down's to-day.

Pablo.—Above all how good he is.

Cosme.—He was ill to-day, he had fever.

Hilarion.—He's a child.

Pablo.—He's an angel. I love him more than if he were my own son.

Remedios.—Sadness is impossible with Eugenio.

Pablo.—In this house sadness is impossible. With my Teresina and my grandchild, and Eugenio, I defy all the sorrows imaginable.

(*A shot sounds.*)

Pablo.—What's that?

Remedios.—My God!

Hilarion.—Where was it?

Cosme.—In Eugenio's room.

SCENE EIGHTEEN

(*Remedios, Teresina, Eugenio, Juan, Don Hilarion, Pablo, Cosme, Eugenio later.*)

Teresa (*Coming in breathless at the right*).—Eugenio—Eugenio—where's Eugenio?

Juan (*Coming in from the park*).—What's happened—where is he? Where did he go?

Pablo.—There—he went in there.

Teresa (*Rushing towards the door*).—Eugenio—for God's sake—Eugenio!

Juan (*Rushing to the door*).—Quick! Eugenio!

Pablo.—My son—my son!

Eugenio (*Appears in a dying condition but still holding himself up*). (*To TERESINA*).—Ah, it's you. (*To the others*). And you.

Teresa.—What have you done?

Pablo.—What's the matter?

Juan.—Eugenio.

Remedios.—Eugenio—speak!

Teresa.—Blood! Blood! Blood!

Eugenio.—I'm dying—yes—I'm dying. (*They seat him.*)

Pablo.—Oh God!—my child!

Remedios.—How terrible—

Hilarion.—What a ghastly accident!

Pablo.—Oh, how terrible! How careless—

Eugenio.—Yes, careless. It isn't in the heart—but—very—close—no—it—was—in the heart. (*Looking at TERESA.*)

Pablo.—But we must get help! Quickly!

Juan.—Yes, quickly.

Teresa.—Eugenio, you can't die.

Eugenio.—I can't die—well, you'll see. And what's it matter. Listen Teresa. (*Holding her face between his hands.*) I loved you dearly—with all my heart—with all my soul—isn't that true? Tell me?

Teresa.—Yes—it's so—I feel it here. (*Pressing her hand to her heart.*) I know.

Eugenio (*Letting her go tenderly.*)—You know—(*To JUAN.*) Listen, I was always loyal to you? I want you to tell me—

Juan.—Always. Always—Eugenio—

Eugenio.—No—don't come near me. Father—I have loved you like a father? You believe me capable of sacrificing—every thing for you—joy, love, hate,—everything? Tell me, Father?

Pablo.—Ah, don't—indeed I know—but you're not going to die.

Eugenio.—Courage—Father. (*Holding him.*) Good-bye—I've done my duty to you all—I've loved you all—I've wronged no one—God help me—lest I look at these two in the pride of my righteousness. No—not that—but I did what I could—Eternal justice—now it all rests with you. (*Dies.*)

Teresa.—Eugenio! (*Seizing him.*)

Pablo.—My son!

Teresa.—Everything is ended!

Pablo.—Ah, we've lost him—we've lost him forever.

FINIS.

TWO ANCIENT FESTIVAL SUR- VIVALS IN "WORDS- WORTHSHIRE"

BY FRANCES TOBEY

I

THE GRASMERE RUSHBEARING

NEVER was quieter or more leisurely gathering for festive observance. We have spent a dreamy day in little Hawkeshead, having been assured by our Town-End hostess that the Rushbearing will not begin until the later afternoon. We have stopped at the chemist's in Ambleside, to buy a kodak, in case the sun smiles on the expected scene. We have had ample time for the refreshment that our hostess' good tea offers. And now we stroll over to the churchyard, coming occasionally upon a child with his "bearing" of flowers, or a mother pushing a garlanded baby cart. We overtake two little lads, who are easily persuaded to stop with their pretty burdens while we try the camera in the uncertain light—for the sun has already begun its course of waywardness which threatens disaster to August's wonted plenitude. And then we reach the churchyard.

The clock in the churchtower is reporting half-past four. The children are arriving quietly and taking their places just inside the low stone wall. Their bearings are ranged on or against the wall, for inspection by the company assembling in the narrow street. There is no noise or bustle, no confusion or haste, no appearance of excitement. The lads and lassies wear a sweetly grave manner and carry their fragrant offerings with an air of dignity rather than of self-consciousness. They are presenting them not lightly, but with due sense of their value.

The bearings multiply on the wall as family after family gathers. Very pretty are they in design and blending of color. There are crowns and stars and crosses of varied hues. There is a

harp of rushes and white waxen blossoms. There are two little effigies of the infant Moses, one in a flower bedecked basket, the other in a nest of real rushes. Beautiful in its simplicity is a great double crown of purple-pink heather, mounted on a staff. From the heather, white streamers hang, held by a rose-bud garden of little folk. Most conspicuous for uniqueness is a great coiling serpent of rushes held high on a rod. Two blooming infants in pale-green gowns and round bonnets sit on the wall, holding tiny baskets of blossoms in chubby hands. A baby in its carriage looks out from a bower of rushes and blossoms.

We move about in the street, with the other elders of the company, and enjoy the picture, framed by the loveliest of fellsides and softened under the grey sky. The crowd is not pressing; it seems more like a kind of family gathering of fathers and mothers and big sisters and uncles and aunts, than like a mixed assembly, a curious crowd with a mingling of impertinent tourists. We are selfishly glad that the average tourist has not time to linger in remote Grasmere, and that most of this quiet little company are real participants in the festival spirit.

From the rectory grounds opposite the church emerges a distinguished figure whose clerical garb is supplemented with gaiters. This is the Right Reverend, the Lord Bishop of Barrow-in-Furness, come to lend his patronage to the quaint old religious festival in this loveliest nook of his diocese. He joins some ladies by the wall and chats with them, then exchanges a word with some of the gratified little ones, admiring their bearings and bringing smiles to their faces. Another clerical figure that appears is less elegant and more sturdy—a figure equally well-known and honored in the valley. The Reverend Canon Rawnsley, of Carlisle Cathedral, Vicar of Crosthwaite, has come to preach the Rushbearing sermon. He is the staunchest friend that the Twentieth Century has left to Cumberland and Westmoreland. He it is who marks and guards the ancient landmarks and cherishes each memory of a great and wonderful past. We have read his reverent volumes; we have come upon his handiwork in many an unexpected place. We know that he is now making an appeal, even to American lovers of the English Lakeland, to help snatch from desecrating hands the beautiful meadows at the head of Windermere, the old Roman camp, still unexcavated. Of all present day dwellers in Lakeland, he, as the firmest link between present and past, is the one whom we should have chosen to see at the Rushbearing.

As the tower clock marks the hour of five, the Rushbearing procession forms for its progress through the village. The village band is in the lead, playing with vigor the old Rushbearing March—Jimmy Dawson's March, sacred to the occasion for long years past. Jimmy Dawson, ancient fiddler of the feast, no longer inspires the procession as of old, but his father's stirring melody still beats the rhythm of the day. Behind the band walk the clergy, Mr. Peterson, village rector, Canon Rawnsley and the Bishop; and then comes the banner of St. Oswald, that Christian King of Northumbria who is patron saint of Grasmere's old rough-raftered church. Six maidens, the oldest girls of the Grasmere schools, follow with the sheet of honor. This is a large single piece of linen, spun and woven in the dales, and be-decked to-day with stag-horn moss, from bogs high on the fells. The sheet is doubtless reminiscent of the time when the rushes were brought to the church in sheets. The bearers of the sheet show the only attempt at uniformity of dress that we see in the procession: they are all clad in green and white. Behind follow the children with their bearings and banners. We stand aside, and the pretty procession passes down the street and through the village.

A few minutes later they appear again. The march through the village cannot take long, at most. They enter the church, and we follow. The bearings are deposited at the altar, before the pulpit, against the walls, on ledges placed for them on the seats, everywhere that a resting place offers; the old church is on the instant transformed into a bower. It is as if the miracle of the blossoming rod were repeated on a mighty scale. In a few minutes everyone is seated, and the choral evensong service is begun.

We sit between the flowers and feel the peace of the house of God as a positive, pervading power, in the presence of these sincere, honest people of the dales. The service is the simple evening prayer; the only feature of the day distinctive in character being the hymns and the short sermon. The people all sing, in St. Oswald's; to-day the voices rise and swell in the stately simplicity of the old "Hymn for Saint Oswald:"

"As break of dawn on heathen gloom,
Thy saints, O Christ, like Oswald shine;
A living light that scorns the tomb,
And glows within a shrine.

“By him up-reared, the Cross far threw
 Its shadows on Northumbrian sod,
 A folk that only idols knew
 Stretched forth their hands to God.

“The battle’s din, the exile’s grief,
 Trained him to rule with righteous hand;
 His bounty fell with large relief,
 His learning taught the land.

“They won us peace, Thy Saints, O Lord,
 Even though, like Royal David, they
 Smiting and smitten with the sword,
 Toiled through their mortal day.

“Thou mak’st the wrath of man Thy praise;
 Like torrent down a mountain’s brow,
 That cleft its way in ancient days,
 And feeds the valleys now.

“To thee, we keep these festal hours,
 Green with the rush from vale and mere;
 Thy sun makes colour in our flowers,
 By Thee Thy Saints shine clear.”

“The Rushbearers’ Hymn,” too, written more than half a century ago, celebrates the origin of the day:

“Our fathers to the house of God,
 As yet a building rude,
 Bore offerings from the flowery sod,
 And fragrant rushes strewed.”

Canon Rawnsley speaks to us in utterances, brief and sincere, that sustain the impressions of the hour. His simple comment on the spirit and origin of the quaint old feast is wholly fitting. He reminds us of the days, not very remote, when the earth floor of St. Oswald’s still called for the annual renewing of the rushes which insured warmth and cleanliness during the long winter. Perhaps we owe the survival of the Grasmere Rushbearing, long after the ancient festival has been abandoned in almost every other parish of Medieval origin, to a kind fate which preserved

very late the primitive form of the old rafted church. For it was not until the year 1841 that the earthen floor was covered with flag-stones.

The Rushbearing, thinks the Canon, may have been a relic of the Roman Floralia. It is possible, of course, that some of the symbols that have persisted in the bearings, as the serpent, are of pagan origin, although most of them are clearly Christian. At any rate, the festival was very early a Christian ceremonial; its definite shape being determined by an immediate need in relation to the church of God. Probably men and women, the folk, were originally the bearers of the rushes; to-day, the active participants are the children. Traces of mystery-play influence linger in the symbols.

As the speaker recalls the rare souls who in days past have loved the Rushbearing, and reverently assumes their presence to-day, we give ourselves up to imaginings of the relation of the bard of the vale, truest interpreter of her folk, to the fifty repetitions of the pretty fete that marked the years of his residence in the dale country.

In the second volume of Hone's Table Book, may be found, under the date July 21, 1828, an interesting account of the Rushbearing. In the procession that year were De Quincy, Wordsworth, Mrs. Wordsworth and Dorothy. "Wordsworth," comments the writer, "is the chief supporter of these rustic ceremonies."

And yet, after the simple service is concluded, we pass out to the little group of graves above the Rotha to discover that it is not the mound beneath which sleeps the best friend of the dales that is marked with fresh evidence of the loyalty of the dalesmen. One grave indeed blooms with freshly cut daisies and roses: the children's poet receives to-day the offering of the children's love. "Lile Hartley," exquisite spirit faultily anchored, commanded the unstinted love of the dales-folk during his poignant, clouded life—"He would take the shirt from his back to give one in need, and not one of the people but would go down on his knees to him," says our hostess—and he is still a living personality to them. He said, "I would always connect the happiness of children with the place of the dead:" and to-day the happy children have sought out and buried in beauty the mound marked by its little cross of Wordsworth's choosing. But no one has thought to lay a flower on the mound near by, in recognition of the profounder love of a greater soul than Hartley Coleridge.

We are more grieved than surprised at this lapse of loyalty, for we have sadly divined it before to-day. Wordsworth, truest lover of the folk, was never popular with the folk, say their twentieth century descendants. He was hampered with a divinely brooding spirit, which, however far it may achieve universality in art, does not make for popularity. Our hostess has graciously condoned—it was perhaps “poetic reserve” that held him aloof. But she is firm on one ground: that of Hartley’s superior gifts; “Wordsworth owes much of his popularity to Hartley Coleridge,” she insists! In vain we remind her that when the *Lyrical Ballads* were published “Lile Hartley” was just beginning to blossom into that other worldly little being, that “Faery Voyager,” who became the delight of all the inmates of the big house on the Greta. The logic of chronology concerns her not at all.

We feel the absurdity of defending Wordsworth’s genius to Wordsworth’s people, and the discussion drops. But when we are told that the people have thought the bard selfish; that he and Dorothy “kept Mrs. Wordsworth in the back-ground,” left her at home, neglected, while indulging their love of wayfaring, we cannot but wince. Dear serene Mary Hutchinson, whom William and Dorothy brought over Kirkstone Pass to the little vine-embowered nest where they had spent so many sacred hours, none knows better than you how whole-hearted and complete was the intimacy of participation to which you were admitted, once and forever, on that September day, one hundred and ten years ago.

The Rushbearing is over. The bearings are left to adorn the church, softening the rude majesty and strength which is its charm. The children, who received each a shining penny, fresh from the mint, while they waited before the church with their bearings, now gather in the school, near by, as the rain begins to fall, and receive another accustomed treat of the day: for each child, two generous pieces of the famous Grasmere ginger-bread, the product of the Lych-gate house. We have already learned that Grasmere ginger-bread is not the ginger-bread that our American childhood has known; we made its acquaintance the other day in our pocket lunch which refreshed us as we climbed over Langdale, Easedale way; and we characterized it then as candied pie-crust. But young digestions are vigorous.

But more pleasures await the children. In olden days, wrestling and other sports followed the Rushbearing, and the evening was given up to dancing and merry-making. In recent

years, the festivities are resumed on the Monday following the service, when a tea is given for the children, on the school field.

Sunday morning is cold and rainy. The little gentleman from Surrey who is our vis-a-vis at the breakfast table tells us as he applies the inevitable mustard to his bacon and eggs, that a rainy day always promises a full church on an English Sunday. We who find this phenomenon a controversion of all our church-going traditions, ponder over its explanation as we straggle out in the rain. Arrived at the church, we find the phenomenon confirmed. The church is filled; and another St. Oswald service follows. The stately hymns are sung again. The sermon, preached by the Right Reverend, the Lord Bishop of Barrow-in-Furness, is graceful and facilely eloquent. We glow with the Bishop over the staunchness of that warrior king of Northumbria whose valiant struggle with heathendom is one of the glories of Northern tradition. But when he passes over the twelve hundred years, and, surveying the field of modern thought, fears for the safety of the ancient faith under the searchlight of the truth of modern science, we leave him entrenched on the prudent platform of his conservatism, and let our eyes and our minds roam about among the children's flowers and rushes and the tablets that commemorate a wealth of associations.

Here on one of the massive pillars is Woolner's medallion presentment of Wordsworth. Why did the sculptor choose to perpetuate that particular portrait, far from noblest in its revelation, of the many portraits extant?—we idly wonder. But we are grateful that Keble's beautiful words, translated from his dedication to the poet of his Oxford lectures on Poetry, were chosen for the tablet's inscription. We cannot read them now in the dim light, but we recall that Keble knew the poet as one who "whether he discoursed on man or nature, failed not to lift up the heart to holy things;" one who "was raised up to be a chief minister . . . of high and sacred truth." When a great soul finds recognition in a superlative tribute, words, which we bandy lightly in lesser service, are suddenly raised to a new high dignity, and acquire a magic—the magic of perfect and lovely fitness—whereby they bring a rush of tears to the eyes Back of us, on a pillar nearer the door, we know, is the delicately beautiful marble profile of Mrs. Fletcher, of Lancrigg, devoted friend of Wordsworth. Why did we not choose our seats to command a view of that lovely face, perpetuated for us by the artist son? At our right, in the chancel, we make

out a substantial looking marble tablet by Chantry, which we know is there to keep in our remembrance Edward Quillinan's Jemima, the young first wife who met a tragic death in her home, "By flames breathed on her from her own fireside." We cannot read the inscription at this distance, but an unhappy memory recalls to us the opening couplet:

"These vales were saddened with no common gloom,
When good Jemima perished in her bloom."

We try to remember that the lines improve toward the end, and that Edward Quillinan, "minor poet," atoned later, after Dora's death, by writing of Wordsworth and of Dora:

"Of him the tarns and meres are eloquent,
The running waters are his chroniclers,
The eternal mountains are his monuments,
A few frail hearts and one green mound are hers."

And our hearts soften toward him as we recall that a few weeks later when he lay dying at Loughrigg Holme, he could talk only, in his delirium, of Milton, of Shakespeare, and of his best-revered friend, Wordsworth. No, we will not entertain the notion which the couplet tempts one to play with, that Edward Quillinan, trusted of Wordsworth, loved of Dora, called his wife "my good woman!" But—is it not enough to be called "Jemima," without being committed to imperishable marble as "good" Jemima? We comfort ourselves with reflecting that the exigencies of euphony put "the good Dora" forever out of the question. And yet—how unevenly distributed are fortune's gifts!—"the lovely Dora" (what else?) and "the good Jemima" Why have we not eyes behind, that we may see if regal Saint Oswald in his painted window in the tower looks complaisant with the Bishop's anxious asseverations of the importance of bolstering up our orthodoxy? We recall how we pondered over the scenes below that royal figure, the other day, in a passion of desire to read in them some specific content of his life; and how our hopes were suddenly lifted high by the eager lighting up of the face of the grey-haired verger to whom we had turned with the question: "Do the little pictures below St. Oswald represent scenes in his history?" The old man left his work and came quite close, in ready response; and he said—"Yes, he was curate

in this parish for thirty-five years." The good man meant no disrespect to St. Oswaldus, King of Northumbria; he is quite deaf, and he had thought we were speaking of the dedication tablet below the warm little window . . . Shall we ever know the story of the little pictures?

The cessation of the Bishop's mellow speech brings us to present realities. The service closes, and we pass out among the graves into the rain.

The next day—St. Oswald's, August 5—is cold and sodden and sullenly dark. The children's tea is postponed. We drive to Coniston and enjoy Mr. Heaton Cooper's Lake District and Norwegian paintings, in his Norse studio. Tuesday morning is little more promising, but the tea provided for the children "will spoil," we are told, if kept any longer; so this afternoon will be the festive occasion. . . .

When we enter the school field, in the middle of the afternoon, we find the village band and a few warmly clad adults, but no children. Upon inquiry we learn that the children are now, having brought their bearings from the church in procession, at tea inside the school, safe out of the damp and cold. We are permitted to enter and enjoy the sight. The little folks are at long tables and are vying with one another in the consumption of tea, bread and butter, and cake. We hope the tea is of the variety known as "cambric," dedicated to juveniles.

The tea exhausted, the sports invite as the remaining attraction of the festival season. The children flock into the open, and make merry with swing and May-pole, while the village band gives impulse in stirring rhythms. There seems little organization of play. Now and then the rector and the master of the school (which is a church rather than a board school) direct some races, in a deliberate way that stirs no excitement. In one corner of the field, near the entrance, simple toys are displayed for sale by a group of young ladies. As I pay tuppenny for a pink aeroplane, I ask the object of the sale, and am informed that it is to raise money for the school, which has for more than two hundred years commanded the collections on Rushbearing Sunday. This year, part of the contribution goes to the National Society, for general educational ends, and as the Grasmere Schools are faced with the necessity of installing a new system of heating in their rooms, it is hoped to swell the contribution with the proceeds of the little sale of toys.

The sports continue in leisurely fashion through the bleak

afternoon. Interested adults come and go, a few at a time. The band remains faithful. The festival is closing, as it began, after the well-ordered English manner of conduct of life's affairs, without undue haste or flurry, and with the dignity that without detracting from life's color, adds immeasurably to its balance and proportion.

II

THE DERBY OF THE DALES

"Oh, it is always fine for the August Sports! we are assured when we dubiously buy our tickets. "The sun will shine on the twenty-second, if every other day of the season is gloomy."

If Grasmere has been wet, Keswick is dripping and Borrowdale drenched by the time we explore their unique charms. Skiddaw is wreathed in trailing lines of fog, and Buttermere's eastern confining wall looms spectral and mystic and undefined. The twenty-first of August finds us toiling over Kirkstone Pass in sheets of rain, testing our stout English water-proof boots by complying with the driver's humane request: "Do ye mind h'easin' the 'awsses a bit, ma'am?"

Small wonder that as we shiver over the newly laid fire in our Ambleside inn, we feel that if the morrow be fine indeed in Grasmere's sweet vale, the phenomenon will smack of the uncanny.

The morning presents no change in leaden skies. As we spin prosaically along in a motor-bus over the Grasmere road, to us the most exquisitely "conscious and aware" bit of highway in all the green little island, light showers dampen the spirits of the tourists whom we pass on the coaches—the same shivering, dismal looking crowds that we have seen carried through the district in dreary procession for weeks past. But the faces of the natives, in carriage or on foot, are serene and confident.

A Westmoreland Diana, superbly modeled on a heroic scale, sits beside me, soothing a beautiful shepherd dog who chafes on his leash, impatient of the motion and noise of his prison. As we near Rydal, the young goddess points out a pretty cottage at the left, a few rods below the coach road. "That is where the Woodrow Wilsons lived when they were with us," she said. "They are very fond of the place." And we know that she is conversant in a measure with American politics, and

divines that our scholarly compatriot may have acquired new interest in our eyes in the weeks just past.

A few minutes more, and we sweep into Grasmere village, to find its wonted dreaminess of aspect disturbed as we have never seen it before. The festival of the Rushbearing, three weeks ago, was a kind of family gathering, quiet and leisurely and uncrowded. The village people left their afternoon tasks and strolled to the church for a simple religious service with the children. This morning, all of Westmoreland and Cumberland are out, with their guests, in holiday humor.

Loaded coaches and automobiles crowd the narrow streets. We merge into the stream of pedestrians that is rounding Mr. Read's book-store corner, and, a little farther on, pass the sign of Mr. Chew, the butcher, the excellent quality of whose mutton we have often proved. We come to the town hall, where we have illuminated some rainy hours in company of a good collection of canvases by Lake artists, now on exhibition. And then we reach the field.

The other day when I asked the pretty daughter of our hostess if a cricket match, announced as between the Grasmere Club Members and a scratch Eleven of visitors, would be held in the town field, she assumed an air of mock horror. She said that the ground sacred to the Grasmere Sports might not be profaned by any light event.

We have paid, days ago, five shillings each for our seats in the big grandstand, and now we pay an extra shilling at the gate and pass in to find that we are commanding relative luxury. The large grandstand is under a canopy, and the tiers of steps which constitute its seats are clean and gay with new red carpet. And—miracle of miracles!—as we find our way to our places, the sun breaks gently forth and we turn to look upon the loveliest natural amphitheater we have ever seen, defined by an undulating mountain line and smiling in soft half-lights and shadows.

Inside this theater is a smaller stage of action, outlined by a fence, and more conspicuously, by a deep ring of spectators. Back of the crowds who sit and stand in this great ring, many other spectators are established for a leisurely day on coaches and in automobiles. Some of the private coaches carry great hampers of lunch for the mid-day refreshment. Everybody not so favored has a sandwich in his pocket, for the Grasmere Sports are not to be suspended from start to finish. The crowd is a

promiscuous one, this "Derby of the North" being supported by the gentry and by the folk. To-day is the great day of the year in the district. Ladies and gentlemen of elegance and fashion are here, eager and enthusiastic, and here, too, are their humbler brothers and sisters of the dales, with a sprinkling of tourists brought on coaches from hotels in neighboring villages.

The personnel of the Honorable Presidents of the Grasmere Sports is truly impressive. The Duke of Devonshire and the Earl of Lonsdale are most distinguished among them, but there is many an honorable name beside. We look for the line of yellow motor-cars in which the Earl of Lonsdale is wont to bring his guests to the sports, for we are told that his interest and patronage never wane. But to-day another recreation claims that noble sportsman. He is shooting, we learn, perhaps in Lancashire with His majesty King George, who has recently been a guest in the neighborhood.

At our left, on a huge bulletin over the band pavilion, some one reports the score from time to time, in characters that he who runs may read.

The Band of the Second Border Regiment, who are touring the district to encourage recruiting, have been engaged for an arduous day. They are committed to a pot-pourri program, varying from Ragtime to Wagner. They begin the morning with a spirited Grand March from Mancinelli's "Cleopatra."

Within the circle, a jocose little man ambles about on bow-legs, with a large bell in his hand. He is Dick Howe, a local celebrity who may be seen almost any day in the hamlets and country ways of West Cumberland, traveling in a light float, entertaining with funny tales the purchasers of his German yeast. Dick Howe has been bellman at the Grasmere Sports for a long succession of seasons. He opens the day with his summons, adorned with a stream of facetious comment. He is here once more, and he hopes it is going to be a fine day. He has had a "lile crack" with the clerk of the weather, who has promised him that it shall be fairly fine. Either the little man's stentorian tone or his Cumberland accent obscures his speech to our understanding, so that we miss most of his humor; but we accept him as a picturesque accessory to the scene.

In the field is a group of directors and patrons and umpires, closely watching two centers of activity. At the right, a little group of juveniles are engaged in a pretty leaping contest, the beautiful lithe bodies responding to their will in admirable

bouyancy and harmony. Near the center, the real and abiding interest of the day has begun. The old Cumberland and Westmoreland sport of wrestling is introduced early and continues throughout the day, with few intervals. Leaping and running and tugging may come and go, but wrestling, the traditional sport of the district, seems to go on forever.

We recall the memories of Christopher North at Elleray in those days of a hundred years ago, when the learned professor was famous in the district for his physical prowess no less than for his camaraderie. The more powerful of the dalesmen delighted in wrestling with him, and were sometimes worsted in the conflict. The traditions of the sport, very ancient, have persisted in the dales since Professor Wilson's day. And to-day is the occasion, established in unbroken line for more than half a century, for the supreme trial of strength and skill, in the great wrestling contest of the year. The struggle of the light weights comes first, and fifty-two brawny athletes of the dales,—pink and blue and yellow and green—and in some instances gaily embroidered—are alertly feeling for a favoring grip, or are locked like pairs of stags with necks out-thrust and heads stubbornly together.

We are wholly uninitiated; we know neither the rules, the tactics, nor the lingo. We can only wonder and endeavor to understand. The day is for us only another beautiful picture in the complex of associations, literary, historic, esthetic and human, by which the Lake District compels our hearts. We love the people of the dales for the sturdiness of their traditions, and for that Wordsworth loved them. We love them because they gave their hearts unstintedly to "Lile Hartley," when he needed affection, and are tender to his wistful memory. On Rushbearing day, we saw with misty eyes that the one grave in that sacred group above the River Rotha which was fresh-covered with the children's flowers was that lonely one marked by the little cross of Wordsworth's designing. Many and subtle are the ties that bind these dale folk to our hearts—to chronicle them would be to tell many "another story." And as we love them at their work and in their loyalties, so we love them in their play.

True, we have been forced this summer sadly to recognize a lapse in one loyalty due,—one we should have thought the most binding of all. These people are prone to deny their truest interpreter. We have been assured repeatedly this summer

that the people never liked Mr. Wordsworth: he was selfish and moody (our kind hostess tried to condone by attributing this social shortcoming to "poetic reserve") and he (abetted by Dorothy) imposed upon his wife! Dear gracious family of the plain living and high thinking, sleeping together in quiet dignity by your beloved Rotha, we forgive them, even as you would forgive.

But if we begin with reflected interests, to-day, we very soon feel a thrill of excitement growing out of the drama on the stage before us. Again and again some individual struggle quickens our veins and compels an unenlightened admiration. As the day advances and the fifty-two little wrestlers give place to ninety heavy-weights, and they in turn to ninety-seven middlers, we begin to feel a little dazzled by the mass of might represented in this country meet. The race shows no symptoms of physical degeneracy in the hill and dale country, at least. Now and then a new aspirant takes an old champion unaware and carries off maiden laurels. But perhaps the crowd is never more pleased than when an old-school fighter, a victor of many battles, fifty-two years of age and fifteen stone in weight, holds his own in the long heavy-weight contest and wins the belt in the final tussle.

The friendliest spirit governs the trial. The hand-clasp which follows each throw seems generously hearty on the part of vanquished as well as of victor.

Meantime, at one side, small groups achieve homage by manifestations of strength and skill in leaping, pole-vaulting, and tug-of-war.

And over all, and back of all, are the fells, smiling in softly radiant beauty. Never for a moment are they absent from our consciousness, with their jewels of tarn and beck and force. They are a conscious brooding spirit, dominating the scene and lending dignity and impersonality to the special fortunes of the day. We know their more intimate charms; to-day it suffices to feel the personality of their mass and contour as a rich, warm, subtly pervasive back-ground to the folk at their play. Yet now and again the truant imagination will take flight, and, transcending the century intervening, follow with their best lover the chain of terraces—Loughrigg, Lancrigg, Nab Scaur—whence he commanded his favorite perspectives on the scene stretched out before us.

Behind us, a humorous patron of the sports comments with genial irony on the underground telephone connection which

establishes communication to-day between the field and the bulletin score. "Venerated shades of the poets!" he exclaims. "A telephone at the Grasmere Sports! Where is the good Canon, the guardian of the sanctities of tradition, that such sacrilege is permitted in these sacred dales?" He is continuing his little thrust at Canon Rawnsley, Vicar of Crosthwaite, whom he terms an obstructionist, when his companion interrupts him to bring to his attention the broad flat clerical hat and the sturdy figure of the Canon himself, in the field. The Canon, patron of the arts, protector of the ancient landmarks, conservator of previous memories, is flat on the ground at the telephone, animatedly reporting progress to the man at the bulletin.

And the Border Band plays "Everybody's Doing It."

But greater excitement is yet to come. Before us and fifteen hundred feet above, on the sky-line of the nearest fell of the Fairfield group, a flag floats from a staff. The direct way to the goal is steep and rough and obstructed. We have reason to know that even deliberate climbing up that fellside conduces to weary limbs. And now the little bellman moves about the circle, ringing his bell, and calling together the twenty-one guides who are to race to that high goal and back.

The group is assembled and the signal given. Away on the wind fly the slender figures, out through the parted ring of spectators. They are lost from view in the trees bordering the winding Rothay.

In another minute they appear on the fellside, where they soon become moving specks on the landscape. Three specks are conspicuous, and become favorites—"fancied" by the crowd, as the next issue of the Westmoreland Gazette will say. The orange-and-black figure in the lead is followed close upon by a second, with the string of followers extending for fifty yards. Gradually number two drops back and interest centers in a white figure which is forging ahead. Orange-and-black, in the lead, is gaining more rapidly, however, and when he rounds the flag he has left the white figure a hundred yards behind. But now the white speck reaches the flag-staff, and, turning, startles us with the momentum of his descent. He seems not to touch the fell-side. He shoots over stone wall and from rock to rock as if driven from a catapult. When he disappears from sight he is close upon Orange-and-black. A tense moment follows, in which all eyes are fixed upon the gap in the ring. Then enters, panting and dripping, but buoyant and eager, the white figure, hardly

white now—a good thirty yards ahead. The time from the start has been sixteen minutes and twenty and two-fifths seconds.

But dramatic and picturesque as has been the guides' race, a prettier contest is to follow. Twenty-one eager fox-hounds, led in as the band strikes up "D'ye Ken John Peel?" are with difficulty being held by their proud owners. Trim and alert and a-quiver with expectation, they stand in tense line, awaiting their cue. It appears, in the shape of a man who drags on the ground the bag which by its scent has defined the fresh trail, a tortuous ten-mile way over the fells and crags leading from the valley to old Helvellyn.

The sight of the bag sets the hounds in a fever of excitement. The signal sounds, and they are off. We lose them from view, to find them again and again, now threading the bracken, now leaping a wall or a ghyll, until the trail leads them over Grisedale, way beyond our range of vision. In the circle, the wrestling is resumed, and we bring our eyes back from the horizon to the narrow stage of action, gay with the bright garb of the wrestlers. But in sympathy and imagination we are away and over the fells with the staunch little creatures of the chase. Are they encircling Grisedale Tarn, sleeping close under its rugged mountain walls? Will they turn the pass and look down upon fair Ullswater? If they are mounting higher still, is it over the rocky side of Seat Sandal, or by Dollywagon's zig-zag approach to Helvellyn? We give ourselves up to dreams of vistas of far peak and tarn and dale open to them—a fair panorama which lifts their hot chase to the plane of romance. When first one and then another keen eye discovers the returning line of dots, white among the distant bracken, a thrill of emotion stirs the crowd. Again we watch the trail until it finally disappears below the fellside. A moment, and a proud quivering leader dashes into the circle, thirty-seven minutes and forty-eight seconds from the time of starting, to be greeted with a storm of cheers. "Climber," of Bigrigg, has earned seven pounds for his master, but he attaches little importance to that. If his master has been made proud, his cup of delight is full.

The culmination of the sports is over. We, who have not left the field since our arrival at half-past ten in the morning, are amazed to find that it is nearing five o'clock. The victors gather for the prizes—two hundred and fifty pounds will be given—the band is playing "God save the King," and we turn from the field and press through the village in its unwonted crowd

for our last walk over the Ambleside road.

The sun, which has softly smiled at intervals all day, goes out with that effect of finality that we have learned to read in Westmoreland skies in a rainy season. We plod peacefully past Dove Cottage and past Nab Cottage, where lived the two lovers of the dales-folk, breathing a little silent farewell to the landmarks that have never failed in earlier walks to stimulate to elation of spirit. We are leaving the district to-morrow. The last impression of the folk has been a festive one. Coach after coach passes us, returning to its quiet village. As we leave Rydal's tiny street behind, the clouds thicken and the rain begins to fall. The Grasmere Sports wrought the miracle of sunshine—now we return to the uniformity of the grey setting of our fog.

THE WOODLANDS

BY JULIA WICKHAM GREENWOOD

Where woods have soothed with fingers green
 My aching eyes and flung a screen
 Of beauty and of dream between
 The world and me
 Oh, rest, oh, linger, heart of mine
 Within those depths of purity;
 There silences and shadows cling,
 Listen, oh, heart, keep listening,—
 Till silences and shadows sing.

Then spread thy wings, refreshed and find,
 Leaving no tender note behind,—
 Earth's far Savannahs, with the wind
 Race and be free;
 Singing that wood-song, heart of mine
 In other depths of purity!
 . . . I sail the seas without a chart
 The "wind's will" is my will in part,
 But the green woodlands keep my heart.

ÇA IRA SONNETS*

BY GIOSUE CARDUCCI

Translated from the Italian by Laura Fullerton Gilbert

LXXXII

Upon Burgundian hills a blithe sun gleams;
In valley Marne the grapes are harvesting;
Refreshed, the soil of Picardy now seems
To wait the plough, fertility to bring.

But, like an axe from which the red blood streams,
The small scythe cuts the grapes with angry swing.
By his neglected fields the ploughman dreams
With wandering eye, in the red evening.

Above the lowing oxen, like a lance
He brandishes the goad, then with a cry
The plough-handle he seizes: Forward, France!

The plough creaks in the furrow, harsh and dry;
Earth smokes: the air is darkened near and far
By mounting phantasms that seek for war.

LXXXIII

Azure, vermilion, white: Knights brave and leal
Are these the armed sons of a wearying earth,
Their country's common soil brought them to birth;
They climb the snow-clad peaks of the ideal.

Kleber, whose eyes the shaggy brows conceal,
A roaring lion in the foremost line;

*These sonnets are reprinted from the RIME NUOVE OF GIOSUE CARDUCCI translated by Laura Fullerton Gilbert.

Sublime thro' peril, Hoche, thou didst shine
A lightning flash, a flame faint hearts to steel.

Desaix, who duty chose himself, and gave
Others the glory; and that stormy wave
Murat, who, rising, broke upon a crown.

Marceau, who seven and twenty years of life
Gave, single-hearted, and in death lay down
As in the arms of a sweet-smiling wife.

LXXXIV

By the royal Tuileries of Katharine
Where Louis kneels, cajoled by priestly wiles;
And where the queen gives secrets, tears and smiles
To Breton lords, not counting it a sin;

Above the mist, warm, sultry, vespertine
With spindle twisting, turning, now appears
A spectral shape—unsmiling, without tears
Whose distaff seems the distant stars to win.

And spins and spins and spins. From night to morn
Beneath the stars, beneath the moon's pale face
The ancient beldame spins, and wearies never.

For Brunswick comes; before his troops is borne
The gallows; and to hang this rebel race
—These French—there must be rope to last forever!

LXXXV

The sky, it seems, rains messengers of ill.
In shameful quick surrender Longwy falls,
And huddled close within the Assembly's halls
The dusty fugitives await its will.

“Sparse-scattered were we on the ramparts, till
For each two guns we'd scarce one cannoneer;

Lavergne, the craven coward, had fled in fear:
 Could we do more our duty to fulfill?"

The Assembly, seated, answered "You could die."
 Then with strange tears for that most piteous sight,
 Their grey, scorched faces, they departed, sighing.

The hour of peril passes o'er the sky,
 Beats with its wing the bells in its swift flight,
 And "help, O France, help, help!" there comes a crying.

LXXXVI

Hear, citizens, O hear! Verdun the false
 Wide open to the foe her portal flings:
 With Uhlans her unworthy women waltz
 And court Artois, and flatter foreign kings.

Carousing, toasting, while the army halts,
 Light wines and fragrant flowers the city brings.
 Of vile cake-makers these the viler faults,
 And after shame it is not death that stings!

But Beaurepaire rejects dishonored life
 And flings the final challenge of his soul
 Before us, and the fates, and future years.

There gather ancient heroes of the strife
 And some as yet unborn to this their goal,
 And "help, O France!" Their cry the silence sears.

LXXXVII

Before the Hotel de Ville the black flag flies,
 And "Back!" it cries to love, and the sun's glory.
 Rumbling, from time to time admonitory
 The roll of cannon on the silence dies.

Like ancient statues, grouped in such a wise,
 The people seem: and as the hours race by

News-chased "That France may live, to-day we die,"
This their one thought, their willing sacrifice.

In line before Danton, enormous, pale,
File female furies, urging sons half-clad,
Unarmed, save for the weapon of their wrath.

Marat, the madman, sees as through a veil
Dark throngs of men with upraised daggers, mad
For blood—and quick it follows on their path.

LXXXVIII

Druidic, grim, a fearful apparition
Torments the ghosts of those who sleep below.
Around Avignon's papal towers, with passion
Wild whirlwind gusts of brutal fury blow.

O Albigenses, following your vision!
O Huguenots, whose noble wrath was slow!
Your blood inflames these hearts to their perdition,
Fermenting, boiling, till they overflow.

O monstrous court! O pain and sorrow! look!
The coming years are stained with their foul shade.
And can it be that thou art France, white lass,

Who, saving, expiating, with hand unshook
Above thy trembling father, unafraid,
Dost drink thy people's blood, from a full glass?

LXXXIX

The rivers ripple, and the soft wind blows
And murmurs to the mountain whence it came.
Here crash of steel, and fury all a-flame:
The Lamballe princess to the Abbey goes.

The waving golden hair around her flows
Upon the road where her bare body lies:

A vile perruquier extends, espies
The soft limbs which his bloody hands disclose.

How tender and how white she is—how fine!
Her neck a slim white lily, and between
Lilies, the red rose of her mouth's adorning.

Up, lovely eyes, the color of sea-shine,
Up, little curls, to the Temple! To the Queen!
From Death we'll take to her a fair good-morning.

XC

Ah, never king of France at his levée
Had such a greeting to disperse his dreams!
The gloomy tower in the tumult seems
Like some fell night-bird startled at mid-day.

Here in the old days fell to strip and flay
The impious arm of Philip, once "Le Bel,"
And here today belated judgment fell
From the last Templar on the last Capet.

Upon a lifted spear, now waving high
A proud head nods, and at the window beats:
Behold! behold! Shrieks that foul retinue.

The king looks down on them as they pass by
In howling mobs, and pardon from Heaven entreats
For that dread night of St. Bartholomew.

XCI

War-horses stamp above his sleeping head;
Have they awakened Bayard in his grave?
Does Joan the Maid her virgin standard wave
Above the Orleans vales to rouse her dead?

From upper Saone, from windy Gard besped
Who come, with song, the Argonne pass to seize

—So ill-entrenched with cross-barred trunks of trees—
Are they red Gauls, by Vercingetorix led?

No: Condé's genius wakens in the heart
Of him who was Dumouriez, the spy.
And with one burning flash of his quick eye

He points upon the military chart
To a range of hills, and cries "Let them advance!
Behold the new Thermopylae of France!"

XCII

Above the Argonne, in mists of falling rain
A listless morning rises o'er the hill.
The limp tri-color, wet above the mill
Of Valmy, calls to sun and wind in vain.

Stay, miller, stay: to-day instead of grain
Fate grinds the issue for the coming years.
The ragged army turns with blood and tears
The wheel—and ever shall it bear the stain.

The epic columns of the sans-culottes
Close in, as Kellermann waves high his sword,
"Long live our country," loud the cry they raise.

Above the forest, between cannon shots
Archangel of the coming age, is heard
The all-inspiring, goading Marseillaise.

XCIII

Now march, O ye illustrious sons of France
With mingled song and cannon thunderings.
The day of glory spreads vermilion wings
And bright they shine today at Valor's dance.

Encumbered with confusion and mischance
The King of Prussia finds each homeward mile,

And cholera, cold, and hunger,—exiles vile—
Are waiting for the fleeing emigrants.

Red-glowing, livid, on the marshy fen
The sunset flashes, and with transient glory
The sun's last tender smiles the hills imbue.

And from a little group of unknown men
Comes Wolfgang Goethe, saying "The world's story
At this place, and to-day, begins anew."

NOTES TO THE ÇA IRA SONNETS

"It was while reading Carlyle's French Revolution," says Carducci, "that the idea of the Çà Ira sonnet sequence leaped into my mind." He adds, however, that he drew the material for the work largely from Blanc's and Michelet's histories of the Revolution.

The title of the poem is from the song Çà Ira, composed in 1790 by a street singer, later claimed and sung by the Liberals as the expression of themselves and their desires. "Çà Ira," says Carducci, "is for me but the historic word of an historic moment. That which the people of France promised themselves *should be*, became a fact in the September of 1792." And again, "When I think that to the chanting of this verse (*La liberté triomphera*) were destroyed the infamous names of conquest, of usurpation, of sacrilegious fraud, I, who have among my ancestors those who fought the French Republicans in the battles of Carrara, of Montignoso, and of Camajore; I, whose grandfather lost what little he had through the cursed Jacobins, surprise myself by singing loudly

'Ah, ça ira, ira, ira'

And woe to us, if they had not triumphed. The French of the Republic and Empire restored to us our conscience * * * They brushed off the dust of antechambers, and the mould and must of the sacristy. They armed us, disciplined us, and with many kicks behind, if you will, and thumps before, they spurred us on to look in the face and to attack our old-time masters, the Germans and Spaniards. They robbed us of all they wanted

* * * but they left us the example of a wise administration." Thus these poems of the triumphant liberty of France exalt indirectly the beneficent effects that it had on Italy, to which effects he alludes directly at the close of the last sonnet with the famous words of Goethe, after the battle of Valmy.

The action of the poems covers the period from the end of August to the end of September, 1792.

LXXXII

The French provinces designated are those upon the frontier, where the invader was naturally more to be feared.

LXXXIII

Jean-Baptiste Kleber rose quickly to first honors in the French army, contributing to the French victories on the Rhine, etc. His portraits show a leonine countenance.

Louis Desaix, division general at twenty-six years, fought admirably upon the Rhine and in Egypt, perishing at Marengo.

Joachim Murat, fought for new France, then under Napoleon, whose sister he married, and who made him King of Naples. In defense of his claim to the crown of Naples he was shot at the Castle of Pizzo.

Francesco Marceau, general of an army at twenty-four years, died gloriously and happily on the field of battle at Altenkirchen.

LXXXIV

The palace of the Tuileries was begun in 1564 under Catherine de Medici.

It is a popular tradition that an ancient woman sits and spins before the Tuileries, before any great event takes place.

LXXXV

Louis de Lavergne was tried by court-martial after the defense of Longwy, and guillotined.

LXXXVI

Verdun opened her gates to the enemy on the 2nd of September. The Count D'Artois was the brother of Louis XVI: then in the Prussian camp with emigrated nobles, in arms.

The confectioners of Verdun are famous.

Nicolas Beaurepaire, who commanded the garrison at Verdun, killed himself from shame at its surrender at twenty-five years of age.

LXXXVII

The black flag proclaims that the country is in peril.

It is said that finding himself surrounded by some women, anguished and infuriated by so much sacrifice, Danton controlled them, first by insolence, then by moving them to tears, by raising their souls above their personal sorrows, to consider the fate of their country.

Marat, fervent to madness, killed by Charlotte Corday.

LXXXVIII

Druids—those who made human sacrifices.

In September, 1791, Avignon, which for centuries had belonged to the Papacy, was re-united with France, not without incredible horror and strife.

The reference in the last six lines is to the heroic Mlle. de Sombreuil, daughter of an old general, who drank a glass of human blood to save the life of her father, condemned to death.

LXXXIX

The Princess of Lamballe, killed September 3, 1792. She was asked to swear love for Liberty and Equality and complied. She was asked to swear hatred to the king and queen, but preferred to die.

XC

The Temple, where Louis XVI was imprisoned was given by Louis VII to the Templars in the XII century, and was for a long time the head-quarters of the Templars in Europe.

Philip Le Bel, King of France, cruelly persecuted the Templars.

The persecution of the Huguenots began on the night of St. Bartholomew, 1572.

XCI

Bayard, Chevalier "*Sans peur et sans reproche.*"

"Windy Gard," because of the prevailing mistral winds.

"Ill-entrenched." This was the sort of barricade used by the Gauls, in the war with Julius Cæsar.

Dumouriez, the French general, who showed himself worthy of the military genius of the great Condé. "This Dumouriez, with a diploma for espionage, was taken and adopted by the Revolution, which raised him high, saying 'Be my sword'" (Michelet). Dumouriez wrote to Paris that the Argonne should be the Thermopylæ of France, but that he would be more fortunate than Leonidas.

XCII

Of Kellerman, Michelet writes: "He was not then the brave but mediocre general as heretofore—for this day he was a hero."

Sansculottes—the title first contemptuous, then encomiastic, of the citizen soldiers of the Revolution.

(These notes are principally drawn from the Carduccian Anthology of Mazzoni e Picciola.)

THE CITY MARKET PLACE

BY EDNA WAHLERT McCOURT

Children of the desert,
From chimerical oases
Of trim park and proper flower box—
Children of kind jails
That bar God's vistas with brick mountains,
Drown His peace in seas of iron tumult,
To the Market Place!

Odor of the earth
Is on farmers come to offer produce
Royally garbed in soil with crowns of green.
Feel and taste the stuff!
Hear barnyard drama—drone of bees—
See sylvan reaches yearned for—and the sky!—
In the Market Place.

Greedy folk come there;
Past peasants wistfully rememb'ring—
Mothers aching to fill little mouths—
A few old-fashioned house-wives—
Grasping grocery-men, keen-eyed—
And little children—flower girls and newsboys—
Fill the Market Place.

Shadow-chasing children,
When, as the shower seeks the seed,
You win your way with frequent wavering—
Phantom-followers,
You will nowhere find more Truth
With which to grace the gossamer gown of your goal
Than in the Market Place.

Beyond the stir and smell
You can find loyal life, real men,

THE DRAB LITTLE LADY

By HYDE BUXTON MERRICK

There is an old lady, quiet and gray,
Clad in drab calico, rocking away,
Who sits inside of me!

With needle and thread as she rocks to and fro,
Her greatest delight is to silently sew
On the patchy quilt of me!

Triangles, oblongs, yellows and reds,
Rosettes snowy white, with pink at the edge,
She fits in the quilt of me.

Astonishing polygons, every queer hue
She puts in worn places to make them all new,
To make a new quilt of me!

So patient and tireless, day after day,
Sitting and patching, I can oft' hear her say:
"Here's a new quilt of thee!"

But cutting she does with her shears, silver-bright.
She stops in her rocking and flashes their light
Down through the quilt of me!

Taking the orange and purple and green
Away on the blade, for they shouldn't be seen—
Patches I made for me!

So this little lady, quiet and gray,
Sits endlessly matching and patching away,
On the crumpled quilt of me!

HEAVEN'S BLUE

(*Himlens Blå*)

BY VICTOR RYDBERG
(1895)

Translated from the Swedish by Ernest W. Nelson

Wonderful
Unfathomed clearness,
O Heavenly azure,
That, smiling,
Descends to me,
Lifting my soul
To cool spaces
And holy serenity!
Enchanting Nirvana,
Where, bathed in purity,
I exhale myself
In the infinite,
And reborn
In the next breath,
Baptized in longing,
Sink back
To the dust of Earth.

THE SONG OF THE BLOWING WIND

BY ANATOLE LE BRAZ

Translated from the French by Elizabeth S. Dickerman

The blowing wind was at my door.
Like wandering spirits weeping sore,
It moaned "Come, open in God's name!
I see within the fire's warm flame.
Just for a little warmth I came."

I called Annik, my little maid.
"Go, open to the wind," I said.
In came the swift wind blowing free,
By the warm hearth he came to me
And sighed so very peacefully.

With quick leaps like a playful hound,
The flame leaped up and danced around.
"Welcome" it called in accents kind,
(A winter fire can speak its mind)
Glad welcome to the poor sea wind."

Answered the wind from his warm seat
With his shrill whistle clear and sweet;
"Tongue of the fire, to all men dear,
Come lick my hands and warm me here,
The wanderer from the highway drear."

Clearer the living flame arose
And gently warmed the wind that blows,
The wind that wanders everywhere,
Coming and going here and there,
Thin and transparent like the air.

SONG OF THE BLOWING WIND

He told me all his history,
His days of pain, his misery.
No mother's love the wild wind knows,
Nor where his wandering spirit rose
Nor whence he came nor where he goes.

His soul he cannot understand.
In countless forms, in every land,
It sounds o'er valley, hill and plain,—
The spring song of the growing grain,
The loud call of the roaring main.

He sows the seed our harvest gave;
He rides the crest of every wave;
He shouts, he sings where'er he rove,—
Blind, deaf, in earth or heaven above,
The servant both of Death and Love.

TO YOUTH

(After de Banville)

BY ALBERT E. TROMBLY

Laddie without melancholy,
Blonde as Roman suns and jolly,
Treasure up your pretty folly.

That is wisdom! Cherish wine,
Beauty, and the spring divine.
That's enough; the rest resign.

Smile, though darkling clouds amass,
And when spring brings back the grass,
Heap up flowers in your glass.

To the limbs returned to clay,
What remains? except that they
Loved a month or two of May.

"Try to know effects and causes,"
Says the dreamer as he dozes.
Idle words! Let's cull the roses!

REMEMBERING

BY LOUISE MORGAN SILL

When Spring came down the lane that year,
That sorrowing year,
I saw her in a sombre mist—
She whom the sun had newly kissed—
As through a cloudy tear.

I sighed and bent my drooping head,
My weary head,
And must it be like this? I cried,
Oh, better sooner to have died
Than be, though living, dead!

But as I looked upon her face,
Her heaven-born face,
And saw the blossoms' snowy blur
Against the roseate glow of her,
I yielded to that grace—

And I forgot the wound of pain,
Of cruel pain,
Remembering, come joy or woe,
That winter dies, and blossoms blow,
And Peace comes back again.

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By JAROSLAV HILBERT

The Paolo and Francesca Theme in Modern Drama
By GERTRUDE GARDNER BRAINERD

The Happy Prince, A Play in One Act
By OSCAR WILDE

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By GEORGE NORLIN

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By PAUL H. GRUMMANN

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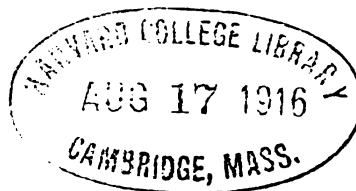
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VOLUME XXVII

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WHOM THE GODS DESTROY*

A ONE ACT DRAMA OF THE WAR OF 1866

BY JAROSLAV HILBERT

Prefaced and Translated from the Bohemian by Charles Recht

“The Knights are dust,
Their swords are rust
Their souls are with their Gods we trust.”

PREFACE

The incident of this so-called comedy dates from the year 1866 but the similarity to events of our day makes the sketch so timely that with but a change of names and location this terrible farce on patriotic heroism could have been played near the San River or in the environs of Ypres in the year 1915.

It happened in 1866 when Bismarck drove home his *coup d'état* by ending forever Austrian interference in German affairs. In April of that year, he entered into an alliance with Italy against Austria. Events moved rapidly after its completion. This alliance was officially to be secret but soon became known abroad. Austria for its protection began mobilization on its Venetian border. Bismarck immediately accused her of insincerity and on June 7, the Prussian army marched into Holstein, then the bone of contention. General mobilization was ordered on June 14 and

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on June 15, Prussia declared war against Hanover, Saxony, Bavaria, and Austria. On June 27 the Prussians defeated the Hanoverians. On June 24 Austria dealt a severe defeat to the Italians at Custozza. This play however concerns itself with the main events of this war which took place in Bohemia. The Austrian army was commanded by Gen. Ludwig von Benedek and at the outbreak of the war he was stationed in Moravia at Olmütz. The Austrians numbered 240,000 men. The invading Prussian army of 310,000 was commanded by its chief of staff, Gen. von Moltke, but the Crown Prince, and King William himself led the troops. It consisted of three army corps; the first marched into Moravia, the second into the westerly part of Bohemia, and the third corps into Bohemia by way of Trautenau and Nachod. Benedek spread his army to meet the invaders.

At this point it is pertinent to note the position of the Czechs. They had just formed the society of the Sokols (falcon) the national guard of Bohemia and they were rejoicing at their Renaissance. Mindful of the great victories of their forbears, the Hussites over the Germans, the Sokols were anxious to help in the repulse of their ancient enemies the Prussians. They sent a petition to Vienna for permission to fortify the narrow mountain passes. The gentlemen of the Ballplatz at Vienna (as the foreign office was then called) scorned this offer. The Prime Minister told the Bohemian delegates that the conflict was a war of Germans against Germans. University students were told that they had better join the regular army as volunteers. Prince Metternich wrote that the Prussian would be driven out of Austria, "mit einem nassen Fetzen" (with a wet rag). He informed the Embassy in Paris that he was very much occupied in composing a triumphal march for the entry of the Austrian troops into Berlin.

The action in this play relates to the Austrian army sent to oppose the Prussians around Trautenau. While Benedek had not met the main army of the Prussians as yet, his losses in trying to check the advance of the three corps were so heavy that he telegraphed to Vienna to the Emperor advising peace at any price. The official communications are as follows:

Benedek to the Emperor: "I earnestly entreat Your Majesty to conclude peace at any price. A catastrophe to the army is inevitable. Major General Beck is returned immediately."

Answered by official telegram No 3022, June 30, at 2:10 p. m.

"It is impossible to conclude peace. Has there been a battle? I order that in case nothing else is left you commence a retreat in the best possible order."

Under such pressure Benedek rallied his army around Jicin, Horitz, Königgrätz, and Sadowa. There on July 2nd he gave desperate battle to the Prussians. This is known as the battle of Königgrätz by the Austrians and Germans, and by the French and English as the battle of Sadowa. It meant a complete defeat of the Austrians and an end of the Austro-Prussian war.

Perhaps the best brief graphic account of the prevailing critical condition of the European imbroglio may be gathered from the correspondence of the contemporary historian John Motley, then American Ambassador to Vienna.

In a letter dated April 23, he writes from Vienna to his daughter Lily:

"P. S. April 24, (to quote from his letter) "Prussia has replied. The note was given in yesterday at 2 p. m. Prussia will disarm in principle *au fur et a mesure* as Austria disarms.

"Now will come a puzzling problem in Rule of Three, Query: Austria not having armed at all, how much disarming will be required of Prussia to equal the promised disarming of Austria?"*

"The boy who answers that deserves to have a double headed eagle of the first class tied around his neck and I wish that he may get it.

"I have been ponderously chaffing on this subject, my dear child, because I have been boring myself, and the United States State Department with dreary despatches on this dreary Schleswig Holsteinismus once a week this three months: and really I have not put down in the foregoing pages all that I know or anybody knows on the subject. I have felt all along that there would be war, I still feel so. Everybody else says there will be peace. Nobody doubts that Prussia will get the duchies, however. To resume the

*That the Austrian army was unprepared for a war at this time was well-known to everyone and that the accusation of her mobilizing was false was an open secret. Count Mensdorff then Minister of Foreign Affairs published his memoirs in the Neues Wiener Uageblat in 1872 and mentioned there that he personally urged the Emperor to grant all the demands of Prussia and to cede Venice to Italy because the Austrian army was in such a position then that it was not "Schlagfertig"

case between Austria and Prussia, however, in single phrase, 'they won't fight, and they won't make up, and they keep nagging.'"

The entire correspondence of Motley is so fascinating that one is at a loss in the choice of quotations. On July 3, 1866, he explains in his letter to Lily:

"You are to remember that Benedek was a good corps commander in Italy. Whether he can handle 200,000 men as well as he did 40,000 there is the whole question, we used to hear occasionally in America. At first sight it looks as if he had been outgeneraled. The Prussians have been as nimble as cats. They have occupied Saxony, Electoral Hesse, Hanover, whisked three potentates off their thrones, neutralized at least 50,000 'Deutsche Krieger' of the B. O. B. (Blessed Old Bund for convenience sake, I will henceforth denominate the Germanic Confederation) and are now in position on the heights of Northern Bohemia."

In this letter Motley makes the prophecy that Benedek will be defeated and he adds a postscript on the following day "When these humble lines reach you, you will already know the details of yesterday's great battle. Yet I know absolutely nothing at this moment, save a telegram published this morning from headquarters in an extra, 'Wiener Zeitung' and dated 10:50 p. m., 3rd of July, that the Austrian army after having had the advantage up to 2 p. m. was outflanked and forced back and that the headquarters are now at Swiniarek, on the turnpike to Hohenbruck. If you will look on the map you will see that this means I fear, that the Austrian army has retreated across the Elbe and given up its whole position."

Dr. Servac Heller in describing the incident which forms the subject matter of this drama in his instructive book "War of 1866 in Bohemia, its origin, events and consequences," published in Prague 1895 recites as follows:

"Steinmetz (Prussian General) did not want to commence an attack on Skalitz until the promised reinforcements of the German Crown Prince's Guards would arrive. But when it became apparent that the Crown Prince's army would not come on time, he changed his mind and ordered an attack with whatever forces he had on hand, and this is just about the same time that Benedek ordered the corps which he had stationed at Skalitz to retreat. Archduke Leopold (Austrian) stationed his divisions about Skalitz in such a way that Frang-

ners brigade, was on the left near the north side of the township, Kryessnern formed the centre, which was thrown about the south side of the city back of the railroad depot and Gen. Schulz to the south formed the left wing of the Archduke's division. To the right and left of the depot was the artillery reserve ready to sweep with fire the heights and groves opposite."

The plot of this play is an incident of the battle of Skalitz. On the evening of the 28th of June a corps of the Austrian army consisting of the 21st, 24th, 77th, and 31st regiments of infantry, the 3rd regiment of Uhlans and several others met the enemy at Skalitz. They were defeated and retreated to Schweinschadel under the protection of the batteries of Gen Rosenzweig. The Prussians followed them and at that point inflicted another defeat. The action takes place on the evening of the 28th of June after the battle of Skalitz and before the dawn of the 29th, on which occurred the defeat of Schweinschadel.

The impression which the defeat at Königgratz left in the popular mind of the newly awakened nation was quite lasting. The Czechs who were defending their own land against their racial enemy fought bravely and desperately, but the proverbial bad leadership of the Austrian Generals made their cause a hopeless one. Many popular songs commemorated the bitter struggle. The following was one of the most popular.

At the battle of Kralove Hradec (Königgrätz)
 The shells were flying hot and heavy
 And still at his cannon he stood
 And kept on loading, loading, loading
 And kept on loading
 A sharp shell burst right near him
 And cut his right arm from his body
 And with his left he kept the cannon
 Loading—and kept on still loading, loading. . . .

The song which the fife and drum band of the approaching enemy played was then the martial strain of the Prussian army. Even this was converted into the popular song played to the words "When to us come the Prussians a-marching."

The author of the play is a comparatively young man and his literary efforts have not achieved in Bohemia such a success that he would be likely to receive notice in foreign countries.

This, the lack of wide recognition of Hilbert's works is due to his style and the choice of his subjects. In his plays he introduces an innovation, which departs from the cardinal rules of the drama, but his treatment of the innovation is not sufficiently consistent and strong. In describing the action of a character, he goes into the psychological cause of the action so that his play becomes not only dramatic, but a psychological study as well. Again in describing silences or lack of reply of a person or persons, he mentions the reasons for such silences. Essentially a prose writer, Hilbert was somewhat carried away by his two stage success "Blame" (Vina) produced at the National Theatre in 1896, and the other, "For God's Sake" (O Boha) in 1898. Criticism of the last play was so severe and gave rise to such extended comment by the press and the critics that the author was obliged to change it somewhat and later published it under a different title, "The Fist" (Pest). In 1903 Hilbert published two plays, the first a one-act, called "Baited Ones," is a very poor production in dialogue, plot and construction. The second, however "Falkenstein" published in 1903, a historical drama, is his best-known work and has achieved some success. Falkenstein is considered by most of the Bohemian critics (notably by Prof. Arne Novak) as the representative play of Hilbert. "The Comedy of 1866," was written in 1909 and produced that year in Prague.

In spite of all the light shed by the great humanitarians such as Zola and Tolstoy on the subject of modern warfare the popular demand for heroism is as great as in mediæval times. We read of iron crosses, Decorations of the Legion of Honor and all the inducements offered to those who braved death or plentifully inflicted it upon their fellowmen.

(With no desire to minimize the horrifying misfortunes of the Moloch of Annihilation, the following is offered as an illustration of military heroism). Much more than physical destruction matters the lasting and pernicious result of the war which stamps religion a lie, calls art a fraud, and scatters to the winds the established facts of social science.

Ours are the days when to hold aloof from the hue and cry of the maddening crowds is an angelic virtue. No one ever realized how potent and all absorbing was the mob spirit dormant even in the minds of those who condemned it. The author of

*Jean Christophe** and the poet of the *Sunken Bell*, Haeckel, the noblest exponent of Darwinism, the great philosopher of *Chantecler* all join in the general chorus of hatred, curses and justification of the present war.

A fair illustration may be gathered from the introduction to a work of science published in America;

“At the present time it would be asking too much of my audience to accept as a scientific truth doctrines which have had their birth in Austria and Germany, where truth appears to be monopolized by professors and divines for academic purposes only of outrage and destruction of civilization and all that civilization means, were it not that I can give assurance that those doctrines have been tested and accepted, by earnest workers and profound thinkers in Switzerland, America and Great Britain. As a matter of fact Freud has no German blood in him, but is a pure Jew, and, after all Science knows no nationality, and the account I present to you is a compromise between and combination of the opinions of many great men.” W. H. B. Stoddart, *The New Psychiatry*.

But even the religious popular sentiment has undergone such total demoralization that to minds who still cling to vestiges of old morale, the startling phenomena of today offer but a little hope for a better tomorrow. The Jack Cade code of Rev. Billy Sunday the “Gott mit uns” motto of the German army, are ample proofs of it. A shell crashes into a church, tears up and demolishes the handiwork of ages, swerves from its course and falls into a group of soldiers. Twenty innocent men fall dead but a miracle is declared because it swerved from the stone image of a saint. Man who is Nature’s noblest and greatest creation is valued less than the clumsy handiwork of a crude village craftsman. The foundations on which rested the superstructures of our moral institutions have been rudely shaken. Were it not improvident to use the German word, the “*Lebenslust*” has gone out of the world, and the reminiscent mind finds no consolation anywhere. Reminiscent? Yes; of Robert Burns’ fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man. The equality of Karl Marx and the

*Not until May 1916 and long after this manuscript went to press, did we learn that the early reports of the war about M. Romaine Rolland were false. Not only did he not participate in the general chorus of songs of hate, on the contrary because of his clear vision and deep sympathy with all humanity, he found his stay in France impossible. He is now engaged in the International Bureau for the Assistance of War Prisoners of all Nations in Switzerland.

thousand and one dreams woven by the spinners of fiction born out of a mind which knows no evil and a heart that is overflowing with love of one's neighbor. Today the lyres are mute, the jester's bells ring out of tune and the shriek of a bullet roars with derision at a mother's lullaby. To the few to whom it was not given to conceive hate in order to justify murder, who insist on withholding judgment, this is a soul-trying epoch indeed. It seems at times futile to build, to weave, and create what in a moment of fury, an insensible mob will destroy. But the passion for the betterment of the world is a part of our existence and on board of a torpedoed ship, we dream and plan the great dream-world to-be and the equality, love and citizenship of all who shall inhabit it.

CHARACTERS OF THE PLAY

EBNER, *lieutenant of the 21st regiment of Baron Reichach.*

VONKA, *soldier of the same regiment.*

VICHODIL, *soldier of the 5th Jägers.*

HAVLIN, *soldier of the 4th of Count Grenville.*

KOVAR, *soldier of the battery of Brigadier Frangner.*

SPRAVIL, *Uhlán of the 3rd of Archduke Charles.*

KLOC, *soldier of the 4th of Baron Degenfeld.*

LEVINSKY, *soldier of the 77th of Archduke Charles Ludwig.*

SOUKUP, *soldier of the 24th Jägers.*

SVACHA } *University students, volunteers of 31st Jägers.*
SUK, }

ANNA PETROVA, *woman of the village, wife of the signal man of the railroad.*

A SOLDIER.

A country church-yard. In its depth is a weed covered wall, about a man's height. It winds to the right toward the spectator then there is a gate. From the gate a short path in the grass to the door of a little church which is on the left of the scene. The graves are ill-kept but covered with wild blossoming flowers. Near this wall bushes of gooseberry and wild currant are nestling. It is spring-time, June. Before the curtain rises, shots are heard. There is noise, alarm and confusion.

The curtain rises. There was a light shower in the early part of the afternoon, the grass is wet. Near the gate the body of a dead soldier lies huddled. To the right the sky is red with the glow of the

burning village of Skalitz. Now and again the landscape shakes with the thunder of the near-by artillery. During the lull is heard the pattering of the feet of soldiers running on the highway which passes the wall of the church-yard. But these are only stragglers who delay, as the body of the Austrian army defeated at Skalitz has fled by already. Then even the stamping and neighing of horses, the clatter of hurrying cannon is heard. Yelling, shots, the creaking of wheels, grating and rasping, the cracking of whips, a stray shot or two—again the cannon thunders, drowning for the moment the noise of the highway. Now the first soldier appears in the church-yard. The others drop in at various intervals afterward.

All the soldiers are excited and fatigued. They are out of breath, wan, tattered, bloody and muddy. All are quite young.

Vonka (Opens the gate, stops a moment, looks about, then turns back).—Hi! you! Moravian.

(VICHODIL comes in followed by HAVLIN.)

Havlin.—Church-yard—we won't stay here—in a church-yard—

(VONKA throws down his gun, pays no attention to HAVLIN. Bends over the dead soldier.)

HAVLIN.—They were carrying him and threw him in here—but you don't want to stay here?

Vonka (Bent over the dead body).—The flies, look at them! What a lot there are on him already—Shrapnel struck him under the chin—it took a bit of his shoulder—A Maygar—from the 32nd (he rises.) To cart him with such an injury. (He is restless—he does not know what to do, he chokes with excitement.)

Havlin.—But you are not going to lie down here.

(VONKA mutters through his teeth but is thinking of something else.)

Havlin.—Say something, you are not going to lie down here, are you?

(VONKA says nothing; he goes to the right. Rests his chin on the wall and gazes out.)

Havlin (to VICHODIL).—You lie down;—is it just to bandage your foot?

Vichodil (Who the moment he came in, sat down on the grass to attend to his wounded leg).—It scratched me, brother; it burns—it did not before but now it stings.

Vonka (Looking over the wall).—Skalitz is still burning—there, the buildings near the railroad station. (Turns toward the church-

yard.) It's a veritable fortress (*To VICHODIL*) you are in our regiment, Moravian—it scratched you.

Vichodil.—A little bit, brother; it caught me in here in the leg.

Vonka.—This reminds me of the story they tell in our regiment. There are a few old fellows there who served in Italy in the 59th. It was just like this grave-yard. A single company of our men held back a whole regiment of the enemy of French Zouaves. (*He stands undecided whether to leave or remain—a cannon shot—he turns a little and listens attentively.*)

Vichodil (*The removal of his clothes is causing him pain*).—Oh! Oh!

Vonka.—It scratched you thoroughly, brother—here my shirt is clean if you want it for a bandage.

Vichodil.—I have one—myself—it is not so bad. It's just bleeding a bit.

Vonka.—It ought to be washed out; we'll get some water here. (*A momentary pause.*) (*A shot—HAVLIN is startled.*)

Havlin (*Quickly*).—At the village there to the left—back of these trees—or at least in a farm house.

(*VONKA looks at him, then steps upon a grave, looks over the wall. He does not say a word, but intently watches the highway, suddenly laughter seizes him.*)

Havlin (*Has quickly moved near him*).—He fell over his scabbard—

Vonka (*Pays no attention to HAVLIN, turns to VICHODIL. He is nervous, the following is said nervously and brokenly*).—You charged all right—I watched you but I knew you were lost when you passed that wood. When a fellow is in it he does not know anything—but we were lying down and we saw you when you ran to the woods with a “hurrah.” We could have shot you down, every single one of you. To let you charge from that wood—the man who led you was stupid—there was fire to the right and left and Prussians—I bet a whole corps—and they were all supported—and then you fellows charge across the bare field. Now picture it. You were like playing schoolboys rolling on the ground and all about you was torn smoke—Oh, it was funny—very funny—and our boys were all on pins and needles, we wanted to be right in it. Our major, he stood there watching it—then he turned to us—I could not watch it any longer so I counted the nervous twitches of the major's moustache—I tell you, like a bunch of boys rolling around in smoke—and then we started.

Havlin.—I saw one of your majors as I ran through the last village—he escaped with us.

(*VONKA startled, his eyes shine angrily as he overcomes his anger.*)

Havlin.—Yes, it was even in this village—then to the right—he escaped with us.

(*Silence.*)

Havlin.—Shan't I say it—he did run? Did not the bigger fellows run? Aren't we all retreating—!

Vonka.—What—you—well. (*He forces conversation.*) Then—your turn came—you Moravian. Frangner, he too got it badly and then we got into it—We were on a hill and we rise and charge like mad—I knew nothing at all—just run and leap—then suddenly there is a wall of the black fellows—you feel that they were never there—but that they rose from the earth—that's how blind you are as you run forward—Every blessed son of them looks like a black giant—and funny, they aren't any bigger than we—then now you see a thousand barrels aimed at you—and this is the interesting part, you take in the whole thing in a single moment—your lads had already gotten there—for you see thousands crouching dead in gray-green uniform—some horses roll there too—you swallow—(*His efforts are in vain, the picture escapes him; what he concentrated in rage struggles and passion breaks out; turns quickly to HAVLIN.*) Away with you.

Havlin.—Eh?

Vonka.—See that you run—

Havlin.—What do you want?

Vonka.—Away I said—away—coward! (*With renewed strength.*) Look out, the Prussians will catch you—we were beaten—beaten—the eighth division of the Austrian army—at Skalitz—don't you know, eh? The men, officers, cannon, horses, everything is fleeing. And the horses, they are not the most stupid—(*Beside himself with anger.*) Without heart into battle, without heart away from it—They can push them from place to place but that they should feel not that—what do you talk—Czech! How about you Moravian? Czech! How do I talk? Czech! And now we'll all be Prussians—(*Shame and sorrow is choking him.*) Sheep!! Animals! Stones! (*He falls to the ground and his body shakes convulsively.*) (*A while passes.*) (*VICHODIL looks at VONKA as if he wanted to say "Well" but nothing more.*) *The church-yard gate grates on its hinges. A soldier appears.*

What are you doing in here? (*No one answers.*)

Are you wounded? (*Again no answer.*)

Fools—stop that shouting.

(*He goes leaving the gate open. On the Trebesau hills the cannonading is resumed. ROSENZWEIG is covering the retreat of the Austrian army. HAVLIN motionlessly follows the shots attentively—but says nothing—now on the road past the gateway two soldiers' figures bob up. One of them returns presently—looks into the church-yard. It's KOVAR.*)

Kovar.—They are ours—one of them might have something—(KLOC follows him in.) Have anyone of you a bit of schnapps—everything is so sticky—(*No answer.*) I say have you a bit of brandy—the Prussians won't catch us any more—(*Again no answer.*) Can't you answer me at all (*To VONKA*) are you wounded? (*To HAVLIN.*) Not you, long-legged one, why don't you answer.

Havlin (*Sharply*).—Because I have none.

Kovar.—Then why don't you say that and well and good.

(*HAVLIN wants to answer him but he is suffering so he just stretches his arm in a striking attitude.*)

Kovar.—Hey!

Havlin.—Don't you touch me.

Kovar.—You—!!

Vichodil (*Raises himself*).—Not so—No quarreling, brethren—there's nothing to drink in here—we two just ran in here and remained—we two—and this chap is going off—I guess.

Kovar.—Why didn't you say so at once. You remained—and why? (*There is a short pause.*) You're wounded.

Vichodil.—Slightly; badly scratched.

Kovar.—Well, if it's not much—why don't you get away? (*No answer.*) (*Pointing at VONKA.*) What ails him?

Vichodil.—Nothing.

Kovar.—And yet he remains here—(*After a while.*) I can see why you two are here, that's plain—and this fellow could run like wildfire but you will not let him.

Vichodil.—You're mistaken my friend—no one is keeping him here.

Kovar.—Well, countrymen now you know it I guess—Yes, we all do—(*He laughs.*) We were sold—sold to the Prussians! In Olmütz we all cried that we would drive them out with a wet rag but now—we were sold—our country—(*The cannon barks—KOVAR, an artillery man, listens like an expert.*) Boom! that's Rosenzweig, he's making them believe he is covering our retreat—

Now once more, boom! (*He laughs for true to his word there is another cannon shot. The noise in the church-yard attracts three soldiers who peer into the yard. These are SPRAVIL, SOUKUP and LEVINSKY.*)

Kovar.—Come here!

Levinsky.—Have you a drop of whiskey?

Kovar.—Did you ever see a Silesian who did not ask for whiskey?

Levinsky.—Give me some—I am thirsty.

Kovar (*Is moved with a spirit of wild jollity*).—A joke—hey—
(*Turns to KLOC.*) Benedek fell.

Kloc (*fails to get the point*).—He fell?

Kovar (*Same vein*).—Fell—I tell you he fell—Do you dispute it?

Kloc (*Naively anxious*).—He fell!

Kovar.—Yes, I am telling you and you are denying it—

Kloc.—You are denying it, not I—you are laughing about it—he did fall near the railroad depot and Kreysnem fell too—A boy from my village, my chum, he fell. You were not there, what do you know?—I hollered to him to get behind a transport van but he did not hear and there was a salvo. The Prussians, they shot him right through his eyes and forehead—that's how he fell, my poor boy—my chum—and General Benedek was killed too, everybody says; so only you are laughing about it.

Kovar (*Amid mad laughter which shakes his whole body*).—Fool! all the way you clung to me like a leech and cried and worried if Benedek fell or not (*With renewed jollity*.) But he fell—you common infantry—even if it was not on the battlefield—he fell—In Jaromer—he fell with all the other generals on a barrel of Rhine wine while you were fighting with nothing in your bellies but broth made of frog-pond water—and today you are still fighting.

Kloc (*Moved by this blasphemy—shouts*).—He was defending our country.

Kovar (*Changed demeanor*).—Who was—?

Kloc.—We all were defending it—and Benedek with us—

Kovar.—You—common—yes—but he (*His eyes shine with rage. There's a shot; he reddens, shakes—and leaps to the ground—lying on his back he still says.*) He—your country—(*Silence.*)

Kloc (*Helpless, naively to others, to divert*).—He is going to sleep. (*No one answers—pause.*)

Spravil (*his voice is clear—calm. He is not addressing anyone.*)

He talks because it is necessary).—We came riding from Nagy-Szeben—in Hungary—six weeks we are in the saddle and we know nothing at all; only when we reached Moravia we learned that there would be war—we are quartered at a mill and sit there whetting our sabres on the millstones and making merry with the country lassies—Last midnight we reach Skalitz and we still know nothing. Since dawn we are lying back of a railroad and sand-heaps and no one is allowed to pass out and see what is happening—we lie here the entire forenoon. Midday comes, then afternoon, then the cannonading furiously breaks loose and we still have the sandpile in front of our noses and must not look out. Then all of a sudden a “Trarara” and we fly out underneath the railroad viaduct. I see nothing, clay is flying all about me, we are galloping across dead potato fields and the horses’ hoofs are kicking up dead stalks—that much I know—but nothing else. Then I hear just one volley of shots—It burst—then I knew nothing whatever. When I come to, I am prone on the ground. My horse is weighing down my foot. The poor beast is cold and stiff, shot through its belly. And all about me there are dead comrades and horses, but it’s quiet and I am all alone. Not a scratch on me but my horse is gone and the battle is over.

(He is silent, the others do not sympathize or listen.)

Levinsky.—I’d like to know if we are going to keep babbling like old women—or what?

Spravil.—We can lie down since everyone else is doing it.

Levinsky.—Well and good but if the Prussians come I’ll surrender.

Soukup (Startled—gloomily).—Not I.

Levinsky.—Well, what then?

(SOUKUP is silent.)

Levinsky.—It’s easy to reproach—but to advise is hard.

(It’s quiet and gloomy again.)

Levinsky.—It’s idiotic to remain here. Instead of thanking the Lord for permitting us to escape out there, you throw yourself obstinately into some new danger. But what for—for whom—these two?

(For a while there is no answer.)

Spravil.—I have no horse. And what should I do? An unmounted cavalry man.

Levinsky.—Well, in the morning you’ll be captured.

Spravil.—No.

Levinsky.—Then run ahead.

(*Quiet once more. SOUKUP now deliberately throws himself on the ground.*)

Spravil.—I'll do the same. (*Slowly he spreads himself on the ground.*)

Levinsky (Sneering cynically).—I'll stay and wait for you—fools. (*He sits down in a waiting attitude.*) We'll stay awhile and see. (*Only KLOC and HAVLIN remain standing. It is growing darker now. The fires are dying out though they still color the skyline to the right. The cannonading has ceased and calmness in and about the grave-yard.*)

Vichodil (Raising himself on his arm—to KLOC).—Why don't you either lie down, brother, or go?

Kloc.—I?

Vichodil.—Surely!—Frangner and Kreysnem fell. Benedek did not. Before the battle was over he rode to Jaromer and left us alone to fight it out. There, if you're not full—here's a bit of sugar beet—it's pretty warm—but it will quiet you—here, bite on it.

Kloc (Takes the beet as though in a dream).—Stand by me brothers in blood, stand by me—I am with you—Holy Virgin Mary, stand by me. Stand by me, I beg that of you. (*His body is shaking, he crosses himself, then falls to the ground.*)

(*It's growing dark now.*)

Havlin (Straightens out; is about to say something, then hisses).—I am revenging myself!—(*And forthwith as though he was wounded falls to the ground.—Now everyone is lying down. The weak moonlight has now grown full and floods the air.—No word, no murmur, occasional sighs, deep breaths, or sounds of the stirring and stretching soldiers. A short pause.*)

Vonka (Half rises and quietly to VICHODIL).—Hi, you Moravian!

Vichodil.—What—

Vonka.—Can you get up?—(*Motioning to the corpse near which he is lying.*) We'll have to move him out.

Vichodil.—Outside of the walls.

Vonka.—Over here is an opened grave.

Vichodil.—There then.

Vonka.—Give me a hand. Help me! (*LEVINSKY and SPRAVIL raise themselves. SPRAVIL lies down again. LEVINSKY alone remains sitting.*)

Vichodil.—The dead are heavy.

Vonka.—They are. (*They drop the corpse into the grav*

Subdued.) Sleep, Magyar—you were fighting for a strange country—with your “Eljen” “Czaczar” you fought bravely.

Vichodil.—They are brave men. (*It's quiet now, they should have parted but they are attracted by something.*)

Vonka.—I am calling you Moravian. I don't know your name.

Vichodil.—Martin Vichodil.

Vonka.—From the country.

Vichodil.—Yes.

Vonka.—I am from Prague. (*After a moment.*) Rosenzweig, my dear Vichodil, is silent now. The artillery will soon pass by. It is night. The enemy will rest tonight and advance early in the morning. (*Suddenly.*) These in here, at least most of them—! Attention! Hist. (*Strange sound without.*) (*Carefully and stealthfully he goes to the wall to gaze over. The noise now becomes more distinct. It is the sound of horses' hoofs on the road toward Skalitz. LEVINSKY raised his head "What is it?" but VONKA silenced him, "Quiet," he adds, however, in a moment.*)

Vonka.—Riderless horses of our troops running amuck. They are gathered into a group and gallop aimlessly. (*Suddenly, without changing his tone.*) Comrades, listen. Here are a lot of horses without men. Something frightened them and they are running about. But they'll quiet down soon, stop and graze in the field. Rosenzweig's batteries are still between us and the Prussians, but that protection will soon be gone. We don't know what we are waiting for. Let's go and catch a horse and follow the army. (*No answer.*)

Vonka (Continues intently).—I am talking for a purpose and you can hear me. I say those of you who hear how useless it is to remain here, get up and go.

Levinsky.—You go first.

Vonka (Excited).—I'll remain. You go ahead, you who don't feel for what reasons you were called.

Levinsky.—Coward and fool.

Soukup (Angrily).—Shut up! (*Commotion, everyone rises except—*)

Kloc (Who for the past few moments has been in a deep dream and was nervously shuddering, kicking about and sobbing—in his dream).—Get behind that wagon—Jump—Jump over here—Holy Virgin Mary!—I am calling you—Jump over to me—

(*SOUKUP who was lying beside him, jumps up.*)

Kloc (Continues).—Where are you putting your head, duck

you fool—hide over here—Holy Mary—not there, there they'll get you. (*With sudden fear.*) See there!—I told you—what's that—you see that—(*a second later.*) Hurrah!

Soukup.—Shut up you.

Kloc.—Hurrah!

Soukup.—Shut up!

Kloc.—Hurrah!

Soukup.—Shut up!

Kloc.—Hurrah, Hurrah!

Soukup (*Shakes him until he awakens.*)—Save that for the Prussians.

Kloc (*Jumps up*).—What!—Prussians?—Prussians—Brothers stand by me, brothers here—

Soukup (*Throws him to the ground.*)—Coward—cry-baby.

Kloc (*On the ground murmuring.*)—Brother, brother, brother. (*Everyone is on his feet now.*)

Levinsky.—You can tell anyone you like, that you'll be able to stop and rest here. I know you won't.

Kovar.—I was hardly able to rise from the ground. (*He was lying flat on his back—he's reeling.*) Water—somebody get me water—I can't lie any more. (*He is reeling—more impatiently now.*) I am going to die—I want to have a drop of water.

Levinsky.—You can say what you like but you cannot sleep here.

Spravil.—Well—what then?

Kovar.—Water, get me some water.

Levinsky (*Laughing*).—What I expected to happen, is taking place and in fifteen minutes you will be out of your grave-yard.

Soukup.—Silence!

Levinsky.—You are not going to order me about!

Kovar (*Commanding tone*).—Water! I demand some water! (*LEVINSKY is laughing.*)

Spravil.—Let him talk. Well, what now?—Who first wanted to sleep here!

Havlin (*Breaks out*).—This one!

Spravil.—Who?

Havlin (*Closing in on VONKA*).—This devil, traitor, he!

(*LEVINSKY is laughing.*)

Havlin.—He was the first one to lie down in here. Out of revenge, because he was the first to fly from the battlefield. He fled just like all the rest of us and now he wants us all to be shot down because he forgot to remain in the battle and ran away.

Vonka.—I?

Havlin.—Yes. You, you. You can't fool me—you are getting even. For what, because you were afraid like all the others, afraid of the Prussians you ran away! And for that we all have to be sacrificed so that you will not have to hide your shame. (*VONKA approaches him but is speechless—There is a moment of absolute quiet and just then from the road the noise of horsemen and quickly passing cannon is audible.*)

Kloc.—Prussians—

Kovar.—These are ours. It's Rosenzweig's men.

Havlin (*All are silent now. The noise behind the scene is increasing. The excitement has subsided for the moment—but it is about to break loose. The start is made by HAVLIN who runs to the gate, breaks it open, shouts.*) Treason! Over here! Deserters! To the church-yard here. They want to desert the army. Arrest them and shoot them. (*Just then.*)

Soukup (*Springs at him; shuts the gate and throws HAVLIN down.*)—Tracherous dog!

Havlin (*Under him.*)—Help.

Soukup.—I'll choke you, traitor.

Havlin.—Let go.

Kloc.—Holy Virgin Mary!

Vichodil.—Brothers! Brothers! (*He hurries to them and is parting them.*) Don't scuffle—Two Czechs—let them go—we Czechs will stand together.

Soukup.—He is a traitor. (*HAVLIN utters some sounds. Now the noise of the approaching batteries is growing.*)

Vonka (*Pale, trembling, in an attitude of defiance.*)—Away! All of you! Away with everyone of you, this moment! I order it!—In ten days the whole country will belong to the Prussians—but I won't have a single one of you here. Cowards—you fight each other before the battle—but you have forfeited our country, you fools. Oh, poor country of ours, such are your defenders—with such, you are to resist the invading Prussians—away with all of you—not a single one of you will I suffer at my side. I won't unite with blockheads and I'll die for my country unaided, alone!

(*He finished and all the soldiers stand as though spell-bound—only HAVLIN remains prostrate. Now ROSENZWEIG'S battery has reached the church-yard and the noise, creaking and motion has reached its culmination. Those in the church-yard remain motionless. It is night. The clear moonlight with impudent stare brightens*

up the scene. On the highway the clatter of the passing cannon is growing less and is disappearing toward Jaromer. It's the last remnant of the Austrian army. Now the handful of this Czech contingent are definitely cut off from the main body of the army. The door which SOUKUP had slammed during the squabble with HAVLIN opens now and through this enters SVACHA supporting the wounded SUK. All the soldiers turn to them and silently watch the entering pair.)

Svacha.—We were sitting outside the wall—we heard you—*(Pointing after the disappearing battery.)* We could not follow them any longer—you'll allow us to stay won't you?

Vonka.—No!

Svacha (Surprised).—I heard voices and it was just yours I guess—*(Quietly.)* My chum is wounded—you won't be hard and deny a wounded soldier the right to rest among his own?

Vonka.—It's impossible—there's a village near by—go over there.

Svacha (After a moment).—I heard you all—yea—I even understood what you were saying—my friend is seriously wounded—and my life does not count—you won't compel him to struggle on or to lie and suffer in some open field—I am sure you will have pity on him.

(SUK exhausted—seriously wounded; is hardly able to stand—he sighs.)

Svacha (On whose shoulders he is supported, makes a few steps as though he were looking for a place where SUK could be set down—but the soldiers are indifferent to them and silent).—You would not have the heart!

Vichodil (Turning to VONKA).—Perhaps it will not turn out as badly as you think, my friend; it might all turn out all right. But if it does not, well, one of them is wounded. *(To SUK.)* Let him lie down here—has anyone something for his head? *(There is no answer.)* Something to put under his head, who has something?

Spravil (Has taken off his knapsack).—Here you are—

Levinsky.—There.

Vichodil.—Give it to him—*(The wounded man is laid on the ground.)*

Svacha.—Are you resting well?—Are you resting, well Jean?

Suk.—Drink—

Svacha.—Something to drink—I put a wet handkerchief to

his mouth. If we had something that would strengthen him—
(*They are all helpless.*)

Spravil.—There's nothing here.

Vonka.—Wait. (*Goes off thru centre—the soldiers follow him silently then.*)

Levinsky.—He ran away.

Soukup.—No. (*They all turn back.*)

Svacha (*Kneeling over SUX*).—He fainted.

Vichodil.—He might be asleep. Leave him alone. Let him rest.

Svacha (*Rises. Moved but quietly*).—He will not last very long—I just wanted him to feel that he is among his own—After that—it's the end of everything anyhow—(*No one answers.*) We were at the railroad depot and he was wounded there. I wanted to surrender with him but he didn't want it—it was because of that hatred, that led us into the war, that hatred against them or perhaps it was something else—The wound didn't seem to be serious and at first we walked quite well—then we met the transports and they picked us up and we went part of the way, but further down the road he fell off—on the way it got to be worse—until—and now he is—(*Pause.*)

Spravil.—You are students?

Svacha.—Yes.

Spravil.—Doctors?

Svacha.—Not yet—he was to have been a Doctor of Laws—

Spravil.—You were volunteers (*SVACHA nods.*) Patriotism—

Svacha (*Warmly*).—Yes, our country is in great danger. (*Pause.*) We were at the Sokol meeting where Dr. Gregr spoke—and that was how we enlisted. I had a premonition—I never believed that assurance about the Austrian strength and the Prussian weakness—He believed it less than I—he with his patriotism! We felt that our country was at this time in a greater danger than at the time of Frederick the Great, so against the consent of our parents he joined the army and I went with him. About me it doesn't matter but he—he is the only son of Dr. Suk. I am poor and I have no one and I would remain while he—this—he was their pride, their baby—and has a sister—God, what a wonderful woman! (*Is silent, then suddenly with a feverish resolution.*) I am in despair—I don't know what to do—there's nothing to keep me here but him and he won't last long—and our cause—our country is lost. (*The soldiers moved—are silent. Just then the gate creaks and the men turn—They were expecting*

VONKA but LEVINSKY utters "*Woman*" and surely enough a poor woman appears—she is ANNA PETROVA the wife of the railroad watchman, past forty. She didn't expect anybody in the grave-yard but is too simple-minded to show surprise. She stands quietly, arms akimbo, looking at the soldiers and then breaks in with an explanation.

Anna Petrova.—The Prussians are in Skalitz: there is no staying there (and as no one is answering her, she adds.) They took away my man—he was the railroad watchman. They led him away. (Again there is no answer and then PETROVA, noticing that a few soldiers are paying some attention to her, continues in a voice that is quiet, dry and without a show of feeling.) We were in watch-house 164—When everybody ran away, my man and I we stayed—my man, he said: "What can they take away from us, we are poor." Then the Prussians came over the hill with cannon and they started to talk German to my man. Something that he must come along with them and he said he wasn't afraid, he was an honest man and he would go. Then he started to look for his cap and they pulled him around so that he should hurry and my man he fell on his knees and begged the head man to let him go. He begged in Bohemian but the Prussian started to holler that he would shoot him and one fellow raised his gun. Then I began to make out that they said that my man was a spy and that he was signalling to our soldiers but my man he got up and he hollered "Si Vatr, ich Vatr—Si Kinder ich Kinder—Si Ehrlich ich Ehrlich—"but they grabbed him and led him away to the hill where they had the cannon—

Spravil.—They'll never give him back to you, Mother.

Petrova.—Good God! (None of the soldiers are paying any attention to her except SPRAVIL and LEVINSKY.) My youngest boy, he who is home, was in the house so I gave him a loaf of bread and a shilling and sent him out after them—I couldn't go—There was shooting all around— Right at the door-step one poor lad was lying—I wanted to get him in the house but he was too heavy so I go for the wheelbarrow to put him on it but when I come back there were four or five there already. One fellow's hand was shot away and he came and sat at the door—I gave him a pail to put his hand into. Then I started to wheel them in, I got fourteen of them into the room and then I couldn't—The room is full of them and I can't do anything for them and all the time the shells were bursting and one took away part of the house and set it on fire—then ours went away and the Prussians came in—I went to Skalitz to the church to pray but the Prussians got all

of their wagons round the church—there's no staying there—
(*In as simple a manner as she said this, she goes to the cross near the church wall, kneels down and prays, entirely indifferent to what is going on around her—There is a pause.*)

Kovar (*Deeply moved, with great impulse*).—We were sold—betrayed—alone—without help. But we'll all perish; all of us—we'll be swept off—for they're a thousand times stronger—but I'll remain and defend my country—and I'll fight along with him who does. (*There is a momentary pause.*)

Levinsky.—I am going. (*Has pulled the knapsack from under SUK's head.*)

(*SUK, whose head has fallen on the ground, sobs with pain.*)

Svacha.—Jean—Jean—(*A momentary pause.*)

Levinsky.—I am going off.

Kovar.—I will fight along with him. We shan't yield. Our country is betrayed—And we still remain—it's the end of us all and even of us, the chosen ones—yes, chosen ones for we were chosen—

Svacha.—Silence please! Silence just for a second—Jean, I am here. Jean do you want to say anything to me? (*The dying SUK now in SVACHA'S arms gazes but does not recognize him. Immediately then.*)

Havlin (*Who was lying squarely on his back terrified in his sleep shouts with a choked voice*).—Back you go—I'll stab—back. (*In a dream he makes a motion as though he were stabbing.*) You at me from the back? Bayonet? There you are!

Kloc (*Listlessly, quietly*).—Virgin Mary—he's lost his senses—

Havlin.—It's in your belly now—you're down—down—your eyes are turning. There—there.

Spravil.—He is crazy.

(*HAVLIN has now awakened fully—he jumps up and screams.*)

Svacha.—Dear Jean—do you want anything—it is I—do you know me, Jean—(*The wounded man opens his eyes, his lips move, he recognizes SVACHA. With difficulty he is about to say something, when again—*)

Kovar.—The chosen ones to defend—the chosen ones to die, chosen to die but die for our country. It is most sacred to die for the country. There is nothing greater.

Svacha (*Despairing, forgetting SUK's condition*).—Quit—for God's sake—can't you see he is dying? (*Then.*)

Suk (*Takes him about the neck, exclaims*).—I don't want to die.

Svacha.—Jean!

Suk.—I don't want to die—! Hold me back—! I don't want to die—!

Svacha.—You won't die—no, you don't have to die—you won't die—you are barely wounded—do not excite yourself—Jean, you'll be well again.

Suk.—I don't want to die—Charl—(*Blood fills his chest again and he sinks back into SVACHA's arms.*)

Svacha.—Water! He'll bleed away.

Spravil.—Let's raise him a little.

Svacha.—Water!

Spravil.—There's none here.

Svacha.—My God—God—! (*It is in vain. SUK is in the throes of the death agony. PETROVA has now come over to him. She is holding his head in her lap. But it is the end—PETROVA slowly deposits the dead body on the ground and begins to pray in an unintelligible monotonous tone. The soldiers remain standing about. Just then VONKA enters. He is carrying a pitcher, gives the scene a glance and with energy approaches the group. On his features it is apparent that he has ascertained in the meantime the hopelessness of the position of the isolated group and is determined to die. The moon has now become full and its light illumines the church-yard brightly.*)

Vonka.—Here is a drop of water—it is all I could find. (*With a glance at SUK.*) He died—

Svacha.—Yes.

Vonka (Depositing pitcher).—Do not permit the dead to stay with us too long.

Suk.—He is dead—(*To SVACHA, who is still kneeling.*) Let us raise him—(*SOUKUP hastens to help. They raise the body.*)

Vonka (Pointing to the grave where they had deposited the Magyar).—There! (*Two soldiers quietly walk over carrying the body—the others watch silently—SVACHA seizes the hand of the dead man and follows—then PETROVA joins them.*)

Svacha (At the grave).—Wait please—(*He himself deposits the dead body in the grave. Pause. In the meantime the gate has opened and Lieutenant EBNER enters—he watches the scene a moment.*)

Ebner.—What does this mean? (*All soldiers turn. Even VONKA has noticed the officer but goes over to PETROVA, who is kneeling at the grave.*)

Vonka.—Throw a clod of clay after him, mother, and then let's go—

Ebner.—What does this mean? (*There's no answer. SVACHA crawls out of the grave.*)

Vonka (*Now approaching the officer.*)—Please go away from here.

Ebner.—An officer.—

Vonka.—None such here.

Ebner.—Who is the oldest?

Vonka.—Please go away.

Ebner.—I don't understand what is going on here.

Vonka.—I am asking you clearly to go away from here and I repeat it. You don't belong to the army any more and have no business here. Be kind enough to leave before we use force.

Ebner (*Unsheathing his sword.*)—Is that your way of talking to your officer, you cur—(*But he has just then been seized from the back by KOVAR and SPRAVIL and overpowered.*)

Ebner.—So, treason.

Vonka.—Leave him alone—free him—he will go—

Soukup.—No, let us get him out of here—

Vonka.—No. (*They free him but SOUKUP and KOVAR remain as though guarding him.*) You've seen what's threatening you and I say again to you that you should not try to engage in an uneven struggle. But if you must know before you go something about us, then let me tell you that we do not remain here in order to surrender to the Prussians. All the same, our fate is decided. Unless you feel as we do, that now it is not the question how this forced and lost war will end, but a question of the sacred ground we stand on—our country.

Ebner.—Lunatics—

Vonka.—My patience is at an end. (*He suppresses his anger.*) For the last time I urge you to go. For the last time I want to make clear to you that we shall from this spot where our fate has thrown us, defend our Fatherland—the Fatherland which you have betrayed and deserted. Now go at once.

Ebner (*With emphasis.*)—The five of you will defend the whole country.

All Shouting.—The five of us.

Ebner (*Taken aback a moment, then again defiantly.*)—You five—against the entire Prussian army which today defeated our whole eighth division—have you escaped a madhouse, or are you in such a hurry to be killed—the whole of Bohemia could not

defend itself without the help of Austria—and you five will dare it. You will undertake it.

All.—We—

Ebner.—Madmen—but I don't recognize any such tomfoolery. You are soldiers of the Austrian army. If there is a mutiny here it is my duty to stop it. Your place is with the army. There you will get your orders. I order that you fall in line—at once—(*SOUKUP with a shout "At you" seizes him. He is again surrounded.*)

Ebner.—Let me go—traitors.

Soukup.—We will give orders now.

Ebner.—Let me go, you traitors—I command you—your oath, you cowards—you dare to attack an officer (*When he realizes how vain his struggle is.*) Wait, I'll see what you'll get—in the morning when the Prussians move on. When they'll get at you—even before that—when you will only hear the fife and drum of the vanguard—you'll lose your heroic appetite. Let me go—I order you—I command it.

Soukup.—Give me a strap or a rope.

Svacha.—Don't kill him.

Soukup.—Give me a rope.

Svacha (To VONKA).—Don't let them kill him.

Ebner.—I order you to let me go.

Soukup.—A rope! He'll live but he'll be a witness to what we are.

Levinsky.—This is great. Here are knapsack straps. (*Handing them over to SOUKUP, EBNER struggles, but is overcome and bound.*)

Ebner.—Cowards.

Kloc.—Jesus Mary!

Soukup.—You'll stay with us.

Ebner.—Hounds.

(*SOUKUP puts a bayonet to EBNER's chest. Pause then.*)

Vonka.—Quiet now—it is night throughout—quiet here—what we'll accomplish he shall witness—the rest is not in our hands. Here we are and shall not yield a step. About us sleeps our Bohemian Fatherland—sleeps, overcome with the horror of the Prussian. The land of our childhood, the country we dreamt about and sang about—our homeland—which now shall be the homeland of the Prussians—the prey of our enemies. But we are still here—we shall not surrender or run away—is there anyone here who would want to go?

All the soldiers.—No one.

Vonka.—Anyone who would desert his homeland?

(Answer.) No one.

Vonka.—Our country is in danger and almost lost—dependent for defense on others who have forsaken her—is there a Czech here who would surrender it without a struggle to the Germans? *(Again, jointly.)* No one!

Vonka.—Swear faith to her!

Soldiers.—Swear!

Vonka.—Swear that you will keep her for the sake of our children!

Soldiers.—Swear!

Vonka.— —that in her great hour of need you will not forsake her!

Soldiers.—Swear!

Vonka.—Join hands on our oath!

(Excepting HAVLIN who stands aside, they all join hands and form an irregular chain. EBNER is lying on the ground.)

Vonka.—Beloved mother country of ours! In your moment of sorrow we who have sworn faith to thee will defend thee to the last drop of our blood—to our last breath—we are mindful all of the pledge that we made in our national songs—our hymn—
(Irregularly, monotonously they do not sing but speak the Bohemian National hymn):

“O Homeland mine. O Homeland, mine
Streams are rushing through thy meadows
'Mid thy rocks sigh fragrant pine groves
Orchards decked in Spring's array
Scenes of Paradise portray
And this land of wondrous beauty
Is the Czechland Homeland mine
Is the Czechland Homeland mine.*

Vonka.—Now we are sworn into a bond—*(They loosen their hold. VONKA now turns to PETROVA who is in the background).*
Leave us—you'd better go now—

Petrova (Going over to him).—Let me bless you before I go, for your mother's sake. *(She makes a cross on his forehead.)*

Vonka.—The Lord will repay you, mother.

Kloc (Very quietly now).—And for mine too.

*The translation of this song is by Rev. Dr. Vincent Pisek, who published it in his collection of Bohemian Songs.

Petrova.—And even for thine—(*Makes a cross on KLOC's forehead.*)

Spravil.—And mine too—

Petrova.—Yes, and thine. (*She goes over to the others*)—and thine—and thine—and for thine—(*Now she has finished*) and for all of ours at home—and those whom we are shielding—the whole of our country—may the Lord bless ye—Good-bye soldiers—(*goes.*)

Vonka.—Let's lie down and rest until dawn and then we'll all rise—get your guns ready—now be quiet all and sleep—

Svacha.—Who will be the sentry—

Vonka.—We are all sentinels—our country's sentinels. (*The soldiers silently are lying down—pauses.*)

Levinsky.—I am going off too—I can't stand it here—Good-bye. (*He tarries still a moment but does not notice SOUKUP who was half-lying on the ground but now jumps up and seizes a gun.*)

Levinsky.—I do not feel the way you do. (*Goes off.*)

(*He has barely left when SOUKUP follows him and a second later a shot is heard on the highway. The soldiers silently follow the sound of the shot with a motion of the head. SOUKUP presently returns bringing in two guns. He sits down and silently loads both weapons; then he edges near the other and lies down. HAVLIN was standing near the gate prepared to escape. As the shot is fired his face shows what a blow it is to him he slides down and dejectedly sits in the grass against the wall and gazes into space.*) (*There is a long pause.*) (*All the other soldiers are lying on the ground and attempting sleep. For a long time the impatient moving about and forced efforts to sleep are audible—then again a compelled silence—loud breathing, sighing—feverish rest—at times a snatched word can be discerned—the real sleep is slow in coming. Finally, it is apparent that they will sleep although their slumber is disturbed. HAVLIN remains motionless. He gazes into space, murmurs a few words and then is silent again. The moonlight is dying away and the bright summer night is rapidly changing into the greyness of an early dawn. The grave-yard now assumes a different aspect. The haggard faces of the soldiers show their disheveled condition, on their uniforms the mud and stains predominate, in the daylight the grotesque side of the scene is apparent. The only familiar sight is the usual friendly approach of a summer morning.*)

It is the dawn of the twenty-ninth of June, 1866. The victorious Prussian hordes will now move onward. In the distance, hardly audible at first but increasing in nearness and volume, comes the

familiar sound of the fife and drum. The melody is the one which was later converted into a folk-song "When to us came the Prussians a-marching—" etc. It means that the vanguard is near the scene and that the invasion of Bohemia is continuing. The sound gains about a third in volume and designates thereby how rapidly the soldiers are approaching. Even EBNER, overcome and exhausted, sleeps. HAVLIN is the only one to hear—he starts. His face is the face of a frightened madman.)

Havlin (*Whispers*).—They're here—(*More loudly*.) They're here—(*Then victoriously*.) No surrender—no surrender—(*While he is saying this he creeps along the wall to the right over the bodies of the sleeping soldiers. He gazes out—now the fifes are quite near—then*.) The officer! (*He shouts this. Raises gun, rests it on the wall—aims—shoots*.) Hst! The officer fell! (*Now he jumps upon the wall and madly waving his gun calls out*.) The officer's hit! The officer fell! No surrender! No surrender! The officer! The officer! (*The fifes have immediately stopped, then a shot from the enemy's side rings out and HAVLIN like a dead bird is dashed to the ground. But now they've all awakened and they seem to realize in a moment, their conversation is sharp, quiet but hushed*.)

Kloc.—The Prussians!

Spravil.—I have no other weapon than a sword.

Svacha.—Here is Suk's gun. (*The gun is however torn out of his hand by KOVAR.*)

Kovar.—I have none myself and I want to shoot—

Spravil.—But what about me—I have none.

Soukup.—Here is another one—take this.

Ebner (*Awakening*).—Prussians?—Prussians here already. Let me go, loosen me—damn you!

(*No one pays any attention to him.*)

Svacha.—There's only one here to lead, that's he.

Vichodil.—Surely he's the one.

Vonka (*The moment he awoke he jumped to the wall and was peering out—now he returns to their midst*).—How about yesterday's oath. Swear over.

All the soldiers.—We swear.

Vonka.—In the defense of brothers.

All the soldiers.—And brotherhood in death.

Vonka.—Yesterday we fought with words, now we shall fight only in deeds.

Ebner (*Desperately, on the ground*).—Let me go.

Vonka.—We have only one round of shot left. After that we'll fall, they'll have us covered. But that one shot shall be fired and see to it each one that it is fired with result. Now from behind this wall and when I give you a sign—fire. (*The soldiers take their places back of the wall and aim without.*)

Vonka.—Are you ready?

Soldiers.—We are.

Vonka.—Fire! (*A volley knells.*)

Ebner.—This is your finish, before you load again they'll storm this place.

Vonka.—Let's out at them before they get here. (*To the gate.*) With me—all. (*The soldiers gather about him.*)

Vonka.—Are you all here?

Soldiers.—We are.

Vonka.—The shooting was fine, now try the bayonet. In the name of our country. For the sake of our country. We are its only guardians. Altogether now with me. (*With a shout.*) For the country, hurrah! (*Flings the gate wide open and rushes out; the others after him, their shouting can be heard.*)

Ebner.—They'll sweep you off—madmen—run on with it. (*A volley—back of scene—from the Prussians' side—then for a second quiet reigns—the church-yard is deserted.*)

Ebner.—Swept off—How could they help it—swept off all— (*But not quite; VONKA'S "For the country—hurrah" suddenly sounds in the distance;*) No? (*The others' shouts now follow VONKA'S lead.*)

(*A pause.*)

Ebner (who has been listening).—Did they escape those devils—but its only a question of moments now. (*Trying to free himself.*) Damned lunatics! (*He is listening again.*) Are they fighting? (*A distant report of the fray. The voices are indistinguishable. But then suddenly for the third time clearly resounds VONKA'S "For the country—hurrah."*)

Ebner (Straightens up).—Who the devil's with them—the victors, madmen!! And I am powerless—Powerless—And now—death—!

CURTAIN.

THE PAOLO AND FRANCESCA THEME IN MODERN DRAMA

D'ANNUNZIO, PHILLIPS, MAETERLINCK, ECHEGARAY

BY GERTRUDE GARDNER BRAINERD

IF generalizations are dangerous and sweeping comparisons at times misleading, it is not necessarily true that they are uninteresting or even unprofitable. Literature, for example, is often most highly illumined by the light of her sister, Art. Both may indeed be simply different expressions of an identical motive and purpose. Modern Art galleries like a Library of Modern Drama are still unclassified. Both produce impressions, individual and variable, and it is the student's unusual as well as satisfying privilege to star and double-star his guide book according to his own personal standards; to relegate some works to a humble retirement and elect others to the Hall of Fame. Who would have the boldness to criticize a single lineament of the divine "Sistine Madonna," for example? There is a peculiar satisfaction, on the other hand, in determining the artistic value of Bonheur's "Horse Fair."

There were a few years ago in that unclassified depository of French Art, the Luxembourg, four pictures which, because of their originality of treatment, as well as their individual interest, stand out very distinctly in the writer's mind. The most striking, because the most unique, was a broad canvas of the impressionistic school, "Printemps" by Monet,—at close range, mere daubs of paint, splotches of color in the pastel tints, but resolving themselves as we recede to a proper distance, into a Spring scene with here and there a human figure, fairy-like, shadowy—the whole effect, flowery, atmospheric, mystical. Near it Bouguereau's "Madonna and Child," its figures of life size, clear in outline, delicate, refined, poetic in conception. Yonder in the corner, a Meissonier battle scene, only a tiny miniature, yet challenging our attention—bloody, stormy, rapid in movement, realistic, almost brutal in its insistence on detail, figures as far as the eye can reach, but each microscopically perfect, each bit of

artillery scientifically constructed. And lastly, by De Camps, a simple meadow scene, with a single hay stack, the identical hay stack represented four different times in the four seasons under four different climatic conditions.

May we draw rather a bold comparison and say that, though so different in subject, yet in treatment, in technique, and artistic ideal, these pictures are curiously suggestive of four modern dramas, dealing with the Paolo and Francesca theme—Maeterlinck's "Pélléas and Mélisande," Phillips' "Paolo and Francesca," D'Annunzio's "Francesco da Rimini," and Echegaray's "Great Galeoto?" Surely no theme in all the history of dramatic literature has equalled this one in popularity. Boker, Greif, Heyse, Crawford, and others of less fame, have come under the spell of Dante's romantic tale. Of this number the plays which we will consider are of greatest interest, not only because of their intrinsic merit and the distinction of their authorship, but because of striking elements of similarity and difference in the characters, setting and plot of the Paolo and Francesca story.

In order to place the slightest possible emphasis on the plot element Maeterlinck, in "Pélléas and Mélisande" has chosen to follow the Paolo and Francesca theme in its simplest and most conventional form. Indeed, the story proper is so brief and even commonplace that the full significance of the plot appears to rest in the details. It is only fair to keep in mind the fact that Maeterlinck did not aim to make a successful acting drama or was ever much concerned with the narrative or scenic element, for, as he says in the Preface to his work, "tout chef-d'oeuvre est un symbole et le symbole ne supporte pas le présence active de l'homme." The setting is never an ornament, but is used simply as a frame, plain and severe as the writer can make it, to hold together the canvas and the picture. Far from there being the slightest trace of Italian geography, there is no attempt to make the setting historical, even earthly—it is fanciful, unreal.

The characters, like everything else Maeterlinckian, are difficult to dissect. They certainly are not ordinary types, nor on the other hand, are they flesh and blood individuals. They are more like good and bad angels, immortal because still unborn, than real breathing human beings. These people would never survive in the struggle for existence. It takes two or three of them to make one mortal man. Moreover, they are for the most part, soulless beings. As for humor of character, there is none of it. A single attempt, at the very beginning of the play, at a

comic situation, and a faint suggestion of satire in the conduct of the minor characters and servants does not sufficiently palliate the continual gloom.

Golaud is the Lord of Ravenna in a somewhat different guise from that which either History or Dante dictates. He is never repellent. From the first he is gentle, sympathetic, attractive. Yet there is nothing noble, heroic, in his make-up. On the contrary, his indulgence is exasperating. The evidence of his deep love for his wife consists in his effort to shield her at any cost. "Do not hold the light under their eyes so," he says, to little Yniold, when they discover the lovers together. Again his thoughtfulness is shown in his warning to Pélleas to avoid her as much as possible, "without affectation." Golaud displays an irritating abnormality of conscience at the end of the play—"I have wrought thee so much ill—since the first day—and it is all my fault, all that has happened, all that will happen. But I loved thee so!"

Pélleas is hardly distinguishable from his brother in what he says, and the way he says it. He is romantic, idealistic, and so is Golaud. There seems to be no adequate cause for his fascination for Mélisande, other than the fact of his youth. Perhaps we have no right to demand a logical or intellectual interpretation—love in Pélleas and Mélisande is not on that basis. One indication of Golaud's superior maturity, beside the gray about his temples, is his attitude toward the lovers. "Mélisande," he thinks, "is very young and very impressionable," and, "they are both little children." The characters of Golaud and Pélleas are however but slightly differentiated. In one of the few instances in Maeterlinck where one character describes another, Genevieve, the mother, reading the account of Golaud's hasty marriage says, "If it were Pélleas, I should understand." Golaud is a man of action in so far as he is a hunter. He has at least one occupation! Pélleas never does anything but dream.

Mélisande is a child, not only in years, but what is of more importance, a child in experience. Further, and it may sound paradoxical, though a child, Mélisande is not innocent. The innocent are ever imprudent, the guilty are cautious. It is surely not physical dread, but a haunting moral fear that takes possession of Mélisande when she and Pélleas are together. "Some one might come," she says, "let me go!" "It is Golaud! He has heard us." Golaud, with all his trustfulness, recognizing this at the end of the drama, when Arkël, the benignant old father,

says he can only see "a great innocence" in her eyes, thunders, "They are greater than innocence. They would give God lessons in innocence. I am less far away from the great secrets of the other world than from the smallest secret of those eyes!" For had not *Mélisande* deliberately and repeatedly, with a wicked satisfaction, lied to her husband? *Pélléas* is far more innocent than *Mélisande*. "I have played like a child," he says, "about a thing I did not guess." It is not until the "love scene" in the fourth act, that he becomes conscious of his attitude toward the girl. "I did not love thee the first time I saw thee. I sought throughout the country and I found not beauty—and now I have found thee!" Even *Golaud*, when he first saw *Mélisande*, was filled with awe at her beauty. It is her physical perfection that captivates *Pélléas*. He is struck by the beauty of her eyes. Her hair as it streams over him is as sweet as if it fell from heaven. (Can it be that *Maeterlinck*, in creating an abundance of hair for all his heroines is intending an adverse criticism on the hair of the present generation—if so, that is one instance of subtle humor to his credit!) To *Pélléas*, *Mélisande* was the embodiment of his highest ideal—beauty. That was his excuse for loving.

The love of *Mélisande* on the contrary, far from having an intellectual basis, seems not even to be inspired by any physical appeal. It is very natural that *Pélléas* himself, should require an explanation. "Why shouldst thou love me?" he asks. But *Mélisande* does not even invent an excuse—"I love thee, since always, since I saw thee." While we are conscious of a struggle within the soul of *Pélléas*, there is not the slightest hint of conflict or a faintest effort at resistance by *Mélisande*. In so far as there is no justification offered, intellectual or emotional, *Mélisande's* love for *Pélléas* is unconvincing, unreal, even immoral.

Though we should hardly be so severe as *Max Nordau* in saying that *Maeterlinck's* characters "are considerably more stupid than trained fleas at a county fair" yet *Mélisande*, as she is pictured on the page, is scarcely more than a French doll. (A doll, indeed, that cannot even open and shut her eyes, as we are told so many times!) And yet it requires simply the wave of the magician's wand to transform a mechanical doll into a living, walking, talking, feeling being, with a soul. By this wand, the power of our own imagination the poet, would have us, it seems, change his characters into original creations—realities.

In little *Yniold*, *Maeterlinck* has created a child-man, older and more knowing than *Mélisande* herself, yet with none of

the effervescence of youth, nor the comprehension of age. Genevieve is not a character, merely woman! Arkël, the old king of Allemonde, the only person who speaks in polysyllables, with his philosophy of despair and the cruelty of fate, is indeed more lifelike than any of the others. But were we to consider either the plot and the action, or the characters of primary importance to the central motive, we should utterly fail of the purpose of the dramatist.

If it be true that "anything is significant in inverse ratio to its tangibility," no one will doubt that Maeterlinck is supremely significant. Intangibility is to him the realest element of Life. It is simply in order to produce spiritual effects as a symbol or outward human expression of this inward philosophical purpose that the plot, characters and the external action must be utilized. Maeterlinck, for this reason, cannot survive under unsympathetic, searching intellectual criticism. The characters of Pélleas and Mélisande are like the "touch-me-not" which are fastened to the plant by such a delicate and fragile tendril that at the slightest contact with the human hand, they droop and fade away. Mélisande's first words are meaningful, "Do not touch me!" The darkness of the grotto and the night is terrifying, and yet rather than that Pélleas should touch her she walks alone. Again the mystery of silence is used so often to suggest a hidden, profound emotion. Tragic Destiny and inexorable Fate, not the characters themselves, are the movers of the action. Fate is seen working through quiescent, passive, unresisting characters in such passages as the following: "The human soul is very silent. The human soul likes to depart alone." "'Twas a little being, so quiet, so fearful, and so silent." What could be more intangible? No wonder Maeterlinck does not bear reading aloud and that his play is best acted, if at all, behind gauze curtains! Only in the light of the author's peculiar theory of the deeper emotions, is the love of Pélleas and Mélisande explicable, on the basis of a spiritual communion between two souls.

Maeterlinck's dramatic text as well as the central motif of the drama is an insistence on Truth, Truth, Truth. The chief tragedy of the piece lies in the fact that Golaud cannot believe Mélisande even on her death-bed, and that she must go down to the grave unabsolved, and he must die like a blind man. Yes, even Pélleas, her lover, cannot trust her! Moreover, there is no justification sufficient to atone for her falseness. Her wilfulness seems to arise from a feeling of revulsion from any sort of re-

straint—social or moral—that is what makes her hopeless and unhappy. Maeterlinck is preaching no moral. He is simply illustrating a psychological fact—one cannot keep a butterfly in a dark room; it must pine away for lack of light and the warmth of the sun. No wonder the tone is fatalistic, the atmosphere murky and the tragedy total; and no wonder that no depth of symbolism or philosophical intention can make up for the absence of a great, profound, remedial undercurrent.

Perhaps, MacDowell could have best interpreted Maeterlinck in music. Dare we say that the Maeterlinckian ideal world could best be expressed in the realm of music or the static Art of Painting? that eloquence through silence cannot best be interpreted by Literature? that because Maeterlinck felt that speech was inadequate to interpret Truth he did not even attempt to approach to Truth?

Maeterlinck seems to present no problem, to solve no moral question; like MacDowell's, his compositions end with a restless, longing note. Arkël, the old sage concludes, "I shall never understand it all." And yet, though Maeterlinck is hampered by a peculiarity of technique, if his range is limited to a single mood, his master tone is universal, his emotional appeal immediate, and his dominant chord always the "C Major of this Life." What Maeterlinck has attempted to do he has done well. "If his glass was small he yet drank out of his own glass," as De-Musset once said of Chopin. At close range, one can see only the daubs of paint, the bits of color, in his work. As with Monet's masterpiece one must stand at a proper distance in order to discover the perspective, the outline and the beauties of Maeterlinck's drama.

Though Stephen Phillips' "Paolo and Francesca" is conducted on far more simple lines with no suggestion of Maeterlinck's mysticism, there is less to be said of it than of the "Pélléas and Mélisande." One cannot, however, forbear a sigh of relief in substituting human beings "tempted like as we are," for ghostly personages, half physical, half spiritual. Moreover, the study of this drama is far more possible and much more interesting from the point of view of the Paolo and Francesca story. Here, Phillips has the Dante episode in mind from the very beginning, even going so far as to transfer Dante's emotional attitude, for both poets consider the theme primarily from an idealistic and romantic basis.

The most obvious difference between Stephen Phillips' work and that of the other dramatists, is the form. "Paolo and Francesca" is in blank verse, and in this there is at once a melody, a drowsiness and a sweetness which accords well with the romantic treatment. As beauty of outline and expression is the central aim, the language is itself essential to the work as a whole and therefore, necessarily, poetical. In their attitude toward language as an adequate medium of expression, Maeterlinck and Phillips are at opposite poles. Maeterlinck believes always that our human language is a hindrance to the communication of Truth, and uses only the simplest and most direct forms, while Phillips considers that Poetry is the fullest and most forcible medium for the expression of the deepest as well as the realest sentiments and thoughts. Therefore, to Phillips, the aesthetic form of his drama is of even more importance than the substance. While Maeterlinck's appeal is to "the things which are unseen which are spiritual," Phillips believes firmly in the power of sensuous beauty.

"Paolo and Francesca" is neither mediæval nor Italian, for Phillips seems purposely to reject all suggestions of local color and racial peculiarities, in order to treat his subject more freely from a modern point of view. The attitude of the author, however, is all the way through distinctly English. Giovanni is never the hot-headed, impetuous, fiery character that some critics would picture, nor is it meant for us to conceive of him as first of all the jealous, enraged man. He is by nature a tender husband, and a loving brother. In spite of his words at the beginning of the play, to the effect that he is marrying Francesca "to set a seal of victory as an indissoluble bond," from their very first meeting and throughout the play she is something far more dear to him than a mere political tool. Giovanni enlists our sympathy when he first takes us into his confidence and says, "I ask no great thing of the skies; I ask henceforth a quiet breathing for this child, Hither all dewy from her convent fetched, Shall lead me down the slant of life." In significant contrast to the Maeterlinckian characters, Giovanni, Paolo, Francesca, even Lucrezia, are almost unpleasantly subjective and morbidly self-conscious. At times they are too introspective and self-analytical to be highly dramatic.

It is a delicate insight into the human character of such a man as Giovanni that he should not be actuated by mere jealousy, but by a real yearning for the love of his wife as he becomes con-

scious that he is about to lose her. It is then that he cries in agony, "Can I not bind her beauty fast o'er which I gin to yearn?" And yet, upon deeper consideration, we realize that, after all, this expression is the surest evidence of a false love. Giovanni's attitude toward Francesca is one of sympathy and tenderness but never of true love, especially as contrasted with his affection for his brother, of whom he says, "I have grown so close to him my very flesh doth tear!" "We are something more than brothers, firm as friends." In the light of this feeling, as considering Giovanni not as a semi-savage of the Thirteenth Century, but as a highly sensitive modern man, we discover no inconsistency in his hesitation in killing Paolo after his confession at the Shop (an episode which has been strongly criticized) and his sincere reluctance to kill the pair until he should have seen them kiss. "I'll wait to find them in each other's arms," he says, "and so to all men justify my deed." Nor, on the other hand, is the deliberate and conscious planning for the murder and its consummation, upon finding the pair "enfolded and entwined," inconsistent with all his tenderness. Browning's Guido of the "Ring and the Book," and Phillips' Giovanni are intensely interesting to study, from this point of view—a comparison of their motives for hesitation and final murder, and the contrasting characters of the two men.

A passing allusion is made by Lucrezia to Giovanni's limp, but he is not made physically repellent as in the case of the corresponding character of the D'Annunzio drama. Yet he lacks a "gaiety of mind," the ability to sing and play, and the "art long hours to entertain," which Paolo possesses. Moreover, he is older and "youth seeks youth," as the dramatist reiterates. Inevitably the "bright Paolo" would appeal to Francesca's romantic nature, while "dark Giovanni" would repel her. Aside from this, the characters of Giovanni and Paolo are not sufficiently differentiated to account for her utter indifference toward Giovanni and her intense passion for Paolo. The bond which united them was, for the most part, the Love "which to no loved one permits excuse for loving."

Overmastering Fate as in "Pelléas and Mélisande" is, in the end, the chief actor, the "primum mobile" of the drama. "His kiss was on her lips e'er she was born." "Unwillingly he comes a wooing; she unwillingly is wooed; yet shall they woo." Giovanni's command that Paolo remain at Rimini, Nita's wily persuasions, Lucrezia's interference, and finally Giovanni's own

committal of Francesca to Paolo are simply used to emphasize this insistence on the cruelty of the inevitable, and we might add, border on the melodramatic in their emotional appeal. The fate of the characters is sealed in Act one, scene one: "Ours is but one heart, one honour and one death. Any one that comes between us I would kill." Even at the end of the second act, Paolo has died and is simply gazing back at life. Fate has made them prisoners, yet never "prisoners of hope," for the very day of their doom is set, their destiny not only in this life but in the life to come determined. Dramatic suspense is at an end early in the play, and yet the reader's interest is sustained. With no clash of character on character, and a decided lack of subtlety in character portrayal, with the web of Destiny already woven, it is clearly the emotional appeal, obvious though it may be, the poetry and idealization of the theme which buoys up the interest. Phillips is in this as in his other works, the decorative artist; never the architect.

The principal characters are, throughout the play, more or less remote from Life, perhaps because of their nearness to Death. Lucrezia, a member of the family, is the most original creation. Everything she does and says is significant in the light of a love for Giovanni—impelled by a violent emotion, she rises more often to the level of Poetry than the other characters. There is bitter irony in the fact that after all her suffering she should have "borne one child," but that that child should have "died in youth."

With the exception of Nita, who affords the lighter comic element, and whose vulgar ideals of love are in striking contrast to Francesca's innocence, the only other interesting character is Angela, the blind and aged servant. She contributes to the mystery by her power of oracle and prophecy; together with Lucrezia, she is an aid to the element of suspense, which is otherwise so lacking. A tone of tenderness and refinement prevails throughout the play. The murder takes place behind the scenes and is dealt with as delicately as the other incidents. Even Paolo must "under some potion gently die," in order not to distress either the eyes of Francesca or the reader. The light Love scene at the Inn out of Rimini introduces not only an element of humour, but serves as a dramatic contrast to the highly poetic and pathetic scene in the Arbor at Dawn. The Apothecary Shop at Pulci affords several bright flashes of Life and interesting bits of characterization.

But in spite of its charm, "Paolo and Francesca" is not great. A first reading is delightful, affecting, profitable; a second is less delightful; a third is monotonous; and on reaching the fourth, one is reading rhythmically, dreamily, even without sympathy. That we scarcely ever pause to ponder over a line or passage and that one can read the play and re-read it over and over again in a few hours, is an indication of emptiness.

Stephen Phillips has done what none of the other dramatists has attempted in apportioning the lovers, not only their physical suffering, but their ultimate fate in the life after death—Hell (blissful though it may appear); and yet, in spite of this, the drama lacks "catharsis,"—a great purifying undercurrent. Like Bouguereau's "Madonna," the effect is poetical and romantic, but the beauty is the beauty of prettiness, never of strength.

Like Meissonier, D'Annunzio embellishes his pictures with all the details of real life. His scene is an Italian batt'e-field of the Thirteenth Century, a hand to hand conflict, with its clash of arms and the shouts of the victorious mingled with the groans of the dying. D'Annunzio's drama smacks of the soil. It is typically Italian. His setting is a faithful reproduction of the Rimini of the time of Dante. There is a luxuriance of local color and a keen insight into the psychology of his native race which Maeterlinck, the Belgian, or Phillips, the native Englishman, could never have possessed. Moreover, though D'Annunzio introduces a great number of characters, those characters are all characteristically native—the women are garbed in all the brilliant colors of the Roman shawl; the men are blood-thirsty, hot-headed, beauty-loving—warriors as well as lovers.

D'Annunzio excels the other dramatists in his command of dramatic technique. His action is never hurried. Both Méli-sande and Phillips' Francesca appear at the very opening of the plays; it is characteristic that D'Annunzio does not introduce his Francesca until a scene as long as an ordinary act has elapsed. Yet the suspense is admirably sustained throughout the five long acts. He continually makes use of the device of throwing side-lights on his principal figures through the description by minor characters. The women, the Jester, her brothers, even the Men-at-arms and the Archers, from their conversation, reflect the character of Francesca from their own peculiar point of view.

In "Francesca da Rimini," there is much unimportant but highly entertaining dialogue which is not essential to the narrative. In the first scene, Francesca's women like "a chirping nest of

swallows" chatter in the most ordinary way, and yet the scene is distinctly good because the dramatist has caught the true spirit of the characters and has pictured the whole so realistically. The Jester is a good character study. The comic element is a pleasant contrast to the tragic gloom, and moreover it is something noticeably lacking in the other dramas. It helps very materially to complete the picture of Life. Even though we finally become exasperated and cry with Alda, "O, Hush! Biancofiore, Do shut your mouth"—there is something refreshing about the merriment and laughter. In spite of this elaboration of detail, the characters are from the first unmistakably individual. Ostasio's treatment of the Jester is significant and fully prepares us for his cold-blooded attitude toward his sister and the "cunning plan" he concocts together with Sertoldo, for the marriage of Francesca. And yet he is not all cruelty, for he is sincerely moved too, at the thought of her as a "flower in the midst of so much iron." Of course, our sympathy is enlisted for Francesca, even before we meet her, when we are told that they are giving her to the lame Malatesta "for the sake of a poor hundred infantry." Added to this there is the fact of the deception, brought about by the substitution of the handsome Paolo for his ugly brother as suitor and indeed even bridegroom, an innovation which is utilized as an important and effective dramatic device by D'Annunzio, and the idea for which he has borrowed from the old romances and legends of Lancelot and Tristram.

There is much of brutal realism and the multiplication of bloody incidents. Even in the first act, at Bannino's dreadful implication of the attempted poisoning of their father, Ostasio wounds his bastard brother. Very significantly, of course, Francesca plucks from the sarcophagus a rose dyed in Bannino's blood and offers it to Paolo across the bars. Bannino appears at the end of the act, his face swathed in bandages. We see at a glance how distinctly different this method is from that of Stephen Phillips.

Fate, like a "loud rushing river," sweeps through the drama. From the very beginning there is an atmosphere of foreboding and a premonition of fear. From the middle of the second act, everything is fatalistic; even Francesca is conscious of it—"I am ready for any mortal game men play with Fate, Knowing I shall not lose, Seeing that all is lost." At the first sight of Paolo she weeps bitterly. She is indeed in even more striking contrast to her surroundings than Mélisande. Like Dante's character,

she is a lily growing up out of the pit of Tartarus; her playing with the "Greek Fire," indicative of her eagerness for light, is like *Mélisande's* intense craving for the sun. *Gianciotto*, the *Lame*, is not only physically repellent, but coarse, cruel and tyrannical. His only reward for his triumphant archers is a curse. *Golaud* and *Giovanni* were more or less attractive, but this man is positively despicable. *Paolo* has all the attributes of the other brothers, the romantic temperament and the intensity of feeling, but added to these he also has the strength and attractiveness of a mighty, skillful warrior. The relation of *Paolo* and *Francesca* is, here, somewhat different from that in the other plays for this *Paolo* has a wife, and he is moreover, by his base deception, under obligations to *Francesca*. *Malatestino*, the horrible one-eyed brother of *Gianciotto*, is the person who excites the suspicion—just as little *Yniold*, and *Lucrezia* and *Jeppe* were agents in the other plays. He is an overdrawn naturalistic creation, "a-thirst for blood, the enemy of all things," and incited by a mad jealousy.

D'Annunzio, with true dramatic power, takes advantage (which none of the other dramatists have done so skillfully) of that most romantic and highly tragic moment, when the lovers first become conscious of the nature of their affection, indeed the most solemn instant in the story. *Francesca*, standing on the ramparts, and praying, vows to let the judgment of God make proof of *Paolo* by preserving him from an arrow, as he stands there unprotected. A shaft grazes his head, and *Francesca*, thinking him wounded, takes his head in her hands. It is then that "a mortal pallor over-spreads his face." There is the common device used in the other dramas of the feigned departure of the husband, and as in *Phillips' play* the commitment of the wife to the brother, in order to test their love and entrap them. The story of *Lancelot* and *Guinevere* as a powerful motive in the development of the plot, is made free use of by *Phillips* as well as by *Echegaray*.

Someone has called "*Francesca da Rimini*" "glorified melodrama." Another has said, it is "more a drama of blood than of love." However that may be, the interest in the story does carry us along and the characters are handled dramatically with a more or less marked development in each of them. Even the brutality and blood-shed, culminating in the butchery, at the end, seems not to detract from the deeper, more fundamental tragedy of inevitable Fate. The most realistic parts are poetically conceived. If "*Francesca da Rimini*" has not all the elements

of greatness, it is at least worthy of consideration and a certain amount of praise because of its lofty attitude toward Life.

Though the details of the story are entirely different from those of the love plot of the Dante episode, Echegaray's "Great Galeoto" is in reality a very novel, original and up-to-date variation of the Paolo and Francesca theme. In Ernest, "He of the dramas, the poet and the dreamer, with a soul on fire and given to romanticism," we discover the Paolo, though a more fully developed character, with much of common-sense and comprehension of Life in his make-up. There are in fact many allusions to the Paolo and Francesca theme all the way through the work. Ernest, in the prologue of the play, inspired by the "immortal work of the immortal Florentine," invokes the shades of Francesca and Paolo to assist him with the story of their loves. Thereafter, when we see Ernest at work the "Divine Comedy" is spread out always before him, open at the "Francesca page." The inter-relation of the characters in the drama is essentially the same. Ernest, indeed, feels just as sympathetically toward Don Julian as though he were a blood relation and not simply adopted, and exclaims in all sincerity, "I too (were I Julian) would be in doubt, even of my own brother."

The characters of the "Great Galeoto" are far more like Ibsen's creations, or rather representations, than any we have met hitherto—they are living, breathing, human and quite like any we might number among our circle of acquaintance. They are neither sages nor saints; rather ordinary than eccentric. Though Ernest is the typical youthful poet, emotional and intense, he is in addition, an individual. Theodora is always natural—a normal, wholesome young woman, with the simple naïveté and innocence of youth. There is nothing of the dewiness of the convent or the mystery of birth about her. She has been brought up like other people. She is never a psychological puzzle. Julian, the husband, is respectable, dignified, a hard-headed business man and a Spanish gentleman, with an extraordinary amount of common sense and good humor and a deficiency of real feeling. Don Mercedes and his wife are hardly more meddlesome than the "ordinary run" of common folk. Pepito, their son, in spite of his Lilliputian character is something more than a caricature. His self-importance and over solicitude in other people's affairs is genuinely humorous. In the "Great Galeoto" we find a genuine excellency which the other dramas

have lacked and which was in them, a distinct limitation—humor of character.

Echegaray reveals less of a national art temperament than any of the dramatists we have considered. Indeed, there is little in the play to remind the readers of the author's nativity. The steady progress of the action and the usual quietness of the atmosphere is never disturbed by loud flourishes or the sounding of trumpets, not even by the hunt and the music of the bugle. The language of the play is sometimes sparkling, brilliant, glittering, but for the most part, it is ordinary conversation. The setting is modern Madrid, (although it might be New York or Berlin or Rome, as well) with no odor of mediæval castles or dark underground vaults. There is moreover, a happy proportion of light and shade in the picture—a playfulness which is altogether charming.

The well-worn device, used by the other dramatists of the approaching departure of the lover, is here a means of heightening their regard and disclosing to one another their real attitude, which had hitherto been concealed. Echegaray deals most artistically and delicately with the love-motif, keeping the physical aspect far in the background. "In my play there can be little or no love," says Ernest, in the Prologue, and in the strict sense of the word this is true of the "Great Galeoto." Ernest and Theodora's love is never, at any rate, sensual. There is an analagous situation, in the last scene, to the final parting in *Pélléas and Mélisande*. The child motif is also present throughout; while the fascination of Theodora's physical beauty corresponds to *Mélisande's* in Maeterlinck's play.

It is Echegaray's purpose "to prove that not even the most insignificant actions are in themselves insignificant or lost for good and evil." The whispered scandal, the insinuations, Severo's hints, Mercedes' "asides," lending a meaning to everything which is naturally not there, Julian's questioning looks—a "thousand trivialities" are the most important factors in the progress of the action. Don Julian's "inward struggle" between heart and intelligence is a triumph of characterization. There is a subtle analysis of suggestion in his words "if the ignoble talk of the town should compel those two to treason, though they may now truthfully assert—'we are not lovers' the force of repetition of the word may eventually drive them to the fact." There is a deep sadness in the noble conflict within the soul of

this man—the spirit of trustfulness in him is willing, “but the flesh is weak.”

The Great Galeoto—“Everybody,” Pitiless Destiny in a novel form is as immanent in this drama as it is in the others. In spite of the fact that the inevitability of the tragedy is ever present, the element of “suspense” as well as of “recognition” is admirably sustained. We see the development of Ernest and Theodora’s love, not so much by what they say—indeed, they never state their love—but by the different expression of the same words. We are conscious of something deeper than mere respect and sympathy, when Ernest says, “Ah, we pray for anyone; we only weep for one;” and yet the lovers are unconscious of it. Even at the end of the drama, when Mercedes falsely construing Ernest’s words, tells Theodora that he has confessed his love for her, Theodora is struck by an indefinably gloomy terror. The tragedy is, of course, in spite of Don Julian’s death, not a tragedy of physical suffering, but of spiritual anguish—a catastrophe of character which is far more pitiful than any bloodshed could have been. The reiterated belief of Ernest, “I have been taught that gossip, whether inspired by malice or not, begins in a lie and generally ends in truth,” is proven a fact.

Not only in its genuine humor of character and dramatic irony, in its skillful manipulation of the element of surprise and suspense, and its possibility as an acting drama, in its scientific handling of the psychology of the social relations, and its insistent, immediate and universal appeal is the “Great Galeoto” great. Were it not that loyalty and innocence and pure and noble love and honor are so triumphant in the end, the questions “What is the use of loyalty?” and “What is the use of innocence?” and “Is it possible that impure love is the sole, supreme bond between man and woman in this world of clay?” might seriously be considered. But as it is the play is sternly moral, to a degree to which none of the other dramas has attained. Echegaray has showed in a powerful way the awful and immense effects for evil which may be accomplished through the mysterious influence of modern life, while the spiritual triumph and the final union of the characters bring about a true “catharsis.”

Returning again to our analogy from the pictures, these dramas are representatives of four Art ideals—Phillips, like Bouguereau, the interpreter of physical beauty, striving with the sense and feeling of the artist, for emotional, aesthetic expression; Echegaray, with the emphasis on method and technique, picturing

the evanescent, transitory mood of nature; D'Annunzio, aiming as does Meissonier, at a close and exact presentation of life as it is, and finally, Maeterlinck, impressionist in style, possessing the intangible, spiritual quality, which some critics have called "the divine" in Art.

BIRD SONGS

BY ELIZABETH HAZELTON HAIGHT

AT DAWN

When one has counted the hours,
Through the whole night long,
Welcome as rain in soft showers
Falls the first bird's song.

THE GOLDFINCH BACK

Among the dandelions,
A flower in the grass,
Then, gold on wings, he rises,
A bird. I watch him pass.

In undulating motion
And singing as he flies,
He takes my heart up with him,
Up, to the sun and skies.

THE HAPPY PRINCE

BY OSCAR WILDE

*Dramatized by Lou Wall Moore and Margaret F. Allen**

Scene: A public square with a golden bronze statue of the Happy Prince.

Time: Twilight, deepening into night.

CHARACTERS

THE PRINCE, a statue.

THE SWALLOW.

Swallow (entering).—I hope the town has made preparations. Where shall I put up? I will put up there. It is a fine position with plenty of fresh air. (*She seats herself on the pedestal of the statue and looks up, saying softly.*) I have a golden bed-room. (*As she prepares to fold her head under her wing, a large drop of water falls upon her.*) What a curious thing! There is not a single cloud in the sky, and yet it is raining! The climate in the north of Europe is really dreadful. (*Looking up.*) What is the use of a statue if it can not keep the rain off? (*Rises and looks around.*) I must look for a good chimney pot. (*She looks up at the Happy Prince with surprise and pity.*) Who are you?

Happy Prince (In a far away tone).—I am the Happy Prince.

Swallow.—Why are you weeping then? You have quite drenched me.

Happy Prince.—When I was alive and had a human heart I did not know what tears were, for I lived in the palace of Sans-Souci where sorrow is not allowed to enter. In the daytime I played with my companions in the garden, and in the evening I led the dance in the Great Hall. Round the garden was a very lofty wall; I never cared to ask what lay beyond it—everything about me was so beautiful. My courtiers called me the Happy

*The Happy Prince was produced for the first time in the Chicago Little Theatre December 26, 1913. It was acted at the Toy Theatre, Boston, March 2, 1914.

*For permission to perform, and for instructions as to how to produce, apply to the producer, Lou Wall Moore.

Prince, and happy indeed I was, if pleasure be happiness. So I lived and so I died. And now that I am dead, they have set me up here so high that I can see all the ugliness and all the misery of my city, and though my heart is made of lead, yet I can not choose but weep.

Swallow (To herself).—What! Is he not solid gold?

Prince (Continuing).—Far away, far away in a little street there is a poor house. One of the windows is open, and through it I can see a woman seated at a table. Her face is thin and worn. She is embroidering passion flowers on a satin gown for the loveliest of the Queen's maids-of-honour to wear at the next Court-ball. In a bed in the corner of the room, her little boy is lying ill. He has a fever, and is asking for oranges. His mother has nothing to give him but river water, so he is crying. Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow, will you not bring her the ruby out of my sword-hilt? My feet are fastened to this pedestal and I cannot move.

Swallow.—I am waited for in Egypt. My friends are flying up and down the Nile and talking to the large Lotus-flowers. Soon they will go to sleep in the tomb of the great King. The King is there himself in his painted coffin. He is wrapped in yellow linen and embalmed with spices. Round his neck is a chain of pale green jade, and his hands are like withered leaves.

Prince.—Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow, will you not stay with me for one night and be my messenger? The boy is so thirsty and the mother so sad.

Swallow.—I don't think I like little boys. It is very cold here but I will stay with you for one night and be your messenger. (*She climbs the pedestal and plucks ruby from the sword-hilt.*)

Prince.—Thank you, Little Swallow.

(*Exit SWALLOW and the lights change to indicate the passing of time. About three minutes.*)

Swallow (Entering).—I passed by the cathedral tower, where the white marble angels were sculptured. I passed by the palace, and heard the sound of dancing. A beautiful girl came out on the balcony with her lover. "How wonderful the stars are," he said to her, "and how wonderful is the power of love!" "I hope my dress will be ready in time for the State-ball," she answered: "I have ordered passion-flowers to be embroidered on it; but the seamstresses are so lazy." I passed over the river and at last I came to the poor house and looked in. The boy was tossing feverishly on his bed and the mother had fallen asleep,

she was so tired. In I hopped and laid the great ruby on the table beside the woman's thimble. Then I flew gently round the bed, fanning the boy's forehead with my wings. "How cool I feel," said the boy, "I must be getting better," and he sank into a delicious slumber. Tonight I go to Egypt and I am in high spirits at the prospect. Have you any commissions for Egypt? I am just starting.

Prince.—Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow, will you not stay with me one night longer?

Swallow (Pausing).—I am waited for in Egypt. Tomorrow my friends will fly up to the Second Cataract. The river-horse couches there among the bulrushes, and on a great white throne sits the God Memnon. All night long he watches the stars, and when the morning star shines, he utters one cry of joy and then he is silent. At noon the yellow lions come down to the water's edge to drink. They have eyes like green beryls and their roar is louder than the roar of the cataract.

Prince.—Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow, far across the city I see a young man in a garret. He is leaning over a desk covered with papers and by his side there is a bunch of withered violets. His hair is brown and crisp and his lips are red as pomegranates, and he has large and dreamy eyes. He is trying to finish a play for the Director of the Theatre, but he is too cold to write any more. There is no fire in the grate and hunger has made him faint.

Swallow.—I will wait with you one night longer. Shall I take him another ruby?

Prince.—Alas, I have no ruby now. My eyes are all that I have left. They are made of rare sapphires, which were brought out of India a thousand years ago. Pluck out one of them and take it to him.

Swallow.—Dear Prince, I cannot do that.

Prince.—Swallow, Swallow, Little Swallow, do as I command you. (SWALLOW plucks out the left eye, mounting on pedestal. Exit SWALLOW left. Lights lower very slowly to darkness; as they rise again SWALLOW enters.)

Swallow.—It was easy enough to get in, as there was a hole in the roof. Through this I darted and came into the room. The young man had his head buried in his hands, so he did not hear the flutter of my wings, and when he looked up he found the beautiful sapphire lying on the withered violets. Then I flew down to the harbor. I sat on the mast of a large vessel and

watched the sailors hauling big chests out of the hold with ropes. "Heave a-hoy," they shouted as each chest came up. "I am going to Egypt," I cried, but nobody minded, and when the moon rose I flew back to you. I am come to bid you good-bye.

Prince.—Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow, will you not stay with me one night longer?

Swallow.—It is winter, and the chill snow will soon be here. In Egypt the sun is warm on the green palm-trees, and the crocodiles lie in the mud and look lazily about them. My companions are building a nest in the Temple of Baalbec, and the pink and white doves are watching them and cooing to each other.

Prince.—In the square below there stands a match-girl. She has let her matches fall in the gutter and they are all spoiled. She is crying. She has no shoes or stockings, and her little head is bare. Pluck out my other eye and give it to her.

Swallow.—I will stay with you one night longer, but I cannot pluck out your eye. You would be quite blind then.

Prince.—Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow, do as I command you. (*SWALLOW plucks out the other eye.*)

(*SWALLOW exits left. Lights lower then brighten as she enters again.*)

Swallow.—I swooped past the little match-girl and slipped the jewel into the palm of her hand. "What a lovely bit of glass," cried the little girl; and she ran home, laughing. (*SWALLOW comes toward the Prince.*) You are blind now, so I will stay with you always.

Prince.—No, Little Swallow, you must go away, to Egypt.

Swallow.—I will stay with you always. I will tell you of strange lands; of the red ibises, who stand in long rows on the banks of the Nile and catch gold-fish in their beaks, of the Sphinx, who is as old as the world itself and lives in the desert and knows everything; of the merchants who walk slowly by the side of their camels, and carry amber beads in their hands; of the King of the Mountains of the Moon, who is as black as ebony and worships a large crystal; of the great green snake that sleeps in a palm-tree, and has twenty priests to feed it with honey-cakes; and of the pygmies who sail over a big lake on large flat leaves and are always at war with the butterflies.

Prince.—Dear little Swallow, you tell me of marvelous things but more marvelous than anything is the suffering of men and of women. There is no Mystery so great as Misery.

You have flown over my city, Little Swallow, tell me all the misery you saw there.

Swallow.—I saw the rich making merry in their beautiful houses, while the beggars were sitting at the gates. I flew into dark lanes, and saw the white faces of starving children looking out listlessly at the black streets. Under the archway of a bridge two little boys were lying in one another's arms, trying to keep themselves warm. I am growing colder and colder. Good-bye, dear Prince. Will you let me kiss your hand?

Prince.—I am glad that you are going to Egypt at last, Little Swallow, for you have stayed too long here; but you must kiss me on the lips for I love you.

Swallow.—It is not to Egypt that I am going. I am going to the House of Death. Death is the brother of Sleep, is he not?

(She sinks at the feet of the Statue and dies. Lights very slowly dim into almost blackness and in the dark you hear a far-away voice. During the speech the light increases to a soft dim blue, concentrated on the HAPPY PRINCE and the dead bird.)

The Voice.—"Bring me the two most precious things in the city," said God to one of His angels, and the angel brought Him the dead bird and the heart of the Happy Prince.

"You have rightly chosen," said God, "for in my garden of Paradise this little bird shall sing forevermore, and in my city of Gold the Happy Prince shall praise me."

OSCAR WILDE FIFTEEN YEARS AFTER

THE REVIVAL OF INTEREST IN THE POET PLAYWRIGHT
PHILOSOPHER'S WORKS; AND THE KINDLY OBLIVION
THAT HAS ENSHROUDED THE MAN

By F. G. H.

AT Berneval, a quiet little village near Dieppe, France, Sebastian Melmoth, an ex-convict just discharged from a sentence of two years at hard labor in the most relentless of English penitentiaries, sat chatting with André Gide, the only living being with heart enough to seek out the man whom all the world still declared a criminal and who still felt himself such.

It was in the winter of 18—. A terrific storm was raging along the sea-coast nearby. Melmoth and Gide were comfortably placed in the best rooms of the only hotel in the village. Gide watched and listened while his companion affected a smile and feebly exerted the shadow of his former wonderful charm. What Gide saw was the face of a dandy grown red and common looking; the hands of a poet swollen and red and scarred with wounds got by terrible prison labor. What Gide heard was a sorrowful man, at first faintly jocund, finally give up the pretense of good cheer, acknowledge himself utterly crushed, and lament the stony-heartedness of a world that only knows a man by the last thing he has done.

Two years later Sebastian Melmoth died in a shabby little hotel in the Rue des Beaux Arts in Paris. Seven persons followed the hearse. On the coffin was an artificial wreath—an unintentional but poignantly true as well as cruel shaft of irony at one who, as king of dandies, lived a life that was the very quintessence of artificiality.

Motley was his name from the hour of his birth. They christened him Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde. He was the most exquisite artificer of epigrams, aphorisms, and paradoxes the nineteenth century produced; and yet no paradox ever fell from his lips half as paradoxical as himself. His own biography is the story of one "who turned that which was good in his life

into evil and that which was evil into good." On the morning of a single day he occupied a position of topmost eminence in the world of Art, dazzling and delighting two worlds, eagerly listened to by a delighted public for the incomparable saying that was sure to fall from his lips—triumphantly entertaining a host of readers with the talent that he expended on his books, and charming enemies into friends by a genius that he exercised in conversation; and on the night of the same day he stood a manacled prisoner on the platform of Clapham Junction Depot, laughed at, jeered at, and spat upon by the very people who twenty-four hours earlier had acknowledged him a monarch of the mind. His career is the most tragic in modern literature or life. It is full of contrasts, contradictions, and amazingly grotesque arabesques of the sublime and the ridiculous; if it were not real it would be laughable.

He was a Midas possessed of an untold wealth of wondrous words in which he loved to thrust his fingers, scattering his finely minted coins to the four corners of the earth, beautifying whatever object they touched—sublimating to the ideal that which had seemed common and popularizing aspects of art that had hitherto been the exclusive enjoyment of the few with a charm and beauty of exposition that brought them within the reach of the many. He was such a magical artist at fashioning exquisite mosaics of exactly placed words that he excelled easily and gracefully at whatever form of literature he attempted.

But life to him was, except at the very last, merely an aspect of Art. In the end he got to know that life is very real and that Art is an aspect of Life. But he came the nearest to being a successful rebel against life and its conventions that the world has ever seen. Had he succeeded he might now be regarded as the hero, the Luther, of a great liberalizing revolution against the tyranny of the Prudes and the Philistines. Except for one thing he might now be known as the champion of individualism over stultifying conventionality,—but that one thing, the single fly in his wonderfully, beautifully lambent amber, wrecked him—like all individualists, like all leaders of new rebellions, the very principle of which is the disdain of all laws, the despisement of any system or proportion, he was inevitably strangled by the exercise of his own individualism.

Life, until it took him rudely by the shoulders, was a tedious, ugly coarse-fibred creature that it was the duty of the artist to refine to the ends of Art. "The proper school to learn art in is not

life, but art," he said. "Art begins with abstract decoration, with purely imaginative and pleasurable work dealing with what is unreal and non-existent. This is the first stage. Then Life becomes fascinated with this new wonder, and asks to be admitted into the charmed circle. Art takes life as part of her rough material, recates it, and refashions it in fresh forms; is absolutely indifferent to fact; invents, imagines, dreams, and keeps between herself and reality the impenetrable barrier of beautiful style, of decorative or ideal treatment. The third stage is when Life gets the upper hand and drives Art out into the wilderness. This is the true decadence, and it is from this that we are now suffering."

Thus this radiant, honey-worded, unanswerable despoiler of life, continued, irrespective of life's laws, the world-wide pursuit of that beauty which is not truth and that truth which is not beauty—a golden-tongued madman in pursuit of a mirage—and the end was the Dead Sea. He knew better than anybody, what the end had to be. In the very hour that he thought to defeat life and the world, he stopped to pay tribute to its victories over all those rebels, like Wainwright, and Paul Verlaine, who had gone before, as if in presentiment that he too would go down beneath its inexorably grinding wheels. "The world is very stern with those that thwart her," he said. "She lays down her precepts, and woe to those who dare to think for themselves, who venture to exercise their own discretion as to whether they shall allow their individuality and natural characteristics to be stamped out, to be obliterated under the leaden fingers of convention. Truly, convention is the stone that has become head of the corner in the jerry-built temple of our superficial, self-assertive civilization. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."

Still does it stand, however, that people remember the last thing a man does, not the last thing a man is. With the passing years a kindly oblivion enfolds all ugly memory of the man—an oblivion that is as strong in its forgetfulness, if not its forgiveness, as the great strength of popular appeal that exists in his own works. The creature of his times, his times did not understand him. It could not differentiate between a man's moral character and his books. In a community that could do no more than admire the beauty of personal cleanliness—the beauty of soap and cold water, Wilde sang of the beauty of silks and marbles and rare stones—beauty for its own sake. And under the pressure

of the most prosaic of surroundings he produced works of transcendent beauty.

But it has taken England—and still the lesson is not entirely learned—fifteen years to realize, as Wilde said of Wainwright in “Pen, Pencil and Poison,” that “the fact of a man being a poisoner is nothing against his prose.” In spite of the unfortunate, abject, but easily condoned and readily understood humility of “De Profundis,” the beauty of the artist is rising more and more clear, more resplendent and comprehensible from the ashes of the man. That trying poseur, that starting fiction of himself that Wilde industriously and studiously built up by years of attitudinizing, with such fixtures as blue china, sunflowers, knee breeches, aestheticism, green carnations, and the like—has passed away and what remains is a constantly growing realization and appreciation of *our one flawless English artist of words*. The truth of the words that Sebastian Melmoth spoke in bitterness in the little village in France, is in full process, not to the hurt, but to the help of his name and fame, like a balm of Gilead to his many wounds,—the public is getting to know the man by the last thing he did, not the last thing he was. People have forgotten that strange, flamboyant, startling egotist that burst upon the world like a comet, signalling his arrival, though in penury, with his famous pun on Henry Irving’s legs—“that one was a poem and the other a symphony”—and they are remembering rather the author of “The Soul of Man Under Socialism” with its singularly apt saying that “a work of art is the unique result of a unique temperament. Its beauty comes from the fact that the author is what he is. It has nothing to do with the fact that other people want what they want;” or its other equally sentient saying that “there is not a single real poet or prose writer of this century on whom the British public have not solemnly conferred diplomas of immorality.” They are remembering this work, his “Critic and Artist,” his wonderful “Poems in Prose,” his Essays and his plays. They are recognizing Oscar Wilde as the literary ancestor of Bernard Shaw, Gilbert Chesterton, Somerset Maugham and the best writers of English comedies today. On the continent his influence is even greater; his works have gone into French, German and Russian. New, finer and fuller editions of his works come out frequently in this country—the only tragic pity of which is that the remnants of the Wilde family are in no way the gainers even from this renewed public interest in the works of him who was but yesterday the public outcast.

But the most remarkable of all signs of the rehabilitation of Oscar Wilde's name and fame that is coming through the mercy of Time occurred in London summer before last. The single sterling success of the theatrical season was a revival of Oscar Wilde's brilliant comedy—that superbly serious comedy for trivial people—"The Importance of Being Earnest." It was the first public performance of an Oscar Wilde play in London since May 25th, 1895, when the man was suddenly branded as a thing tainted, banished beyond human sight, his works confiscated—managers and publishers publicly renouncing all their rights to the products of him whose very name, when spoken, was an offense against right taste.

The performance was an instant success. The play ran over nine months and inspired George Alexander, who produced it, with thoughts of reviving the two other pieces in the Wilde trinity of comedies—"written to teach the world to understand what ails it"—"Lady Windemere's Fan" and "A Woman of No Importance." For the first time in eight years the play was again done in America, with A. E. Matthews as "Algy." Its last New York performance was at The Empire Theatre in 1902, where it had a long season with the bills simply announcing the exquisite work as "by the author of 'Lady Windemere's Fan.'" This last time when it was done in New York, Oscar Wilde's name was found upon the play bill; but during the summer when George Alexander reproduced the comedy in London, crediting it to Oscar Wilde called for a little more courage than he had in stock. He left the author's name off the programme and off the printed bills entirely.

Then occurred a singular commentary on the public. Scores of letters were written to the press protesting against the cruel neglect that had been done Oscar Wilde by the anonymous performance of his comedy, which had suddenly become as great a vogue as in the days of its first performance. Mr. Alexander read these letters unmoved. He had good reason to be timid. Finally steps were taken to call a public meeting in justice to the memory of Wilde, whom these very advocates of posthumous justice had once driven into unthinkable misery, perhaps deservedly but without a hearing. To this genuine show of a real public desire that Wilde be given credit for his work, Mr. Alexander obediently bowed and had the name of Oscar Wilde again printed on the programme of the St. James Theatre, just as it had appeared on that terrible May 25th, 1895.

For it was on the stage of the St. James Theatre fifteen years earlier that "The Importance of Being Earnest" was being acted when its author, Oscar Wilde, furnished the proof—if proof were wanting—that it is but a step, or less than a step, from the famous to the infamous. It was on the stage of this very St. James Theatre that Mr. Alexander was acting in "The Importance of Being Earnest" when the news came that Oscar Wilde's name had been stricken from the list of the living; that the man had fallen from the topmost heights to unthinkable depths; that English cant had found a fresh victim and that a typical English mob was dancing for joy in front of the courthouse in which Wilde had been condemned.

Instantly the theatre was closed, the actors dismissed, a hasty conference held and search made for a new play, that could at once be put into rehearsal. Meantime all England was gloating over a taste of the king of sports—man-hunting. The wrath of the Philistines was at fever heat; the newspapers fanned it into an organized crusade. When he might easily have fled, Wilde continued on the scene. With head erect, without uttering a word of reproach to his enemies, he remained to meet the nameless fate which speedily followed. High and low turned against him in common hatred. It seemed as if all London had rallied itself into a mob that fairly thirsted for him. Two hotels closed their doors against him; one because a mob was raging before it, threatening to storm the house. Many of that mob the night before had sat in delight before the finely polished wit of him whom they would obliterate.

Everybody knows the rest of the tragic story. They took him away and put him in a kind of rabbit cage with a roof of wire netting. They gave him bags to sew and left him to be forgotten. That is the way of the mob. The very essence of Philistinism—"that part of a man's being not illumined by imagination"—is the mob spirit. In the prison cell, whose door was always closed to his friends but open to his enemies, they killed the man; he upon whom fell the stone of the world's disapproval, was ground into powder. But the artist lives.

AN ANCIENT REALIST

BY GEORGE NORLIN

A number of admirable efforts in recent years to transplant the delicate flowers of the Greek Anthology into the alien soil of English verse¹ may serve to awaken a more general interest in that remarkable collection of Greek minor poetry, which taking its earliest form in the "Garland" of Meleager in the first century B. C., grew from age to age in the hands of various compilers until, in the fourteenth century A. D., Maximus Planudes, a learned monk of Constantinople, included in his up-to-date Anthology verses which are coeval with the beginnings of English Song.

The Anthology as we now have it comprises some five thousand short pieces which the Greeks called epigrams, a word which means primarily inscriptions on stone, and which was applied to the poems of the Anthology because they were in many cases composed as actual inscriptions or because they purport to be inscriptions, or merely because as literary forms they approach the inscriptional ideal of saying little and suggesting much. They touch upon all manner of themes—love, friendship, family affection, literature, art, religion, nature, the tragedies and comedies of human life; and it is part of their charm that they often treat these human interests in an intimate and personal way. They range in time over a period of almost nineteen hundred years, from Archilochus, the earliest poet represented in the Anthology, whom we may date roughly at seven hundred B. C., to the latest versifier of the Planudes collection; but the great majority are of the Alexandrian and Byzantine periods. In so vast a mass of poetry, much of it late—mere flickers of dying candles—there is, naturally, a plenty of indifferent verse; but the general average is good, and many, a great many, of these little poems are as perfect in their unpretentious beauty as anything can be.

¹The latest is a collection of verse translations by various authors, including versions of his own, by G. B. Grundy, entitled "Ancient Gems in Modern Settings." Oxford, 1913.

Some have the prestige of great names—Plato, Sappho or Simonides; some are mere waifs, undated and unclaimed, which have kept their place by intrinsic charm; and still others—and these make up a great number—are by poets who are known from the Anthology alone.

Of the latter poets it is perhaps Leonidas of Tarentum who most deserves to be singled out for special study. He was evidently a favorite with the Greek Anthologists as he was later a favorite of Sainte-Beuve.² Meleager praised his verses as the “rich ivy clusters of Leonidas” and wove them prominently into his “Garland,” and it is no accident that in the Anthology which has come down to us Leonidas is represented by a greater number of epigrams than any poet except Meleager. Indeed, Meleager is the only one of those whom we may call the humbler poets of the Anthology who could with any justice dispute the supremacy of Leonidas; but as Meleager is par excellence the love poet of the Anthology, and as this is a theme on which Leonidas is all but silent, there is little basis for comparison. It is, perhaps, safe to say that each is superior in his own way. Leonidas could hardly have felt, still less have put into such fervid words, the Romantic passion which in Meleager and his imitators flamed into what Mr. Grundy has boldly called “the most beautiful love-poems in Western literature.”³ He could hardly have written, for example, these lines of Meleager:

Now the bright crocus flames, and now
 The slim narcissus takes the rain,
 And, straying o'er the mountain's brow
 The daffodillies bud again.
 The thousand blossoms wax and wane
 On wold, and heath, and fragrant bough,
 But fairer than the flowers art thou,
 Than any growth of hill or plain.
 Ye gardens cast your leafy crown,
 That my Love's feet may tread it down,
 Like lilies on the lilies set
 My Love, whose lips are softer far
 Than drowsy poppy petals are,
 And sweeter than the violet!⁴

²Nouveaux Lundis VII. p. 11.

³“Ancient Gems in Modern Settings,” p. XLIV.

⁴Ep. V. 144 trans. by Andrew Lang.

Leonidas could not have surrendered himself to the Asiatic abandon of this and other characteristic love poems of the later period which, however attractive to modern taste, are nevertheless somewhat un-Hellenic. In the rare instances in which he touches on love it is with the detached interest of one who watches the game, not one who plays it, as in two dedicatory epigrams to Aphrodite, in one of which Callicleia hangs up as thank-offerings in the temple of the Goddess a silver Eros, a bronze mirror, and sundry articles of personal embellishment of which she has no further use, having now attained her desire;⁵ in the other the handsome Rhodo consecrates to Aphrodite the staff, the sandals, the dirty flask, the tattered wallet containing nothing but ancient philosophy, which seedy old Professor Sochares had owned before they became the spoils of Love!⁶

But the difference between Meleager and Leonidas is not merely one of temperament; it is one of range of interests and sympathy. To Meleager life is love and youthful dalliance, and the only shadows of his world are cast by the sombre moods of some lovely Zenophil or Heliodore; Leonidas looks farther and envisages the stern exigencies of the coming years, when life has lost its insouciant vigor and stoops with dull patience to the burdens of Fate. He is oppressed like any Greek by the pathos of human existence, "the riddle of the painful earth," but the characteristic melancholy of his race is in him accentuated by a life of unusual stress and trouble. He was born in Tarentum in Southern Italy; he lived in the early third century B. C., through the turbulent years of war between his country and Rome; he saw his people conquered, himself condemned to wandering exile—"a life that is no life" he bitterly complains—and cruellest of all, a grave far from his native land!⁷

Tarentum was but the first of the Greek cities to feel the shock of Roman arms, and Leonidas' tragic cry, *Bios 'a Bios*, "a life that is no life" must have been raised in many a Greek community throughout the world as in future years they saw the "wasting War God of the Italians"⁸ advance upon them and over them with a ravaging greed for dominion which appeared to at least one poet of the Anthology to mock at the limits of the earth and the sea, and aim at the very heavens and the citadel of God:

⁵VI. 211

⁶VI. 293.

⁷VII. 715.

⁸From Mackail's trans. of Ep. VII. 368.

The mighty throne of the heavens
Guard, O Zeus, I pray,
For the earth and the ocean tremble
Beneath the Roman sway.

The unwearied doors of the highest
Close, I pray, O God!
For the road that leads to Olympus
Is the only road untrod!⁹

“We all dwell in one fatherland, the Universe,” said Meleager,¹⁰ but he was a Syrian by birth and could not realize that to be a mere citizen of the world was a chill and empty privilege to those who had shared the free life of the old Greek cities which, in the days of their independence, had absorbed the interests, the passions, the ambitions of their members to a degree that we can no longer understand. The breaking up of the solidarity of the old city-state into the larger political unity of the Empire did, in the course of time, result in a thin sentiment of universal brotherhood, but the immediate effect was to rob Greek life of its warming and comforting feeling of social comradeship in all matters of life and death and to fling the individual back upon himself and obsess him with a sense of his aloneness and insignificance. That is why the Anthology is, as Longfellow said of it, one of the saddest of books. Much of the brightness, the warmth, the color which made life so wonderful and death so abhorrent to the Greek race in its youth is now gone from the world, leaving the spirit heavy with the tedium of an existence which is but a painful moment between two eternities:

Long ere thou sawest the sun,
Infinite ages had run;
After the day time is done
There are infinite years.

Man, what remaineth for thee?
A point too little to see,
Or lesser if that may be,
Thy life time appears.

⁹IX 576 trans by Lilla Cabot Perry.

¹⁰VII. 417.

Yet evil therein is rife,
It is filled with sorrow and strife;
And sweeter by far than life
Is the death man fears.¹¹

These gloomy lines of Leonidas appear to be not merely the expression of a passing mood, as so many pessimistic utterances in Greek literature are, but of a settled melancholy. There is in him little or none of that passionate clinging to life which comes from a feeling that death is the end of all joy in the light of the sun.

With courage seek the kingdom of the dead,
The path before you lies:
It is not hard to find, nor tread;
No rocks to climb, no lanes to thread;
But broad and straight, and even still,
And ever gently slopes downhill;
You cannot miss it, though you shut your eyes.¹²

Death is better than life; the end, at any rate, is peace. His characters pass off the stage with no regret: Theris, the old fisher¹³, and Platthis, the faithful spinning woman¹⁴, to their long sleep; Pheidon to the tranquil harbor after a stormy life¹⁵; old Gorgus, heeding the first call of death and refusing to hoard his weary years:

As on her withered prop doth hang the vine,
So I upon my staff; and death doth call.
Wilt feign thou hearest not, O Soul of mine?
And yet, methinks, thy joy of life were small
To bask in sunshine at hay-harvest tide
Three years or four—were that so sweet to thee?
So calmly musing, Gorgus laid aside
His life and sought the greater company.¹⁶

¹¹VII. 472, trans. by J. A. Pott

¹³IV. 39 trans. by C. Merivale

¹⁴VII. 295

¹⁵VII. 726.

¹⁶VII. 478B

¹⁶VII. 731, trans. by J. A. Pott.

Only once does he dwell on the pity of death for the dead; it is in the graceful epitaph which he wrote for the girl-poet Erinna:

Erinna, young maiden singer among the poets, the bee who gathered the flowers of the Muses, Death snatched away to be his bride. Truly, indeed, did the girl say in her wisdom: "Thou art envious, O Death!"¹⁷

In his other epitaphs, Death is cruel mainly to the living; to the young girl who pining for her dead baby brother goes down with him into the grave;¹⁸ to the heart-stricken mother who would fain follow her dead son but may not:

Ah, unhappy Anticles, and unhappy I who burned thee on the funeral pyre in the very flower of thy youth, my only son, my child who didst perish at eighteen years! I am left to mourn and lament my lonely old age. O that I might go to the shadowy halls of Death; no longer is the dawn sweet to me nor the rays of the keen sun. Ah, Unhappy Anticles, cut off by Fate, be thou the healer of my grief and take me with thee out of life.¹⁹

In this dreary epitaph, Leonidas shows himself capable of voicing the poignant sorrow which bursts through the reserve of silent pain, but more commonly his sympathy is for those who bear their burdens with uncomplaining acquiescence. He is impressed above all by the hard lot of the poor—patient laborious days, year upon year, the bent frame, the dim eyes, the withered hands; at last the low, flickering flame, then darkness and the everlasting night.

Morning and evening, sleep she drove away—
Old Platthis—warding hunger from the door;
And still to wheel and distaff hummed her lay,
Hard by the gates of Eld, and bent and hoar,
Plying her loom until the dawn was grey,
The long course of Athena did she tread;
With withered hand by withered knee she spun
Sufficient for the loom of goodly thread,
Till all her work and all her days were done:

¹⁷VII. 13.
¹⁸VII. 662.
¹⁹VII. 37.

And in her eightieth year she saw the wave
Of Acheron—Old Platthis—kind and brave.²⁰

Theris the old, the waves that harvested
More keen than birds that labour on the sea,
With spear and net, by shore and rocky bed,
Not with the well-manned galley laboured he.
Him not the star of storms nor sudden sweep
Of wind with all his years had smitten and bent;
But in his hut of reeds he fell asleep,
As fades a lamp when all the oil is spent.
His tomb nor wife nor children raised, but we,
His fellow toilers, fishers of the sea.²¹

The poet's own life was one of narrow circumstances. In an epigram which is a thank offering for deliverance from sickness, he prays to be released also from the hard straits of poverty²²; in another, half playful, half sad, he warns the mice to leave his humble cabin and seek a more abundant board:

Dust-loving mouse, go, scamper from my cot!
The meagre pantry of Leonidas,
Contenting him, for thee sufficeth not.
Two rolls with salt, such is the fare he has,
Nor asks he better than his father's lot.
What seekest thou then here, thou dainty mouse?
Thou wouldst despise the food whereon I dined.
So hurry off; go try my neighbor's house,
For here is naught; there thou'lt abundance find.²³

His own experience, then, helped him to a fellow-feeling for the humble toilers who, having bravely waged an unequal war against Fate, claim all the more because they lack the recompense of Elysian Fields the simple "well done" of the living. He has no quarrel with the rich, among whom he doubtless had his friends, nor has he any envy. The facts of the nakedness of birth and of death are too much in his mind to permit him to be dazzled by the trappings which are worn between. Old Crethon, once rich in many lands, now owns his narrow grave, naught else:

²⁰VII. 726, trans. by Andrew Lang.

²¹VII. 295, trans. by Andrew Lang.

²²VI. 300.

²³VI. 302, trans. by Lilla Cabot Perry.

I am the tomb of Crethon; here you read
 His name; himself is numbered with the dead;
 Who once was rich in stable, stall and fold;
 Who once was blest above all living men—
 With lands, how narrow now, how ample then!²⁴

It is no advantage even to be richly buried. Sufficient is the light covering of a little dust. The lofty column is but a cruel weight upon the dead.²⁵ With these few lines Leonidas dismisses the glamor of wealth and station and for the rest devotes himself to "the short and simple annals of the poor."

This is the little farm of Cliton: his
 These narrow furrows for the sowing are;
 This little wood for cutting twigs is his,
 And his this somewhat scanty vine. Ah, well!
 Here Cliton passed his four times twenty years.²⁶

A number of his epitaphs are for country people, peasants and shepherds, whose little lives are lent a lonely pathos by the fact that the world in which they lived goes on without a pause to mark their absence. The slab on the grave of poor Alcimines declares that this tiny spot of earth belongs to him though now overrun with thorns and brambles which he kept cut while he lived.²⁷ Another epitaph, one of the most perfect in the Anthology pictures the cattle coming home, uncared for, to the steading, while the herdsman, struck by lightning, lies dead beneath the oak tree:

The hapless cattle from the hill-side came,
 Late, and self-herded, beaten on by snow,
 But ah, the herdsman sleepeth, where the flame
 Of heaven beneath the oak-tree laid him low.²⁸

The above epigram, of which no translation can convey the simple beauty, is claimed for both Leonidas and Diotimus. There is, however, no doubt about the authorship of the epitaph

²⁴VII. 740, trans. by J. H. Merivale.

²⁵VII. 665.

²⁶VI. 226 trans. by Lilla Cabot Perry.

²⁷VII. 656.

²⁸VII. 173, trans. by Andrew Lang.

for the shepherd Clitagoras, in which Mackail finds "all the tenderness of an English pastoral in a land of soft outlines and silvery tones."²⁹

Shepherds that on this mountain ridge abide
Tending your goats and fleecy flock alway,
A little favour, but most grateful, pay
Cleitagoras, nor be the boon denied!
For sake of mother earth and by the bride
Of Hades under earth, let sheep, I pray,
Bleat near me, and the shepherd softly play
From the scarred rock across the pasture wide.

Ah! but in early spring cull meadow-sweet,
Neighbor, and weave a garland for my tomb;
And with ewe's milk be the stone edge bedewed,
When the lambs play about their mother's feet;
So shall you honour well the shades, from whom
Are thanks,—and from the dead is gratitude.³⁰

In one of his epigrams, whose earnestness is probably inspired by the dreariness of his own experience,³¹ Leonidas warns men against the homeless life of those who wander over seas from land to land; better a little hut for shelter, a tiny hearth, and scant, coarse fare.³² And yet he feels at times, like any member of the race which made the Odyssey, the alluring call of the sea:

'Tis time to sail! The chattering swallow's come;
There blows a pleasant breeze from out the west;
The meadows now are springing into bloom;
The sea, once-storm-tossed, now has sunk to rest.
So weigh the anchor! let the cable run!
And sail away with all your canvas set!
The God of all the harbours says 'Begone,
And fare ye forth your livelihood to get!³³

However, the sailor's life was not always one of summer skies and smiling waves; among a sea-going people, many were con-

²⁹Mackail: *Select Epigrams from the Greek Anthology*, p. 79.

³⁰VII, 637, trans. by William H. Hardinge.

³¹VII. 715.

³²VII. 736.

³³X. 1, trans. by J. B. Grundy.

strained by poverty or other causes to voyage in frail ships through the winter season when the ocean was frequently swept by sudden violent storms. To them, "even as a mother is sweeter than a step-mother, the land was dearer than the hoary sea."³⁴ It was a perilous business and too often the waves took their toll of death. The ghastly desolateness of such a fate is a common theme of the Anthology, and a number of the epigrams of Leonidas express his shuddering pity of those who go down in the cold and the dark:

A rough and steep-down squall out of the East and night and the waves of the gloomy setting of Orion were my bane, and I, Callaeschrus, lost my hold of life as I sped through the mid Libyan sea: So I am rolled drifting in the ocean to be the prey of fishes, and this stone says falsely that is over me.³⁵

Another sailor was more fortunate in that his body was washed upon the shore to be tended by loving hands and placed within a grave:

Do not set sail trusting in a long ship or deep; one storm is stronger than any ship afloat. A single gale destroyed Promachus and the sudden wave swept his sailors into the yawning sea. Yet fate was not altogether cruel to him; on his native soil he won a tomb and funeral rites at the hands of his kin; for the rough sea had deposited his body on the wide-spreading shore.³⁶

Another complains that he lives too near the hated sea which had done him to death:

Tumultuous sea, having handled me so cruelly, why didst thou not spew me forth far from the dreary shore? Then would I not, now that I am clothed about with the dark mist of death, be so near neighbor to thee.³⁷

The feeling of the hostility and cruelty of the sea which appears in so many of the sailor epitaphs of the Anthology is shared also by fisher folk, who after years of precarious struggle against a treacherous element are in the end overwhelmed by a sense of its appalling brutishness:

Around his fisher's spear he tied his net,
Ceasing from toil upon the weary sea;
With silent tears his aged eyes were wet,
As, turning to Poseidon, thus spake he:
'I'm weary, blessed one, and nigh to death,

³⁴. IX, 23.
³⁵VII. 665.

³⁶VII. 273, trans. by Mackail. Cf. VII. 65.2
³⁷VII, 283.

But poverty alas! is ever young!
 So while a poor old man still draws his breath,
 Oh, give him sustenance, my lord, but wring
 From out the land, and not from out the sea,
 If, as 'tis said, of both thou ruler be.³⁸

The same weariness expressed with more restraint is found in the epigram of Leonidas in which the old fisher Diophantus dedicates to the God of the Sea his hooks, his line, his long rods, his creels, his fish trap, his three-pronged spear, his two oars—all that he has left to show from his ancient craft.³⁹

In the epitaph which Leonidas wrote for himself, anticipating his own death, he says after speaking of his unhappy life, 'but the Muses loved me and I have this sweetness in my bitter lot. The name of Leonidas is not fallen into oblivion; the gifts of the Muses alone proclaim it as long as suns rise and set.'⁴⁰

Did Leonidas base this confidence of immortal fame upon such slender "gifts of the Muses" as the Anthology brings to us? Or was he the author of poems of a more ambitious kind, and is it a mere accident that only epigrams have come down to us under his name? There is good reason to believe that the twenty-first poem published among the idyls of Theocritus was not written by Theocritus but by Leonidas. It has none of the marks of Theocritus, but shows many of Leonidas' qualities and tricks of style. It is a vivid picture of the poor and simple life of fisherfolk, and is characterized by the sympathetic realism of the fisher epigrams of Leonidas. It betrays the same fondness for the detailed enumeration of the implements of the craft which appears in a number of Leonidas' epigrams, notably in the last one cited,⁴¹ and is, moreover, addressed to Diophantus, the name of the old fisherman who in the above epigram dedicates all his gear to Poseidon. But the poem will make its own argument. It opens with a brief dedication to Diophantus, which is in the form of a general reflection upon the disquieting effects of poverty. Then follows a picture of two old fishermen sleeping side by side in their poor cabin by the sea, with the tools and instruments of the craft strewn all about them. Before the night is half spent, worry for the morrow breaks their sleep, and they while away the hours before the dawn with talk. One tells the other of a marvelous dream in which he had caught a fish of gold; thinking himself

³⁸VI. by Macedonius but in the manner of Leonidas. Trans. by G. B. Grundy.
³⁹VI, 4. ⁴⁰VII, 715. ⁴¹VI, 4.

a rich man, he had vowed to Poseidon in the dream that henceforth he would desert the sea and live on the land. The oath troubles him until his companion reassures him by telling him that the oath which he swore was no more real than the fish he caught, and that he had better turn his attention to actual fishing lest he starve on his golden dreams:

'Tis Poverty alone, Diophantus, that awakens the arts; Poverty, the very teacher of labour. Nay, not even sleep is permitted, by weary cares, to men that live by toil, and if, for a little while, one close his eyes in the night, cares throng about him, and suddenly disquiet his slumber.

Two fishers, on a time, two old men, together lay and slept; they had strown the dry sea-moss for a bed in their wattled cabin, and there they lay against the leafy wall. Beside them were strewn the instruments of their toilsome hands, the fishing-creels, the rods of reed, the hooks, the sails bedraggled with sea-spoil, the lines, the reels, the lobster pots woven of rushes, the seines, two oars, and an old coble upon props. Beneath their heads was a scanty matting, their clothes, their sailor's caps. Here was all their toil, here all their wealth. The threshold had never a door, nor a watch-dog; all things, all, to them seemed superfluity, for Poverty was their sentinel. They had no neighbour by them, but ever against their narrow cabin gently floated up the sea.

The chariot of the moon had not yet reached the mid-point of her course, but their familiar toil awakened the fishermen; from their eye-lids they cast out slumber, and roused their souls with speech.

Asphalion.—They lie all, my friend, who say that the nights wane short in summer, when Zeus brings the long days. Already have I seen ten thousand dreams, and the dawn is not yet. Am I wrong, what ails them, the nights are surely long?

The Friend.—Asphalion, thou blamest the beautiful summer! It is not that the season hath wilfully passed his natural course, but care, breaking thy sleep, makes night seem long to thee.

Asphalion.—Didst ever learn to interpret dreams? for good dreams have I beheld, I would not have thee to go without thy share in my vision; even as we go shares in the fish we catch, so share all my dreams! Sure, thou art not to be surpassed in wisdom; and he is the best interpreter of dreams that hath wisdom for his teacher. Moreover, we have time to idle in, for what could a man find to do, lying on a leafy bed beside the wave and slumbering not?

The Friend.—Tell me, then, the vision of the night; nay, tell all to thy friend.

Asphalion.—As I was sleeping late, amid the labours of the salt sea (and truly not too full-fed, for we supped early if thou dost remember, and did not overtask our bellies), I saw myself busy on a rock, and there I sat and watched the fishes, and kept spinning the bait with the rods. And one of the fish nibbled, a fat one, for in sleep dogs dream of bread, and of fish dream I. Well, he was tightly hooked, and the blood was running, and the rod I grasped was bent with his struggle. So with both hands I strained, and had a sore tussle for the monster. How was I ever to land so big a fish with hooks all too slim? Then just to remind him he was hooked, I gently pricked him, pricked, and slackened, and, as he did not run, I took in line. My toil was ended with the sight of my prize; I drew up a golden fish, lo you, a fish all plated thick with gold! Then fear took hold of me, lest he might be some fish beloved of Poesidon, or perchance some jewel of the sea-grey Amphitrite. Gently I unhooked him, lest ever the hooks should retain some of the gold of his mouth. Then I dragged him on shore with the ropes, and swore that never again would I set foot on sea, but abide on land, and lord it over the gold.

This was even what wakened me, but, for the rest, set thy mind to it, my friend, for I am in dismay about the oath I swore.

The Friend.—Nay, never fear, thou art no more sworn than thou has found the golden fish of thy vision; dreams are but lies. But if thou wilt search these waters, wide awake, and not asleep, there is some hope in thy slumbers; seek the fish of flesh, lest thou die of famine with all thy dreams of gold!⁴²

The Muse of Leonidas has many moods, playful and bright as well as sad. He is indeed, as Sainte-Beuve pointed out, the most representative poet of the Anthology,⁴³ but that which distinguishes him from all the rest, and which appears in the idyl of the fishermen as in his epigrams, is his sympathy for the poor, their incessant struggle against want, the patience and the courage of their narrow lives.

⁴²Trans. by Andrew Lang.

⁴³S' étant essayé avec succès dans la plupart des genres, excepté le tendre, il nous sera comme un abrégé vivant de l'Anthologie, dans sa partie du moins la plus honorable et la plus digne. Nouveaux Lundis, VII, p. 11.

HAUPTMANN'S 'EMANUEL QUINT'

BY PAUL H. GRUMMANN

CHRISTIANITY has shown a certain reluctance to employ the novel in its service. This has been due to the fact that this form of literature has been more or less despised as worldly and out of harmony with the spirit of religion. The first attempts to utilize the novel in this connection, moreover, were rather inadequate. These novels were too narrowly devoted to a purpose, hence the artistic or broadly human element was lacking. Then the Christian novel of the historical school appeared, which was a step in advance, but the historical background generally overshadowed the Christian elements. These novels resembled those paintings of the crucifixion, in which the eye is particularly attracted to the beautiful classical buildings in the background. Here belong such novels as Eckstein's 'Die Claudier,' Kingsley's 'Hypatia,' and Wallace's 'Ben Hur.' It almost seems as if the authors were trying to make Christianity respectable by giving it a classical background. The reaction to this tendency produced a series of novels in which the gospel stories were retold in all of their simplicity and beauty. The perennial return of the craving for the simple life helped the popularity of these stories and our growing interest in the life of the common man added a certain sanction to them.

It is clear therefore that the literary trend alone might have led Hauptmann to the task of a Christian novel. Other powerful influences, however, were also at work. German painters had devoted themselves to Christian subjects in a most unique manner. Almost all of them stressed the humanity of Jesus. Böcklin's 'Mary over the body of Jesus', convinces us of this intensely human point of view. In Klinger's 'Crucifixion', Jesus appears on a low cross, not one that towers above the scene. The suffering portrayed on the face of Jesus is human, and the figures which surround him are not in the attitude of worship or scoffing, but express the pangs of personal bereavement or callous indifference. Many painters, notably von Uhde, portrayed Jesus

in his purely personal relationships, surrounded by little children or ministering to the poor.

The fact that Hauptmann was born and reared in Silesia also had much to do with this interest on his part. Silesia is mountainous and her resources are meagre. Poverty naturally drove its inhabitants into religious cults which glorify self-abnegation. The last act of Hauptmann's 'Weavers' gives an excellent example of this type of faith and shows that the poet was interested in this subject long before he wrote 'Emanuel Quint.'

More important than any other factor, however, was the rise of socialism in Germany, for the socialists repeatedly stressed their relationship to primitive Christianity. Socialistic orators have asserted again and again that Jesus was the first socialist. They have approved violence on the ground that Jesus drove the money changers from the temple, they have frequently cited the fact that he advised the young man to sell all that he had and give it to the poor, and in the peroration, they have been wont to declare that if Jesus were to appear again, he would be imprisoned as they, the socialists, are, that he would be crucified as of old. The ideals of primitive Christianity have received a sanction through this agitation which reaches far beyond party lines. Socialists have deserted their churches in favor of the socialistic meetings, which are surcharged with this primitive belief in a universal brotherhood. They have not given up Christianity as many suppose; they have reverted to its primitive ideals with certain modern modifications.

In the throes of such an agitation Hauptmann wrote his 'Emanuel Quint, the Fool in Christ.' Quint is a man who resembles Jesus in many particulars, and the book suggests what would happen if a man attempted to apply the principles of Jesus to modern society. Just as the painters had done, Hauptmann divested his figure of its divine setting. Quint is the illegitimate son of a woman who after his birth has married a carpenter. The tragedy of his advent, the agonies of the disgraced mother have left their marks upon the son, for he is distinctly abnormal. Deficient in vitality, and robbed of the normal child's environment, Emanuel soon becomes a victim of his dreams. He is inefficient in his foster-father's workshop, and is unable to meet the requirements of the world generally. His Silesian environment supplies the pietistic atmosphere which naturally suggests a life of idle contemplation to the boy, and his

abnormal imagination seizes the main precepts of the teachings of Jesus in a thoroughly uncritical fashion.

Unable to analyze his own subconscious mental activity, he looks upon every discovery which he makes through his inner consciousness as a revelation or an inspiration. In this manner he comes to accept the main doctrines of primitive Christianity with the stubborn conviction of the fanatic. He acquires a fine scorn for productive labor, a supreme contempt for commercialism carried to the point that he refrains from touching money. He accepts literally the doctrine, do good for evil, and acquires a love for martyrdom which is fortified by the conviction that suffering should be accepted as a means toward spiritual excellence. His convictions are firmly established by the opposition which he encounters in his home. He suffers and is silent, but his capacity for suffering is so great that opposition becomes the source of augmented faith.

Naturally enough, his brutal foster-father drives him away from home, and Quint now has an opportunity of testing his doctrines in the world at large. He meets other religious fanatics, but so firmly has he crystallized his convictions that he maintains them in the face of all whom he encounters. He converts a popular preacher who reminds us of John the Baptist, and in poverty-stricken Silesia soon finds ignorant followers who cling to him with unbounded enthusiasm. Especially the devotees of peculiar cults find a new center for their religious vagaries in him. Two young socialists also follow him for a time. They make no impression upon him and later leave him without being influenced by him. This is the first indication that the author did not write his book in defense of the socialistic propaganda, but that his main purpose was to present the religious dreamer who goes his way, hedged in by his strange illusions.

One of Quint's most interesting disciples at this time is Bohemian Joe, a smuggler and desperado of the lower criminal class. Joe is over-awed by the supernatural appearance of Quint and he soon convinces himself that Quint is a worker of miracles. Since his fanatic devotion to Quint is only the result of his own superstition, Joe's conversion is very superficial, and he naturally reverts to his native savagery and becomes the Judas of the novel.

In the presence of Bohemian Joe, Quint performs a miracle. An old woman who has longed for death for many years and has suffered from nervous hysteria, becomes calm in his serene presence and dies in accordance with her long standing wish. This

incident is at once magnified, and the resemblance of Quint to the pictures of Jesus fires the imagination of the people, so that the sick and lame flock to him to be cured. Curiously enough, Quint disclaims all mystic healing powers and he insists over and over again that he is not the messiah. But the more he insists, the more they throw their suggestion about him until finally he subconsciously accepts his mission, without however making any assertions about it.

The rumors of his messiahship incense the ruffians of the village and he is all but killed at their hands. He is now taken to a hospital where his strange equanimity arouses the interest of the attendants. What is more important, the Lady of Gurau, the founder of the hospital takes it into her head to have an interview with him. This Lady of Gurau is one of Hauptmann's most interesting characters. A spinster of considerable means and business shrewdness, she has those emotional oddities which are said to characterize the elderly unmarried women. She has her own peculiar religious views and many minor hobbies which she can coddle to her heart's content, for she has the necessary means. She is so profoundly moved by her interview with Quint, that she decides to take him under her own personal protection. Not only are his physical needs provided, but he has an opportunity to read in the library of the Lady of Gurau, a library as grotesque as the venerable lady herself. He is absolutely free to do as he pleases, on the popular doctrine that every one must, after all, work out his own salvation. So it comes about that this man who has so singularly narrowed his life by autosuggestion and suggestion from others, finds nothing but affirmation in his reading, instead of being broadened and corrected by it. Thus Quint becomes more and more of a bigot, but so lovable withal that that ugly word almost does him an injustice. More and more he plays the part of Jesus in his little environment, ministering to the poor and especially to little children.

But one of his flock, an adolescent girl of the village, suddenly becomes subject to attacks of religious hysteria, such as were common enough in the early Christian love feasts. Since he is blamed for this, he quietly leaves the shelter of the Lady of Gurau, to join the company of his faithful followers who have meanwhile organized a communistic colony in a secluded spot. This is a good example of what happens when the ignorant forsake the more rational guidance of society and fall back upon their own

emotions. The colony was soon rent with dissension, and vice flourished. At the sight of Quint the little band is temporarily sobered and he is hailed as their deliverer. But Bohemian Joe acts the part of Judas and Quint decides to leave them and follow his own hazy destiny. A serious difficulty however has arisen. The little girl who is afflicted with religious hysteria appears in the community in pursuit of Quint. This is the one occasion in his life, when it may be said that Quint has a remote suggestion of erotic sentiment, but earthly love has been so stifled by his religious musings, that he at once rises to the role of paternal protector of the girl. He instinctively feels that she does not belong with the motley crowd of the colony and takes her back to her parents. He is judged by circumstantial evidence, for the villagers look upon him as her betrayer. So convincing is his fanaticism however, that he inspires the angry crowd with sufficient awe to escape physical violence. Only one man, a deputy to the Reichstag, a conservative of the old school vents his spleen upon him and gives an exhibition of the narrowness and bigotry of an aristocracy that has lost all touch with the ignorant, misguided humanity about it. The Lady of Gurau now withdraws her protection without investigating the case; whimsical in her brutality as she had been in her charity.

This turn in his affairs Quint accepts with the patient indifference that has become a part of his very nature. Through all of the years of his earlier experiences, he has lived in rural surroundings, and this partly accounts for the simplicity of his faith. When he comes to Breslau, where he has his first city experiences, he no longer has the plasticity to adapt himself to a new environment. For this reason the problems of the large city leave him unscathed. Like a stranger in a modern Babel, he nourishes the sweet hallucinations, that have become a part of him, without allowing his self-constituted personality to be shaken into a larger consciousness. This portion of the book contains some of the most beautiful passages that Hauptmann has written. The simple life is presented on the motley background of city life, and the reader breathlessly follows the actions of this somnambulist, who convinced of his mission of sorrow and abnegation, dispenses his ministrations of love and kindness to the poor.

He has had a large number of experiences that came to Jesus. He has had disciples and has been disappointed by them, he has been betrayed by a Judas, he has had his Gethsemane. Worst

of all, the world has resented the fact that he is peculiar, in spite of the unselfishness of his motives and principles. The supreme experience for which he has been quietly preparing, the crown of martyrdom does not come to him. Instead of this, he is ignored. He finally goes up on a high mountain and perishes without causing a ripple in the world from which he has come.

At first the book strikes the reader as distinctly strange. One almost feels that the author was too conscious of the fact that he was writing his first novel; that in an attempt to get away from the terse structure of the drama, he has given his novel too much epic breadth. But very soon the book has the same effect that the dramas of the author produce. The reader begins to ponder and the remoter intention begins to unravel. He begins to see that very many things have been accomplished by the author for which he will look in vain in other books on kindred subjects. It becomes clear that Quint has been revealed with all his idiosyncracies by a psychological expert who has the sympathy of a solicitous friend. No vagary of Quint is too foolish to engage the serious interest of the novelist, and nowhere does he scoff at this fool in Christ. Yet his sympathy is rationalized, for Quint is nowhere exalted into a hero nor is he made the representative of a really valid cause. By maintaining the judicial attitude the author has succeeded in characterizing the eccentricities of Quint and revealing the tragedy of this individual who has shut himself up in his meagre personality, while the great world lay beyond him with its complex human interests, its joys and sorrows, its possibilities of enjoyment and service, from which he was forever separated because he became the victim of the ideals of primitive Christianity,—ideals which Christianity herself has outgrown and to which she will never return.

The dream of applying the ideals of primitive Christianity to modern life would mean that two thousand years of European development have been a vast error. It would mean that Catholicism, Humanism and modern science have added nothing to the gospel preached to a simple and primitive people. It would mean a colossal distrust of humanity. Christianity drifted from her ancient moorings because Christianity had the possibility of growth. For this reason an ideal Christian today might be conceived as robust in physical strength, capable of enjoying the world and all that it has to offer. He might be conceived as learned and efficient in the great work of the world, enamoured of the ideal that he is to accomplish things. He might be con-

ceived as one who takes delight in all of the beauties of nature and the works of man—as one who takes delight in art. He might be conceived as one standing four-square to all the winds that blow, defending what he considers right with all the resources of his being. He might be conceived as one who considers the family relation, the human love relation as divine in essence and not necessarily tainted by sin. But all of this is absent in primitive Christianity, and therefore it is quite natural that Emanuel Quint should cause hardly a stir in this, our twentieth century. Without influencing anyone positively and without receiving any positive influence, he was indeed the fool in Christ.

No thoughtful reader will fail to be impressed by the portrayal of the spiritual yearning of the individuals that come into contact with Quint. More than ever one feels that man is essentially a religious creature, when one beholds how many creatures are alert for a spiritual revelation from him. Disappointed by the existing cults, they vainly seek for a messiah who promises to satisfy their thirst for the supernatural. This is most marked in the poorest classes, whose only consolation lies in a reward hereafter. But it is also present in those who do not suffer want, for man yearns for a more complete state of happiness than is actually allotted to him. Man is also forever in conflict with the incompleteness of his experiences, and he naturally longs for deliverance from illness and death. These are only the more primitive bases of his religion. Man has spiritual experiences which give him peace, joy, and confidence and he craves the repetition of these experiences on an ascending scale. If he is suddenly deprived of them, a void comes into his life that may disturb his whole equilibrium, and he may do the most absurd things in efforts to readjust himself.

Possibly no country offers more striking examples of this phenomenon than America. In America many churches mix and clash. Consequently many individuals become estranged from church entirely and adopt a kind of *laissez faire* atheism. But they reckon without their host, for they have a craving for the supernatural and therefore they drift into the new cults that are established from time to time. It is not an accident that Boston is the mother of isms. Here scholars gathered under whose influence rationalism grew with leaps and bounds. Here, moreover, scientists delved into the deeper secrets of psychology, and those who lived on the fringe of this inquiry found abundant food for new cults. Even scientists were overwhelmed by their

craving for the supernatural and assisted more or less consciously in this activity. When the scientific background of these cults is examined, it generally turns out to be rather meagre. Professor Lehmann of Copenhagen has demonstrated pretty conclusively that the spiritualistic phenomena which have interested so many of us are to be referred to psychological principles, not to a spirit world; yet the spiritualistic cult will continue for a long time for it offers spiritual consolation to those who crave it. It may be that the neurasthenia of our times is in no small measure due to our unrequited craving for spiritual experiences. In view of this it might not be out of place for America to take her art interests more seriously and cater to the emotions in a more enlightened way. The Catholic church did this most adequately in the past, supplying spiritual uplift to the many that were at odds with her creed. As long as the intelligent minister wisely to the spiritual needs of the less fortunate, there will be a minimum of danger. When this spiritual need is not served, it will assert itself in crude, grotesque, unwholesome ways, and give rise to new superstitions. The concrete portrayal of religious life of this type in 'Emanuel Quint,' makes the book particularly important to all who are interested in the analysis of modern life.

When Hauptmann began his literary career, he was hailed as a realist and naturalist. But when in 'Hannele' he began to write dream poetry, almost all of the critics proclaimed that he had become an idealist. Both positions involved considerable error, for his early works were not realistic in the narrower sense and his dream poems were realistic in a very acceptable sense. From the beginning he emphasized the psychology of his characters, and he insisted upon concerning himself with that more difficult psychology reflected in dreams and visions. When realism and naturalism ignore the spiritual nature of man they give an incomplete account of him.

Reared in the scientific atmosphere of modern Germany, Hauptmann became a corrective force against one sided notions that became prevalent among scientists and those who derived their philosophy from the scientists. Psychology had related itself to biology, and a new method of interpreting psychic phenomena arose. It was found that our psychic reactions were to be traced to the habits of our savage ancestors. So the erotic element in our life finds an explanation in our animal instinct of self-preservation. The mother's love is the instinct of the female to protect her offspring. Our social forms are the stereotyped

left-overs of habits valuable in our savage state. Our religious customs are likewise traced to very humble origins. So our attitudes of worship are to be explained in the light of the physical features of the countries which our ancestors inhabited. If we have sprung from inhabitants of the plains or desert, we throw ourselves on the ground when we worship, for thus our ancestors embraced the ground when storms inspired them with fear. The descendants of those who dwelt in the forest and climbed trees in times of danger, are supposed to worship in the attitude of climbing, with uplifted head and arms.

Rapidly a philosophy was springing up around this very plausible investigation, which taught men to view life from the tangent of its primitive sources. This was not only brutalizing but it involved a serious error. Humble as the basis of our psychic experiences may be, many generations of human effort have refined these reactions until they are very far removed from the first sources. Our erotic emotions have been refined by such institutions as chivalry, and by music, poetry, and art, until the basic instinct is so overlapped that we scarcely recognize it. Likewise our religious nature has been matured by prophets and seers to such an extent that the basic instinct of fear is a negligible quantity in the grand aggregate.

Psychology was concerning itself with the rudiments and was ignoring those more difficult, complex, higher states of consciousness which come with civilization. It was not accidental that a poet arose to teach us the deeper inferences of this science. By characterizing human beings as they think and feel, as they dream, as they have visions and inspirations Hauptmann has humanized psychology and has ennobled our conception of man.

WISDOM

BY PAUL VERLAINE

Translated from the French by Bernard Raymund

The sky floats up above the roof
So blue, serene!

A tree waves up above the roof
Branches green.

A bell in the wide sky overhead
Softly rings,

A bird in the treetop overhead
Sadly sings.

Oh, gracious Heaven! life is there
Tranquil and sweet,

The city rumor, softened there,
Floats from the street.

What hast thou done, oh, lingerer,
Weeping thy ruth,

Speak! what hast done, oh, lingerer,
With all thy youth?

SERB HERO SONGS

Translated from the Serbian by Abraham Yarmolinsky

THE KING'S CHOICE

Lo! there came a grayish falcon flying
From Jerusalem, the holy city,
And he brought a little bird, a swallow.
Yet it was no gray and royal falcon,
But it was our holy prophet Elias,
And he brought no little bird, no swallow:
'Twas a writing from the Holy Virgin
That he brought, the gray and royal falcon.
On the kingly knees he dropt the letter,
And it thus addressed the noble ruler:
 "Lazar tzar, thou king of noble lineage,
 "O, what kingdom hath thy mind now chosen?
 "Is thy wish to have the Heaven's kingdom,
 "Or the earthly realm thy heart preferreth?
 "If the earthly kingdom thou hast chosen,
 "Saddle horses, fasten girdles tighter,
 "Let thy heroes buckle on their sabres,
 "Rush upon the Turkish army swiftly,
 "And the Turks will all in battle perish.
 "But if thou hast Heaven's kingdom chosen,
 "Build then on the meadow of Kossovo,

The Serbian Hero Songs ("pesmas") are the chief literary monument of Southern Slavdom. Like the Border Ballads, the "pesmas" are but loosely connected, they fall, however, into two distinct ballad-cycles: that of Marko Kralievich and that of the Kossovo Battle. Marko is the Serbian Cid, the ideal champion of the nation in its struggle with the Turks. All through the ballads which sing his gallant exploits resounds the mournful echo of the Kossovo battle (June 15-28, 1389). In this epic encounter, which united the entire Southern Slavdom, the Serbs led by czar Lazar were utterly crushed by the Turks, and the defeat eventually put an end to Serbia's independence. In the melancholy songs of the Kossovo-cycle this fatal event stands forth either as the main motive or as the general background. Very early, artless bards began to compose songs of crude beauty about the great national disaster, and gradually the epic types were evolved, with which, it is said, every Serb is familiar. The vitality of the "pesmas" is unique: until recently they were still chanted in villages under the accompaniment of the traditional "gusla." The first collection of Serbian songs, which saw the print early in the nineteenth century, aroused the admiration of men like Goethe and Grimm. The selections given here belong to the Kossovo-cycle. The "King's Choice" forms a kind of pious prelude to the whole cycle, the ballad of the lovely maiden of Kossovo shows the Serbian Epic at its best.

A. YARMOLINSKY.

"On Kossovo build a church of marble,
 "Not of marble, but of silk and scarlet,
 "That the warriors take their last communion;
 "For they all are doomed to fall in battle,
 "Doomed to perish art thou also, Lazar!"

When the king had heard these wondrous tidings,
 Long he pondered over them in silence:

"Lord my God! what shall I choose? he queried
 "Which of these two realms shall be my portion?
 "Heaven's realm, or else the earthly kingdom?
 "Earthly realms are fitting and so petty;
 "But the Heaven's kingdom is eternal . . . "

And the king he chose the realm of heaven,
 He preferred it to the earthly kingdom.
 On Kossovo straight a church he raises:
 Not of marble, but of silk and scarlet.
 Then he calls the patriarch of Serbia,
 Also all the twelve great Serbian bishops,
 That they may the last communion offer
 To the army, and to death prepare it.

THE BRIDE OF KOSSOVO

Early rose the maiden of Kossovo,
 Early rose she on a Sunday morning,
 On a Sunday ere the day has broken,
 And she took the pathway for Kossovo.
 Up she tucked the sleeves of her white bodice,
 Turned them up and bared her snow white elbows.
 On her back, white wheaten loaves she carried,
 In her hands she bore two golden pitchers;
 One is filled with water fresh and limpid
 And of wine, brimful, red wine, the other
 Early set she out, out for Kossovo.

On Kossovo, there's the virgin straying,
 On the field that saw King Lazar perish,
 And where, bathed in gore, lay many heroes.
 Wisely she evades the bloody bodies,
 But whene'er she finds a living warrior,

Him she laves with fresh and limpid water
 And with wine, red wine, his lips she moistens,
 Thus devoutly giving him communion,
 And she feeds him with the bread, the wheaten.
 Meanwhile chance has led the maiden's paces
 To the youthful hero Paul Orlóvitch,
 To the gallant king's young standard-bearer,

Still alive he was, the youthful warrior,
 But he lost an arm hewn off completely
 And a foot cut off above the knee-joint;
 And his gory ribs hung maimed and broken,
 And a gaping wound the lungs uncovered.
 Gently from the bloody pools she dragged him,
 Washed his wound with clear and limpid water,

And with wine, red wine, his lips she moistened,
 Thus devoutly giving him communion,
 And she fed him with the bread, the wheaten.
 Then the youthful hero's soul grew stronger
 And he spake, the youthful Paul Orlóvitch:
 "Sister dear, O maiden of Kossovo,
 "Tell me, pray, what misery befell thee,
 "That thou searchest thus the bodies of the fallen.
 "Who is he thou seekest on the bloody meadow,
 "Brother, nephew or perchance thy father?"

Answered thus the maiden of Kossovo:
 "Brother dear, to me unknown the warrior,
 "It is not a kinsman I am seeking,
 "Neither brother, nor a brother's offspring
 "Nor my father who in sin begot me.
 "Twenty days ago, full well thou knowest,
 "Thirty monks, by order of King Lazar,
 "Gave the last communion to the army.
 "All the Serbs did celebrate Lord's Supper,
 "And the last to come were three brave chieftains.
 "One was Milosh, brave and good duke Milosh,
 "And Kossántchitch Ivan was the second,
 "But the last was called Milan Toplitza.
 "I was standing silent in the doorway,
 "As the duke went past, the gallant Milosh.

"Fair the hero was and clad so richly:
 "On the floor the hero's sabre sounded,
 "Costly feathers trimmed his silken bonnet,
 "Round his neck he wore a silken kerchief
 "And a motley cloak around his shoulders.
 "By the hero I was promptly noticed.
 "Then he doffed his motley cloak the gorgeous,
 "And to me he gave it, slowly speaking:
 "'Take this motley cloak,' he said, 'fair maiden,
 "'For my sake, I pray thee, keep it, sister,
 "'And remember Milosh in thy prayers.
 "'For Kossovo, I am bound, to perish,
 "'By the side to perish of King Lazar.
 "'Pray for me, dear, pray to God Almighty,
 "'That I may therefrom return in safety;
 "'Then my joy I'll share with thee, dear sister;
 "'For I'll give thee for a husband, maiden,
 "'My Milan, of all my friends the dearest,
 "'Him who is my brother by my choosing,
 "'In the name of God and John our patron;
 "'And I'll be the groomsman at thy wedding.'
 "Next to him came young Kossántchitch Ivan.
 "Fair the hero was and clad so richly:
 "On the floor the hero's sabre sounded,
 "Costly feathers trimmed his silken bonnet,
 "Round his neck he wore a silken kerchief
 "And a motley cloak around his shoulders,
 "But a golden ringlet on his finger.
 "Promptly noticed was I by the hero.
 "Then the ringlet took he off his finger.
 "And to me he gave it, slowly speaking:
 "'Take this golden ringlet, stately virgin,
 "'For my sake, I pray thee, keep it, sister,
 "'And remember Ivan in thy prayers.
 "'For Kossovo, I am bound, to perish
 "'By the side to perish of King Lazar.
 "'Pray for me, dear, pray to God Almighty,
 "'That I may therefrom return in safety.
 "'Then my joy I'll share with thee, dear sister,
 "'For I'll give thee for a husband, virgin,
 "'My Milan, of all my friends the dearest,
 "'Him who is my brother by my choosing,

" 'In the name of God and John, our patron;
 " 'And I'll be the bridesman at thy wedding.'
 "And the last came he, Milan Toplitza.
 "Fair the hero was and clad so richly:
 "On the floor the hero's sabre sounded,
 "Costly feathers trimmed his silken bonnet,
 "Round his neck he wore a silken kerchief
 "And a motley cloak around his shoulders,
 "But around the arm a golden bracelet.
 "Promptly noticed was I by the hero.
 "Off his arm he took the golden bracelet
 "And to me he gave it, slowly speaking:
 " 'Take this golden bracelet, stately maiden,
 " 'For my sake, I pray thee, keep it, sister,
 " 'And Milan remember in thy prayers.
 " 'Lo! I go to battle, there to perish,
 " 'By the side to perish of King Lazar.
 " 'Pray for me, dear, pray to God Almighty,
 " 'That I may therefrom return in safety,
 " 'Then my joy I'll share with thee, fair maiden,
 " 'For I'll choose thee for my faithful spouse.'
 "Thus they passed me by, the three brave warriors.
 " 'Tis for them I search the meadows of Kossovo."

And the youthful hero thus responded:

"Sister, dear, thou maiden of Kossovo,
 "See'st thou yonder lances cleft and broken?
 "Where the pile is highest and is thickest,
 "Where it streamed the blood of gallant warriors,
 "Reaching girth and stirrup of the horses
 "And the silken girdles of the heroes,—
 "All thy three brave friends there have they fallen.
 "Now return to thy white house, dear maiden;
 "Skirt and sleeve in vain with blood thou stainest."

When the ill-starred maiden heard these tidings,
 Tears her eyes and whitened cheeks have flooded,
 And she started on her homeward journey;
 Home she went and bitterly lamented:

"Woe to me! ill-luck pursues me fiercely:
 "To a fir twig green my hand I reachèd,
 "Woe! all sear has turned its splendid leafage."

WHY GO YE TO THE SPHINX

*On the Statue by Saint Gaudens in Rock Creek Cemetery,
Washington*

BY LAURA MARQUAND WALKER

Why go ye to the Sphinx o'er shifting sand
There asking yet again unanswered things?
"If love, why death? And whence our being springs?"
To make of monstrous stone our vain demand.
Come ye within this city of the dead,
Where west winds blow and every small bird sings;
Where all is quiet save for fluttering wings;
Leave Egypt's waste and come ye here instead!

Here is one sitting, silent and alone:
She knows what know the dead who answer not,
With folded arms she waits: and to this spot
Come young and gay or those to sorrow prone.
Her face is as the face of one whose peace
Was reached through life's long agony of tears;
And what she knows or knows not—yet our fears
If laid before such majesty, shall cease.

Beauty ineffable, calm unsurpassed,
Patience and waiting, till all Time shall end!
Ah: listen at her lips and she may send
Some thrill unknown to keep your courage fast.
Gaze on her wondrous face, and gazing stay;
Whate'er betide—the end is surely Peace;
Here where the birds sing let all questionings cease
Then lift again your burden! Go your way.

DANTE'S REJECTED CANTO

BY ALBERT E. TROMBLY

We crossed the bog and came upon a plain,
Barren and dry as are the Lybian sands,
Where seed cannot take root for want of rain.
As oft a traveller seeing foreign lands,
Stops by the wayside marvelling to see
A thing he never saw nor understands,
So lingered I, for to the right of me,
And rising from a broad and shallow well
I saw a fog of wondrous density.
And turning to the poet: "Master, tell,
I beg of thee, what novel thing is this?
And why a mist where sunshine never fell?"
And he to me: "As patience leads to bliss,
So will you learn, if you but wait a space,
How different that from what you think it is."
I followed on, and at a brisker pace;
And as we nearer drew, I saw the cloud
Was one of dust, and felt it on my face.
Within the pit a multifarious crowd
Of spirits were embedded in a dust
Musty and black, which served them as a shroud.
But now and then a head was upward thrust
As if to gasp a breath of fetid air,
Then sank again but with a livelier gust.
"O wanderer," one cried, "who standest there
Garbed in the flesh that men possess on earth
What brings you here ere death has claimed its share?"
"A lofty purpose, nothing of my worth,
Compels me here," I said. "But tell me, you,
What land was yours and what your name and birth?"
And he to me: "There where the Arno's blue
Divides the city of the Florentines,
My mother bore me, if they told me true.
For I Testaccia was, and Italy pines
Because of me, for when I lived above
I fed its youth with many a poet's lines;

But since I had less sanity than love,
 I made the poets say a thousand things,
 Which they had never dreamed nor reckoned of.
 And graver still I dried my manhood's springs,
 In delving books for facts, not one of which
 To any mortal, any comfort brings.
 And now am I condemned within this ditch
 To search in tomes that lie all buried here
 Beneath this filthy dust, and dark as pitch,
 To ascertain how oft the Chian seer
 Has used an alpha, and when I have done
 Must I begin again my penance drear."
 "And yonder, who are those?" "The nearest one
 Is Doctor Ciarlatano," he replied;
 "We all of us were doctors neath the sun.
 For more than sixty years he vainly tried
 To find out why the *t* should have been crossed,
 And still he knew it not the day he died.
 The one behind him there who's almost lost,
 Is Stupido, who thought the moon of lead,
 And would have had it so at any cost.
 And to the left the bald and pear-shaped head
 You see is Pazzo's. None of us on earth
 Have ever lived, but we've been cold and dead.
 Of any thought our skulls have known a dearth,
 And yet we fancied that the naught we did,
 Was all there *was*, and all that could have worth.
 Genius budded round us which we chid
 Or heeded not, or which we tried to choke:
 We would not have it bloom, we wished it hid.
 And since we gave our lives to sniff and poke
 The dust from off old books, so must we here
 Furrow with our snouts, a hog-like folk.
 Nor do we ask that ever human ear
 Should hear our names, when you return up there,
 For well we know our memory's long been sear."
 "I made a book when still I breathed the air,"
 Another cried, whose head had just appeared,
 "To prove that *a* and *e* were vowels in '*bare*.'
 And now, ah me, a thing I never feared,
 I find each copy buried here below,
 And I condemned to feed on what I reared

A RIDE ON AIR

For all eternity!" As when we throw
 A rock into a pool the waters spout
 Against the impact of the sudden blow,
 So did the head of this unhappy lout
 Plunge down so quickly in its grimy well
 That whence he sunk there burst and issued out
 A cloud of soot as foul and dark as hell.

 A RIDE ON AIR

BY CAMILLE FAIRCHILD

Currents of air
 That drive as they bear—
 A whiz: and we're there.

Currents of thought
 That work as they're wrought—
 A flash and they're brought.

No absence, no space.
 To the strong, the race.
 Mind and man: what a brace.

MAN SPEAKS

BY ROBERT J. SHORES

See, God! The woman that thou gavest me,
With whom I was cast out of Paradise,
She whom thou gavest, wife and mate to be,
To lie with me at eve, at morn to rise
And bid God-speed as I at thy decree
Go forth to wrest so much as shall suffice
To keep us twain, from out the sullen land;
She mocks me, God! And must I hold my hand?

Oh, God, I have paid dearly for thy gift,
In sin and sorrow, yea, in toil and tears,
In self-denial and in thankless thrift,
In endless labor and in foolish fears;
And I have watched my hope of surcease drift
Like dead-wood down the river of the years,
Until my eyes with watching dim are grown,
And through it all, dear God, I've been alone!

Alone at morning and alone at night,
For she whom thou didst give to be my bride
Hath fled away when I fared forth to fight,
And even lying softly by my side,
Hath turned her face to spy the morning light
And I have felt the hate she sought to hide,
And felt her shudder from her head to hips
As though my kiss were poison on her lips.

God, I have watched the birdlings build their nest;
How one by one they brought each little twig,
And fitted it where it might fit the best;
There have I stood below and ceased to dig,
To hear their song and note the swelling breast
As each with song and spring-time love grew big
And as one voice their two heart's love was shown;
But I, oh, Lord, have built my house alone.

Oh, Lord, I have dealt gently with my mate,
 And whatsoe'er I had, that too had she;
 My bed was her's, and what I ate she ate,
 For I was kind as I knew how to be.
 But for my love she hath returned me hate,
 Though I have loved her better far than thee;
 Yea, oh, my God, in this I did thee wrong,
 But if the sin was sweet, the pain is long.

All else that lives in water or in land
 I have subdued and bent unto my will,
 And all have bent beneath my heavy hand,
 And some have struggled but at last lay still;
 And she, the woman, hath my fury fanned,
 And often urged me on to maim and kill,
 But when in triumph I have sought her praise,
 She loathed the blood and turned away her gaze.

How often, Lord, when stricken with sick fear,
 Her lovely limbs all trembling with affright,
 Weak and undone and timid as the deer
 At some strange sound or stranger shape by night,
 In simple faith in me she hath drawn near
 And trusted me to set her world aright,
 And safe and sound defied her dread alarms
 Knowing her safety lay within my arms.

Then, Lord, one moment she hath been my own,
 And turned her back on all the world beside,
 And claimed her kinship with my blood and bone,
 And been to me what once I dreamed my bride
 Might always be until we sought thy throne;
 But she no longer than her fear doth bide,
 Her terror spent, she soon grows cold again
 And all my pleasure turns once more to pain.

And in the spring, oh, Lord, when soft the breeze
 Doth rustle through the leaves and stir the grass,
 When sap is springing in the waking trees,
 Along the river and through woods I pass
 And mark how all the living love—alas!
 I have no love to love me as have these;

The woman that thou gavest me—'tis plain
She loves me not, and spring has come in vain!

For all her vows are vain and all are lies,
And all her kisses coin to pay her keep,
For I can read her secret in her eyes;
That hidden hate which never sinks to sleep;
And when I clasp her, often I surprise
That damned disdain which strikes its roots so deep
That to uproot it, I must slay her whole,
For well I know, dear Lord, this is her soul.

It is not seemly, Lord, that I should be
Of all the creatures that thy hand hath wrought,
Always alone with none to comfort me;
Even the fox that in the trap is caught
Hath one at home that comes in fear to see
Where he hath strayed; but all my love is bought;
Oh, God, what is it that these brutes have done
That they have love and I alone have none?

See, God! The woman that thou gavest me,
With whom I was cast out of Paradise,
She whom thou gavest, wife and mate to be,
To lie with me at eve, at morn to rise
And bid God-speed as I at thy decree
Go forth to wrest so much as shall suffice
To keep us twain, from out the sullen land;
She mocks me, God! And must I hold my hand?

THE BEST OF THE NEW BOOKS

In this list we shall include only such books as in our opinion are really worth while. No extended reviews will be given, only the briefest descriptions. The fact that a book is listed, is the highest recommendation we can give.

In **ON THE LAKE**, by Elizabeth Reynolds, the title poem portrays the loveliness of Lake Michigan. A number of the songs in this book have been set to music and rendered by Mme. Sembrich, Mme. Gadski and Mr. John McCormack. These poems flow along like a gentle brook, concealing depths of tenderness underneath their placid surface. (Richard G. Badger, \$1.00 net.)

BARS OF IRON, by Ethel M. Dell is the latest by the author of *The Way of an Eagle*. We know it must be a good story because we are told that the first printings amounted to 65,000 copies, besides it has 538 large pages of text and a colored frontispiece. (G. P. Putnam's Sons, \$1.50 net.)

In **THE REAL ADVENTURE**, Henry Ketchill Webster has treated every question, every situation and every condition which appeal most vitally to married men and women today. It's a big novel and a pretty good one, too. (Bobbs-Merrill Co., \$1.50 net.)

THREE THINGS EVERY BOY MUST HAVE, by Charles S. Lyles. After reading this book, you will exclaim, "These are exactly the three things that I should want my boy to have!" An excellent book for the parent and the educator. (Richard G. Badger, \$1.00 net.)

EPITAPHS OF SOME DEAR DUMB BEASTS, by their Mistress, Isabel Vallé. Little verses from the heart of one to whom the dumb creatures are living personalities who possess souls. Illustrated. (Richard G. Badger, \$1.00 net.)

NAN OF MUSIC MOUNTAIN, by Frank H. Spearman is a thrilling story of the mountain west, a gang of outlaws, a fascinating girl and a brave, resourceful man, a fine combination to keep the reader on the jump from the first page to the last. (Charles Scribner's Sons, \$1.35 net.)

In **THE IVORY CHILD**, Rider Haggard has given us another thriller—one in which our old friend, Allan Quartermain, is again the central figure. It's a mighty good yarn and one that you will not put down until it is finished. (Longmans, Green & Co., \$1.35 net.)

THE RIME NUOVE OF GIOSUE CARDUCCI, translated from the Italian by Laura Fullerton Gilbert. These poems of the great Italian combine the best elements of Browning and Tennyson and avoid the faults of both. (Richard G. Badger, \$1.25 net.)

THE FLEDGLING BARD AND THE POETRY SOCIETY, by George Reginald Margetson, a satire which deals with many questions of the day, with topical allusions to the Poetry Society of America. (Richard G. Badger, \$1.00 net.)

THE EPIC SONGS OF RUSSIA, by Isabel Florence Hapgood, was originally published thirty years ago and in this new edition, with an introductory note by J. W. Mackail, it will find a much more appreciative audience than greeted its initial issue. (Charles Scribner's Sons, \$1.50 net.)

LEONARDO DA VINCI, by Osvald Siren gives a detailed biography of the great artist and also depicts the artistic surroundings out of which grew his masterpieces. The volume is beautifully illustrated. (Yale University Press, \$6.00 net.)

THE FOOLIAM, by Edwin A. Watrous, a pentameter satire, with many a clever allusion to topics of the day. "It is written," says the author, "for *men only*,—and *curious* women." (Richard G. Badger, \$1.00 net.)

HUMOROUS POEMS, by Ignatius Brennan. If you see nothing but clouds in the world, *don't* read it. And after you have read it, *don't* lend it, for it will be passed along and you will never get it back. (Richard G. Badger, \$1.00 net.)

THE ROAD TO EVERYWHERE, by Glenn Ward Dresbach. The poems are excellent. The best are an ode on the Completion of the Panama Canal and a song beginning "The roses are dead in the garden." (Richard G. Badger, \$1.00 net.)

MAN: GOD'S MASTERPIECE, by Frank Crowell, is a protest against creed and dogma and an earnest plea for a simple, pure religion such as Christ taught when on Earth. (R. F. Fenno & Co., \$1.00 net.)

Three interesting volumes of poems recently issued by Yale University Press are William Alexander Percy's SAPPHO IN LEVKAS, Lee Wilson Dodd's THE MIDDLE MILES, and Frederick Mortimer Clapp's ON THE OVERLAND.

The Globe Theatre Shakespeare is a handy school edition, in which JULIUS CAESAR and THE MERCHANT OF VENICE have just been issued. (Harper's 35 cents net, each.)

TWO PLAYS, by Morris M. Townley. The first play is a comedy of love, politics and a self-reliant woman. The second portrays a campaign of wits between a wealthy lawyer and a burglar. (Richard G. Badger, \$1.00 net.)

THE PIPES O' PAN, by Sylvia Sherman. An Arcadian wood-dream, sweet as the fragrance of the forest on a midsummer afternoon. Cleverly illustrated. (Richard G. Badger, \$1.00 net.)

PROFILES, by Arthur Ketchum, is a volume of *vers libre* that is *true* poetry, and of poems in the old rhythms that nevertheless have in them a melody that is entirely new. (Richard G. Badger, \$1.00 net.)

LIVING THE RADIANT LIFE and QUIT YOUR WORRYING, by George Wharton James are two of the many uplift books recently issued and should prove an inspiration to their readers. (The Radiant Life Press, \$1.00 net, each.)

NIGHTS, by Elizabeth Robins Pennell is a fascinating volume of reminiscences and pictures. The reminiscences are of Venice and Rome in the aesthetic eighties and Paris and London in the fighting nineties, and of the men and women who made them the two most interesting decades of modern literature and art. (J. B. Lippincott Co., \$3.00 net.)

EDUCATION AMONG THE JEWS, by Paul E. Kretzmann, Ph. D. An interesting study of what the author claims to have been the most thorough system of education in the history of the world. (Richard G. Badger, \$1.00 net.)

AT THE EDGE OF THE WORLD, by Caroline Stern, contains a number of lyrics and one dramatic poem which is, nevertheless, essentially lyrical. The imagery in this book is at times exquisite. (Richard G. Badger, \$1.00 net.)

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, HIS LIFE, WORKS, AND INFLUENCE, by George McLean Harper, is a publication of keen literary interest, especially as the author has at his disposal a considerable amount of unprinted material, furnished by Mr. Gordon Wordsworth, who has given Professor Harper access to the manuscripts of Dorothy Wordsworth's Journals. To these new sources of information are added some unpublished letters now in the British Museum. In Professor Harper's work the earlier years of Wordsworth's life, only vaguely touched by previous biographers, receive particular attention. (Charles Scribner's Sons, \$6.50 net.)

CIVILIZATION AND WOMANHOOD, by Harriet B. Bradbury, treats of the evolution of woman and its bearing upon the social, religious and political life of the human race. It inspires the reader with faith in human nature and in the ultimate triumph of high ideals. (Richard G. Badger, \$1.00 net.)

NOTHING A YEAR, by Charles Belmont Davis is the story of a woman who tried to make diamonds instead of hearts the trump in life's game. The results are interesting. (Harper's, \$1.30 net.)

OUR MISS YORK, by Edwin Bateman Morris asks the question, will business fly out of the window when love knocks at the door? It answers it, too. (Penn Publishing Co., \$1.25 net.)

BEHOLD THE WOMAN, by T. Everett Harré is the story of the queenly Alexandrian courtesan whose beauty was the glory of Egypt. We read of a woman's quest of love amid the vices and excesses of an age in which wantonness was an art, and women became eminent only through their share, and of this woman's finding redemption and her soul's desire in that divine Christ who through all ages will know no utter condemnation but only forgiveness. (J. B. Lippincott Co., \$1.35 net.)

MANHOOD IN ITS AMERICAN TYPE, by Martyn Summerbell, LL. D. shows that America has evolved a type which is peculiarly American,—a type to which all immigrants conform by the third generation. A very well written book this. (Richard G. Badger, \$1.00 net.)

SEVENTEEN, Booth Tarkington's latest, is a story of a youth and summertime and the Baxter family, especially William. (Harper's, \$1.35 net.)

DRIFTING WATERS, by Rachel Swete Macnamara is the rebellion of a young girl against the jealous proprietorship of a mother's love. It is an interesting story, the scenes of which are laid partly in England and partly in Egypt. (G. P. Putnam's Sons, \$1.35 net.)

EXPRESSION IN SINGING, by H. S. Kirkland, is a forceful contribution to the literature on the *art* of singing, a plea for the *intellectual* and *emotional* appreciation of music on the part of the singer. (Richard G. Badger, \$1.00 net.)

MAKAR'S DREAM, by Vladimir Korolenko, translated by Marian Fell. A story of the Judgment Day, when those who have toiled on earth with dumb despair in their hearts, open their mouths and give voice to their suffering. This book also contains three other stories, very original in conception and masterly in execution. (Duffield & Co., \$1.50 net.)

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THE OLDEST AND LARGEST REVIEW IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
DEVOTED TO POETRY AND DRAMA

Poet Lore

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A Magazine of Letters

Autumn Number

The Feud of the Schroffensteins, A Play in Five Acts
By HEINRICH VON KLEIST

Heinrich Von Kleist
By LAWRENCE MARSDEN PRICE

Three New French Novelists; Ferrere, Harry, Binet-Valmer
By JESSE LEE BENNETT

Three Old French Lyrics
By HENRY CLINTON HUTCHINS

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Poet Lore

VOLUME XXVII

AUTUMN 1916

NUMBER V

THE FEUD OF THE SCHROFFEN- STEINS

BY HEINRICH VON KLEIST

*Translated from the German
by Mary J. Price and Lawrence M. Price.*

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

RUPERT, *Count of Schroffenstein of the Rossitz line.*
EUSTACHE, *his wife.*
OTTOKAR, *their son.*
JOHANN, *Rupert's natural son.*
SYLVIVS, *Count of Schroffenstein of the Warwand line.*
SYLVESTER, *his son, the ruling count.*
GERTRUDE, *Sylvester's wife, sister-in-law of Eustache.*
AGNES, *their daughter.*
JERONIMUS *of Schroffenstein of the house of Wyk.*
ALDÖBERN,
SANTING, } *vassals of Rupert.*
VETORIN, }
THEISTINER, *a vassal of Sylvester.*
URSULA, *a sexton's widow.*
BARNABE, *her daughter.*
Attendant on Eustache.
A warden.
A gardener.
Two wanderers.
Knights. Priests. Courtiers.

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The scene is laid in Swabia.

ACT I

SCENE I

Rossitz. Interior of a chapel.

A coffin stands in the centre. About it stands RUPERT, EUSTACHE, OTTOKAR, JERONIMUS, knights, priests, courtiers and a choir of youths and maidens. Mass is just over.

Choir of maidens (with music).—

Come, ye radiant
Hosts of heaven,
Down to earth from your abode.
Early springtime
Saw an angel;
Ruthless foot hath trod him down.

Choir of youths.—

Thou whose throne the skies above surround,
Thou whose realm the stars of heaven bound,
We, thy servants, will thy foes confound,
Vengeance! Vengeance! Vengeance! do we swear.

Choir of maidens.—

From the dust he
Gazeth upwards,
Mild reproach is in his eyes;
Begs with childish
Faith for kindness,
But the answer is the knife.

Choir of youths (as above.)

Choir of maidens.—

In his coffin,
Suffering ended,
Foldeth he his bloodstained hands,
Asking mercy
Of his slayer
But his foe stands grim and still.

Chorus of youths as above.

(As the music ceases the family approaches the altar, followed by the retainers.)

Rupert.—
I swear revenge! Revenge here by the Host,
Revenge upon thy house, Count Schroffenstein! (*Receives
the sacrament.*)

My son, come forward now and swear!

Ottokar.—

My heart

Bears up with wings thy curse to God on high.
I swear revenge as thou dost.

Rupert.—

Speak the name,
The name, my son, the name!

Ottokar.—

Revenge I swear,
Sylvester Schroffenstein, on thee!

Eupert.—

Make no mistake.
A curse like ours must reach the ears of God,
Who arms with lightnings every single word.
So choose thy words with care and do not say
Sylvester only—say and his whole house.
So will it be more sure.

Ottokar.—

Revenge! Revenge!

Sylvester, on thy murd'rous house! (*Receives the sacrament.*)

Rupert.—

Eustache,
'Tis now thy turn.

Eustache.—

I am a woman. Spare
Me this!

Rupert.—

Thou art the mother of the dead.

Eustache.—

O God! How can a woman take revenge?

Rupert.—

In thought and in her prayers.
(*She receives the sacrament.*)
(*RUFERT leads EUSTACHE forward, the others follow.*)

I know, Eustache, men are the avengers
And women are by nature made to mourn.
Enough of nature.

'Tis but a pleasant little fairy tale
 Which poets, mankind's nurses, tell to man.
 We know that faith and innocence and love,
 Fidelity, religion and the fear
 Of Gods are fabulous as beasts that speak,
 That even blood relationship, the most
 Enduring tie of all, has given way,
 That cousins, yea, and brothers point the sword
 Against each other's breasts. Behold to-day
 The final spark of human kindness dies,
 The love for little children is no more.
 They tell of wolves that suckled children once,
 Of lions that a mother's only child
 Have spared. Since all is changed, O Ottokar,
 I marvel not that in thine uncle's place
 I see a savage beast, no more a man.
 Since beasts and men their nature have exchanged
 Let woman change her nature too. Let her
 Drive out the love that fills her heart and set
 Up hatred in its stead. And we meanwhile
 Will do our part as men. And so I call
 On all my vassals here, man, woman, child,
 Whoever loves his life, to come together,
 For this will be no open, honest war,
 'Tis but a chase, as if we hunted snakes.
 We've but to hem them in in their own lair
 And suffocate them in their loathly nest
 And leave their bodies lying, that their race
 May smell the stench afar and come not near
 To their old lair till many an age is past.

Eustache.—

O Rupert, calm thyself! Gross injury
 Deprives the victim of his self-control
 And thus deprives him of his vengeance too.
 For rage holds sway within his heart, and rage
 Is prime confederate of the enemy.
 Perchance Sylvester sets a snare for thee,
 And blind with pain thou art an easy prey.
 Investigate, postpone the feud! I do
 Not seek to bind the hand of vengeance. I
 But seek to guide it that it strike more true.

Rupert.—

So I should wait, thou thinkest? Wait until
 Not only Peter's death must be avenged
 But thine and Ottokar's? Go forth, Aldöbern!
 Make known to Warwand peace is at an end!
 But speak not softly as I say it now
 And not with such dry words. Say rather I
 Am minded to tear down his castle walls
 And build instead a scaffold. Nay, I bid thee,
 Speak not so mildly—tell him that I thirst
 To drink the blood of him and of his children,
 And of his children's—

(Covers his face; exit, followed by all except OTTOKAR and JERONIMUS.)

Jeronimus.—

A word, Count Ottokar.

Ottokar.—

'Tis thou, Jerome,
 And thou art welcome, tho we are in haste.
 I scarce have time to seek my armor out
 And gird it on.—But yet, what wilt thou here?

Jeronimus.—

I come from Warwand.

Ottokar.—

O, from Warwand? Well?

Jeronimus.—

And by my oath, I am upon their side.

Ottokar.—

Sylvester's? Thou?

Jeronimus.—

For never was a feud
 With such wild haste, such wicked lack of thought
 Determined on as this.

Ottokar.—

Explain thy words.

Jeronimus.—

Nay, it is thou who shouldst explain. For as
 I stood among these benches looking on
 I felt just like a clown
 Who watches a magician's tricks.

Ottokar.—

What's this?

Dost thou not know?

Jeronimus.—

Thou hearest what I say,
I come from Warwand, where Sylvester, whom
Thou hast accused of murdering a child,
Kills flies for buzzing round his daughter's head.

Ottokar.—

So that was it! Ah yes, in truth I know
They prize thee in that house and call thee friend,
So thou shouldst be well versed in all their ways.
They say thou art the daughter's wooer—well,
I never saw her, but the voice of fame
Proclaims her fair. Perhaps the prize is worth it.

Jeronimus.—

What dost thou mean by that?

Ottokar.—

I mean because—

Jeronimus.—

That is enough. I understand thy thought.
Thou thinkest that I saw a wondrous fish,
Whose only food was loathly carrion,
And so I struck my knightly honor dead
And hung the corpse as bait above the head
Of that strange fish—

Ottokar.—

Let's speak right out, Jerome!
God grants this time that we should recognize
With certitude undimmed by subterfuge,
Who are our foes. Warwand's our foe. There lies
The truth in numbers round and neatly put
As poison in a capsule. Time is scant.
I have no time to haggle and to sift
A mass of chaff to find a grain of truth.
We'll make it short and say thou art for Warwand.

Jeronimus.—

And by my troth that is the truth! As yet
I never had to choose 'twixt you and them,
Yet must the choice be made 'tis quickly done,
If things are so, I can not hesitate;
For now I'll gallop over hill and dale
And rouse in every castle every heart
And call the sense of justice up to arms
To aid the falsely slandered.

Ottokar.—

What! The sense
Of justice? Counterfeiter base of feelings!
Thy coin, despite its glint, will not deceive
One soul. It will ring false and men will nail
Thy words as warnings on the door. The sense
Of justice! Can there be a different one
From that which dwells within my heart! Dost think
That I, if I believed him innocent,
Would not stand boldly forth in his defence
And brave my father's wrath? How then, O fool,
Could I with such ecstatic joy gird on
This sword, which yesterday I first received
And dedicated then to this revenge?
But that's enough; thou canst not understand.
We'll end the matter, for methinks we twain—
We have from now naught more in common.

Jeronimus.—

Naught.

Ottokar.—

Farewell!

Jeronimus.—

Ottokar!
What dost thou think? Thou strik'st me in the face
Yet do I stand and beg that thou shouldst still
Explain to me. Dost think I am a coward?

Ottokar.—

If thou wouldst know, then stand beside this bier.
(Exit OTTOKAR. JERONIMUS after an inner struggle is about
to follow him but sees the warden.)

Jeronimus.—

Old man!

Warden.—

What, sir?

Jeronimus.—

Dost know me?

Warden.—

Hast thou been
Within this church before?

Jeronimus.—

No.

Warden.—

How then can
A warden in the church know all the names
Of those who are outside it?

Jeronimus.—

Thou art right.
I broke my journey here to see my friends
And found them plunged in deepest grief and pain.
I scarcely can believe what people say,
That by his uncle this poor child was slain.
Thou art not of the common herd. Thou dost
From time to time hear hints let drop by those
In high positions. Tell me, if thou wilt,
What sad events have lately happened here,
And all in proper order as they came.

Warden.—

That, sir, I'll gladly do. Long years ago
A compact of inheritance was made
Between the lines of Warwand and of Rossitz,
Wherein 'twas writ that should one line die out
The whole estate should fall unto the other.

Jeronimus.—

Make haste, old man, that fact's not to the point.

Warden.—

Aye, sir, that's right in point. That is as if
Thou wouldst assert the apple played no part
In mankind's fall.

Jeronimus.—

Well then, speak on.

Warden.—

I speak.
The day before Count Rupert entered on
His reign he suddenly fell ill. Two days
He lay unconscious. All regarded him
As dead, and Count Sylvester as his heir
Reached out for his estate. In vain; my lord
The count came back to life. Believe me, death
Itself could not have brought so deep a gloom
To Warwand's house as this unwelcome news.

Jeronimus.—

Who told thee that?

Warden.—

My lord, 'twas twenty years

Ago. I am no longer sure.

Jeronimus.—

Go on.

Warden.—

I will. Sylvester ever since that time
Has cast his longing eyes at our estate,
Just as the hungry cat eyes greedily
The bone the dog is gnawing.

Jeronimus.—

Is that true?

Warden.—

And when a son was born to our good lord
'Tis said that he turned pale.

Jerronimui.—

Indeed?

Warden.—

And now

Since patient waiting's been in vain, and since
The sons grew up like two young poplar trees,
He made the matter short. He seized an axe
And felled the youngest one, just nine years old,
Who lies there on the bier.

Jeronimus.—

Go on and tell

How all occurred.

Warden.—

Am I not telling thee?

Now just suppose that thou wert our Lord Rupert.
Toward evening thou wert strolling far from Rossitz
And turning toward the woods. Imagine now
Thou didst espy thy youngest lying dead.
Beside him stood two men with blood-red knives,
Retainers these of Warwand. Thou didst draw
Thy sword and strike them down.

Jeronimus.—

Did Rupert that?

Warden.—

One died, the other lived and has confessed.

Jeronimus.—

Confessed?

Warden.—

Yea, sir, he has admitted all.

Jeronimus.—

What then has he confessed?

Warden.—

He has confessed

That he was hired and paid by Count Sylvester.

Jeronimus.—

Didst thou hear that? From his own lips?

Warden.—

My Lord,

I heard it well, as did the whole assemblage.

Jeronimus.—

'Tis loathsome. Be precise. Pray how did he
Confess it?

Warden.—

Under torture.

Jeronimus.—

Under torture?

Repeat his words.

Warden.—

My lord I did not hear

His words save one. 'Twas noisy in the square

Where they were torturing him. One scarce could hear

His words.

Jeronimus.—

Save one, thou sayest, what was that?

Warden.—

I heard one word, my lord—the word Sylvester.

Jeronimus.—

Sylvester? Well, what more?

Warden.—

I heard no more,

For scarce had he confessed before he died.

Jeronimus.—

And so thou heardst no more?

Warden.—

My lord no more.

(JERONIMUS stands lost in thought.)

(A servant enters.)

Servant.—

Was not Count Rupert here?

Jeronimus.—

Thou seekest him?
Then I will go with thee and seek him too.

(All go out.)

(OTTOKAR and JOHANN enter from the other side.)

Ottokar.—

How cam'st thou by this veil? It is the one,
The very one—and then, these tears! Pray tell me
What mean these tears. Thou art wrought up. Methinks
The Virgin Mary hath inspired thee as
Thou kneltest at her feet.

Johann.—

My lord, as I
Went by the shrine I felt impelled to kneel
In prayer before her.

Ottokar.—

But the veil? How cam'st
Thou by this veil? Speak out.

Johann.—

I found it, sire.

Ottokar.—

And where?

Johann.—

In yonder glen beside the cross.

Ottokar.—

And dost thou know to whom it once belonged?

Johann.—

I do not know.

Ottokar.—

'Tis of no consequence.
But since it is no use to thee, accept
This ring and give the veil to me.

Johann.—

The veil?
My lord, what dost thou mean? Am I to barter
What I have found to thee?

Ottokar.—

Do as thou wilt.
I always was thy friend. I will reward
Thee as thou wilt.
(Kisses him and is about to go.)

Johann.—

O, take from me my all,
My life, if thou but wilt.

Ottokar.—

Thou art so strange—

Johann.—

Take thou this veil and thou dost take from me
My life, for like a holy relic it
Preserves for me the thought of that blest hour
When God vouchsafed to me a taste of the
Eternal life.

Ottokar.—

Indeed. And so it was
Not found,—it was a gift to thee? Pray tell!

Johann.—

Five weeks ago—no, 'tis five weeks to-morrow—
Thy father led his hunting train into
The wood. The steeds like bended whalebones sped
Away. My horse, a half-tamed Turkish mount,
Took fright at sounding horn and cracking whip
And baying hound, passed every steed until
He did dispute with thine own father's horse
The lead. I drew the reins with all my might,
But 'twas as if the spurs had goaded him.
He gained his topmost speed and like a bolt
Shot from a bow he flew along. I wheeled
To right and sped him down the vale. And since
I scarce had time to look before I leaped
We dashed, both man and steed, into a stream.

Ottokar.—

Then God be praised that thou art once again
Upon dry land. But who did save thee?

Johann.—

Who,
Thou dost inquire? How can I tell thee in
A word? I cannot say it as I would.
It was a naked maid.

Ottokar.—

A naked maid?

Johann.—

As pure she was and radiant as a goddess
Just stepping from the bath. 'Tis true I glimpsed

Her beauty scarce before she fled away.
 For lo! when sight came back to me once more
 She stood there veiled.

Ottokar.—

And then?

Johann.—

An angel then
 She seemed to me as veiled she came and raised
 Me up with heavenly pity. Quickly next
 She loosed her scarf from neck and hair and stanch'd
 My streaming wounds.

Ottokar.—

O happy thou!

Johann.—

I lay
 And dared not move for very joy as does
 A dove when fondled by a childish hand.

Ottokar.—

And spoke she not?

Johann.—

Her voice was like a bell.
 She asked me, while she tended me, my name
 And whence I came and started when she heard
 I came from Rossitz.

Ottokar.—

Started? Why?

Johann.—

God knows.
 But quickly finishing her task she fled
 And left the veil with me.

Ottokar.—

Did she not tell
 Her name?

Johann.—

I begged her and besought her all
 In vain.

Ottokar.—

Nay, that she does not do.

Johann.—

Know'st thou
 The maid?

Ottokar.—

I know her well. Dost think, O fool,
The sun doth shine for thee alone?

Johann.—

What dost
Thou mean? Thou knowest too her name?

Ottokar.—

Not that.
Be calm. She tells me that no more than thee,
And would be wroth if we should rudely try
To find it out, so let us do as she
Would have us do. Let man not seek to learn
The secrets of the angels. Let us do
As with the angels we are wont. Come, let
Us christen her, and may the Virgin's own
Next counterpart be called Maria too—
For us alone, and when thou speakst that name
I'll know of whom thou speakst. Long have I sought
A friend like thee. Few souls there are within
This house like thine, so gently strung
They thrill with every breath.
And since our oath of vengeance drives us forth
To desperate scenes of war, we'll stand together
Like brothers. Side by side we'll fight.

Johann.—

Fight? Whom?

Ottokar.—

Dost see this corpse and still canst ask? Against
Sylvester's thrice accursed house.

Johann.—

O God,
Forgive him tho thy angel he blasphemes!

Ottokar.—

What? Art thou mad?

Johann.—

O Ottokar, I must
Make full confession of a fearful thing.
I must lay bare to thee my heart. For like
The restless ghost no tomb can hold, no bolt,
No vault, so does my secret—

Ottokar.—

I fear.

Speak, Johann.

Johann.—

 Thee only do I trust, for here
 Within these walls it seems to me that in
 A pagan temple I, a Christian, lie,
 And savages with fearful gestures drag
 Me faint with terror toward their blood-spilt god.
 Thou seemest more humane. To thee I turn
 As toward a white man midst the savage horde,
 For none save thee on pain of death may know
 The name of that divinity whom I
 Adore.

Ottokar.—

 O God, 'tis as I thought.

Johann.—

 'Tis she.

Ottokar (horror-stricken).—

 'Tis who?

Johann.—

 Her name is in thy thoughts.

Ottokar.—

 What name
 Is in my thoughts? Did any word escape me?
 Thy supposition may be wrong, and looks
 Are oft deceptive—may mean much or naught.
 Too quickly dost thou draw conclusions. She
 Whose veil thou hast—O no, it cannot be—
 She is not Agnes—Agnes Schroffenstein!

Johann.—

 I tell thee it was she.

Ottokar.—

 O God!

Johann.—

 As she
 Upon the word that I belonged to Rossitz
 So quickly fled, I followed her afar
 Almost to Warwand's doors and here a man
 Not once but many times assured me of it.

Ottokar.—

 O, let me lean upon thy breast, my friend.
 (*Leans upon JOHANN'S shoulder.*)

(*Enter JERONIMUS.*)

Jeronimus.—

Permit me, Ottokar, with changed intent
To show myself to thee. I would remove
The low esteem in which I'm held and gain
A better fame. A mortifying task
God knows! Of all that has occurred I knew
Not anything. (*Pauses since OTTOKAR does not look up.*)

Well, then, if thou wilt not
Believe, 'tis well and good. So let it be.
I have no mind to try myself by fire.
If 'tis thy wish to so misunderstand me
By God I will endure it then!

Ottokar (absent-mindedly).—

What dost

Thou say, Jerome?

Jeronimus.—

I know what strengthened thee
In thy suspicion It is true and I
Will not deny it. I have begged the maid
To be my wife. But ere I link myself
With murd'ers let the hangman come and break
My coat of arms!

(*OTTOKAR falls on JERONIMUS's neck.*)

What is it, Ottokar?

What moveth thee so suddenly and deeply?

Ottokar.—

Give me thy hand. I do forgive thee all.

Jeronimus.—

But why these tears?

Ottokar.—

Enough! I must away.

(*OTTOKAR goes out quickly; the rest follow.*)

SCENE II

Warwand. A room in the castle. *AGNES leads SYLVIVS to a seat.*

Sylvius.—

Where, Agnes, is my Philipp?

Agnes.—

Must I tell

Thee every day? I'd write it on a page
Wert thou not blind. Come, let me write it on
Thy hand.

Sylvius.—

Would that help?

Agnes.—

Yes, believe me, it
Would help.

Sylvius.—

Nay, nay, it helps not.

Agnes.—

It will keep
Thee from forgetting.

Sylvius.—

Keep me, Agnes, from
Remembering.

Agnes.—

Father!

Sylvius.—

Agnes!

Agnes.—

Feel my cheek.

Sylvius.—

Why dost thou weep?

Agnes.—

I know the Father chides
Me for it. He has never understood.
But as I cannot help but laugh when someone
Is laughable I cannot help but weep
When someone dies.

Sylvius.—

Why does the Father think
Thou shouldst not weep?

Agnes.—

He says 'tis well with Philipp.

Sylvius.—

Dost thou believe?

Agnes.—

Of course the Father knows,
And yet somehow I feel he speaks not as
He thinks, for Philipp wished to stay. Why should
He not? We loved him and he liked it here.

And now they've laid him in the grave. It is
 So hard. 'Tis true the Father says he lies
 Not in the grave at all, or rather that
 He does indeed lie in the grave, but that—
 O, how can I repeat it all to you!
 But I can see the grave wherein he lies
 Beneath the mound. Else why the mound?

Sylvius.—

Quite true!

Yet Agnes, I believe the Father's right.
 I really do.

Agnes.—

Thou dost? That is so strange.

Then may be it is so. Else why shouldst thou
 Believe and be so sure?

Sylvius.—

And thou, my child?

Agnes.—

What dost thou mean?

Sylvius.—

I mean, what is thy faith?

Agnes.—

That I have yet to learn.

Sylvius.—

Hast thou not been
 Confirmed? How old art thou?

Agnes.—

Fifteen almost.

Sylvius.—

See, see, it were quite meet a knight should come
 To lead thee to the altar!

Agnes.—

Dost thou think so?

Sylvius.—

And that would please thee well, I think.

Agnes.—

I do

Not say it would.

Sylvius.—

Thou hast no need to say it.
 But tell thy mother she should send to thee
 The priest. To him make thy confession.

Agnes.—

Hark!

I hear her coming now.

Sylvius.—

Then thou shouldst tell her.

Agnes.—

No, no, do thou! She might think ill of me.

Sylvius.—

Here, Agnes, lay my hand upon thy cheek.

Agnes (reluctantly).—

But why?

(*Enter GERTRUDE.*)

Sylvius.—

Gertrude, Agnes doth accuse thee.

Her heart hath counted up for her her years

And says she doth approach maturity.

She feels her head might bear the bridal wreath

If only one would come to lay it on.

But thou, she says, hast ever kept from her

The knightly stroke that dubs a maid a woman,

The confirmation.

Gertrude.—

That Jerome has taught her.

Sylvius.—

Gertrude, tell me, is she red?

Gertrude.—

There, there!

I'll tell thy father of it in the morning.

Till then my Agnes must be patient quite.

(*AGNES kisses her mother's hand.*)

Here, Agnes, is the box of toys. What didst

Thou want them for?

Agnes.—

I mean to give them to

The gardener's children, Philipp's lonesome playmates.

Sylvius.—

Give me the soldiers, Philipp's troops.

(*Opens the box.*)

See, when

I hold these toys it seems to me as if

Our Philipp sat beside the table here.

"Tis here he used to set them up and fight

His wars and tell me how they went.

Agnes.—

The knights,
He used to say, are we. The footmen are
From Rossitz.

Sylvius.—

Nay, not so, he did not say
They were of Rossitz, but the enemy.

Agnes.—

Quite so, 'twas what I meant, the enemy
From Rossitz.

Sylvius.—

No, my child, not that, For who
Shall say that Rossitz is our foe?

Agnes.—

Why, it
Is said by all.

Sylvius.—

Then say it not again.
They are the nearest friends we have.

Agnes.—

O no!
Thy grandchild and my brother they have slain,
And thou dost call them friends?

Sylvius.—

What! slain our Philipp?

Gertrude.—

Ah, Agnes, youth can no more keep a secret
Than can a child a bird within its hand.

Agnes.—

A secret! Every child within these walls
Already knows it. Thou thyself hast said
It openly.

Gertrude.—

I openly? What have
I said? I said to thee in confidence
That such might be, were possible, in fact
It almost seemed—

Sylvius.—

Gertrude, 'tis not right
To speak like that.

Gertrude.—

Thou hearest, I say naught,
Blame no one for the deed and hold my peace.

Sylvius.—

And yet thou speak'st as if 'twere possible.

Gertrude.

Well, that is my good right. He passed away
Too quickly; yesterday in health, today
Upon his bier—and then when seven years
Ago my daughter died, why sent they not
A messenger? This time, what zeal! The news
Had scarcely time to reach their ears before
A mounted messenger from Rossitz came
In wild dishevelled haste to us and asked
About the house if our dear son were ill.
Of course we know why they are so concerned.
It is the compact of inheritance,
Which we would fain annul but they will not.
And then the ugly spots upon his body—
The body's quick decay—but hush! I hear
Thy father's step. He has forbidden me
To speak of this affair.

(Enter SYLVESTER with the gardener.)

Sylvester.—

It must be done.

I know thy turnips, Hans, are sweet as sugar—

Gardener.—

My lord, as sweet as figs.

Sylvester.—

'Tis all the same.

They must be rooted out.—

Gardener.—

A gardener,

My noble lord, would rather plant ten fields
With box than root a single cabbage out.

Sylvester.—

Thou art a fool. Uprooting is a task
Of joy when 'tis to clear the way for what
Is better. Think of that young race of trees!
They dance like children when we pass, and look
At us with their bright flowered eyes. O Hans!
'Twill make thee glad, thou canst be sure of that,

And thou wilt plant them, cherish them and love them,
 As if they were thy children's foster brothers,
 Who live like them by thine own industry.
 Together thou shalt see them grow, shalt see
 Them bloom together. When thy daughter brings
 To thee her first-born thou wilt find our barns
 About to burst with fruit.

Gardener.—

My lord, dost think
 That we shall live to see that day?

Sylvester.—

If not,
 Why then our children will.

Gardener.—

Thy children, sir!
 I'd rather train up oak trees than thy daughter.

Sylvester.—

What dost thou mean?

Gardener.—

I mean that tho the chill
 North-eastern wind may spare them not, at least
 No one would dare approach with axe in hand
 As toward thy Philipp.

Sylvester.—

'Tis enough. I will
 Not hear such foolish talk within my house.

Gardener.—

I'll plant the trees, but if thou dost not live
 To eat the fruit, the devil fetch me if
 I ever send a bit of it to Rossitz!

(Exit GARDENER; AGNES hides her face on her mother's breast.)

Sylvester.—

What dost thou say? I am astonished. Thou
 Alone, Gertrude, art to blame for this.
 Distrust is like a plague spot on the soul
 That makes all things, however pure and clean,
 Seem to the eye to wear the garb of hell.
 The meaningless, the common things of life,
 Are shrewdly sorted out like tangled yarn
 And knit into a pattern which affrights
 The soul with fearful forms. Gertrude, 'twas
 A grievous deed.

Gertrude.—

My lord—

Sylvester.—

Would thou hadst kept
That light concealed, which, as thou sayest, dawned
Upon thy soul! Would thou hadst never let
Its baneful radiance fall athwart this day!
Had this day seen what thou dost think it saw,
A midnight darkness must have covered it
As sombre as Good Friday.

Gertrude.—

Let me speak—

Sylvester.—

Thou knewest well this tattling parrot crowd,
This magnifying mirror of ill fame,
Yet thou didst scatter in its creeping path
The spark which it will bear to neighbors' roofs.

Gertrude.—

Have I done that? My lord, the matter was
So clear to all men's eyes, that every one
Did judge aright. Concealment was in vain.

Sylvester.—

What dost thou think? Dost thou recall the time
Some eighteen years ago when thou didst haste
To Rossitz to thy sister's aid upon
The birth of her first child? Suppose that she,
When she discovered that the child was dead,
Had said that thou whilst seeming to embrace
And kiss it—mark my words—had said that thou
Hadst stopped its breath or pressed upon its brain.

Gertrude.—

My God! I'll say no more. I will accuse
No man, I will endure it all, if they
But leave to us this one, our last.

(She embraces AGNES passionately.)

(Enter a page.)

Page.—

My lord,
A knight stands at the gate.

Sylvester.—

Admit him.

Sylvius.—

Agnes,
Conduct me to my room.
(*SYLVIUS and AGNES go out.*)

Gertrude.—

Shall I provide
For him a place beside us at the table?

Sylvester.—

Pray do, and I meanwhile will tend his horse.
(*Both go out.*)

(*AGNES enters, looks about her, throws a wrap about her shoulders, puts on a hat and goes out again.*)

(*Enter SYLVESTER and ALDÖBERN.*)

Sylvester.—

From Rossitz, dost thou say?

Aldöbern.—

From Rossitz, aye.

Aldöbern is my name. I bear a message
From Rupert, Count of Schroffstein, to thee
Sylvester, Count of Schroffenstein.

Sylvester.—

Thy mission
Commends thee well, Aldöbern. Friends of Rupert
Are friends of mine. So let us make short shrift
Of ceremony. Pardon me if I
Sit down, and do thou sit beside me here
And tell me what thou know'st of Rossitz. We
Are like two kindred stock who dwell apart,
Divided by a sea. On rare occasions
Like weddings, christenings and funerals
A boat will glide across. The messenger
Is questioned almost ere he finds his words,
Is asked what has occurred since last he came,
Why things are so and why not otherwise,
And inquiry is made concerning things
Of less import, such as how many teeth
The youngest has and has the cow had calves,
And matters such as these. See, friend, I feel
Almost that I would like to do the same
With thee.—So prithee sit thee down.

Aldöbern.—

My lord,

I best can state my business standing.

Sylvester.—

What,

Thou fool, one can as little stand and talk
As one can ride and kiss.

Aldöbern.—

My speech, my lord,
Were ended ere I sat me down.

Sylvester.—

Thou art

Disposed to make the matter short. That grieves me,
But if it is so pressing let me not
Delay thee. Speak!

Aldöbern.—

My message is: my lord,
Count Rupert Schroffenstein, doth warn thee peace
Is at an end between his house and thine,
Since thou hast murdered Peter, his dear child.

Sylvester.—

Murdered?

Aldöbern.—

Murdered!

And then he said I should not speak so calmly—
Of merely discord, strife and war and feud,
Of scorching, burning, loot and laying waste,
So I will use his very words and say
That he is minded here upon thy walls
To set a scaffold up. He thirsts for blood
From thee, thy children and thy children's children.

Sylvester (rising and fixing his gaze upon him).—

There, there, good friend, so, sit thee down. I pray
Thou comest not from Rossitz. Am I right?
Sit down. What was thy name? Pray sit thee down
And tell. I have forgotten whence thou camest.

Aldöbern.—

My birthplace, sire, was Oppenheim. But what
Of that?

Sylvester.—

Yes, yes, from Oppenheim and not
From Rossitz. So I thought. Wilt thou not sit?
(*SYLVESTER goes to the door.*)

Gertrude!

(Enter GERTRUDE.)

Call the squire who waits upon
This knight. Dost hear?

(GERTRUDE goes out.)

Now seat thyself, old man.
As far as war's concerned I do agree
With thee. It is a merry thing for knights.
Thou seest I agree with thee.

Aldöbern.

With me!

Sylvester.—

Of course I do. If thou hast suffered insult
Or injury from anyone, confide
Thy tale to me. Together we'll avenge.

Aldöbern.—

Sir, art thou mad or dost thou but pretend?
(Enter GERTRUDE, the squire and a servant.)

Sylvester.—

Tell me, my son, who is thy master? Is
It well with him? Thou knowest what I mean.

Aldöbern.—

The devil! I am not the thing thou meanest.
Dost think I got not from my mother sense
Enough to know thou art a knave? Go ask
Our dogs. You'd see they'd tell by scenting what
Thou art, and I'll be hanged if any one
Of them would take a morsel from thy hand.
So much in closing for my task is done.
Upon thee, murderer of a child, war I
Declare! (*Is about to go away.*)

Sylvester (restraining him).—

Nay, hold! By heaven, thou makest me
Afraid. Thy speech, tho not too full of sense,
Is far enough from nonsense that it makes
Me chill, for one of us is mad. If thou
Art not I soon will be. The ounce of sense
That saveth thee will drive me to the madhouse.
If thou didst say to me that rivers flowed
Beside their beds uphill and emptied then
In mountain lakes that rest upon the peaks,
I should attempt to put some faith in thee.

But when thou sayest I have killed a child
My cousin's child at that—

Gertrude.—

O God, who can
Charge up that deed to thee? 'Tis they of Rossitz
Who but a little time ago—

Sylvester.—

Be still!
Now, please you, sir, just say that once again.
Can it be true, be really true? Thou dost
Declare on me this war because the boy
Was slain?

Aldöbern.—

And shall I tell thee ten times o'er
And then as many times again?

Sylvester.—

Tis well.
Franz, saddle me my horse! Thy pardon, friend.
But who can grasp what baffles human thought?
Where is my sword, my helmet—? I must hear
It from his lips before I can believe.
Send for Jerome and beg him to appear
Forthwith in Warwand.

Aldöbern.—

Fare ye well.

Sylvester.—

Nay, wait;

And I'll go with thee, friend.

Gertrude.—

For heaven's sake,
Do not entrust thyself unto the foe!

Sylvester.—

Fear not for me!

Aldöbern.—

If thou dost hope for mercy
In Rossitz thou dost err.

Sylvester (still arming himself).—

No matter, I
Will go alone. A soiltary knight
Has access to the foe.

Aldöbern.—

The least that can

Befall thee is that thou be chained against
The dungeon wall.

Sylvester.—

Thou speakst in vain, for I
Will clear the matter up if I must ride
To hell for light.

Aldöbern.—

A curse is on thy head.
And Rossitz holds not one to whom thy life
Were sacred.

Sylvester.—

I am undismayed. Their lives
To me are sacred and my own I'll stake.
Let us depart! (*To GERTRUDE.*) Unscathed I shall return,
For innocence is sacred unto God.
(*As they are about to depart JERONIMUS enters.*)

Jeronimus.—

My lord,—

Sylvester.—

'Tis well that thou art come, Jerome.
Await here with the women my return.

Jeronimus.—

But whither goest thou?

Sylvester.—

To Rossitz.

Jeronimus.—

Wilt

Thou give thyself to justice like a sinner
Turned penitent?

Sylvester.—

What words!

Jeronimus.—

Ah well, a life
Of infamy is scarcely worth preserving.
So go and lay thy sinful head upon
The block.

Sylvester.—

And dost thou think that if my conscience
Accused me I would hesitate to die?

Jeronimus.—

O charlatan, dost think that I will buy
Thy counterfeited heart in all good faith

Again? Am I a common stupid clown
 That thou with thy declaiming on the corner
 Canst fool me time and time again? But why
 So many words? One is enough. 'Tis knave.
 I will avoid thee. That is best, for here
 About thy presence is a stench like that
 Of murderers.

(SYLVESTER faints.)

Gertrude.—

Help! Bring help!
 THE CURTAIN FALLS.

ACT II ✓

SCENE I.

Mountain landscape. A cavern in the foreground. AGNES is sitting on the ground, winding a garland. OTTOKAR enters and watches her sadly, then turns away with signs of grief which AGNES notices. She continues winding garlands as if she had not seen him.

Agnes.—

A hateful occupation spying is,
 And since the conscience free would scorn to spy
 Himself, 'tis he who's often spied upon.
 And worst of all the spy doth often win
 Reward not blame. For oftentimes he finds,
 Instead of that which he deserves to find,
 A quiet ministration to his needs
 Or even to his whims. For instance there's
 A youth—what is his name? I know him well.
 His face is like a sudden summer storm,
 His eye is like the lightning on the hills,
 His hair the clouds in which the lightning hides,
 His coming's like a gust of mountain breeze,
 His speech like mountain torrents streameth forth;
 And his embrace—But hush! What did I wish
 To say? Ah yes, this youth, I meant to say,
 Has crept up suddenly and secretly
 As unannounced as is the summer sun
 When he would peep upon a night of love.

It would have pleased me well if he had found
 What he was looking for in me, and if
 The thorn of jealousy, that goads young love
 And dulls itself thereby, had driven him
 About just like a colt that finally
 Comes back to seek his sheltering stall. Instead
 Of that there is no other rival just
 At hand except his memory, and that
 Keeps singing in my ears his zither song,
 And I for guerdon wind this crown of flowers. (*She looks around.*)
 What dost thou wish?

Ottokar.—

Naught more.

Agnes.—

Then sit thee down,
 That I may see how well this garland doth
 Become thee. Is it fair?

Ottokar.—

Right fair.

Agnes.—

In truth?
 But see my fingers.

Ottokar.—

They are bleeding.

Agnes.—

'Tis
 Because I stripped the flowers of thorns.

Ottokar.—

Poor child!

Agnes.—

A woman spares no pains. For hours I
 Have thought how every flower should be placed
 And how the simplest one should do its part,
 That form and hue should fail not of effect.
 And now 'tis done. Accept it. If thou say'st:
 I like it; I am paid.

(*She looks round again.*)

What aileth thee?

(*She rises; OTTOKAR seizes her hand.*)

Thou art so strange, so grave—I understand
 Thee not.

Ottokar.—

Nor do I thee.

Agnes.—

If thou dost love
Me still, then speak a reassuring word.

Ottokar.—

Thou first. How couldst thou dare to-day to leave
Thy father's house?

Agnes.—

My father's house? Thou know'st
It then? Have I not always wished that thou
Shouldst not inquire?

Ottokar.—

Forgive me. 'Tis no fault
Of mine I know.

Agnes.—

And so thou know'st?

Ottokar.—

I know.
Fear not, thou canst confide in me as in
Thy guardian angel. Tell me how thou couldst
Make bold to seek this mount alone. Dost thou
Not know a mighty neighbor seeks thy kin
In feud of bloody vengeance?

Agnes.—

Feud? The dust
Lies thick on all my father's coats of mail,
And no one hateth us except the marten,
Who steals our fowls.

Ottokar.—

What dost thou say? You are
At peace with all your neighbors, with yourselves?

Agnes.—

'Tis what I say.

Ottokar.—

O God, I give thee thanks
That I have lived if but for this alone—
O maiden, maiden,—O, my God, I have
No need to slay thee now!

Agnes.—

To slay me now?

Ottokar.—

O, come and let me talk with thee a while.
 I'll be as bright, as open and as true
 As is thy soul. O, come and let no shade
 Upon thee fall, nay, not the smallest shade.
 For I would see thee clearly, as I can
 Already see thy mind and guess thy thoughts
 As tho I were thy God. But tell me what
 They call thee. Tell thy name to me, that kind
 Invention that doth clasp the infinite
 Within a word, and I will tell thee mine.
 'Twas but in jest I kept it from thee when
 Thou didst refuse to tell me thine. Long since
 Would I have found thine out if thy command,
 Tho strange, had not been law to me. But now
 I ask of thee thy name nor think to do
 Thee wrong thereby, because to me thou dost
 Mean more than all the joys of earth, and I
 Am linked to thee more firmly than to life
 Itself and so I ask that thou shalt hide
 Naught more from me, and I do solemnly
 Demand of thee a trust most absolute.

Agnes.—

I cannot tell.

Ottokar.—

What dost thou fear from me?

From every wrong suspicion I can free
 Thy mind.

Agnes.—

But thou didst speak of slaying me.

Ottokar.—

Of love I spoke.

Agnes.—

Of love I know thou spak'st

With me, but pray with whom didst thou converse
 Of death?

Ottokar.—

I tell thee 'twas a wicked error

To which a friend, himself deceived, had led me.

(*JOHANN appears in the background.*)

Agnes.—

There stands a man I know. (*Stands up.*)

Ottokar.—

Thou knowest him?

Agnes.—

Farewell!

Ottokar.—

For God's sake stay! Thou dost me wrong.

Agnes.—

I do not. Let me go! Wouldst thou slay me?

Ottokar.—

Nay, thou art free. If thou wouldst go thou canst
Unhindered, where thou wilt.

Agnes.—

Then fare thee well!

Ottokar.—

Thou comest not again?

Agnes.—

Nay, not unless
Thou speak'st thy name at once.

Ottokar.—

Must I do that
At once, before this stranger here?

Agnes.—

Enough.
Farewell for ever!

Ottokar.—

Nay, Maria, thou
Shalt learn to rate me better.

Agnes.—

Everyone
Dare own his name.

Ottokar.—

I will this very day.

Come back!

Agnes.—

Shall I trust thee and thou not me?

Ottokar.—

Thou shalt and at thy risk!

Agnes.—

So let it be,
And if I am deceived 'twill cost me not
A tear. (*Exit.*)

Ottokar.—

Johann, does it not seem that it
Is she? Can there be any further doubt?

Johann.—

It scarcely seems to me thou standst in need
Of any information I can give.

Ottokar.—

'Tis as thou takest it. All mortals have
Two aspects. One reveals itself. About
The other one must ask.

Johann.—

Hast thou the kernel,
The shell comes of itself.

Ottokar —

I tell thee that
She doth refuse to me her name and flees
Me too, like thee. The mere suggestion that
I come from Rossitz drives her hence. She comes
And goes as if she were a spirit. Thou
Didst see.

Johann.—

I saw, but with this difference!
Thou hast the talent but to call this spirit,
And I to drive it forth.

Ottokar.—

Johann!

Johann.—

Pah! Pah!
The trouble is, my nose curves wrong or else
'Tis with my ear lobes. What besides is there
About me that's so horrid it can make
Her cheeks turn pale and rob her of all power
Except to flee?

Ottokar.—

Johann, I scarcely know
Thee now.

Johann.—

But I know thee.

Ottokar.—

I will forgive
Whatever insults thou dost heap on me,

If only thou be not discredited
By them.

Johann.—

I will not pay too high a price.
Should someone come to me and say he knew
A horse that he would like right well to buy,
And I should slink away and buy it for
Myself, pray tell me what thou thinkst, would that
Be fair?

Ottokar.—

Thy simile is quite awry.

Johann.—

Say rather it is bitter, but 'tis honey
Compared with what I feel.

Ottokar.—

'Tis wrong to nurse
Thy error just because it doth offence
To me.

Johann.—

Offence! That pleaseth me right well,
And if perchance I'm wrong I'll cherish my
Mistake.

Ottokar.—

'Twill bring thee little joy for I
Will suffer quietly whate'er thou dost
To me.

Johann.—

There thou dost right, but naught would grieve
Me more than if thy heart were tortoise-like
Protected by a shell no shaft could pierce.
For but one joy is left to me on earth—
To persecute thee with a gadfly's sting.

Ottokar.—

Thou art far better than this moment shows.

Johann.—

Thou fool! Thou fool! Dost think to catch me so?
Since I'll not show myself magnanimous,
Thou seek'st to make me think I am. Thou think'st
The compliment unmerited may force
Me to a nobler course. I scorn thy high
Esteem.

Ottokar.—

Thou wouldst provoke me. 'Tis no use.
I know too well, to-morrow thou wilt take
My part.

Johann.—

Nay, nay, not so, for I will see
To that. For in my breast I'll make a wound
And tear it open every morn anew,
In order that my injury be made
Concrete.

Ottokar.—

Impossible! Impossible!
How canst thou harbor thoughts so monstrous while
Thou lovest Agnes?

Johann.—

Why dost thou recall
That love to me? O, monster!

Ottokar.—

Fare thee well!

Johann.—

Nay stop! Thou thinkest that I jest with thee.

Ottokar.—

What wouldst thou have?

Johann.—

Let's speak the truth. Thy life
And mine are like two spiders in one box.
So draw! (*Draws his sword.*)

Ottokar.—

Not so. Must I be slain by thee
I'll let thee murder me.

Johann.—

Thou coward, draw!
I thirst not for thy death but for my own.

Ottokar (*embraces him*).—

Johann, my friend, I will not murder thee.

Johann (*pushes him away*).—

Go hence, thou snake! Thou wilt not even sting,
But with thy loathsome presence wilt thou slay
Me slowly.—Good! (*He puts up his sword.*)
I'll turn to other means.

(*Exeunt on opposite sides.*)

SCENE II

Warwand. A room in the castle.

SYLVESTER *in a chair, showing signs of returning consciousness.*
About him stand JERONIMUS, THEISTINER, GERTRUDE and a servant.

Gertrude.—

Praise God! He breathes again.

Sylvester.—

Gertrude—

Gertrude.—

Speak,

Sylvester, dost thou know thy wife again?

Sylvester.—

I feel so light and joyous, 'tis as if
 I stood before the gates of paradise.

Gertrude.—

And at the portals we thy angels stand
 To give thee loving welcome.

Sylvester.—

Tell me why

I'm in a chair. My last remembrance is
 Of standing—

Gertrude.—

Yes, thou did'st, but then a swoon
 Did lay thee at our feet.

Sylvester.—

A swoon? And why

Was that? What is it? What is wrong with thee
 And with you both? (*He looks about excitedly.*)
 Is Agnes missing? Is

She dead?

Gertrude.—

She's in the garden.

Sylvester.—

Tell me then

Why ye are so distraught. Gertrude, speak,
 And thou, Theistiner, art thou too struck dumb?
 Jero—Jeronimus! Ah yes, I do
 Recall.—

Gertrude.—

Sylvester, come to bed. I'll tell
Thee all.

Sylvester.—

To bed! Fie! fie! And is it true
That I've been in a swoon?

Gertrude.—

Thou knowest well.
Thou knowest even why'twas so.

Sylvester.—

I know!
Fie! fie! a mind is but a stupid thing.

Gertrude.—

Sylvester, come to bed, thy body needs
A rest.

Sylvester.—

Yes, thou art right. My body is
To blame for all.

Gertrude.—

Then come.

Sylvester.—

Dost think that that
Is necessary?

Gertrude.—

Absolutely so.
Thou must go to thy bed.

Sylvester.—

Concern thyself
Not so. Thou makest me ashamed. Just grant
To me a moment's respite and I will
Myself set right whatever is amiss.

Gertrude.—

But take thy drops at least, the drops that thou
Hast often told me are a ready cure.

Sylvester.—

No woman thinks a man's own strength can cure.
She trusts a salve far sooner than a soul.

Gertrude.—

Believe me, it will strengthen thee.

Sylvester.—

For that
Naught's needed but my senses. (*Stands up.*) I rejoice

Because the mind is stronger than I thought
 For if it leaves one for a moment 'tis
 That it may seek its God, its fount of strength,
 And come again with its heroic powers
 Renewed. Theistiner, there's no time to lose.
 Gertrude, does he know?

Gertrude.—

He does.

Sylvester.—

Thou dost?

Then speak. What dost thou think of it? It is
 A knavish trick, no doubt.

Theistiner.—

In Warwand there

Is none who doubts and but for thee, my lord,
 There is not one who hath not long foreseen
 That soon or late it must have ended thus.

Sylvester.—

Foreseen? Nay, that I did not do. But doubt?
 I doubt no longer. So thou sayest 'tis
 Already known among the people?

Theistiner.—

Yes.

They have the head that brought the news from Rossitz.

Sylvester.—

What dost thou mean? The messenger still here?

Theistiner.—

He is, but stoned to death.

Sylvester.—

Thou sayest stoned?

Theistiner.—

Thy people could not be restrained. His head
 Is nailed between the owls above the gate.

Sylvester.—

O, that was wrong!
 Theistin, thy head should have protected his,
 A messenger is sacred.

Theistiner.—

Nay, thou dost

Unjustly censure me. I witnessed not
 The deed as thou dost think, but came upon

His corpse. And there was barely time enough
To save this man, Jeronimus.

Sylvester.—

Ah well!

They must submit to it. When things are done
They cannot be undone. If we touch pitch
We needs must soil our fingers. Yet, indeed,
It seems to me the motive of this crime
Was partly good and can be used for good.
We will make use of it. Ride quickly forth
And call on all my vassals that they come
In person to my castle. Meanwhile I
Will summon those within. There is no need
Of many words. I'll show my hoary head
And every hair will call a hero up.
So we will stay this scurvy first attack
And we will gather strength, till we can turn
The tables on them—till we drive the wolf
To bay within his den. We cannot fail.
Believe me, we will fight for all that's high
And holy in our eyes—for virtue, honor,
For wife, for child, for life.

Theistiner.—

My lord, I go

And every vassal shall be here ere night.

Sylvester.—

'Tis well. (*Exit THEISTINER.*) Franziscus, call the steward here.
And bring me quickly all our armorers. (*Exit servant.*)
I grieve, Jeronimus, that thou hast met
With violence. But in the strictest sense
I was not there. My people love me well,
As thou hast seen. It was mistaken zeal
Of faithful souls and so forgive them. I
Will watch them for the future. If thou wouldst
Return to Rossitz, thou canst go at once.
Ten horsemen shall escort thee on thy way.
I scarcely can deny that I am glad
Of thy mishap—do not misunderstand—
Because it kept thee here awhile. For I
Have shown myself unworthy. Nay, speak not.
I know what thou wouldst say. 'Tis true, a man
May fall because he's strong. The withered tree

Withstands the storm that lays the live oak low,
 Whose spreading branches are an easy prey
 To stormy winds. It is not meet that man
 Withstand all blows, and he who feels the hand
 Of God may sink to earth and groan in pain.
 The gladiator prides himself on his
 Stolidity. We men who do not fall
 For gold or show should rise again nor feel
 Ourselves disgraced thereby. I'll not delay
 Thee longer. Go to Rossitz, to the friends
 Whom thou hast chosen. Here in Warwand thou
 Dost see thou art no more a welcome guest.

Jeronimus.—

Yes, thou art right. I do deserve no more
 Than that I should be shown the door, for if
 I am a knave in my own eyes, what must
 I be in thine! 'Tis true that I am not
 So vile as thou dost think. In short, believe
 Whate'er thou wilt of me! I've no defence.
 My tongue is lamed. Like straying children are
 My words, they answer not. I go, but let
 Me say, 'tis not to Rossitz that I go.
 Dost hear? And one word more to thee: If thou
 Canst use me, send for me. for I would give
 My life for thee—my life. (*Exit.*)

Gertrude.—

Jerome, a word!

He's gone. Why callest thou him not?

Sylvester.—

If thou

Dost understand, explain to me. 'Tis like
 A dream to me.

Gertrude.—

Well then, 'tis clear that he
 Has been won over to the Rossitz cause.
 In all the shire there's not a single knight
 They would not set against us if they could.

Sylvester.—

Ah yes, but 'tis Jeronimus. If it
 Were any other I'd believe it, but
 Jeronimus! It is no easy task

To rob one of a high esteem, the work
Of years.

Gertrude.—

It is a devilish deceit
That seeketh to defame both thee and me.

Sylvester.—

But what, pray tell me, can they say of me?

Gertrude.—

'Tis true the youngest son of Rupert has
Been slain, and by thy servants in the mountains.

Sylvester.—

My servants?

Gertrude.—

Yes, and that is not the worst
By far. One hath confessed that thou didst hire
Him for the deed.

Sylvester.—

Thou sayest that?

Gertrude.—

I do,—

Upon the rack and died a moment later.

Sylvester.—

Confessed and died! However base his life
In death no man is reprobate. Who heard
Him make confession?

Gertrude.—

Everyone in Rossitz.
Upon the market place before the eyes
Of all they tortured him.

Sylvester.—

Who told thee that?

Gertrude.—

Jerome. He heard it from the people's lips.

Sylvester.—

Nay, that is no deceit. It can be none.

Gertrude.—

For God's sake, then, what is it?

Sylvester.—

Am I God

That thou dost ask of me?

Gertrude.—

Deceit or not,

Suspicion falls on us.

Sylvester.—

'Tis true; it does.

Gertrude.—

And we must justify ourselves?

Sylvester.—

'Tis we
Who must, not they.

Gertrude.—

My God! How can we clear
Ourselves?

Sylvester.—

'Twere possible, indeed, if I
Could talk with Rupert.

Gertrude.—

What! Wouldst thou risk that?
Now that the herald's death hath made his rage
Still fiercer?

Sylvester.—

Yes, 'tis true, the case is worse
By far, but that's the only method right
At hand. Yes, yes, 'twill do. Where is Jerome?
If he is here he may conduct me thither.

Gertrude.—

O husband, follow my advice.

Sylvester.—

Gertrude,
Thou dost not understand, pray let me go.
(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE III

Before the gates of Warwand. AGNES enters hastily. JOHANN follows her.

Agnes.—

Help! Help!

Johann (seizing her).—

Just listen, maid, it is no foe
That doth pursue thee, for I love thee, nay
I do adore thee.

Agnes.—

Monster! Hence! Thou art
From Rossitz.

Johann.—

Can I be so terrible
To thee? Just look at me. See how I shake
With pain and joy and long to clasp thee in
My arms, my sum of misery and joy!

Agnes.—

What dost thou wish of me, thou madman, tell?

Johann.—

Naught more, for thou art dead to me and like
A corpse. 'Tis with a shudder that I clasp
Thee to my heart.

Agnes.—

Ye saints, preserve me from
His frenzy!

Johann.—

Maid, tomorrow I'll be dead
And lying in my youthful grave. Does that
Affect thee not? And canst thou now refuse
To me, a dying man, a parting kiss?

Agnes.—

O, rescue me, ye saints!

Johann.—

Nay, sainted maid,
Do thou save me. For like a nauseous snake
Life hath ensnared me with its myriad toils.
I loathe to touch it. Take this dagger then—

Agnes.—

Help! Help! I'm threatened. Help!

Johann (sternly).—

I tell thee, take
This knife. Hast thou not stabbed me to the heart
Already?

Agnes.—

Thou art brutal. (*Falls senseless to the ground.*)

Johann (gently).—

Take this knife,
Beloved one. As lips would seek thy lips
With avarice my breast desires the blow
Thy hand will give.

(*JERONIMUS rides out of the gate with his attendants.*)

Jeronimus.—

Did I not hear a cry

Of fright? Thou wretch! What deed is this? She bleeds.
 By heaven! Thou shalt pay with thine own life
 For this foul act. (*Stabs JOHANN, who falls; JERONIMUS lifts AGNES*)

O, Agnes, Agnes! Dost

Thou live? I see no wound.

(*SYLVESTER and GERTRUDE come out of the gate.*)

Sylvester.—

It was Jerome

Whose voice I heard, not Agnes. O, my God!

Gertrude.—

O, Agnes, child! My only child! My last!

Jeronimus.—

Bring help! She is not slain.

Gertrude.—

She moves, she breathes!

She lives, she lives!

Sylvester.—

O, does she live unharmed?

Jeronimus.—

'Twas just in time I came. Scarce had he flashed
 His knife at her before I laid him low.

Gertrude.—

He comes from Rossitz, does he not?

Jeronimus.—

Ask not.

Thou makest me ashamed. He doth.

Sylvester.—

Give me

Thy hand, Jerome, we understand each other.

Jeronimus.—

Thou'rt right. We understand.

Gertrude.—

She wakes! O, see

She's opening her eyes. She looks at me.

Agnes.—

Have I been rescued from the maniac?

Gertrude.—

He lieth dead beside thee. Do not fear.

Agnes.—

He lieth dead because of me? It is
 Too terrible!

Gertrude.—

Jerome hath laid him low.

Agnes.—

Afar among the mountains he began
To follow me and at the very sight
Of him my heart stood still with fear. I fled.
But murderous frenzy is a sharper goad
Than fear and here he seized me.

Sylvester.—

Did he draw
His knife at once without a word? Canst thou
Recall?

Agnes.—

I scarcely can, for at the sight
Of that most dreadful face my senses left
Me quite. He spoke—God knows I thought him mad—
He spoke of love and said that he adored
Me, called me first a saint and then a corpse
And then he drew his knife and, begging me
To kill him, turned the blade on me.

Sylvester.—

Is he
Alive? He seems but wounded, for his eyes
Are open. (*To the servants.*) Take him to the castle. Call
The surgeon! (*They carry him off.*) Then return and tell me how
He does.

Gertrude.—

How couldst thou, daughter, venture such
A long and weary way among the hills?

Agnes.—

O, be not angry with me, 'tis a way
I love.

Gertrude.—

But thou wert gone so long.

Agnes.—

I met
A knight who spoke with me a while.

Gertrude.—

A knight!
Then thou didst risk thy life, for what could he
Have been, if not a knight from Rossitz.

Agnes.—

Dost

Thou think that such he was?

Jeronimus.—

I know at least

That Ottokar is often in the hills.

Agnes.—

Thou meanest—?

Jeronimus.—

Rupert's eldest son. Dost thou

Not know him?

Agnes.—

Nay, I never saw him.

Jeronimus.—

I

Have proof that he knows thee.

Agnes.—

Knows me?

Gertrude.—

He knows

Our Agnes? How?

Jeronimus.—

If I mistake me not,

I've seen a veil that thou dost often wear

In his possession

(*AGNES hides her face on her mother's breast.*)

Agnes.—

Mother,—

Gertrude.—

O my child,

For God's sake do be on thy guard, for he

With some chance fruit that he might offer thee

Might poison thee.

Jeronimus.—

Nay, that I scarce would fear,

But rather that—but who can trust the snake?

He's sworn her death upon the sacrament.

Agnes.—

My death!

Jeronimus.—

Myself hath heard it.

Gertrude.—

See, I'll have
To watch thee like a child. Thou shalt not go
Beyond thy home's protecting walls. Thou shalt
Not leave my side.

(*A servant enters.*)

Servant.—

My lord, the murderer
Still lives. The wound, the surgeon says, is slight.

Sylvester.—

Has he regained his consciousness?

Servant.—

My lord!
We can't make any sense of what he says.
He speaks the jumbled ravings of a madman.

Jeronimus.—

'Tis clearly but pretence.

Sylvester.—

Dost know the man?

Jeronimus.—

I only know his name's Johann and that
He's Rupert's bastard son. In Rossitz he
Hath trained himself to arms and yesterday
He gained his sword.

Sylvester.—

But yesterday the sword,
To-day gone mad! And didst thou say that on
The sacrament he swore the oath of vengeance?

Jeronimus.—

He did, with all the others of the house.

Sylvester.—

Jerome, a dark suspicion threatens to
Become a certainty to me. I had
Forgiven them for throwing blame on me,
For vowing vengeance and declaring war,
Yes, had they burned my house and slain my wife
And child in war, I had forgiven them;
But that they sent to me a paid assassin—
If that is so—

Gertrude.—

Can there be any doubt?
Have they not given us the proof?

Sylvester.—

Thou speak'st

Of Philipp?

Gertrude.—

Now at last thou dost begin
To see what thou wouldst not believe from me.
Surmises, nay, I call them certainty,
Hast thou despised and called a woman's strained
Interpretation, which, because it once
Is right, doth hold itself infallible.
But now thou knowest better. I could tell
Thee things thou never wouldst surmise.

Sylvester.—

What more?

Gertrude.—

Dost thou recall two years ago thou hadst
A fever? Hardly had thy strength returned
Before Eustache sent to thee a jar
Of pineapple she had preserved.

Sylvester.—

Ah yes,

A horseman's wife from Rossitz brought it here.

Gertrude.—

I made excuse and begged thee not to eat
Thereof and brought to thee instead a jar
Of peaches that I had preserved myself.
But thou didst scorn my peaches and wouldst have
Eustache's fruit. Then followed thy relapse.

Sylvester.—

'Tis strange, but I remember one thing more.
The cat knocked over my preserves, and I
Had Agnes pass to me thy fruit instead.
Speak, Agnes, is that so?

Agnes.—

Yes, father, it

Is so.

Sylvester.—

But now the strangest thing of all
Is this: Eustache's fruit affected not
At all the cat, but I fell ill because
I ate the peaches thou didst give to me.

Gertrude.—

O, very well! Of course 'tis possible
To misconstrue all things.

Sylvester.—

Quite right. I do
Agree with thee, and hence 'tis meet that I
Should not pay heed to what thou misconstruest
For me. Enough of this. I do demand
That thou shalt say no more of Philipp's death;
So, be he poisoned, be he not, he's dead
And that is all. I'll have it so.

Jeronimus.—

And yet,
Sylvester, do not fail to seize the chance
That seems to favor thee. If Peter's murder
Is but a ruse, and such it seems to be,
Johann is implicated in the plot.

Sylvester.—

A ruse that Peter's slain? How can that be?

Jeronimus.—

Ah yes, 'twere possible that Rupert's son,
Reported slain, has simply died of sickness,
And that his father saw a chance to take
Advantage of his death and profit by
The compact of inheritance. He seized
Thy servants, who by chance were in the hills,
And so made use of them that tho they were
Quite innocent it seemed to all the world
That they had done the murder. Then he could
With some pretence of justice make an end
Of peace between the houses and attack
Thy line, to root it out, that he might seize
The whole inheritance himself.

Sylvester.—

But thou
Didst say that of my servants one confessed
In death that he was hired by me to do
The deed. (*Silence.*)

Jeronimus.—

The man who told me that had heard
One word, and only one, from him they tortured.

Sylvester.—

What word?

Jeronimus.—

Sylvester. (*Silence.*) Didst thou never miss
These so-called murderers among thy men?
From those they left behind perhaps we could
Learn more.

Sylvester (to the servants).—

Let some one call the captain in!

Jeronimus.—

And yet I think Johann could tell us more
Than any other.

Sylvester.—

Yes, but would he speak

The truth?

Jeronimus.—

If he refuses to confess
The facts, we'll do what they of Rossitz did.
We'll put him on the rack.

Sylvester.—

And then, suppose
That he confesses Rupert hired him?

Jeronimus.—

Then
'Tis out, discovered.

Sylvester.—

Then, forsooth, I too am
A murderer. (*Silence.*)

Jeronimus.—

A priest might extricate
Us from this tangle. 'Tis too much for me.

Sylvester.—

Thou thinkest me a difficult enigma.
Console thyself, for God is such to me.

Jeronimus.—

In brief, what wilt thou do?

Sylvester.—

The best would be
To speak with Rupert even yet.

Jeronimus.—

'Twould be
A daring step to take, for from his words

At Peter's bier it seemed that no divine
Or human law could give thee safety now.

Sylvester.—

It might be tried, for man oft dares to think
The awful thought that shudders at fulfilment.

Jeronimus.—

He scarce hath given proof of that to-day.

Sylvester.—

This crime, however terrible, Jerome,
Is still to be forgiven. Was he not
Provoked quite sorely? My request is sure
To take him off his guard. We know a man
Will often do what one can scarce expect
Because one scarcely dares to hope.

Jeronimus.—

We are
But shooting in the dark; we'll hope to hit
The target.

Sylvester.—

Yes, I'll venture. Ride to Rossitz
And ask for me safe conduct, for methinks
That thou at least hast naught to fear.

Jeronimus.—

I will
Attempt it. (*Enters gate.*)

Sylvester.—

Then farewell!

Gertrude.—

Farewell! Return
Right soon and bring us consolation.
(*SYLVESTER, GERTRUDE and AGNES follow JERONIMUS.*)
Agnes (*picking up the knife as she is going out.*)
Nay,

There's no such thing.

Gertrude (*horrified*).—

The dagger! Agnes, do
Not touch it, for it may be poisoned. Throw
It down. (*AGNES puts it down.*)
And never lay thy hands on aught
That I myself have not examined first.

(*Exeunt.*)

THE CURTAIN FALLS.

ACT III

SCENE I

Mountain landscape. AGNES is sitting in a mournful attitude before a cave. OTTOKAR enters unnoticed and takes a position not far from the cave. AGNES sees him, utters a cry, leaps to her feet and is about to flee.

Agnes (after regaining her composure).—

'Tis thou!

Ottokar.—

Art thou afraid of me?

Agnes.—

Thank God!

Ottokar.—

Why dost thou tremble so?

Agnes.—

'Tis over now.

Ottokar.—

But can it be thou wert afraid of me?

Agnes.—

I can't account for it myself, for just
As I was calling up the courage, strength
And resolution that should help me thru
It seized me unawares, but now 'tis o'er.

Ottokar.—

O, God of Fate, a lovely, gentle soul
Hast thou perturbed.

Agnes.—

Since thou hast summoned me
Pray tell me what thou wilt.

Ottokar.—

If I should tell,
Maria, dost thou think thou couldst have faith
In me?

Agnes.—

Why dost thou call me by that name?

Ottokar.—

I would remind thee with that name of that
Blest day when I did christen thee. I found
Thee sleeping here within this dell, which seemed
To cradle thee. The branches of the trees

Protectingly did weave above thy head
 An arbor wreath. A waterfall did sing
 A lullaby and gentle breezes fanned thee.
 A goddess seemed to guard thee. Then thou didst
 Awake and gaze on me as if thou wert
 My new-born happiness. I did inquire
 Thy name and thou didst say they had as yet
 Not christened thee. I reached into the spring
 And with a drop of water wet thy brow
 And breast and said: "Since thou art image of
 The virgin, let Maria be thy name."

(AGNES turns away deeply moved.)

How all is changed since then. Thy soul was like
 A book to me that first doth occupy
 The thought and then doth move the soul and hold
 It fast. The everyday demands of life
 Sometimes distract the reader from the book,
 For commonplaces too demand their toll.
 But ever and anon he doth return
 And doth commune as with a friendly spirit,
 Which in the language of the gods explains
 To him the world. No secret is withheld
 From him except the secret of the book's
 Own loveliness, which must itself be solved.
 But now thou art to me a letter that
 Is sealed.

Agnes (turning toward him).—

Didst thou not tell me yesterday

Thou hadst a secret to confide to me?

Ottokar.—

Why didst thou flee forthwith?

Agnes.—

Dost thou ask that?

Ottokar.—

I can surmise that thou took'st flight before
 The youth who came upon us here, because
 I know thou hatest all who come from Rossitz.

Agnes.—

And they hate me.

Ottokar.—

I can assure thee, thou

Are quite mistaken. Some at least do not,
And I myself bear witness for that youth.

Agnes.—

For him!

Ottokar.—

I know his love is unrestrained.

Agnes.—

His love—?

Ottokar.—

I know. He is my bosom friend.

Agnes.—

Thy friend—?

Ottokar.—

What ails thee, Agnes?

Agnes.—

I am faint. (*Sits down.*)

Ottokar.—

Alas! How can I help thee?

Agnes.—

Grant to me

A little respite.

Ottokar.—

I will fetch for thee

Some water from the brook. (*Leaves her.*)

Agnes (rising).—

'Tis well. Now I

Am strong. The crown sank in the sea, and like

A prince despoiled I toss my life in too.

Let water or let poison be the draught

He brings to me, it matters not. I'll drink

And let him work his monstrous will on me. (*Sits down again.*)

Ottokar (returning with water in his hat).—

Here is the drink. Dost thou feel better now?

Agnes.—

At any rate I'm stronger.

Ottokar.—

Drink. 'Twill do

Thee good.

Agnes.—

Unless it prove too cold.

Ottokar.—

It seems

Not so to me.

Agnes.—

Just try.

Ottokar.—

But why? There is

But little.

Agnes.—

As thou wilt. Give me the drink.

Ottokar.—

Be careful. Do not spill too much.

Agnes.—

A drop is

Enough. (*Drinks, keeping her eyes fixed on OTTOKAR.*)

Ottokar.—

How doth it taste?

Agnes.—

'Tis cool. (*Shudders.*)

Ottokar.—

Then drink.

Agnes.—

Must I drink all?

Ottokar.—

It matters not. Do as

Thou wilt.

Agnes.—

Just wait a moment. I'll do all
Thou sayest.

Ottokar.—

'Tis medicine.

Agnes.—

For woe.

Ottokar.—

For what?

Agnes.—

Just sit beside me till I have my strength.
A healer such as thou serves not for pay
But finds reward in the recovery.

Ottokar.—

What dost thou mean by that?—for pay—?

Agnes.—

Come, let
Us talk. Beguile the time away for me
Until 'tis over, for thou knowest well
That convalescents dearly love to talk.

Ottokar.—

Thou seem'st so strangely changed.

Agnes.—

So soon? Does it
So quickly take effect? I must make haste
And tell thee what I have to say.

Ottokar.—

What, dost
Thou have to say?

Agnes.—

First tell me, dost thou know
My name?

Ottokar.—

Thou hast forbidden me to ask.

Agnes.—

That means thou dost not know. Dost thou believe
I trust thy word?

Ottokar.—

I'll not deny I know—

Agnes.—

Thou dost admit it? Well, then, I will own
That I know thine as well.

Ottokar.—

What is it, then?

Agnes.—

'Tis Ottokar von Schroffenstein.

Ottokar.—

How didst
Thou learn?

Agnes.—

It matters not. I also know
That thou hast vowed upon the host to slay me.

Ottokar.—

My God!

Agnes.—

Be not disturbed. What matters it

To thee I know? I've drunk the poison. Thou
Hast carried out thy vow.

Ottokar.—

The poison?

Agnes.—

Here is
The rest. I'll drink it dry.

Ottokar.—

Nay, hold! It is
Enough for thee. Give me the rest that I
May die with thee. (*Drinks.*)

Agnes.—

O Ottokar! (*Falls on his neck.*) I would
That it were poison so that I might die
With thee. If it is not, I dare not, can
Not hope to live with thee, since I have so
Ignobly sinned against thy soul.

Ottokar.—

Wilt thou
Do that?

Agnes.—

What dost thou mean?

Ottokar.—

I mean, wilt thou
Agree to live with me and hold to me
And boldly face the demon of distrust
If it should ever challenge thee again?
Wilt thou unalterably trust in me,
Whatever dark suspicions on me rest,
Yea, trust in me more fully than thou dost
In father or in mother?

Agnes.—

Ottokar!
Thou makest me ashamed.

Ottokar.—

O, wilt thou not?
And may I call thee altogether mine?

Agnes.—

Yes thine, and unreservedly.

Ottokar.—

'Tis well.

This bond shall last thru all eternity,
 And we shall need eternity to tell
 Each other all our secrets. Dost thou know
 Thy father caused my brother to be slain?

Agnes.—

Thou thinkest that is true?

Ottokar.—

I think there is

No doubt. The murderers themselves confessed.

Agnes.—

Why, then, thou must believe it.

Ottokar.—

Thou dost not?

Agnes.—

Nay, I am not convinced, there is one thing
 That counts for more than any mere suspicion
 Or certainty, 'tis the conviction of
 Another's purity of soul.

Ottokar.—

For thee

That doth suffice, but thou wilt scarce demand
 That I should see things only with thine eyes.

Agnes.—

Nor I with thine.

Ottokar.—

Thou wilt not ask that I

Should trust my father less than thou dost thine.

Agnes.—

And I can say the same.

Ottokar.—

O Agnes, can

It be? Must I so soon remind thee of
 Thy promise never to conceal from me
 Thy inmost thoughts? O, dost thou think that I
 Will hold thee guilty of the sins of all
 Thy house? Art thou thy father?

Agnes.—

No. No more

Than thou art thine,—else could I learn to love
 Thee not in all eternity.

Ottokar.—

What has

My father done? It is not strange this crime
Has roused him up to war against the ones
Who perpetrated it. Is he to blame
For that? Could he do otherwise?

Agnes.—

'Tis not
For me to say. 'Tis true he was provoked.
But that he sent a murderer to us
And sought to give us like for like, as he
Would hold, that was ignoble and unworthy.

Ottokar.—

What, Agnes, dost thou say? A murderer?

Agnes.—

Ah, yes, thank God, there is no doubt of that,
And I in my own person have the proof,
For he had drawn his blade already e'er
Jerome could strike him down and now he lies
In Warwand wounded.

Ottokar.—

Who did that?

Agnes.—

I'll give
Thee now a proof of how I do confide
In thee. The murderer is thy friend.

Ottokar.—

My friend?

Agnes.—

Thyself hath called him so and that is what
Miled me even now.

Ottokar.—

It cannot be

Johann!

Agnes.—

'Tis he who yesterday surprised
Us here.

Ottokar.—

By Heaven! Thou art mistaken. That
I know.

Agnes.—

'Tis very strange. Am I to see
The matter with thine eyes?

Ottokar.—

My father an
Assassin! Tho 'tis true he's violent
I've never known him less than fair.

Agnes.—

Thou dost
Demand that I should trust thy father more
Than thou dost mine. (*Silence.*)

Ottokar.—

At all events my father
Did not engage Johann to do the deed.

Agnes.—

Perhaps no more than mine hired knaves to slay
Thy brother. (*Silence.*)

Ottokar.—

Had Jeronimus in his
Excess of zeal not laid him low, perhaps
This riddle might have been explained.

Agnes.—

And had
Thy father not struck down the men he found
Beside thy brother's body, then perhaps—(*Silence.*)

Ottokar.—

Ah, Agnes, that misdeed is not to be
Denied. The murderers have confessed.

Agnes.—

Who knows
The outcome? For Johann is ill and in
His fever utters many a name, and if
My father thirsted for revenge he would
Not find it difficult to choose the one
That suited best his needs.

Ottokar.—

O Agnes, Agnes!
It almost seems to me that we have dealt
Unjustly with thy father.

Agnes.—

I am glad
To take it back and so will all my house be
If we have been unjust in thought to thine.

Ottokar.—

For mine I pledge myself

Agnes.—

And I for mine.

Ottokar.—

'Tis done. We trust each other, God be thanked!
 The morning breaks for me! O, why could not
 Our fathers understand each other just
 As easily as we! O, if we could
 But bring them both together! While apart
 Each thinks his single thought. Could each but add
 The other's thought to his then each would see
 The third and truer possibility
 For which his eyes are blinded. Guiltless as
 They are, one eye must understand the other
 Without a word. O, could thy father but
 Make up his mind to it! For I can scarce
 Expect so much from mine.

Agnes.—

'Tis possible
 He is already on his way.

Ottokar.—

O no!
 He surely would not go all unannounced
 And having no safe access—?

Agnes.—

Yes, he wished
 To go at once to Rossitz with the herald.

Ottokar.—

This action doth more eloquently plead
 Thy father's cause then doth the best that I
 Can say of mine.

Agnes.—

I wish that thou didst know
 My father, couldst but see his actions, how
 He can be strong yet gentle. Long ago
 Has he forgiven all.

Ottokar.—

O, could I say
 The same of mine! For ne'er could I commend
 The reckless zeal with which he seeks revenge.
 I fear my father's wrath if he should see
 Thy father come before him unannounced.

Agnes.—

Well, that is not to be. Jeronimus
Will be his herald.

Ottokar.—

What? Jerome? He is
Not safe himself.

Agnes.—

Why not?

Ottokar.—

If he has wounded
Johann, if he has wounded him in Warwand,
My father will be wroth.

Agnes.—

In truth he is
A vengeful man, thy father.

Ottokar.—

Yes, sometimes

He is.

Agnes.—

Then thou shouldst go straitway to him
And calm his wrath as best thou canst.

Ottokar.—

I calm

His wrath? My father's wrath? He sways us like
The sea a ship. We ride upon the waves,
They mock at our control. I could propose
A better plan, for all is profitless
Unless the errors that mislead us be
Made clear, and one of these is that attack
Upon thy life, to me so clear already.
I know the youth, I know his secret thoughts.
By jealousy impelled, he challenged me
Upon this spot to draw my sword. He said
He did not seek my life but only longed
To die himself.

Agnes.—

'Tis strange. He said the same
To me.

Ottokar.—

Then all is clear as I have said.

Agnes.—

Not in the least! It is not clear to me.

'Tis true he feigned insanity and sought
To force on me the knife and said, when I
Refused, I had already pressed a knife
Into his heart.

Ottokar.—

Need I account for that

To thee?

Agnes.—

I do not understand.

Ottokar.—

Did I

Not tell thee that he loved thee?

Agnes.—

O my God!

'Tis all a great mistake and now he lies
In fever in his dungeon cell and no
One cares for him because 'tis said he is
A murderer. Yet he is guiltless quite.
But I will go to him.

Ottokar.—

A moment. One

Misunderstanding is dispelled; perhaps
We can remove the other. Dost thou know
What I will do? I always thought it strange
That on my brother's corpse the little finger
Of both hands was removed, naught else. For what
Could prompt a murderer to take but this
And nothing more? If aught can be found out
'Twill be upon the spot that saw the deed.
I know it well and people live close by
I know that too. To them I'll go.

Agnes.—

Then fare

Thee well!

Ottokar.—

Nay, not so fast. Johann can not
Escape. Take care of him and say that I
Am still his friend.

Agnes.—

Enough. I'll find a way
To bring him consolation.

Ottokar.—

Wilt thou? Well,
I'll grant to him one kiss.

Agnes.—

Another he
Will give to me for thanks.

Ottokar.—

The third is my
Reward for the permission.

Agnes.—

From Johann?

Ottokar.—

That is the fourth.

Agnes.—

I understand, but what's
The use!

Ottokar.—

Well, then, farewell. Next time I'll give
Thee poison.

Agnes (*laughs*).—

From the bubbling spring and thou
Shalt drink with me.

Ottokar (*laughs*).—

Are we not like two children?
For scarce has fate, stern teacher, cast on us
A friendly glance again, before we raise
Our mischief-loving heads.

Agnes.—

I'm good again.

I'll go.

Ottokar.—

And when wilt thou return?

Agnes.—

To-morrow.

SCENE II

ROSSITZ. *A room in the castle. Enter RUPERT, SANTING
and EUSTACHE.*

Rupert.—

Didst thou say "slain?"

Eustache.—

'Tis what the people say.

Rupert.—

The people? Rather say the women.

Eustache.—

'Tis

A man who hath assured me.

Rupert.—

Can a man

Confirm the words?

Santing.—

I can, my lord. It was

A man, a wanderer from Warwand who
Reported it.

Rupert.—

Reported what?

Santing.—

That thy

Johann was slain.

Eustache.—

Nay, Santing, not Johann;

'Twas of the herald that he spoke.

Rupert.—

Which one

Of you twain is the woman now?

Santing.—

I do

Declare it was Johann. If I am wrong
Then put thy wife in armor and put me
In skirts.

Rupert.—

With my own ears I'll hear it. Bring

The man to me.

Santing.—

I doubt if he is here.

Eustache (looks at him).—

He's in the house.

Rupert.—

'Tis all the same. Go fetch him.

(*Exeunt SANTING and EUSTACHE; RUPERT whistles; two
servants enter.*)

Go quickly, bring Count Ottokar.

Servant.— I will,
My lord. (*Does not move.*)

Rupert.— What wilt thou have?

Servant.— My lord, we've bought
A bell and beg that when thou need'st us thou
Wilt ring. (*Sets the bell on the table.*)

Rupert.— 'Tis well. I will.

Servant.— We ask because
When thou dost whistle out doth leap the dog
And leave his corner by the stove. He thinks
The call was meant for him.

Rupert.— 'Tis well. (*Exit servant.*)
(*EUSTACHE and a wanderer enter.*)

Eustache.— Here is
The man, so hear and judge if my report
Be false.

Rupert.— My man, who art thou?

Wanderer.— Sire, my name
Is Hans Franz Flanz; I am thy vassal, just
Returned to-day from wandering far and wide.

Rupert.— Thou wert in Warwand. Tell me what thou sawest.

Wanderer.— I saw them kill thy herald.

Rupert.— Who did that?

Wanderer.— My lord, the names would fill a parchment full.
At least a hundred fell upon the one,
Retainers all of Count Sylvester.

Rupert.— Was
Sylvester there?

Wanderer.—

He tried to act as if
He did not know of it and kept himself
Concealed until the herald's members had
Been strewn about the castle yard, but then
He came below.

Rupert.—

What said he then?

Wanderer.—

He stormed
At first and soundly did berate them all,
But there was none who took his words to heart
And shortly after he did call them all
His faithful vassals.

Rupert (after a pause).—

O, the snake—'tis well
We are forewarned. We will beware of him.

Eustache (to the wanderer).—

Perhaps the herald first offended him.

Rupert.—

A herald and offend! He was at most
The tongs with which I pinched him.

Eustache.—

Yet 'tis scarce
To be believed that he inspired the deed.
For to what end should he inflame thee more?

Rupert.—

Perhaps he sought to test the scope of our
Revenge. 'Tis well. We'll call the hangman in
As counsellor.

(SANTING and a second wanderer enter.)

Santing.—

My lord, here is the man.
He'll tell thee if I told a woman's tale.

Rupert (turning).—

Is hell his servitor?

Second Wanderer.—

My lord, the knight
They slew in Warwand was Johann.

Rupert.—

And so
'Twas not my herald?

Second Wanderer.—

That, my lord, occurred

Before.

Rupert (after a pause).—

Ye are dismissed—but Santing shall
Remain. (*Exeunt wanderers and EUSTACHE.*)

Thou seest, Santing, 'tis a lie.

Unless thou canst in Warwand verify
The tale thyself, I'll put no faith in it.

Santing.—

Hadst thou but listened to the man thyself!
And in the house I met another man,
A stranger to this one, and he did tell
The selfsame story in the selfsame words.

Rupert.—

About the herald I'd believe it, but
Johann! How came he there?

Santing.—

My lord, they say

He wished to slay Sylvester's daughter, Agnes.

Rupert.—

To slay a girl? They're mad. The boy's in love
With everything in skirts.

Santing.—

They say he had

Already drawn his knife upon her when
Jeronimus rushed up and cut him down.

Rupert.—

Jerome! Well, if it really did occur,
I can believe that it was he who did it,
Because I know the grey haired fop doth woo
The daughter. Still in spite of that I'll not
Believe it till thou bringst the tale from Warwand.

Santing.—

I'll go at once and if I'm not again
In Rossitz ere the close of day, then thou
Wilt know that I as well am dead.

Rupert.—

First I

Would see the third, who told the tale to thee.

Santing.—

He's in the house, my lord, but sick.

Rupert.—

Then lead
Me in to him. (*Exeunt.*)

(*JERONIMUS and EUSTACHE in conversation enter on the other side.*)

Eustache.—

Sir knight, for heaven's sake—

Jeronimus.—

To send assassins who behind his back
Should slay his daughter, that most innocent
Of maids, whose life can show no crime except
That by this father it had been bestowed.

Eustache.—

Wilt thou not listen—

Jeronimus.—

Are ye better than
The ones that ye accuse, when vengeance takes
As low and base a form as doth offence?

Eustache.—

I tell thee that—

Jeronimus.—

Is that the readiest way
To give your neighbors' sense of justice proof
That in this wicked and confusing strife
The right is on your side? O no, indeed!
I do not know the facts but must I choose,
I'll take Sylvester's side, not yours.

Eustache.—

Just let
Me say a word. Did we inspire this deed?

Jeronimus.—

Did ye inspire the deed? Why, that's a joke.
The man, the murderer himself, confessed.

Eustache.—

Who is this man?

Jeronimus.—

Thou askest who? It was

Johann.

Eustache.—

O, what a monster is this liar!
I am astonished and I scarcely dare,
Jeronimus, to tell thee what I think

Of thee. For any unperverted judge
Must needs acquit us promptly.

Jeronimus.—

Thou art wrong,
For when I listened to Sylvester's words
My heart declared for him, so nobly did
He clear himself of all the accusations
That had been made against him.

Eustache.—

Can it be
That thou dost take his part?

Jeronimus.—

Strike off my hand
If it be lifted up in perjury;
Sylvester Schroffenstein is innocent.

Eustache.—

Am I to take thy word against their word
Who said they did the deed?

Jeronimus.—

Nay, thou dost jest,
For thou didst even now demand of me
That I should hold thee guiltless even tho
Johann confessed.

Eustache.—

My inmost feeling is
Of greater weight than all confession.

Jeronimus.—

So
Sylvester says but with the difference
That in his case I am convinced of it.

Eustache.—

If that affair resembles this at all—

Jeronimus.—

For his, Sylvester's, innocence I'll vouch.

Eustache.—

But not for ours?

Jeronimus.—

First clear yourselves.

Eustache.—

What has
The boy confessed?

Jeronimus.—

Nay, tell me rather first
What hath the murderer who was tortured said.
I want to know it word for word.

Eustache.—

Alas,
Jeronimus! if I must tell the truth
I do not know, for if I ask they say:
He did confess; and if I ask the words
He used, they say that no one, not the count
Himself, for noise heard more than this one word—
Sylvester.

Jeronimus.—

Even Rupert heard no more?
Well then, if he but lacked that word, he must
Have known before in some faint way.

Eustache.—

Of course
He had suspicions.

Jeronimus.—

Ah indeed! In such
A case the word was quite superfluous.
A look would have sufficed for you.

Eustache.—

Jerome,
I've never been convinced and yet a flag
Must flutter with the wind. I never shall
Forget that wretched day and thou wilt see
The future will be full of wretchedness.
But tell me what Johann confessed.

Jeronimus.—

Johann?
Why, just the same. He spoke your name.

Eustache.—

Naught else?

Jeronimus.—

That would have been enough for one less noble
Than is Sylvester.

Eustache.—

Did he not believe?

Jeronimus.—

In Warwand only he defends you now.

Eustache.—

I must confess this hatred that divides
The houses always seemed devoid of cause.
I always sought to reconcile the men,
But ere I ever could succeed, some new
Distrust would sever them for years. But tell
Me did Johann confess no more?

Jeronimus.—

No more.

And even that he only spoke in fever.
As we have said,—that would have been enough—

Eustache.—

So he is ill?

Jeronimus.—

He raves and doth confuse
The true and false. For instance, in the hills
He says is hell for him, for Ottokar
And Agnes it is heaven.

Eustache.—

Inded, what does
That mean?

Jeronimus —

Why, that they love each other like
The angels.

Eustache.—

What? Thou dost alarm me. Agnes
And Ottokar?

Jeronimus.—

Why dost thou start? I think
Thou shouldst rejoice instead. A minstrel could
Have hit upon no better plan to loose
This frightful tangle and to lead a grim
Beginning to a joyful end and kill
The feud between your houses root and branch,
Than such a marriage.

Eustache.—

Knight, thou dost begin
To make me think,—but am I wrong? 'Tis said—
Perhaps 'tis gossip merely—but 'tis said
That thou thyself dost sue for Agnes' hand.

Jeronimus.—

'Tis true. Do not inquire how much 'tis due

To generosity that I concede
Her to thy son. In short the maiden loves him.

Eustache.—

But tell me how they learned to know and love
Each other. For 'tis scarce three moons ago
That Ottokar returned from court where he
Attended on our emperor as page,
And in that time he has not seen the maid,
At least not in my presence.

Jeronimus.—

In thy absence
So much the more. This very day they were
Together on the mountain.

Eustache.—

True enough.
It might turn out to be the best solution,
And dost thou think Sylvester would approve?

Jeronimus.—

I am convinced that he would not refuse
The maid to him, altho he does not know
As yet about their love. If Rupert could—

Eustache.—

It is too much to hope for, quite—and yet
I'll try it—Hark! He's coming! He is here!

(*Enter RUPERT and SANTING: RUPERT sees JERONIMUS, turns pale and retires.*)

Rupert (as he goes out).—

Come, Santing! (*Exeunt both.*)

Jeronimus.—

What was that?

Eustache.—

Has he then talked
With thee already?

Jeronimus.—

Nay, I have with purpose
Avoided him because I wanted first
To speak with thee. He seems to be enraged.

Eustache.—

He paled at sight of thee. That is a sign
Like thunder clouds for me. I fear a storm.

Jeronimus.—

He knows perhaps Johann fell by my hand?

Eustache.—

The last I knew, he knew it not, but he
Was speaking with a stranger even now.

Jeronimus.—

That cuts athwart my plan.
(*Enter RUPERT.*)

Rupert.—

Eustache, go!
Leave us alone.

Eustache (aside to JERONIMUS).—

Be on thy guard (*Exit.*)

Jeronimus.—

I greet thee.

Rupert.—

I am quite curious to know what brings
Thee here to me in Rossitz. Thou dost come
From Warwand, if I'm right.

Jeronimus.—

I come direct
From home and yet 'tis true I was in Warwand
A little time ago.

Rupert.—

Thou knowest then
Of course, we cousins are just now at odds.
Is it as messenger of peace that thou
Dost come and with a herald's sanctity—?

Jeronimus.—

A herald's? Why dost thou ask that? 'Tis as
Thy guest I come.

Rupert.—

My guest thou art?—Then thou
Art charged with naught from Warwand?

Jeronimus.—

Naught at least
Which I cannot transact as guest whene'er
We have a chance to talk.

Rupert.—

'Tis well. We'll make
The chance. Speak out.

Jeronimus.—

It is Sylvester's wish
To talk with thee.

Rupert.—

To talk with me?

Jeronimus.—

A strange
Request, I know. Almost incredible
It seems, and yet if anything could prove
That he is innocent, 'twere this.

Rupert.—

That he
Is innocent?

Jeronimus.—

To me it is as dark
A puzzle as to thee. The murd'ers have
Confessed. 'Tis true confession under torture
Is scarcely proof and furthermore 'twas but
A word—a word that might mean anything.
And yet in spite of all, there's basis for
Suspicion and it seems impossible,
At least improbable that he can clear
Himself.

Rupert.—

Thou think'st—

Jeronimus.—

And yet, as I have said,
He thinks there's some mistake.

Rupert.—

Mistake?

Jeronimus.—

Which he
Could show, could he but speak with thee.

Rupert.—

For all
I care.

Jeronimus.—

Thou wilt indeed receive him?

Rupert.—

Shouldst
Thou see him once again—

Jeronimus.—

See him again?
I'll go to him straitway.

Rupert.—

Report to him
That I'll be glad to have him come to me.

Jeronimus.—

O happy hour that brought me here! I'll ride
To Warwand straight and bring him back with me.
O, may he find thee kind and gentle as
Thou art to me! And do not make it hard
For him. The whole affair's a tangle—blood
Accompanies the sword, but peace must come
Before all happiness. Have but the wish
To find him innocent and thou wilt find
Him so. I do believe it on my oath.
Like thee I was enraged by mere suspicion;
But when I saw his venerable head
I knew I had been wrong.

Rupert.—

Thy mission is
Fulfilled, I think.

Jeronimus.—

Just one thing more. I would
Explain to thee two badly garbled tales
That may perhaps have reached thine ears.

Rupert.—

Go on.

Jeronimus.—

Johann lies ill in Warwand.

Rupert.—

Near to death,
I know.

Jeronimus.—

He will not die.

Rupert.—

Well, please yourselves.

Jeronimus.—

What dost thou mean?

Rupert.—

No matter. Just proceed.
Explain the other tale.

Jeronimus.—

I mean to say
Johann, 'tis true, did draw his knife,—

Rupert.—

I hired
Him for the deed.

Jeronimus.—

What dost thou say?

Rupert.—

'Twere vain
To make denial since he has confessed.

Jeronimus.—

'Tis just the other way. His words make clear
That thou wert unaware of what he did.

Rupert.—

And yet Sylvester is convinced, and well
He may be so, that I am just as much
A murderer as he.

Jeronimus.—

There thou art wrong!
His people are misled; but he remains
Immovable and calls thee innocent.

Rupert.—

A hellish plot, hatched by the blackest devil!

Jeronimus.—

What, Rupert, dost thou say?

Rupert (regaining his composure).—

That's one of them.
Speak on. Thou wouldst explain another rumor.

Jeronimus.—

First give me courage, strength and confidence.

Rupert.—

Rely upon thyself for that. Speak on.

Jeronimus.—

The herald—

Rupert.—

Has been killed. I know it, but
His blood is not upon Sylvester's head.

Jeronimus.—

There thou art right, for he was in a swoon
The while. The deed enraged him and he will
Afford thee every satisfaction that
Thou dost demand.

Rupert.—

'Tis of no consequence.

Jeronimus.—

What dost thou say?

Rupert.—

A herald counts for naught.

Jeronimus.—

Thou art a monster!

Rupert.—

Art thou then a herald?

Jeronimus.—

I am thy guest and I repeat to thee:
If heralds are not sacred unto thee
Perhaps a guest is.

Rupert.—

Sacred? Yes, but I
Am subject, too, to fainting fits.

Jeronimus.—

Farewell. (*Exit quickly.*)

(*Pause. Then EUSTACHE rushes in from the next room.*)

Eustache.—

For God's sake, save him, save him! See, they are
Attacking him—Jeronimus!—the mob
With clubs—O, save him! See, they drag him down—
He's on the ground—O, do come to the window!
They're killing him—No, now he's up again—
He draws his sword—he fights—they're giving way.
O Rupert, I implore thee, now's the time—
They hem him in again and he defends
Himself with fury. Shout one word, by all
The saints I beg thee, just one word from out
This window!—Ah! a blow struck home, he reels—
O, there's another! Now 'tis over—now
He falls and dies.—

(*Pause. EUSTACHE confronts RUPERT.*)

A step to reach the window, yes, the sight
Of thy commanding presence would have tamed
The crowd. Whene'er thine hour of danger comes,
May God in mercy not withhold from thee
The help thou didst withhold from him!

(*Enter SANTING.*)

Santing.—

'Tis done,

My lord.

Eustache.—

'Tis done! What dost thou mean by that?
 Speak, Santing, Rupert, done? Ah! now 'tis clear!
 O, what a fool was I to call on thee
 For rescue! Fie upon thee! 'Tis a deed
 Of shame, so ugly, so contemptible,
 That even I, thy too submissive wife,
 Condemn thee boldly. Shame upon thee that
 Thou sittest there and must endure to see
 Me plume myself and in my innocence
 Despise thee! Ah! the sense of justice still
 Prevails in everything and even love
 And fear are naught beside it. Not my lord
 And husband, nay, and not the father of
 My children is to me so sacred that
 I could deny the judgment that thou art
 A murderer!

Rupert (rising).—

Whoever smote him first

Shall die.

Santing.—

'Twas thy command.—

Rupert.—

Who says it was?

Santing.—

That is a slap at me.

Rupert.—

Then pocket it.

(He whistles. Two servants enter.)

The dogs! did I not whistle! Go and find
 The count forthwith and send him to my room.

THE CURTAIN FALLS.

ACT IV

SCENE I

ROSSITZ. *A room in the castle. Enter RUPERT and SANTING.*

Rupert.—

That is the doom with which supreme command
Is curst, that to the will which may be changed
The arm is linked that carries out the fell
Intent beyond recall. A ruler would
Not do one tenth the ill he does were he
Compelled to do it with his own two hands.
His merest thought hath power to slay. His meanest
Dependent hath advantage over him
In that he dares to wish for ill.

Santing.—

I can

Not teach thee how to rule, thou canst not teach
Me to obey. Obedience is an art
With me. Command me to refuse obedience
And I'll obey.

Rupert.—

Obey, obey, obey!

Thou speakest like a neophyte. Dost think
Thou servest me? Shall I explain to thee
What service is? 'Tis giving aid and profit.
What has thy fancied service brought to me
But nauseous remorse? It is to me
Repugnant. I disown the deed and thou
Shalt take it on thyself. I'll lock thee in
The castle keep.

Santing.—

Lock me!

Rupert.—

When thou art free
The mountain fief thou didst desire shall be
Thine own.

(Enter EUSTACHE.)

Rupert (rising and speaking aside to SANTING).—

Thou hast my word. In two weeks time
Thou shalt be free. (To EUSTACHE.) What dost thou want?

Eustache.—

Do I

Intrude?

Rupert (to SANTING).—

Away! Thou know'st my will. As long
As I am master in this house no servants

Shall undertake to play the role of lord.
 I've still the reins in hand. I'll let them feel
 The bit. It matters not how much they champ
 At it. Whoever first laid hands upon
 The herald well deserves the axe. I'll throw
 Thee in the tower. No words, I say, if thou
 Dost value life. Thou hast interpreted
 My words as pleased thee best and hast misused
 Thy master's will disloyally. I'll spare
 Thy life. Begone! (*Exit SANTING.*)
 (*To EUSTACHE.*)—What dost thou wish?

Eustache.—

My lord—

Rupert.—

Dost thou desire to end the speech thou didst
 Begin, then spare thy pains; thou seest I
 Am not disposed to hear.

Eustache.—

If I have wronged thee—

Rupert.—

Must I defend myself before thee? Shall
 I summon the retainers, give account
 Of what I've done?

Eustache.—

My lord, a wife is glad
 To think her husband free from guilt and I
 Will kiss thy hand with tears, with tears of joy,
 If it is free from murder.

Rupert.—

Are the people
 Aware of how it happened?

Eustache.—

Yes, the deed
 Explains itself. The rabble was urged on
 By Santing's words.

Rupert.—

That I did not appear
 Before the window at thy call I can't
 Explain myself. It grieveth me to think
 Of it.

Eustache.—

It would have been too late. He fell

So soon, the promptest aid could not have saved
His life; the throng was unrestrainable. It
Would not have heard thy voice.

Rupert.—

Had I but shown
Myself!

Eustache.—

Yes, then perhaps.—

(*Chambermaid rushes in and falls at EUSTACHE's feet.*)

Chambermaid.—

My gracious mistress,
Have mercy on us! They are leading him
To death. O, do not let them take his life!
O, plead for both of us!

Eustache.—

For thee? What madness!

Chambermaid.—

My Friedrich! It was he who struck him first.

Eustache.—

Struck whom?

Chambermaid.—

The knight thy husband ordered slain.

Rupert.—

I ordered slain! The devil! It is Santing
Who is to blame.

Chambermaid (rising).—

It was at thy command

He did it.

Rupert.—

Snake, accursed snake! Begone,

I say!

Chambermaid.—

It was at thy command he did it.

I heard thy very words to him.

Rupert.—

Thou didst?

Chambermaid.—

Within the castle hall I stood and heard
Thy very words but thou wert blind with rage
And sawst me not. Two others heard it too.

Rupert.—

No matter. Leave the room!

Chambermaid.—

Then thou wilt spare

His life?

Rupert.—

He'll be reprieved.

Chambermaid.—

Thank God! Thank thee,
My noble lord! He is a trusty man
Who'd stake his life for thine.

Rupert.—

Enough, I say!

Go hence! (*Exit CHAMBERMAID.*)

(*RUPERT throws himself into a chair; EUSTACHE approaches.*

Pause.)

Eustache.—

My friend.

Rupert.—

Let me alone, Eustache.

Eustache.—

O, let me stay! That throb of human kindness
That stirs in thee doth cleanse thy every fault.
Repentance is the sinner's innocence.
I long to revel in its splendid sheen,
For never hast thou seemed more glorious
To me than now.

Rupert.—

I am a monstrous wretch!

Eustache.—

Thou thinkest so but O, the moment that
Succeeds a crime is oft the fairest one
In human life. And what commends thee most
Of all is that thou art not conscious of it.
For man is ever best when he in all
Sincerity perceives how base he is.

Rupert.—

I am revolting to myself. No one
Can honor me.

Eustache.—

He who condemns himself,
Him shall no man condemn. Come, rise again,
Thou art not sunk so low, thou canst not rise.

Rupert.—

And he who made me so detestable,
Him will I hate.

Eustache.—

O Rupert, canst thou think
Of vengeance still?

Rupert.—

I think of vengeance still?
Nay, ask me rather, am I still alive.

Eustache.—

How can it be? This moment, this at least,
Keep free from stain, and harbor in thy soul
No devil while an angel speaketh from
Thy countenance.

Rupert.—

So wouldst thou have me say
Perhaps: Sylvester, it is true, has been
Unfair to me. But at thy wish I will
Forgive him just as if it were a grudge
Between two women. It is true he killed
My son, and killed the boy who was as dear
To me as my own son.

Eustache.—

O, do not talk
Of it! Dost thou repent the bloody deed,
Done at thine own behest, then show it now
And honor in his death at least the man
Whom thou hast sacrificed so wantonly,
Who in the final hours of his life
Did swear Sylvester innocent.

(*RUPERT looks her fixedly in the face.*)—

He is
As innocent of Peter's death as we
Of that attack upon the life of Agnes.

Rupert.—

A strange comparison! —

Eustache.—

Why not, my husband?
The cases are alike upon both sides,
The circumstances even since the acts.
Thou foundst suspicious men about thy child,
And so did Warwand. Thou didst cut them down,

Eustache.—

The secret is disclosed!
 Upon my knees I do implore thee now
 By that one night which I did grant to thee
 Before the priest pronounced our marriage vows,
 And by our one and only child whom thou
 Wouldst sacrifice yet didst not bear as I,
 O, terminate this wretched bitter feud
 Ere it blots out the race of Schroffenstein!
 'Tis God himself who shows thee how to bring
 About a peace. The children love each other.
 I have most certain proof.

Rupert.—

They love?

Eustache.—

Yes, in
 The mountains God hath brought them both together
 Where neither knew the other.

Rupert.—

In the mountains?

Eustache.—

I heard it from Jeronimus himself,
 That noble upright man. His plan it was
 To reconcile the kindred lines by marriage,
 Renouncing her he loved, that she might wed
 Thy son.—O, honor his intentions now
 That he is dead, that in thy troubled dreams
 His shade may not torment thee! Speak a blessing!
 I kiss thy knee with tears and kiss thy hand
 That yet doth owe me what it promised at
 The altar. Use it once in kindness. Give
 Thy son the wife he longs for. Give thyself
 And me and all our kindred peace!

Rupert.—

Nay, tell
 Me, did I hear aright? They meet together
 Among the mountains? Ottokar and Agnes?

Eustache (rising).—

O, God in Heaven! What is this I've done?

Rupert (rising).—

That is indeed a most important fact.
 (*He whistles; two servants appear.*)

*Oh how
 really!*

Eustache.—

Thou wouldst not—no, thank God! It cannot be—
That would be too malicious for a devil.

Rupert (to servants).—

Has not the Count returned?

Servant.—

Not yet, my lord.

Rupert.—

And where is Santing?

Servant.—

By the corpse.

Rupert.—

Then lead me to him. (*Exit.*)

Eustache (following him).—

Rupert! Rupert! listen! (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE II

Warwand. A room in the castle.

SYLVESTER enters; opens a window and stands before it showing great emotion. GERTRUDE enters and approaches him with her face covered.

Gertrude.—

Hast heard it?

(*Enter AGNES.*)

Agnes (in the doorway; softly).—

Mother! Mother!

(*GERTRUDE turns round; AGNES approaches.*)

Dost thou know

About the dreadful deed? Jerome is slain.

(*GERTRUDE nods her head.*)

And does he know?

Gertrude (turning to SYLVESTER).—

Sylvester!

Sylvester (without looking round).—

Is it thou,

Gertrude?

Gertrude.—

If I knew thy thoughts I could

Say much to thee.

Sylvester.—

It is a dismal day,

With rain and storm and ominous commotion.
 An unseen spirit carries all along
 In its fell course,—the dust and clouds and waves.

Gertrude.—

Sylvester, wilt thou listen to my words?

Sylvester.—

I am intent on watching yonder sail.
 See how it sways. It is in sore distress
 And cannot reach the farther shore.

Gertrude.—

Give heed
 To what I say, Sylvester. I have news
 To tell about Jerome.

Sylvester.—

'Tis over now. (*Turns.*)

I know it all.

Gertrude.—

Thou knowest? What dost thou say?

Sylvester.—

But little. Is Theistiner back?

Gertrude.—

And so
 Thou wilt begin the war?

Sylvester.—

Why not? I know

Mine enemy.

Gertrude.—

No doubt can now remain.
 Since he has slain the innocent Jerome
 He will not spare thy life. It is his coldly
 Determined plan to hew away thy line
 Both branch and limb in order that his own
 May raise its crown more proudly to the skies.

Sylvester.—

To think that he could slay the good Jerome,
 Who did not come as herald but as friend
 And on an embassy of peace,—To think
 That he could sacrifice him to the mob
 In order so to have revenge on me——

Gertrude.—

The scales at last have fallen from thine eyes.

Sylvester.—

And I perceive Jeronimus's worth.
This very day I charged with guilt the man
Who hath so nobly sacrificed himself
For me, for well enough he knew! He held
Me back and rode himself to Rossitz when
He was no safer there than I.

Gertrude.—

Could he
Do otherwise? In blinded fondness thou
Hast always taken Rupert's side and thou
Wert wroth that anyone should ever dare
To doubt him. Now at last Jerome has had
To go to him for thee.

Sylvester.—

Compose thyself!
From this day on revenge is my sole thought.
A kindly cloud I hovered over him
Till now, but now I'll loose my thunderbolt
At him.

(*Enter THEISTINER.*)

Theistiner.—

So here I am again, my lord,
Home from my quest and I have brought the five
Retainers with me.

Sylvester (turning quickly).—

Where are they assembled?

Theistiner.—

They tarry in the hall and three of them
Paratzin, Manso, Vitina, have brought
Along upon their own initiative
Some thirty men.

Sylvester.—

Some thirty men? A wish unuttered they
Have thus fulfilled. Gertrude, Agnes, go!

(*The women go out.*)

Since they have proved so loyal I infer
That we may readily make use of them.

Theistiner.—

They strain like bended bows; the murder of
Jeronimus hath made them furious.

Sylvester.—

We'll take advantage of the storm. Since he
Is aiming at my head I'll aim at his.
Thou sayest thirty have arrived and I
Can muster twenty more. The spirit which
Inspires us makes an army out of that.
What dost thou think, Theistiner? I am minded
To move this very night on Rossitz.

Theistiner.—

Sire,

If thou wilt grant me fifteen men or so
I'll batter down the gate myself and break
The way for thee. I know the nest as well
As if it were a badger's hole. They are
Not yet prepared against attack. I'll take
My oath upon it that the gates are watched
By seven citizens as in the times
Of peace.

Sylvester.—

'Tis settled then. Take thou the lead.

At nightfall we advance. The entrance thou
Shalt make by storm and I will follow thee.
Before Jeronimus's corpse we'll meet
Again and hold a festival of death,
And Rossitz like a flaming torch shall light
The obsequies. Come, let us join the vassals! (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE III

Cottage kitchen. BARNABE *by the hearth.* *She is stirring
a cauldron over the fire.*

Barnabe.—

First for my father:
Rest in the grave: that impious hand may not strew
Over the field whitening bones to the winds.
Joyous response: when Gabriel's trumpet shall sound
May he come forth, jubilant, leaving his tomb.
Bliss without end: The gates will swing for him wide
Open, and light stream down in welcome to him.
Ursula (off the stage).—

Barnabe, Barnabe

Art stirring the cauldron?

Barnabe.—

Yes indeed, with both my hands;
I wish that I could use my feet as well.

Ursula.—

Thou dost not speak the wishes three.

Barnabe.—

Well, if

Our Lord were deaf as thou art it would be
Quite useless. Then for my mother:
Every success: let not the land-witch with her
Poisonous glance kill the young calf in the cow!
Bodily health: and may the cancer and rag
Red with her blood rot and decay on the heap!
Life after death: and may no devil stick out
Blasphemous tongue when she would pray to her God!
Now for myself:
Fullness of joy: and may a handsome young man
Drag me by force into his marriage-bed soon!
Light be my pain: that when—

Ursula.—

Barnabe, thou wicked girl, thou hast forgot
The flower pollen and the seeds of deadly nightshade.

Barnabe.—

O no, indeed. 'Tis all mixed in. The brew
Is thick. My ladle stands straight up.

Ursula.—

But where

Hast thou the eggs cut from the body of
A pike?

Barnabe.—

Should I prepare another?

Ursula.—

Wait

Until I make a brew from elder blossom.
Let no one in the kitchen, dost thou hear?
And stir it well, dost hear? And then recite
The wishes, dost thou hear?

Barnabe.—

O yes. Where was I?
Fullness of joy—? Nay, that's already said.

Light be my pain: that when the dear little one
Springs from my womb it bring me not woe and pain.
That will be all. If I have still one more wish,
Graciously, God, bring back my mother to health.

(She stops as if exhausted.)

Alack the day! If joy were not so sweet
Would man take so much trouble to secure it?
Again from the beginning. First for my father:
Rest in the grave: that impious hand may not strew
Over the field—Ah!

(She sees OTTOKAR, who has entered during her last words.)

Ottokar.—

Why art thou talking with thy cauldron, maid?
Art thou a witch, thou art the prettiest
I ever saw and I will wager thou
Wilt never injure him who likes thee well.

Barnabe.—

Kind sir, pray go. I beg thee, go. No one
Beside myself may stand upon this hearth
Just now.

Ottokar.—

Why thou alone?

Barnabe.—

I scarcely know,
Unless because I am a maid.

Ottokar.—

Yes, I
Will swear to that. And what's thy name, sweet maid?

Barnabe.—

'Tis Barnabe.

Ottokar.—

Indeed, then is thy voice
Much sweeter than thy name.

Ursula.—

O Barnabe,
Who's talking in the kitchen?
(OTTOKAR makes an entreating gesture.)

Barnabe.—

Didst thou call?

Ursula.—

Yes. Art thou there and dost thou speak the wishes?

Barnabe.—

O yes, be still! (*She begins to stir the cauldron again.*)

But now good sir, thou must

Away! For mother told me that the brew

Would be of no avail if watched by one

Who was not pure.

Ottokar.—

But if a pure man watch it,

It surely will grow better.

Barnabe.—

Nay, of that

She did not speak.

Ottokar.—

Because it is quite clear.

Barnabe.—

Yes; so it seems to me. I'll ask my mother.

Ottokar.—

'Tis useless. Thou canst see it for thyself.

Barnabe.—

Well, then, but do not interrupt me for

Our fortune's brewing in this pot and I

Must say the wishes—

Ottokar.—

What is in it then?

Barnabe.—

The finger of a child. Ha! Ha! now thou

Dost take me for a witch.

Ottokar.—

A child; a finger—

Ursula.—

Thou wicked girl, why dost thou laugh?

Barnabe.—

Why should

I not? For I am merry and repeat

The wishes.

Ursula.—

That of mine about the cancer?

Barnabe.—

O yes, and that about the calf.

Ottokar.—

O, did

I understand thee rightly—?

Barnabe.—

Hush! I must
Not chatter. I must say the wishes, let
Me be! My mother will be angry and
The brew will all be spoiled.

Ottokar.—

Now listen! Take
This purse and tell thy mother that it fell
Upon the hearth. Say that, and then come back
Here quickly!

Barnabe.—

There is money in it,—

Ottokar.—

Give
It boldly to thy mother, only do
Not tell her whence it came. Now go!

Barnabe.—

Art thou

An angel?

Ottokar.—

Go! But stay not long away.

(He pushes her gently into the next room; walking excitedly up and down.)

The finger of a child! Suppose it were
The little finger! Peter's little finger!
O, sway me, hope, as in a swing and let
My inmost soul be filled with joy, as if
A cooling breeze were playing on my breast
The while my eyes were closed.—How strong is joy's
Foreboding when it seizes on the heart!
'Tis almost more than I can bear—But hush!
She comes: now I will hear the truth.

(BARNABE enters; he goes to meet her and leads her forward.)

Now tell

Me how thou didst obtain the finger.

Barnabe.—

Just

A little while ago we found it.

Ottokar.—

Found?

And how?

Barnabe.—

Well, I will tell thee, tho my mother

Forbade me.

Ottokar.—

Yes, speak on.

Barnabe.—

While seeking herbs

Beside the stream that wanders thru the wood

We found the body of a child who had

Been drowned. We drew it out and struggled long

To bring the poor thing back to life. In vain!

My mother then, who knows about such things,

Cut off the little finger of the child,

For after death that is of more avail

Than is a grown man's hand, while he's alive.

What worries thee? Of what canst thou be thinking?

Ottokar.—

Of God. Go on. Was no one else with thee?

Barnabe.—

No one whatever.

Ottokar.—

What?

Barnabe.—

When we had cut

The finger off, two men from Warwand came

And tried to cut the finger from the right hand.

That has no virtue, so we scampered off.

I know no more.

Ottokar.—

Enough. Thou hast explained

As would a holy revelation what

I never understood before. Thou canst

Not understand my meaning but thou shalt

In time. Just one thing more. In Warwand lives

A maid I like as well as thee. I long

To speak with her this very day within

A cave she knows. 'Tis Agnes, daughter of

The house. Thou canst not go astray.

Barnabe.—

I am

To summon her to thee? That will be joy

To her.

Ottokar.—

And thee. We will reward thee well.
But thou must speak to her alone and tell
None other that a youth hath sent thee. Dost
Thou understand? I think thou dost. And so
That she may know that it was I that sent thee
Take her this scarf and give this kiss to her. (*Exit.*)

(*BARNABE looks after him, sighs and goes out.*)

SCENE IV

Another mountain landscape. Enter RUPERT and SANTING.

Santing.—

This is his usual path. The forester
Did tell me so. Two separate times have I
Myself beheld him on this path in haste.
If he is in the mountains, Agnes is
There too, and we will catch them both at once

Rupert (sitting down on a rock).—

I'm hot. My tongue is dry.

Santing.—

And yet the wind
Is blowing cool across the fields.

Rupert.—

I think

The heat must be in me.

Santing.—

Dost thou feel ill?

Rupert.—

No, only parched.

Santing.—

Here is a spring.

Rupert.—

Will it

Be sure to quench my thirst?

Santing.—

The water is
So clear that thou couldst see thy face therein.

(*RUPERT rises, goes to the spring and bends over it. Suddenly he turns away with a gesture of horror.*)

Santing.—

What is it, pray?

Rupert.—

A devil's face looked from
The spring and gazed at me.

Santing (laughing).—

It was thine own.

Rupert.—

Thou scorpion! (*Sits down again.*)

Barnabe (enters).—

Is this the way to Warwand,

Good sir?

Santing.—

What is thy business there, fair child?

Barnabe.—

I bear a message to the lady Agnes.

Santing.—

If she's as fair as thou I well would like
To go with thee. What wilt thou say to her?

Barnabe.—

O, nothing. I have but to lead her to
The mountains.

Santing.—

What, today?

Barnabe.—

Thou knowest her?

Santing.—

Less well than thee and I regret it less.
Then 'tis today?

Barnabe.—

At once. Is this the way?

Santing.—

Who sent thee?

Barnabe.—

Who? My mother.

Santing.—

Is that so?

Well, if thou followest this path thou canst
Not miss thy way.

Barnabe.—

Then God be with thee. (*Exit.*)

Santing.—

Didst

Thou hear her, Rupert? How this very day
She's coming to the mountains? I would swear
The girl was sent by Ottokar.

Rupert (rising).—

I care

Not whether God or devil leads her feet
Among my snares. Since they have branded me
A murderer beforehand I will prove
Them right. Knowst thou their meeting place?

Santing.—

Not so,

But we must follow in their tracks.

Rupert.—

Then come!

(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE V

Rossitz. *A prison in the tower. The door opens. Enter*
VETORIN.

Ottokar (still outside).—

My father hath commanded it?

Vetorin.—

Yes, he

In person did command, that when thou didst
Return, then shouldst thou follow where we led,
So come, young man, come in.

Ottokar.—

Thy satyr face,

My Vetorin, is most confoundedly
Suspicious. Still I'm not a maid. I'll come.
(*He enters. The jailer follows him.*)

Vetorin.—

The place is harmless, as thou seest, for on
These stones a satyr even would be cold.

Ottokar.—

With chains and ropes and not with roses would
He bind me, for I see this grotto is
A prison.

Vetorin.—

Yes, it is a place in which
To think fine thoughts. I'll wager that thy mind
Tomorrow will be older than thy head
At least five years.

Ottokar.—

If I were but like thee
I'd take thy wager, for thy little mind
Is thirty years behind thy grey-streaked head.
—Now let me seek my father.

Vetorin (blocking his way).—

Nay, in truth,
Thou must stay here and be as merry as
Thou canst.

Ottokar.—

Now, by my life, I've never been
As gay as now. Old man, I'd like to kiss
Thy toothless lips. I know thou likest not
To go to war. Now listen—tell thy wife
That I bring peace.

Vetorin.—

Art thou in earnest?

Ottokar.—

Yes,
Upon my life.

Vetorin.—

To-morrow we will talk
Again. Farewell.
(*To the jailer.*) Bar up the door at once
Behind me. (*To OTTOKAR, who is about to follow him.*)
Nay, upon my oath, it is
By order of thy father that thou art
A prisoner.

Ottokar.—

What dost thou say?

Vetorin.—

I may
Say nothing more than this.

Ottokar.—

Than what?

Vetorin.—

Than that

I may say nothing.

Ottokar.—

O, by God in heaven!

I needs must speak with him at once. I have
Some most important information which
I must impart by word of mouth.

Vetorin.—

Well, then,

Thou hast at least this consolation—he
Is gone with Santing. Whither—no one knows.

Ottokar.—

Then let me go in search of him—

Vetorin (blocking his way).—

Nay, thou

Art joking.

Ottokar.—

No, prevent me not! Upon

My knightly honor I mock not at thine,
My mind is suddenly as full of gloom
As if a storm were threatening. My news
Brooks no delay and if thou wilt not let
Me go, upon my life, I'll force a path.

Vetorin.—

Thou force a path! Thou speakst as tho I were
A woman! I must answer for thee with
My life and honor. Thou canst only go
Across my body. Listen, I will tell
Thee of a better plan: be patient for
An hour and I will bring to thee thy father
As soon as he returns.

Ottokar.—

But tell me what

Is my offence.

Vetorin.—

I know not.—I'll do more.

I'll send a messenger to seek thy father
And bring him back the sooner.

Ottokar.—

Well, then, I

Will wait.

Vetorin.—

Then fare thee well.

(*To the jailer.*) And do thy duty.

(*VETORIN and jailer go out; the door is locked.*)

Ottokar.—

Perhaps I should not have agreed to stay.—
 God knows how soon my father will return.—
 They promised they would look for him, but they
 Have not the will that wins. The devil! 'Tis
 No use! I must break loose, for have I not
 Agreed to meet with Agnes in the mountain?
 Ho, Vektorin! Ho, Vektorin! That man's
 A lock that none can open but his master.
 He serves him with a blind obedience,
 And if his service brings him tenfold harm
 He serves him still. I'll try to win him if
 He comes, tho naught can win him lest it be
 To tell him he is incorruptible.
 At any rate he's more accessible
 Than these deaf walls. O, heaven and hell! that I
 Should have to make my plaint to these cold stones
 In shepherd style! I needs must cultivate
 The women's virtue, patience. It consists
 In leaving with good grace important things
 Undone. And I can see already that
 It costs more pain than doing much.

(*He is about to sit down.*)

But hark!

I hear some one approach.

(*The jailer opens the door for EUSTACHE.*)

Eustache (to the jailer).—

I will reward

Thee later.

Ottokar.—

Mother!

Eustache.—

O, my son I have
 Some fearful news for thee.

Ottokar.—

Thou dost alarm me.

Why art thou so perturbed?

Eustache.—

Perhaps thou dost
 Already know Jeronimus is slain.

Ottokar.—

O, God in Heaven! Who hath done this deed?

Eustache.—

That is not all. For Rupert knows about
Thy love for Agnes.

Ottokar.—

What! Who can have told

Of that?

Eustache.—

O, do not ask! 'Twas I, thy mother.
For when Jerome confided it to me
A fatal zeal impelled me and the tyrant
I never really knew—

Ottokar.—

Whom dost thou mean?

Eustache.—

O God! I mean thy father.

Ottokar.—

I can grasp
But half. But let me tell thee first that all
Is solved. The murder is explained. The men
Discovered close to Peter's body had
Themselves just come across it and had cut
The little finger off to use it as
A charm. In short, Sylvester is as free
From guilt as is the sun.

Eustache.—

O Christ! And he
Will slay Sylvester's daughter.

Ottokar.—

Who?

Eustache.—

Thy father.
If she is in the mountains she is doomed,
For he has gone in search of her with Santing.

Ottokar (rushing to the door).—

O Vektorin!

Eustache.—

Nay, listen. He would forfeit
His life if he should set thee free.

Ottokar.—

Then 'tis

His life or mine. O, Vektorin! (*Looks about.*) Then may
The virgin help me! (*Puts on a cloak which was lying on the
ground.*)

And this cloak will break

My fall. (*Climbs into an unbarred window.*)

Eustache.—

For God's sake, do not leap! 'Tis madness.

The tower rises fifty feet above

The ground, and at the foot are paving stones.

O Ottokar!

Ottokar (above).—

O mother, when I leap

Keep still, I beg thee, keep quite still or they

Will catch me.

Eustache (kneeling).—

Ottokar! Upon my knees

I beg thee and implore thee, do not throw

Thy life away in that mad leap.

Ottokar.—

Nay, life

Hath worth alone to him who doth despise it,

And I have need of mine. Farewell! (*Leaps.*)

Eustache (rising).—

Help! Help!

ACT V

SCENE I

*Interior of a cave. AGNES, wearing a hat and two dresses; the
outer dress is looped together in front. BARNABE. Both are stand-
ing timidly in the foreground at one side.*

Agnes.—

Hadst thou but told me that before! I wish

Almost I had not followed thee. Go please,

My child, and see if anyone comes near.

Barnabe.—

Of those two knights I can see naught.

Agnes (with a sigh of relief).—

O God

Be thanked for that relief!

Barnabe.—

But of the youth
As well as I can see naught.

Agnes.—

Thou seest him not?
Perhaps thou know'st him not.

Barnabe.—

I know him as

Myself.

Agnes.—

Then look more sharply down the path.

Barnabe.—

'Tis growing darker in the glen and in
The huts I see the candles gleaming bright
And fires aglow.

Agnes.—

The lights? How can that be?

Barnabe.—

Should someone come, I could not fail to hear.
'Tis most uncanny still about these heights.

Agnes.—

No, no, 'tis all in vain! I must go home.
Come with me, Barnabe.

Barnabe.—

Be still! I hear
A sound. Again I hear.—'Tis but the murmur
Of rushing water borne upon the wind.

Agnes.—

The waterfall? 'Twas that and nothing more?

Barnabe.—

There's something dark there in the mist.

Agnes.—

Speak! Is

It one or two?

Barnabe.—

I cannot be quite sure.
But they are men I see.—Ah!—(*Both girls start.*)
(*OTTOKAR enters and takes AGNES in his arms.*)

Ottokar.—

O, God be thanked! Thy angel guards thee, child.
Thou art alive?

Agnes.—

Why dost thou ask?

Ottokar.—

There, there!

Be calm. Am I not Ottokar?

Agnes.—

It seemed

So strange here all day long. For first there came
The messenger and then thou cam'st so late
And with such questioning. Then those two knights
Who all day long have lurked about the cave.

Ottokar.—

Two knights?

Agnes.—

Who asked for me.

Ottokar.—

Asked whom?

Agnes.—

This maid,—

Who has confessed that she had brought me here.

Ottokar (to BARNABE).—

Kind heaven forbid!

Agnes.—

What knights, pray, can they be?

Ottokar.—

And do they know that Agnes is here now
And in the cave?

Barnabe.—

That I have not confessed.

Agnes.—

Thou seemest anxious, Ottokar. Thou makest
Me doubly so. Dost thou then know these knights?
(*OTTOKAR stands lost in thought.*)

Are they—no, surely they are not from Rossitz?
They are not murderers sent out to slay me?

Ottokar (with a sudden pretence of cheerfulness).—

Dost thou not know? All is explained, and cleared
Is every doubt. Thy father is not guilty.

Agnes.—

Then is it true—?

Ottokar.—

This maid I found possessed
Of Peter's finger. Peter was not killed.—
He drowned.—We'll talk of that some other time.
Let us be happy in this hour! Let grief
Be talkative and tedious!—In joy
The heart is dumb. (*Presses her to his heart.*)
We'll make this night a night
Of love. O Agnes, wilt thou? Come!

(*Drawing her to a seat.*)

In but

A little time the truth will be revealed,
The fathers reconciled, I will make bold
To claim thee as my own and with this kiss
I do betroth myself to thee.

(*Rises and speaks aside to BARNABE.*)

Look, maid,

Stand by the entrance, dost thou hear? And shouldst
Thou see someone draw near, do not delay
But call. And one thing more. We will exchange
Our clothes. Thy task will be to lead back home
The lady Agnes clothed in my attire.
Should we be taken by surprise act quickly.

Now go!

(*BARNABE retires to the background; OTTOKAR returns to
AGNES.*)

Agnes.—

Why does she leave us?

Ottokar.—

Agnes, Agnes!

What joy awaits us! Thou shalt be my wife.

O, canst thou grasp the measure of our joy?

Agnes (*smiling*).—

Yes, thou shalt teach me to.

Ottokar.—

Aye, that I will.

What bliss! The day, the night is not far off.

To lovers' minds the night alone is bright.

Why dost thou blush?

Agnes.—

Doth darkness hide so little?

Ottokar.—

It hideth, foolish child, but from the eyes.
 'Tis with my cheeks I sense thy blush. O Agnes,
 When once the word is said that sanctifies
 What fills thy heart.—Amidst the throng of guests
 Whose glances follow us like wasps I will
 Draw near to thee, and thou wilt speak a few
 Embarrassed words and thou wilt turn and chat
 A little with a guest. It will not vex me,
 For well I know that every time a guest
 Takes leave, scarce will the door be closed behind
 His back, before thy glance, where'er thou art,
 Will find me and encourage me, and when
 The last has taken his departure, when
 At length we are alone, our fathers and
 Our mothers smile, kiss thee, then me, and say
 "Good night, dear children," and we turn to leave,
 And all the servants want to light our way
 With candles, I exclaim, "One light will do."
 I seize it, seize thy hand, this hand, (*kisses it*) and we
 Ascend the stair in silence just as if
 Our hearts were unperturbed and naught is heard
 Except the rustle of thy skirts adown
 The empty halls. Then—Agnes, dost thou sleep?
Agnes.—

I sleep?

Ottokar.—

Because thou art so still. Let us
 Go on. The door I softly open now.
 I softly close it then behind us just
 As if it were forbidden, for man fears,
 Wherever as a child he has been taught
 To fear. We find a bench. I draw thee down
 To me and grasp thee with my arms and with
 A single kiss I tell thee all my love.
 (*Goes quickly to back and speaks softly to BARNABE.*)
 Hast thou seen no one yet?

Barnabe.—

I almost thought
 Just now I saw two forms creep up the hill. (*OTTOKAR returns
 quickly.*)

Agnes.—

Why art thou always whispering to that maid?

Ottokar (sitting down again).—

Where did I stop? O yes, 'twas at the kiss.—

For bolder grows my love. Since thou art mine

And I am thine I will remove thy hat (*he does*).

Disturb thy primly ordered curls (*he does*) and boldly

Remove thy neckerchief. Thou dost entreat

Me softly to put out the light. Forthwith

The night doth cast its deepest veil about

Our sacred love, as now.

Barnabe (from the back).—

O Knight, sir Knight!

(*AGNES looks around affrighted.*)

Ottokar (interrupting, as she is about to speak).—

Now like the swollen streams of early spring

My passion breaks all bounds. I loose this knot

And this (*he does*) and strip the vexing cloak from thee.

Agnes.—

O Ottokar, what wilt thou do to me? (*Falls upon his neck.*)

Ottokar (busy with the second dress).—

As Nature's handmaid I restore her to

Herself. Why this impenetrable veil

Of mystery? O Agnes, beauty needs

No other veil except its own and that

Is beauty's self.

Barnabe.—

Sir knight, sir knight, be quick!

Ottokar (rising quickly, to BARNABE).—

What tidings?

Barnabe.—

One of them passed closely twice.

Ottokar.—

Did he see thee?

Barnabe.—

I fear he did. (*OTTOKAR goes back to AGNES who has risen.*)

Agnes.—

Why did

She speak in fear?

Ottokar.—

She had no cause.

Agnes.—

I know

She had.

Ottokar.—

Two peasants who had lost their way.
But thou art cold. Put on this cloak. (*Throws his cloak
about her.*)

Agnes.—

Thou art

So strange.

Ottokar.—

There, there! Sit down.

Agnes (sitting down).—

Nay, let me go!

Ottokar (standing before her).—

Now, who would think this clumsy garment could
Conceal a maiden's tender form? And if
I press this helmet on thy locks I might
Turn women into rival suitors too.

Barnabe.—

They come, sir Knight, they come!

(*OTTOKAR throws AGNES'S cloak about him and puts on her hat.*)

Agnes.—

Who come? What art

Thou doing, Ottokar?

Ottokar (adjusting the cloak).—

It is my father.

Agnes (almost fainting).—

O Heaven help us!

Ottokar (grasping her).—

Nay, be calm. No one
Will do thee harm if fearlessly and boldly
Thou goest from this cave in male attire.
I will remain. Do not protest. It is
But for the first attack.

(*RUPERT and SANTING appear.*)

Speak not a word,

But go at once!

(*The girls go.*)

Rupert (stopping Agnes).—

Who art thou? Speak!

Ottokar (stepping forward and disguising his voice).—

Dost thou
Seek Agnes? Here am I. If thou dost come
From Warwand lead me home.

Rupert (as the girls go out).—

Nay, I will send
Thy spirit on its way unto thy father.

(Stabs OTTOKAR who falls without a groan. Pause.)

Rupert (gazing fixedly at the body).—

Look, Santing! she is dead, I do believe!

Santing.—

A snake dies hard and yet I swear 'tis true.
A sword has pierced her bosom.

Rupert (holding his hands to his face).—

Santing, why
Did I do that? I can't remember now.

Santing.—

Why, that is Agnes, sire.

Rupert.—

Yes, Agnes, yes.
Quite right. She did me many injuries.
I know, but what they were I quite forget.

Santing.—

I know not what thou meanest, for the girl
Herself hath never done thee any harm.

Rupert.—

No harm at all? Then why have I harmed her?
Stare not that way at me, thou basilisk!
But bluntly tell me why, thou devil! If
Thou knowest not, then tell me lies!

Santing.—

Art thou
Gone mad? It is Sylvester's daughter.

Rupert.—

Yes,
Sylvester's. Now I know. The daughter of
Sylvester who hath slain my Peter.

Santing.—

And
The herald and Johann.

Rupert.—

Johann, quite right.

And who hath painted me so black a rogue
That I at length was driven to become one.

(Draws the sword out of OTTOKAR'S bosom.)

'Twas well deserved. Thou reptile breed! *(Thrusts the body aside with his foot.)*

Santing.—

The sight

I see, my lord, is strange. A line of men
With torches in their hands is moving down
From Warwand's heights.

Rupert.—

They must be on their way

To Rossitz.

Santing.—

It is most suspicious.

Rupert.—

Dost

Thou think of Count Sylvester?

Santing.—

Would I give

A straw for any other view? Let us
Return. A moment more and it will be
Too late.

Rupert.—

If only Ottokar fall not

Into their hands! Did he not leave the cave
As we came in?

Santing.—

He probably went home

And we shall find him on the way. So come. *(Exeunt.)*
(AGNES and BARNABE are seen at the entrance.)

Agnes.—

This fearful night! The sight is horrible.
It is a funeral procession lit
With torches. Like a ghastly fevered dream
The vale is lurid with the blood-red lights
And thru this spirit host I will not go.
Since thou dost say the cave is empty I—

Barnabe.—

Two knights came out just now.

Agnes.—

Then Ottokar

Must still be here. O Ottokar, O—
Ottokar (in a feeble voice).—

Agnes!

Agnes.—

Where art thou, Ottokar? A sword—my God—
 A sword is in thy breast! My Ottokar!

(She falls upon him.)

Ottokar.—

My plan succeeded. Agnes, flee! *(Dies.)*

Barnabe.—

O God

In heaven! She is faint. There is no help
 At hand. Compose thyself, my lady! God! The troop
 Approaches with the lights! Do not delay,
 But flee, my mistress! *(Exit.)*

(SYLVESTER and THEISTINER enter, followed by a torch bearer.)

Sylvester.—

Halt! Is this the cave?

Theistiner.—

It is, my lord. Johann hath said so, and
 If we may trust his words here we shall find
 The lady Agnes.

Sylvester.—

Bring the light.

Theistiner.—

If I

Am not mistaken I see Ottokar
 And Agnes lies there too.

Sylvester.—

Upon the ground!

My God! A sword is in her breast.

Agnes (rising).—

Who speaks?

Sylvester.—

'Tis hell that's calling thee, thou murderer! *(He stabs her.)*

Agnes.—

My God—*(Dies.)*

(SYLVESTER sinks upon one knee by OTTOKAR'S body.)

Theistiner (after a pause).—

My lord, I pray thee tarry not

In this disheart'ning anguish. Rise! We need

Full strength and such a fearful sight as this
Doth shake the frame of him who is bereft.

Sylvester.—

Nay, let me rest a moment. Nature rules
In man and is all powerful. She will
Be served alone, wherever she appears,
As if she were the only God. A storm
Hath fallen on my soul that sweeps me toward
The tomb. If I withstand it I will rise
More terrible than I have ever been,
But let the first storm pass.

Theistiner.—

My lord, delay
Is dangerous. Arise and seize the chance,
For so propitious it will never be
Again. Command revenge and we will rage
Like furies over Rossitz.

Sylvester.—

Earthly aims
Seem far removed to one whose loss is near
As is this corpse. There is no gain on earth
That can make good to me what I have lost.
She ripened like the harvest of my life
That ruthless feet have trodden down for me.
Now I must starve or beg from stranger mothers
A stranger child as alms.

Theistiner.—

Sylvester, listen!

Do not delay.

Sylvester.—

Quite right. For mourning there
Remains a whole eternity. This is
The moment for revenge. For once my soul
Doth thirst for blood. It is a choice sensation.
Come, let us join the troop.

(A noise is heard without: Holla! Come in! Holla!)

Theistiner.—

What do I hear?

*(RUPERT and SANTING are brought in as prisoners by
SYLVESTER'S knights.)*

A knight.—

Sylvester, we have made a noble catch—

This pretty pair—discovered by a knight
Beneath the bushes whilst he grazed his horse.

Theistiner.—

Sylvester, let me look, I pray thee. It
Is he. In very truth 'tis Rupert and
The other one is Santing.

Sylvester (drawing his sword).—

Rupert! Thou!

Theistiner.—

The devil is a rogue and leads the sinner
In person to the hangman's hand.

Sylvester.—

A captive?

And why? O, God of Justice, speak to man,
That he may know what he should do!

Rupert (seeing AGNES's corpse).—

My son!

My son is slain! O, let me go to him!
(*He tries to break loose, the knights hold him back.*)

Sylvester.—

'Tis his own sword he carries in his breast.
(*He replaces his sword in its sheath.*)

Allow him to approach his son.

Rupert (falling on the body of AGNES).—

Alas!

My Ottokar!

(*Enter GERTRUDE.*)

Gertrude.—

A herald sped to us
In Warwand, calling loud that Agnes was
Found dead here in a cave. Ye knights! Ye men!
Where is she? Is it true? O, where?

(*She stumbles over OTTOKAR's body.*)

My God!

My child! My life! My all!

Eustache (enters).—

If ye are men,
Then let a woman pass unhindered. Give
Command, Sylvester. I, the mother of
The slain, demand free access to my son.

Sylvester.—

'Tis granted. Grief is free. Go to thy son.

Eustache.—

Where is he? And thy daughter? They are wed!

(*SYLVESTER turns away; EUSTACHE sinks on one knee by AGNES'S body.*)

SYLVIUS appears, guided by JOHANN who shows signs of madness.

Sylvius.—

Where dost thou lead me, son?

Johann.—

To misery,

Old man, for I am madness. Be consoled.

This is the way.

Sylvius.—

Alas! That I am blind

And in the orest, and a maniac

Hath charge of me! Pray, take me home, my son.

Johann.—

To happiness? It can't be done. The door

Is barred inside. Come, come, we must go on.

Sylvius.—

Must we go on? O God! Have mercy on us!

Well, I will follow thee.

Johann.—

Hurrah! We're here.

Sylvius.—

So soon? By my slain child? And where is she?

Johann.—

If I were blind my nose would tell me where.

The corpse already stinks. We will swoop down

On it like birds of prey on carrion.

Sylvius.—

He raves. Alas! Who will have pity on

A blind old man lost in the pathless woods?

Johann.—

Do not be vexed. I mean it well by thee.

Give me thy hand and I will lead thee to her.

Sylvius.—

Is it still far?

Johann.—

An arrow shot. Bend down.

Sylvius (touching the body).—

A sword! And in the bosom of a corpse!

Johann.—

Old man, I call that horrible. The maid
Was good and O! so beautiful!

Sylvius.—

That is

Not Agnes, boy! It is her garb, not she
Herself! Nay, by my soul, it is not she!

Johann (feeling the body).—

O, fie! The scorpion! 'Tis Ottokar!

Sylvius.—

'Tis Ottokar!

Gertrude.—

And I, the mother, know

Beyond a doubt that this is not my daughter. (*Rises.*)

Sylvester.—

Bring up the lights!—Nay, nay, it is not she!

Eustache (who has hastened up).—

O Agnes! Ottokar! What must I think—
Ill-omened mother I—that my son's corpse
Is double? Ottokar!

Sylvester.—

Thy son is in

The raiment of my Agnes, but whose corpse
Is that in male attire? It is not—nay,
'Tis surely not—?

Sylvius.—

Sylvester, tell me where

Is Agnes' corpse. Lead me to her.

Sylvester.—

Alas!

Poor man! She is not slain.

Johann.—

There speaks a fool.

Old man, come on. I see another corpse.
We'll hope 'tis that.

Sylvius.—

Another corpse? Methinks

This is a morgue.

Johann.—

Old man, be merry! It

Is she, thy Agnes.

Sylvester (covering his face).—

Agnes!

Johann.—

Touch her face.

It must be soft as summer gossamer.

(*To RUPERT.*) Thou monster! Hence!

Rupert (half rising).—

Keep off, I beg of thee.

'Tis dangerous to mock a madman's weakness.

Tho he be bound with chains, he still can spit

Upon thy face and so befoul thee with

The plague. Away! And leave to me at least

The body of my Ottokar.

Johann.—

Go thou

Away! Thy Ottokar lies there. Old man,

Believe me, Agnes lieth here in death.

Sylvius.—

My Agnes! Child! Child of my child!

Eustache.—

My God!

My daughter! What a fell mistake is this!

Rupert.—

(*Looks more closely at the body of AGNES, rises, goes quickly to OTTOKAR'S body and turns away with a gesture of horror.*)

Why dost thou mock me, hellish apparition?

A devil thrusts his tongue at me.

(*Looks again at the body and tears his hair.*)

'Twas I

Myself. I drove it thru his breast. Twice thru

His breast!

(*Enter URSULA.*)

Ursula.—

Here is the finger of the child!

(*Throws the finger into the middle of the stage and disappears.*)

All.—

What's that we saw?

Eustache.—

What did she say? A finger?

And did not Peter lose the finger of

One hand?

Sylvester.—

The murdered Peter! Seize the woman
And bring her back to me! (*Some of the knights go out.*)

Eustache.—

By heaven, if
A woman knows the child she bore, then this
Is Peter's finger.

Rupert.—

Peter's finger?

Eustache.—

Yes,
It is. I know it by this mark. It was
The only one he had upon his body.
Yes, it is his. I am convinced of it.

Rupert.—

Incomprehensible!
(*URSULA is led into the cave.*)

Ursula.—

Have mercy, sirs!

Sylvester.—

How cam'st thou by this finger?

Ursula.—

Sir, the child
I cut it from was dead and drowned. I found
It so myself.

Rupert.—

Was drowned?

Sylvester.—

And why didst thou

Cut off his finger?

Ursula.—

Sir, because I wished
To bury it beneath the threshold, that
It might ward off the devil. Spare me, Sir!
For if it was thy son, as Barnabe
Hath said, I did not know it then.

Rupert.—

It was
Not thee I found at Peter's side. I found
Instead two knights of Warwand.

Ursula.—

Yes, they came

Upon the child a little later and
 Began to cut the other finger off.
 (RUPERT covers his face.)

Johann (to *URSULA*).—

What dost thou want, old witch?

Ursula.—

That settles it,
 My little dear. If you have killed each other
 It was your own mistake.

Johann.—

Mistake! Mistake!
 Alas, alas, for Ottokar and Agnes!

Rupert.—

Johann, be still! Thy words cut like a knife.

Johann.—

Do not be cross. Papa has done it by
 Mistake. He meant no harm. Do not be vexed.

Rupert.—

Sylvester, I have robbed thee of a child.
 I offer thee a friend as recompense. (*Pause*.)
 Sylvester, I am childless just like thee. (*Pause*.)
 Sylvester, let thy daughter's blood be on
 My head. Canst thou not pardon better far
 Than I?

(*With face turned away SYLVESTER extends to him his hand.*
EUSTACHE and GERTRUDE embrace.)

Johann.—

Bring wine! Be merry! Wine! Let's laugh
 Ourselves to death! It is a merry jest.
 The devil smeared their faces both with coal
 While they were sleeping. Now they know each other.
 Ho! rascals, wine! We'll drink a toast to this.

Ursula.—

Praised be the Lord! So you are reconciled.

Rupert.—

'Tis thou didst make the tangle. Thou hast loosed
 It too. Go hence!

Johann.—

Go on, old woman, go!
 Thy conjuring hath served thee well. Go on!
 For with this pretty trick I'm well content.

THE CURTAIN FALLS

HEINRICH VON KLEIST

BY LAWRENCE MARSDEN PRICE

BERND Heinrich Wilhelm von Kleist was born on the eighteenth of October in the year 1777 and was christened in the garrison church of Frankfurt-on-the-Oder nine days later. His father was a captain. His ancestors were soldiers. The Kleists had provided Prussia with eighteen generals. His godfathers and godmothers were chiefly majors, captains, colonels and wives of officers. Race pride and class prejudice seemed to predestine him for a military career. One unsoldierly failing, it is true, was in the heritage of the family. "Alle Kleists Dichter" ran a proverb and the poetic in their nature had sometimes blended ill with the soldierly.

Heinrich was one of seven children. He was educated privately, sharing with a somewhat dull and melancholy cousin the tutorship of Pastor Martini. His instructor described him later as open-hearted, modest, and diligent, quick to learn and with a passion for knowledge, but subject to fits of enthusiasm and somewhat excitable and erratic. From his eleventh to his fifteenth year his instructor was Professor Catel of the French Gymnasium in Berlin. Kleist learned to speak French perhaps better than German.

In his fifteenth year he was confirmed and he then entered the army as a matter of course. His father was already dead. His mother died the following year. His half-sister Ulrike endeavored to fill the place of both to him and remained his counselor and frequent rescuer in time of need almost, but not quite to the end of his brief life. Kleist took part in the Rhine campaign of 1793, but his enthusiasm for war was never great and distaste soon showed itself. "Heaven grant us peace," he wrote to Ulrike, "that we may redeem in more philanthropic fashion the time we are killing here in so immoral a fashion." The idle garrison life with its lack of congenial friends was still less tolerable. He began, at first secretly, to prepare himself by study for another career. When his brothers and sisters heard of his intentions they were much chagrined for according to their ideas distinc-

tion was not to be sought outside a military career. They asked whether he intended to study law or enter the administrative service. To this he could make no satisfying answer, for he planned to enter no bread-earning profession but to seek happiness through the harmonious rounding out of his individual self. This self-centred idealism was quite characteristic of the time. It could claim the sanction of Goethe himself. Yet it was the bane of nationalism and without a rapid change to other ideals it would have been impossible for the lax Prussia of 1805 to throw off the yoke of Napoleon in 1813. Kleist's own attitude toward the state was to pass through a rapid series of developments, epitomizing unconsciously the history of the inner life of his country during the time.

Kleist carried out his intention and left the army in 1799. He was now twenty-one years of age. He was of medium height with a boyish, some of his contemporaries say, a childish face. His hair was light brown and hung low on his forehead. His eyes were dark blue and tried to express the pent up feeling his delicate lips refused to free, for he was shy by nature and hindered by a faulty and stuttering speech, while a physical malady made him feel still more isolated from companionship and weakened his self-confidence. But he knew how to show a childlike appreciation when kindness was shown him and displayed a childish imperiousness in his demands on those whom he loved. Throughout his life he seemed to struggle for self-expression. "Alas! there is no way," he once lamented, "to make oneself understood by others and man has by nature no other confidante but himself." In his poetry he achieved at last the power of expressing in pure form his personality but not until he had passed through a period of self-consciousness that showed itself in the form of pedantry.

Kleist began his studies at the University in his native Frankfurt-on-the-Oder. His chief interests at the outset were mathematics, physics and philosophy. In these studies he failed to find the happiness he had hoped for. They ministered to the needs of his intellect and understanding, not to his heart and feeling, he said. The phrasing shows the influence of Rousseau, who for good or ill was to be his guiding star for some years to come. With his fellow-students Kleist did not mingle but he interested his family and neighbor's family in his studies and then took charge of their joint endeavors. The role of tutor doubtless pleased him well. If there was something of the pedant in this, there was something of the poet as well. It showed his

instinct to produce creatively out of the store of impressions he had received.

His inspiration as a teacher was Wilhelmine von Zenge, the daughter of Major von Zenge, a neighbor of the Kleists. Finding her compositions faulty in expression he asked permission to give her in written form a series of instructions in regard to grammar and style. One day she found in her hands instead of the expected instructions a declaration of love. Kleist gave himself such evident pains to transform himself into her ideal that he at length won her favor and the consent of her parents.

The betrothal necessitated the immediate selection of some bread-earning occupation. Of this problem he writes in one of his first letters to her. Law, diplomacy, and finance he rejects in turn as too sordid. He would clearly like best an academic position but as that is not open to him he finally seeks a position that had once been promised him in the civil service.

Kleist left Frankfurt for Berlin in August, 1800. From Berlin he started on a long journey the real object of which has always been much in doubt. Kleist's physical malady has already been referred to. Perhaps he went in quest of a specialist who could bring him relief. It is known, however, that Kleist was entrusted with a secret mission to investigate certain industries outside of Prussia. Prudence should have dictated a wise silence in regard to his objects. Instead of that we find scarcely a letter without some phrase intended to sharpen Wilhelmine's curiosity, combined with cautions as to secrecy and insistence that she must have unreserved confidence in him even though she cannot understand his aims. The letters portray the author clearly. The didactic tendency is strongly marked, the youthful desire to pose is rather too pronounced but in the descriptions of places seen and impressions received there are evidences of the future poet. The hopeful note is dominant throughout.

The journey began auspiciously. Kleist wrote from Berlin: "I have found an older and wiser friend, just such a person as I desire. He did not hesitate a moment to accompany me. I needed not so much support as counsel regarding the best means of attaining the end. Brockes recognizes that the chances of success are good and that there is at least no danger." The way led the two friends over Potsdam and Wittenberg to Leipzig where they stopped just long enough to matriculate as students under the names of Klingstedt and Bernhoff. Their student cards enabled them to evade many questions while traveling. From

Leipzig they journeyed to Dresden where they interviewed the English ambassador, Lord Eliot. Here they learned things which led them to change their plans and make Straszburg or Würzburg their destination instead of Vienna as originally planned. At Würzburg Kleist was rejoiced to find his journey ended. It would not be necessary to go to Straszburg. The friends occupied cheap rooms in a private house, for the expenses of the journey, which they seem to have borne themselves, had made heavy drains upon their purses.

In the entire series of letters there is little hint of any public business being transacted. The personal interest is emphasized. Kleist's time is pretty well accounted for excepting for ten days in Würzburg from about the first to the tenth of October. Kleist says it was impossible to write during that period. He does not explain why, but he is happy now. The basis of their happiness is secured and he draws a picture of the future for himself and Wilhelmine and the children she desires.

Whatever the principal reason for Kleist's journey it marked a stage in his development and brought to light new characteristics in him. The free disposal of his hours, the contact with nature and the communication with a sympathetic friend opened out to him new vistas and filled him with a distaste for all confining duties. The life of an author appeared to him alone desirable and he began to write to Wilhelmine of the five or ten years preparation necessary before he could support himself and her. For the present, however, there was no choice but to go to Berlin and serve an apprenticeship in the civil service. But he was lax in his studies and interested in philosophy alone. The study of Kant drove him to a period of despondency, for he was seeking truth and out of Kant he read the impossibility of learning truth in its positive form. In the midst of his dejection his chief gave him one day a book of many volumes to read and report upon. He forthwith gave up his position and applied for a passport. He gave Paris as his destination and study as his object. He wrote to Ulrike to bring money and come to him. They would start on the journey together. This he did solely because of a previous promise, for unfortunately the steadfast Ulrike could not minister to his spiritual needs as Brockes and some of his later friends were able to. She was practical, resolute, adventurous. She liked best to travel in man's attire and readily passed for a man. She was far from Kleist's ideal of a woman, for she trusted herself rather than the one she loved. "I can tell Ulrike anything,"

Kleist once said, "except that which is dearest to me, I love her more than I can say and in her character there is all that is worthy of reverence and respect. She has much and shares what she has but, as Goethe says, one cannot rest on her bosom."

The journey led over Dresden and Leipzig. Kleist found appreciative friends at both places and Ulrike urged him with difficulty toward the journey's end. The life in France did not please Kleist at all. The resolution was meanwhile ripening in him to return to nature and lead a simple life according to the precepts of Rousseau. Wilhelmine relates the story of the decision in this way: "From Paris he wrote often to me at first, then once after I had received no letter for three months, he wrote that he was going to buy a little estate in Switzerland and hoped that I would follow him thither. I besought him most earnestly to return to his home. I said that I would follow him wherever he went, but that it would be hard for me to leave my parents. I waited in vain for an answer to this letter. My hopes and expectations of a happy future had long since vanished. I said to myself often 'I can never be happy with this man,' but I hoped I could at least cheer him up a little. After five months I learned from his sister where he was staying. I wrote to him and received an answer that he had not expected a letter from me but had understood my last letter as a refusal to follow him to Switzerland. After a bitter struggle he had succeeded in casting the thought of me from his heart, and he begged me therefore not to write to him again. Since he had lost his position in Berlin frivolously and by his journey to Paris had led his friends to expect great things of him, he could not return to his home without fame. His only hope now was that his life would end soon."

Such an outcome of the betrothal to Wilhelmine was foreshadowed from the beginning. Kleist cherished his love for Wilhelmine above all other things except duty and by duty he understood, a man's obligation to attain to his highest power. Wilhelmine had moreover at last failed in the test. She gave her reluctant consent, it is true, to accompany him but a reluctant consent was to him no consent. He demanded her confidence, a confidence such as Ottokar demanded of Agnes and received in the "Feud of the Schroffensteins." Kleist explained in his last letter to Wilhelmine that he had intended to invest the remainder of his fortune in the purchase of an estate when a popular insurrection in Switzerland made that seem unwise. Instead he therefore was using up his capital for his daily needs, was busy at

authorship for the present and expected in another year to be utterly bankrupt.

In Switzerland Kleist first made himself known to Heinrich Zschokke, an acquaintance of the Kleist family. Zschokke wrote of him "Kleist seemed to me to be one of those beautiful beings whom one loves on their own account. In his nature there seemed to me to dwell even at his happiest moments a secret inner sorrow. That was the very thing that drew me to him, almost more than his talents and his high moral principles. It lent a peculiar charm to my intercourse with him." Kleist became acquainted also with Ludwig Wieland and Heinrich Geszner, both men of letters and sons of poets. With the help and encouragement of men like these, Kleist was able practically to complete his "Familie Schroffenstein."

The difficult fifth act of this drama challenged his powers especially. As a background to this act two hostile houses had to be conceived as in "Romeo and Juliet." But the "Familie Schroffenstein" is neither a piece of virtuosity nor an imitation. The drama matured under the impression of Kleist's own experience and fancied grievance. Out of this he had developed his tragedy with its deep ethical content, the overwhelming denunciation of distrust:

Distrust is like a plague spot on the soul
That makes all things, however pure and clean,
Seem to the eye to wear the garb of hell.
The meaningless, the common things of life
Are shrewdly sorted out like tangled yarn
And knit into a pattern which affrights
The soul with fearful forms.

Before the "Familie Schroffenstein" was fairly completed Kleist parted with it to Geszner, who was a publisher, for a sum amounting to about one hundred and twenty dollars, which he doubtless sorely needed. He left it to his friends to put it into final form. They did so with more correctness than inspiration. Kleist wrote to Ulrike a little later, begging her not to read the play. It was a pitiable botch, he said, in comparison with what he was about to produce. "I will die happy," he wrote later, "if three things are vouchsafed to me: a beautiful poem, a child and a noble deed." With his next drama Kleist hoped to unite the art of Aeschylus and Shakespeare and to snatch the laurel wreath

from Goethe's brow. Kleist longed to return to Frankfurt. He referred often to his absence as an exile, but he would not return without honor. Characteristically despising the stepping stones of progress he sought to gain all with a single bound.

"The death of Robert Guiscard the Norman" was to be the theme of this great drama. In April 1802 Kleist retired to the island of Delos in the Lake of Thun and began to wrestle with his theme. The intensity of application soon brought on a physical crisis. He was taken to Berne and cared for by friends. Ulrike heard of his condition late and only indirectly. She hastened to his aid and braved her way into Berne, which at that time was practically an armed camp. It was six o'clock and the streets were to be cleared at seven. In less than an hour she found her brother, practically recovered and sitting at his work again. Her first task was to take him away from distracted Switzerland. As the young Wieland was compelled for political reasons to leave, it was arranged that all three should travel together. It was thus made to appear that Wieland was leaving voluntarily. Toward the end of the journey they parted company, Ulrike returned to Frankfurt and Kleist fell under the kindly care of the elder Wieland. Kleist seems, however, to have formed no further associations with the poets of Weimar. Goethe at least gave him no encouragement. Ignoring the storm and stress of his own youth Goethe once wrote of Kleist: "He seemed to me like a body beautifully planned by nature but ravaged by an incurable disease."

Wieland later invited Kleist to his summer home in Osmannstädt. He found him a strange guest. Sometimes a chance word in conversation would wake in him a train of associations, that made him forgetful of all else. He was absent-minded and even at the table he murmured strangely to himself. It was long before Wieland succeeded in bringing him to speak of the tragedy, that seemed to absorb all his thoughts, and longer still before he could persuade him to impart any portion to him. At last one day Kleist recited to him whole scenes of his tragedy. It made a lasting impression on Wieland. He wrote more than a year later: "If the shades of Aeschylus, Sophokles and Shakespeare united to write a tragedy it would be such a one as Kleist's 'Death of Guiscard the Norman,' if the whole corresponded to the part I heard. From that moment on I was convinced that Kleist was born to fill a great gap in our dramatic literature, which to my mind at least neither Goethe nor Schiller have filled."

It would seem that at this time there was little of the drama in written form. Kleist had, from time to time, brought some scenes to paper only to destroy them in discontent and ponder them over again. It was not that he had difficulty in inventing beginning and end and course of events. Indeed these are fairly well known today. His difficulty was one of style. He was struggling for the appropriate form. He was living with his characters and listening to their conversation until he was sure that they could express themselves only so and not otherwise. Wieland urged him to write down the drama in some form and then proceed to its betterment as a whole, but before he could be persuaded to do this another experience drove him from Wieland's protecting home.

"I do not know what to say in my defence," he wrote to Ulrike, "but I have had to leave Osmanstädt. Do not be angry. I had to go and I cannot tell you why. I have left with tears the house where I have found more love than the whole world, you excluded, can bring me." The cause of Kleist's leaving, clearly enough, was Wieland's daughter Luise, who loved Kleist and seems to have been loved in return. Wieland looked with favor on the situation, but Kleist was absolutely without means and was too proud to become a permanent dependant.

For lack of other place to go, Kleist now went to Leipzig and Dresden and visited former friends, among them Lieutenant Pfuel. In him he found the man he needed. When Kleist proposed a compact of suicide Pfuel joked him out of the mood. He even succeeded in taunting Kleist into writing down a few of the scenes he had composed. When Kleist felt the need of a journey he professed the same need but insisted on paying the expenses since Kleist's company was so essential to him. Kleist was glad to let the situation appear to his sister in that light. The friends journeyed mostly afoot to Berne and to the lake of Thun, to Italy and to Geneva. Here Kleist wrote to his sister after a long silence of his despair. "Heaven knows, my dear Ulrike, how gladly I would give a drop of my heart's blood for every word of a letter that could begin: 'My work is completed.' I have spent half a thousand days in succession, most of the nights included, in the struggle to bring one more crown of glory to our family. But now my protecting goddess tells me it is enough. She kisses tenderly my fevered brow and consoles me and says, if every one of her dear sons would do as much our name would not lack a place in the

stars. So let it suffice. It were madness to devote my strength longer to a task that is too great for me. And so I shall never return to you and my dear family. Never! Do not urge me. If you do you do not know what a dangerous thing the craving for fame is."

From Geneva the two men journeyed to Paris. Here Kleist was more disconsolate than ever and he begged of Pfuel again his companionship in death. In his bitterness he quarrelled with his friend, left the house in anger and did not return. Friends sought the morgue of Paris in vain for him. Not long after Ulrike received a strange letter from him dated at St. Omer, the twenty-sixth of October, 1803.

"My dear Ulrike," he wrote, "what I am about to write you may cost you your life, but I must carry out my resolution. In Paris I read my work so far as it was completed. I condemned it and burned it. Now all is over. Heaven denies me fame, the best thing on earth, and like a spoiled child I throw all else away. I cannot show myself worthy of your friendship, without your friendship I cannot live. I am rushing into death. Be calm. I will die the beautiful death in battle. I have left the capital of this country, I have wandered to the north coast. I will enlist in the French army. The army will sail to England, destruction for us all hovers over the sea. I rejoice at the thought of the limitless splendid grave. You, my beloved, will be my last thought."

Friends discovered Kleist, rescued him from his real danger, that of being shot as a spy, and sent him homeward. On his way a sickness of body and soul overcame him. His recovery was slow but he regained his mental balance. A physician in Mainz took him into his home during his convalescence. When he was well enough he passed through Weimar, where he saw Wieland and Luise again and then sought a reconciliation with Pfuel in Potsdam. From Potsdam he started out on the hardest journey of all. He went to his home, a confessed failure broken in body and spirit and said he was now ready to take any office that could be secured for him. He spared himself only the chagrin of seeing Wilhelmine.

It was nearly a year before a position was found. Meanwhile his family gave him an allowance and Ulrike stayed with him to watch over his expenditures and his actions as well. When at length a place was secured for him it was in Königsberg. Kant, whose philosophy had first driven him to despondency,

had recently died. But to his place at the University Professor Krug had just been called from Frankfurt-on-the-Oder. He brought with him as his wife Wilhelmine von Zenge, and Wilhelmine's sister, Louise, accompanied her. Kleist first saw them at a large gathering. At first he avoided them. Then he sought out Louise, told the story of his wanderings, misfortunes and failures and asked at last if her family would care to see him. Louise introduced him to Professor Krug, who invited him to his house, where he soon became a frequent visitor. The sisters found Kleist much changed but for the better. He was not so exuberant as sometimes in the Frankfurt days but he showed the same simple trustfulness as then and his imagination was livelier, more active, more vivid than before. For more than a year Kleist worked at Königsberg and tried to keep his resolution not to write, but it was impossible. Formerly writing had been to him a dread experience, now it had become an instinct. "My opinion of my powers is but a shadow of what it was," he wrote to a friend. "If I were fit for some other work I should undertake it gladly. I write poetry simply because I cannot help it."

Queen Louise interested herself in Kleist at this time and sent him from time to time a sum of money. Kleist was pleased to refer to this as a pension. It encouraged him in the belief that he was justified in devoting himself exclusively to writing. Kleist's literary production during the next few years was surprisingly large but the mastery of style and form is still more remarkable. Self-conscious pedantry and declamatory striving for effect are absent. Instead we find a glow of passion held well in check, we find repose, harmony and proportion. "Michael Kohlhaas" (1808) is a model short story, the tale of a man who sacrifices all he has to secure the righting of an injustice. "Der zerbrochene Krug" (1806) is similarly a model comedy. Those to whom Kleist had talked or written cannot have been surprised at his sharp perception of homely characterizing detail. Indeed that had been evident enough in the "Familie Schroffenstein" but that he had so keen an eye for inequalities in the administration of justice must have surprised even his friends. This comedy had been first drafted in Switzerland in literary competition with his associates there. Kleist now brought it into form for publication. In "Penthesilea" (1808) Kleist expressed in poetic form, as Goethe might have done, his own struggle for the gift of poetry. The classic guise also challenged comparison with

Goethe's 'Iphigenia.' His other notable dramas followed in rapid succession.

Kleist's personal affairs, however, did not better themselves during this productive period. Having resigned his position there was no reason for remaining longer in Königsberg. Early in 1807 he started off with some friends for Dresden. On the way he was arrested as a spy and carried off to France, where he was held in a military prison several weeks before Ulrike and some friends were able to bring about his release. Kleist took this adventure on the whole in good part. He continued his interrupted journey toward Dresden, where he formed some good literary connections and some unfortunate ones. He joined with Müller, Pfuel and Rühle in a publishing enterprise. Müller was the only man of experience in the company. He wisely refrained from investing any money. It was, of course, Ulrike's money, not his own, that Kleist invested. Their journal, the "Phoebus," failed, but not before it had printed the only fragment of "Robert Guiscard" that is preserved today. Kleist passed through another mental crisis at this time, the cause of which, it would seem, was not so much the failure of the business enterprise as a new disappointment in love.

Julie Kunze, the ward of Christian Gottfried Körner, an influential literary friend of Kleist, is said to have been the object of his affection. According to a plausible rumor Kleist demanded of her that she correspond with him without the knowledge of her guardian, which she refused to do. Kleist took this as a proof that she did not have absolute faith in him, and regarded their betrothal as broken off. Whatever the details of the story may have been it is certain that Kleist suffered some great misfortune at this time. Pfuel related that in Dresden he had once had Kleist a whole week in his room while Kleist was violent and out of his head as a result of a rebuff in a love affair. It is also certain that Kleist from now on gave up all hope of finding happiness in love. He was borne up thereafter by the sympathy of friends both men and women and by the hope of being able to do something for his country, whose humiliation he was growing to feel ever more keenly. In his "Kätchen von Heilbronn" (1808) Kleist idealized the faithful, trustful, submissive woman whom he had failed to find. His next play, "Die Hermannsschlacht," (1808) was in historic disguise a drama of hatred of the modern oppressor, Napoleon. Kleist was chagrined that no theater in Germany or Austria would risk the presentation of this drama.

After the failure of the "Phoebus" and the alliance of Saxony with Napoleon Kleist wandered into Austria with a friend, Friedrich Dahlmann, who later became well known as a historian. They finally settled for a time in Prag, where they planned to found a political journal, the "Germania," but the defeat of the Austrians at Wagram put an end to the undertaking. For several months Kleist was not heard from. It was known that he was seriously ill, in fact it was once reported during that time that he was dead, but early in the year 1810 he returned to Frankfurt to dispose of his inheritance in the family estate in order to provide for his immediate needs while he should write his "Prinz Friedrich von Homburg."

This play, drawn from the family history of the House of Brandenburg, dramatizes the experience of a romantic young prince who, wrapped in thoughts of love and glory scarcely hears the commands on the eve of a decisive battle. At a critical moment on the following day he rushes forward with his cavalry and by his bravery and good fortune but contrary to the orders of the day, wins a brilliant victory for his cause. His exaltation changes to despair, when he learns that the elector insists that military justice shall have its due and he must be court-martialed for insubordination. When at length he is able to see the justice of this and is preparing for death the elector is able to pardon him. This drama was in marked contrast to the elementary hate-breathing "Hermannsschlacht." It represented that positive virtue whereby the freedom of Prussia was soon to be gained, the subduing of self in the interest of discipline. Kleist could write such a drama for he had been such an egoist as the prince, but after being driven to the point of madness by his own ambition he was at length finding spiritual recovery through working with his fellows for the common good. Kleist intended to dedicate this play to Queen Louise. It was to have been staged at court and then in the National Theater. Queen Louise died on the nineteenth of July, 1810, and Kleist had to seek a new patroness. He naturally selected Princess Wilhelm of Prussia as she belonged to the house of Hessen-Homburg, but she found a play impossible in which one of her ancestors humiliated himself. Kleist failed to find for his play either producer or publisher.

Kleist now renewed his attempts to sell his old manuscripts. Here again he met with difficulty. "Der zerbrochene Krug" had been accepted for the Weimar theater but owing to Goethe's unskilful stage management the play had proved a failure. This

fact was well known and made it difficult for Kleist to find acceptance for his work at the hands of publishers and managers. He next attempted the establishment of a daily paper "Die Berliner Abendblätter," which began to appear in October, 1810. The "Abendblätter" found much favor with the public until an article by Kleist's friend Adam Müller provoked the opposition of Hardenberg, the State Chancellor, and the resultant censorship finally sapped the life out of the paper. "It is really remarkable," Kleist wrote to a friend, Marie von Kleist, about this time, "how everything fails that I undertake. No matter how firm a step I resolve to take the ground slips beneath my feet."

Kleist was now moved to address himself submissively to Hardenberg and appeal for a civil position. The request was unanswered. An application for a military appointment addressed directly to the King was more successful and Kleist saw before him the prospect of service for his country against Napoleon. In order to qualify for this position, however, he must have an equipment. He therefore applied to Hardenberg for the loan of twenty louis d'or. This request was unanswered. Kleist now went to Frankfurt to ask the same favor of his sister. He came unannounced and so affrighted Ulrike by his appearance that he left forthwith and only came back after he had written a letter of apology coupled with an announcement that he would come to eat with the family. This last dinner with his family was a painful experience for him. It does not even appear that he reached the point of asking for the loan he needed. He wrote to Marie von Kleist two months later. "I assure you I would rather die ten times than experience again what I did at the dinner table at home. I have always loved my brothers and sisters and, though I have said little about it, it was always my earnest wish to bring them joy and honor by my work. The thought that what I have done, be it little or great, is not appreciated by them and that I am treated as a worthless member of human society is too painful. Really it not only robs me of all joy that I had hoped for in the future but it poisons my past as well."

Marie von Kleist, to whom this letter was written, was a relative of Kleist only by marriage. She was somewhat older than he and had always taken a protecting interest in him. She had been able to appreciate his literary work as his family had not. She possessed some influence at court and it was she who had secured for him the pension from Queen Louise and the promise of a military position from the King. A barren promise the latter

proved for Prussia soon allied itself with the hated oppressor, Napoleon, and Kleist would not serve in such a cause. Marie was unhappy in her relations with her husband, from whom she was later divorced. Gratitude and a common unhappiness drew Kleist nearer to her and she was his chief consoler at this period of his life. At about the same time Kleist was drawn toward another ill-fated woman, Frau Henriette Vogel, with whom he had become acquainted earlier in life. Frau Henriette Vogel was a woman of literary ability and a well-known actress. She had become estranged from her husband and was moreover suffering apparently from cancer. She looked forward to years of pain and a lonely death.

During the month of November, 1811 Kleist turned definitely away from Marie and attached himself to Henriette Vogel. He wrote to Marie on the twelfth of November: "Her resolution to die with me attracted me with a power I could not resist. You know that I have often asked you to die with me, but you have always said no." On the twentieth of November, Kleist and Henriette Vogel went to an inn near the lonely lake Wannsee not far from Potsdam. On the next morning they walked out to a little hill about a half mile from the inn. Here Kleist shot his companion through the heart, reloaded his pistol and shot himself.

He could have had no thought that his country would esteem him as one of the greatest dramatists of his century. He could not have foreseen that two years after his death his people in a great uprising would throw off the yoke of the oppressor he hated. As little could he have foreseen that a century later two kindred stems, torn by dissension, would seek to destroy each other only to join again over the corpses of their dead children as Sylvester and Rupert Schroffenstein over the bodies of Agnes and Ottokar.

THREE NEW FRENCH NOVEL- ISTS, FARRERE, HARRY, BINET-VALMER*

BY JESSE LEE BENNETT

IT was a wise woman who said, in criticising the realists: "It is perfectly all right to call a spade a spade, but why, pray, call it a manure shovel?" It is seldom, after all, that the spade is called a spade. It is generally called either an agricultural implement or a muck rake. At least in English or American fiction. The French appear to have learned a lesson from the exaggeration of Zola and his confreres and from the prudishness of their writers for the Home. Most recent French novelists seem to be able to call a spade neither more nor less than a spade, to call it a spade, indeed, in that refreshingly nonchalant manner which is the proper fashion in which the article should be mentioned.

Among these younger French novelists who have not as yet gravitated either to a fixed place in current criticism or to a large sale in America, are three unusually able and remarkable writers, writers well-fitted to bring to us that note of vigorous and virile sanity which France has struck so clearly in the past year. The books of all three—an officer in the French navy who writes under the pseudonym of Claude Farrere; Myriam Harry, wife of the sculptor Perrault-Harry; and a writer signing himself Binet-Valmer—are books which do not shriek for your attention but which, nevertheless, remain clear-cut in the memory after more clamorous and apparently important volumes have been forgotten. A peculiarity which they share with each other and with most French literature but not with the literature of other countries is that they are concerned primarily with egocentric individualities and the reaction of the outside world upon them, not with individualities considered somewhat primarily in their relation to the outside world. It is a difference of importance and one which causes the reader of French fiction to find much

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current English fiction and most current American fiction rather disheartening and standardized.

The books of Claude Farrere have had remarkable success in France. His best known book—“*Les Civilisés*,” in which his individuality is most strongly felt, won the Prix Goncourt in 1905 and has had over a hundred editions; many of his other books almost as many. Farrere possesses to unusual degree that quality which Galsworthy terms “Flower of Author”—a remarkable personality is displayed between all his lines, a charm which causes the casual reader of one of his works sooner or later to become a careful reader of them all.

From an Anglo-Saxon point of view “*Les Civilisés*” is, truly well calculated to startle. It is difficult to believe that it could ever be printed entirely unabridged in the English language, yet it is the most moral of books. It shows three over-civilized ultra-moderns exploiting life and life annihilating them—three men who have grasped, to the tiniest detail, Joseph Conrad’s idea of an episodic spectacular universe with no continuity and who live with “minimum of exertion for maximum of pleasure.” And, against a purple tropic background of unbelievable dissipation, voluptuity, sin and sense, it places some fragile, absurd and illogical ideals which sway but do not break, and keep up an unepisodic continuity. A curious young man wavers between the two extremes of truth with misery, illusion with happiness; the multicolored laxity of tropical Saigon and the harder-fibred restraint of more temperate France. It is a book to make you gasp and to make you feel and to make you think. When you have lain it down its author has seemed to say to you: “Even from a selfish and practical standpoint, more can be secured from life by allegiance to accepted ideals than by denial of them” but he bends low and whispers also: “Whether you are to play a positive or negative part in the drama of life, my friend, is determined by your destiny and completely beyond your control.”

A singularly charming book is Farrere’s “*Les Petites Allées*” in which the French naval officers are shown as developing the courtesans of Toulon into heterae—“By being esteemed they become estimable.” A brave thought and a brave and honest and delightful book which did not bring down upon the author’s head the reproaches he anticipated because its verisimilitude to life disarmed potential critics. “*La Bataille*” has been translated into English. It is a novel laid in Japan during the Russo-Japanese war. As brilliantly hard a book as can be imagined;

its situations most novel, its two Japanese officers, whose patriotism is like a saint's devotion, high-strung, crystalline figures, vibrant as the rarest steel.

More mellow, delightful and very different is "*L'Homme qui assassina*." It was successful, also, when dramatised. The scene is laid in Turkey at Stamboul which renders it particularly interesting at present. Almost unquestionably, it would be successful in America either as book or play. Of Farrere's other books an early one, "*Fumee d'opium*", is possibly most unusual. It has been greatly praised by Pierre Louys and others. It depicts the diverse effects of opium upon all sorts of people separated by races, by century, by type of mind and soul. In its story, "*Cauchemar*", it will stand comparison with the best of Poe in that author's own medium. A book, as are all of Farrere's, to be placed with all those books you have most enjoyed, found most unusual and most enduring in their interest.

With Myriam Harry we come to a point of view toward life possibly less hard and clear, less abstract, but more highly colored, more softly human, with an appeal to the feelings as great or greater than to the intellect. In the dedication to her husband of her fine book, "*L'Ile de Volupté*", she says: "To the sculptor Perrault-Harry, my husband, to one who fixes in stone and bronze the mobile trait and the eternal instant, I offer this story of fugitive love and of fleeing horizons." But by words and scenes, she fixes in the mind, almost as indelibly, poignancies of emotions, eternal instants of tenderness or of despair, and, above all, characters—individualized, unique, unforgettable—blundering doggedly along under blows unexpected, uncombattable and continuous. She is a mistress of the art of picturing souls struggling toward each other through the walls of essential difference and mutual incomprehensibility; a past-mistress of the art of leaving forever fixed in the mind a poignant moment by a street-corner, in a doorway, or on a ship, of two souls far removed from oneself, existing only in the pages of a book—yet alive, pulsating and not to be forgotten. Her books show the undulatory nature of emotion, the waves of life that lift two beings for a brief moment to the crest of mutual sympathy and understanding and then separate them—possibly forever—in the descending trough of the great waves of time.

But, above all, her characters remain. After years they are still alive in the mind. Who could forget Pierre and his Janina,

his, "Madame Petit-Jardin;" who could forget the interrupted "Divine Chanson" of Ginette and her little Lieutenant Silvere; or Alain and Frisson-de-Bambou, one of the "Petites Epouses" of Farrere's Saigon. Above all who could forget Heliane of "L'Ile de Volupté", or poor Helie of that early and remarkable book "La Conquete de Jerusalem?" Like people one has met under striking or unusual circumstance, in curious and exotic places, or under tragic conditions, they remain clearly in the mind when the standardized or conventional characters of so many thousands of novels are forgotten or have become but dim shadows. There is little that Loti has done that Myriam Harry has not done much better and there is a more virile tenderness, a more vigorous reaction to life and its experiences in the woman's novels than in the man's.

With M. Binet-Valmer we come to an artist more impersonal. Farrere, artist and philosopher, is also—essentially—healthy and vigorous, a naval officer and a man of a brilliant, cosmopolitan and sparkling world. However detached his viewpoint, one can never but feel that he is, himself, abundantly alive, vigorously in the current of the world which he observes and of which he writes. With Myriam Harry, also, we feel this keen interest in life of one who is still part of it, of one who has felt and who feels, who might well meet and talk with her own characters as one of them.

But in Binet-Valmer one feels something different—a detached, wide-visioned, dispassionate observer; an intelligence, pitying and comprehending, but living in a more frigid and austere world, seeing the current of life pass by after having longer ceased to be in the center of it. His first book to awaken widespread attention in Europe was "Lucien" a book not possibly transferable to English or American readers. An anonymous French reviewer says of it: "Lucien is not the book of a moralist; it is solely that of an analyst who exposes the results of an observation coldly, impersonally, objectively, as a physician might do. Indeed, 'Lucien' is that: the observation, the analysis, presented powerfully, interestingly and in simple, clear and elegant language, of a psychopathological disorder."

A book of Binet-Valmer's to which it would be difficult to give too much praise is "*Les Meteques*." Truly a remarkable achievement, it is the study of the somewhat unwholesome effect upon French life of the multitudes of foreigners domiciled in

France, its title being the name given by the Athenians to foreigners resident in their city. Quietly in the House of Deputies a provincial delegate asks of the President of the Council a question concerning the rumored sale of some French vessels to a foreign syndicate. The President promises a satisfactory answer in forty-eight hours. That is all. But the book is concerned with the results of the question itself, with the wheels within wheels, the intrigue within intrigue; the passions, emotions and tragedies; the effects upon the lives of types of mind and soul the most dissimilar and most representative—the highest and noblest to the basest and most earthbound. It is the work of a master craftsman, its action and vigor and comprehensive versimilitude consummately developed. But, however successful as fiction, it is even more memorable for the glimpse it gives of the intelligence creating it, an intelligence serene, fine and rare. In few books of its length can there ever have been pictured more convincingly such a wide gamut of souls in their reaction upon each other in the great mysterious jumble of life. It is a book not to be forgotten by any city dweller, a book much deeper and finer than that other novel of much the same world—de Maupassant's "*Bel Ami*."

These newer French writers should be known to Americans because they can give an impression of France and Frenchmen different from that of the Bourgets, Lotis, de Coulevains, Mirbeaus, Bersteins, Huysmans and others we have known—an impression of a France harder and saner and more easily comprehensible than the varied worlds of these writers. To Americans it is a more comprehensible world, for example, in which one of Farrere's characters—a five-o'clock-rising, steeplechase-riding, hard-headed business man says to a dissolute young libertine: "There exist other people that you do not know, that it might, perhaps, give you pleasure to know—honest people. There are some. Not many. But there are some. Would you like to see them? Come to my house. God knows I am not an honest man! No! I am a bandit, sir. I have stolen, pillaged, held for ransom. But on account of those turpitudes which have filled my life, I have a furious desire for all that is honest" and "for *me*; never—you hear—never shall *I* cease to find good and savoury my life of fatigues and battles, my life of movement and action, because it is in harmony with all that which is most strong and sane in man—the combative instinct, the instinct of preservation—"

And it is a more comprehensible world to us than the world

of French farce or French "comiques"—the world in which another business man says to a boy in Binet-Valmer's "*Les Me-teques*:" "Do not try to go against your nature. You belong to a category of men who are estimable only by their revolts and who are the hereditary enemies of the type to which I belong—. Remain in Paris, my child. It is the boulevard of the rebels. With your temperament you will be either an illustrious individual, an artist, a thinker or a bandit. You are one of the sick whom the humdrum of everyday offends, who are perpetually in pursuit of a chimerical glory and at the mercy of their nerves. Try only to remain yourself. Do not occupy yourself with questions of money. Live from day to day, lose your luxurious habits and do not marry from pity for her who would be your wife. That is the only morality that a man like you should practise." Wise advice that American business men—were they more articulate—might well give to the newer types our aging national life is producing.

Here are three writers with books that depict that firmer, saner and more stalwart France which the battle-fields of Europe are beholding. They write with an art we can envy. If the war is stopping their voices for awhile they will speak later with all the more assurance, authority, experience and vigor.

THREE OLD FRENCH LYRICS

BY HENRY CLINTON HUTCHINS

THE three lyrics given below are translations from originals contained in Karl Bartsch's collection of Old French Lyric Poetry: *Altfranzösische Romanzen und Pastourellen*. Numbers 1 and 3 (in Bartsch, numbers 29 and 74, Book I) are classified by Bartsch as *Pastourellen*; number 2 (number 23, Book II) is classified as one of the *Romanzen*. This latter could be termed more specifically a *Chanson de Mal Mariee* (Petit de Jullevillee: *Histoire de La Langue et de La Littérature Française*, I. pp. 345ff.) of which Gaston Paris in his *Origines de La Poesie Lyrique en France*, p. 9 writes:

"The principal subject of these songs is marriage, uniquely considered from the point of view of the wife, and considered as an odious state of bondage in which the husband is a grotesque tyrant, is called a cad or the jealous one, who makes his wife unhappy because he himself is neither young enough nor amiable enough, who abuses her, threatens to shut her in, to clothe her ill; but who is only sure of the fate which awaits him."

In the lyric translated here the girl is bewailing her husband's blows and threatening to revenge herself upon him by fleeing with her lover.

Of the *Pastourelles* Gaston Paris (*La Littérature Française au Moyen Age*, p 196) says:

"A particular division of songs bears the name *Pastourelles* (that is to say *Bergerettes*). In these songs the subject matter nearly always treats of the meeting of the poet with a shepherdess, and of the varied success which comes from the request for her regard that he addresses to her. These little poems usually consist of a recital and a dialogue. They are written in strophes of short lines generally with a rhythm that is lively and varied."

Number 1 is a typical pastourelle, Marguet being afraid to grant the poet's request for her chaplet of flowers for fear of incurring the ill favour of her lover, Robin. A refrain somewhat similar to the one here, is pointed out by Bartsch as occurring in

Adam's *Le Jeu de Robin et Marion* (p. 52 ed. Langlois). In the third lyric there is a breaking away from the conventional dialogue and the poet is taunted for his backwardness.

The different metres and the rhyme schemes of the originals I have tried to follow as carefully as possible. In I the fact that the seventh line of the first stanza is missing has necessitated some slight variation.

H. C. H.

I

As I rode the other day,
On my palfrey swinging,
Found I straight before my way
A shepherdess of aspect gay,
Keeping flocks, a chaplet stringing
Of lilies, color pied.

"Sweet Marguet," I cried,
"My shepherdess, my bride;
My companion, don't deride;
Give to me your chaplet pied,
Give to me your chaplet pied."

She saith: "As God doth me espy,
Nothing of the sort I'll dare;
Robin's in the copse near by,
And he'll straightway here repair:
If he together sees us playing,
I shall have, Oh! such a flaying,
From his cudgel tried."

"No, Marguet," I cried,
"My shepherdess, my bride;
My companion, don't deride;
Give to me your chaplet pied,
Give to me your chaplet pied."

II

"Why insults my husband me?
A churl is he!

No sin against him have I wrought
 Nor spoken of him evil aught
 Except my lover have I sought:
 Ah, woe is me!
 Why insults my husband me?
 A churl is he!

And if he gives me not my meed
 Nor a joyful life doth let me lead,
 I'll make him rue his blows indeed
 Of a certainty.
 Why insults my husband me?
 A churl is he!

Now what I'll do right well I know,
 I'll him repay for many a blow,
 For with my loved one will I go
 Resignedly.
 Why insults my husband me?
 A churl is he!"

III

In May when blossom the meadows sweet,
 When the rose is new,
 Riding was I past a field of wheat
 A by-way through;
 When I chanced to see a shepherdess true:
 Yielding to great delight was she
 Singing this glee;
 "Margueron, Oh! shamed be he
 Who from fair Love so soon doth flee."

Margueron in truth doth heed
 She who sings near;
 Much to his liking was the song, indeed
 Of the dance's cheer,
 When another maiden doth he hear:
 Weaving a garland of flowers is she
 Singing this glee:
 "Margueron, Oh! shamed be he
 Who from fair Love so soon doth flee."

A CLAUDE LORRAINE

BY CAMILLE FAIRCHILD

Mount and stream
Divide the landscape of a Dream,
On the water smote
By the hoof of Pegasus
White Swans float—
Limpid stairs
Flow from, while leading to, a Fane above
And unawares
*Twixt Fame and love
The muses hide in ecstasy;
For beyond Beotian sea
Apollo lo, is pleasuring.

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DEVOTED TO POETRY AND DRAMA

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Winter Number

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By GIUSEPPE GIACOSA

A Bright Morning, A Comedy in One Act
By SERAFIN and JOAQUIN ALVAREZ QUINTERO

The Honor Cross, A Play in One Act
By M. E. LEE

The Comic in German Folk-Christmas Plays
By F. G. JENNEY

Poems

By D'ANNUNZIO, DE LISLE, ZIEL, SCHUELER, VITTORELLI, MERCANTINI,
RILKE, HALEK, CHARLOTTE PORTER, GUSTAV DAVIDSON, CAMILLE FAIRCHILD

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Poet Lore

VOLUME XXVII

WINTER 1916

NUMBER 6

UNHAPPY LOVE

(*Tristi Amori*)

A PLAY IN THREE ACTS

BY GIUSEPPE GIACOSA

Translated from the Italian by Albert E. Trombly.

CHARACTERS

GIULIO SCARLI, *the lawyer.*

EMMA, *his wife.*

COUNT ETTORE ARCIERI.

FABRIZIO ARCIERI, *his son, a lawyer.*

RANETTI, *Attorney.*

GEMMA, *five-year-old daughter of Giulio and Emma.*

MAID, *Marta.*

The scene is laid in a little provincial city.

ACT I

Dining-room in the house of the lawyer, GIULIO.

SCENE I

EMMA and FABRIZIO.

(EMMA is sitting before the fireplace, thoughtful. FABRIZIO enters from the study, looks around, comes stealthily up behind her, takes her head between his hands, tips it back and kisses her on the lips.)

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Emma.—You're stifling me!

Fabrizio.—Tell me that you love me; greet me with a loving word! Tell me that you love me.

Emma.—I love you.

Fabrizio.—Tell it to me again.

Emma.—I love you, I love you, I love you! You've come, I'm happy.

Fabrizio.—Didn't you expect me?

Emma.—I always expect you!

Fabrizio.—This morning I wasn't to come so early to the office. My steps have brought me here. Every day I say to myself: I have never loved her so much! I came up. I didn't hope to see you, I wished to be for a moment in the house where you are. But since Giulio was talking in his study, he didn't notice me. I heard your soft and slow step here. . . . How beautiful you are!

Emma.—Do you like me?

Fabrizio.—I love you.

Emma.—Do you love me again?

Fabrizio.—How could I love if I didn't love you?

Emma.—Do you love me again?

Fabrizio.—You know that I do.

Emma.—Answer. Then, when you are gone, your words will remain here. You have business to distract you; my affairs let me go aside in my mind and listen to things remembered. When I am alone I let you speak, I let you speak as I did with you that evening up there on the mountain, when you were frightened at my silence and I delighted in your voice. But think! All day long! You must tell me so many things that some will remain with me, and: so many things means a single thing, isn't that so? and you must repeat it a thousand times like a prayer. Are you going already?

Fabrizio.—Necessarily—I came up in haste, I can't stop.

Emma.—Shall I see you again today?

Fabrizio.—I don't know, I hope so.

Emma.—You know that I'm not alive when you aren't here. This evening?

Fabrizio.—Yes. Every evening on going I promise myself never to return here and then in the morning I begin to feel the hours drag. I couldn't keep away, and yet this is torture!

Emma.—And for me what is it?

Fabrizio.—You can be silent; you are bent over your work,

you feel me near, you hear me speak and you can be silent and think. I must talk with Giulio, be attentive to what he says to me, smile, laugh, and meanwhile I feel your look and your breath which terrify me!

Emma.—Do you remember how it was before? What evenings! How many things all our words said! You praised the season and I felt you were telling me your love and I told you mine in speaking of the household.

Fabrizio.—And so it is now.

Emma.—Yes. But with pain. What will become of us?

Fabrizio.—Let's not think of it. Sunday at your uncle's?

Emma.—Yes.

Fabrizio.—I love you again.

Emma.—Yes.

Fabrizio.—But I love you so much!

Emma.—Yes.

Fabrizio.—Isn't Marta in the house?

Emma.—No.

Fabrizio.—Now I'm going in order that Giulio may not see me. Good-by. (*He goes.*)

SCENE II

EMMA, *then* GIULIO.

(*A silence. EMMA takes certain dishes which are on the table and puts them in the cupboard.*)

Giulio.—Emma, Ranetti is here; I have offered him some vermouth.

Emma.—You see that I haven't finished putting things in order.

Giulio.—Ranetti sees worse in his own house.

Emma.—Let me remove these clothes from before the fire.

Giulio.—Why? Where there are children people know how it is. Is the vermouth here in the cupboard?

Emma.—Yes.

Giulio (*He opens the cupboard takes a bottle and the corkscrew while EMMA puts away the dishes.*)—Ranetti has brought me my dividend from the liquidation of the mills. We've sold at an unhopd-for profit. Ranetti is a clever one for such things! Guess how much I draw.

Emma.—I don't know.

Giulio.—Eleven thousand francs. Aren't you saying anything?

Emma.—What should I say?

Giulio.—You don't yet know the value of money. When, three years ago, I invested three thousand francs in the mill business you advised me not to do it. You wanted to put this money into improving the house.

Emma.—I'm wasteful.

Giulio.—I tell you this as an excuse for my having been right. (*Seeing that EMMA is preparing only two glasses.*) Only two glasses?

Emma.—I shan't have any. I'm trying to be saving.

Giulio.—You're not fair.

Emma.—You're right, excuse me, but 'twould make me ill. And besides I have something to do in the other room.

Giulio.—Stay a minute. Ranetti will be glad to see you. Shall I call him?

Emma.—Call him.

Giulio (Toward the office).—Ranetti.

SCENE III

RANETTI and same.

Ranetti.—Here I am. How are you, madam?

Emma.—Well, and you?

Ranetti.—I just met your little girl on the street. Her name's Gemma isn't it?

Emma.—Yes.

Ranetti.—The mother Emma, the daughter Gemma.

Giulio.—I wanted to give her my wife's name. My wife objected saying that it would give rise to confusion; so I prefixed a G.

Ranetti.—The initial of your name. And what a healthy child. Marta was trying to hold her back. Does she go to school yet?

Emma.—No. She's five years old. I send her shopping with Marta to give her a little walk. I never find time to go out in the morning.

Ranetti.—I know how it is in a house! (*To GIULIO who hands him the vermuth.*) Madam first.

Emma.—Thank you, I'm not taking any.

Ranetti.—Does it affect your legs? With women vermouth does affect their legs. As for me it strengthens mine and I need it. I've been on my feet since yesterday morning.

Emma.—How are you?

Ranetti.—Don't you know we had the great ball at the club last night?

Giulio.—Who would think him the most active and industrious of the attorneys? He dances all night.

Ranetti.—And I slave it all day long. Doesn't madam even ask me how it went?

Emma.—How did it go?

Ranetti.—It went badly. Nowadays at the club one can't dance any more. (*To GIULIO.*) And I've come, too, to speak to you of this.

Giulio.—To me?

Ranetti.—Aren't you the president? It's the same old story. We pay, the officers enjoy it and make fun of us. The lieutenant of the riflemen dances with his spurs on. Last night he tore a figure seven in Mrs. Pastôla's gown, large enough for my hat to pass through. Pastôla wants to send him the bill. The other evening they made a great stir saying that because they come in shoulder-straps, we must come in evening dress. At least to the big ball, they said. I went in street dress and I directed. Are foreigners going to prescribe to us? The girls notice only them. They steal them at every turn. The villagers can never dance.

Giulio.—They're young fellows.

Ranetti.—And what are we? Meanwhile we are not marrying and we're creating scenes.

Giulio.—Scenes!

Ranetti.—Why yes! Last night I was directing. If you don't command the end of the line, there's no more order, isn't that so? It's necessary to cry out; they chose me for this: when I command the window-panes tremble. Well, last night, once when I shouted *line* a captain who was in the first file with Mrs. Sequis said: "What a cannonade!" and he stopped his ears. I mumbled to myself, to myself, mind you: "I wonder whether they do stop their ears for cannonades!" Nothing else! When the dance was over two officers came to me and asked me what I had said. I was prudent and answered that I didn't remember. You have said this and that; and they repeated my words in a threatening tone. I acted prudently and denied the affair.

What's to be done? Fight a duel? It's a matter that concerns you. Later on at the cotillion. . . (GIULIO goes to the door of the office.) Am I boring you?

Giulio.—No. (*He looks into the study and returns.*) Go on.

Ranetti.—For the cotillion they were making the butterfly. Notice that I introduced that figure at the club, and I had donated the butterflies which I had them make in the rear of Pasca's shop. Do you know what the butterfly figure is like?

Giulio.—I can imagine.

Ranetti.—They take

Giulio.—I can imagine. Go ahead.

Ranetti.—Well, Bessola warned me that it was Lieutenant Rovi who always entered the figure when he shouldn't have. He's a great tall fellow who sticks up through cupolas; 'tis natural that he catch the butterflies. Bessola who is small could never come up to him. What would you have done?

Giulio.—Well

Ranetti.—I kept my eye on him and when I saw Lieutenant Rovi enter out of turn, I begged him to withdraw. He answered yes, and went right on. And I asked him once, twice, and three times. The fourth time I took him by the arm to draw him away. He shook himself with a jerk and called me a villain right out loud!

Giulio.—The deuce! and you?

Ranetti.—I was prudent and went to supper. But I warn you that at the club they're talking about you. You are president.

Giulio.—But I have already resigned three times.

Ranetti.—And they have reelected you; then it's up to you to beware. But evenings when there is a ball you are never to be seen.

Giulio.—My wife doesn't go.

Ranetti.—And why not, madam?

Emma.—I don't care to.

Ranetti.—A young woman! It's of this, too, that they talk.

Emma.—I do no harm to anyone.

Ranetti.—Last year you came.

Giulio.—Against her will even then. Emma has a staid character, she doesn't like to be in society, she doesn't like to talk.

Ranetti.—O, I see!

Emma.—One must dress and be up late. (GIULIO turns toward the office.)

Ranetti.—Are you going?

Giulio.—No, I'm looking into the office to see whether anyone has come in. I've left it open.

Ranetti.—Your substitute takes life easy.

Giulio.—Lawyers don't have substitutes, they have colleagues.

Ranetti.—O, excuse me!

Giulio.—And my colleague is not in the office because he has gone to court in place of me.

Ranetti.—I meant that the ball wasn't the cause of his tardiness.

Giulio.—Why?

Ranetti.—Because Count Arcieri doesn't deign set foot in the club.

Giulio.—He has something else in mind.

Ranetti.—And then we are not people of his set. (*EMMA gets up and walks away.*) Madam has something to do. Let us not inconvenience her.

Emma.—No, I'm turning these garments in order that they may not burn.

Ranetti.—Nevertheless . . . discretion.

Giulio.—Let discretion alone, and since you are a good fellow, be somewhat indulgent in your judgments.

Ranetti.—I said that your colleague was not of our sort—he's a noble!

Giulio.—He maintains that he is Lawyer Arcieri without anything more.

Ranetti.—As much as to say that he doesn't need to wear his title, because we must all know it.

Giulio.—If he did wear it, you'd want him to do the contrary.

Ranetti.—Admit that he isn't where he belongs!

Giulio.—He's serious, and is ashamed of the equivocal and vicious life of his father.

Ranetti.—His father, at least, is genial, helpful, witty.

Giulio.—All profligates are so. But he owes to half the city. The son is afraid of finding a creditor in every one whom he meets.

Ranetti.—He isn't obliged to pay.

Giulio.—But he pays as much as he can. The father hasn't another dollar. He gets along with gambling and worse. He has wasted all his son's patrimony. The latter has only a pension of two thousand francs left which that usurer of a Maraschi must pass over to him. Well, he doesn't draw a cent, he spends it all in stopping up the biggest holes here and there. The money he has

is what he makes. He lives on a few cases which I turn over to him, but none of you help him. You, a well-advanced attorney, have never yet sent him a client.

Ranetti.—I send them to you.

Giulio.—That isn't the same thing. I have a child and may have others. Of the work which comes to me I have the sacred duty of getting out of it as much as possible. He himself doesn't need to be told. The other day he told me that he noticed he was a burden, and spoke of going away to make his fortune. But as long as he is here he hopes to keep his father in hand in order that he may not spend too much. It's a grievous thing. Another matter than the butterflies of the cotillion! He lives like a hermit. He saves his money, he didn't join the club because of the expense. He can't live with his father, that house is so far from respectable! He's boarding at the house of the court secretary. He looks elegant because he makes over and finishes wearing out the garments which his father has laid aside, while the latter is playing beau at the age of fifty. I beg of you then not to go and blab these things at the Vasco Coffee-house. For who can tell whether you or I could do otherwise. And instead of admiring or at least praising that virtue, of sustaining that courage, you fellows show him a repelling coolness which he attributes to diffidence, to lack of esteem because of the sad reputation of his name. It's a sad case.

Ranetti.—You are right. You will see.

Giulio.—I have been wanting to tell you this for sometime. But I dislike begging for friendship for him who deserves to find it spontaneous.

Ranetti.—You are right. I shall send him today a good client. Are you satisfied?

Giulio.—He's very able. You'll be doing good.

Ranetti.—Will he be late in coming?

Giulio.—I don't know.

Ranetti.—Are you waiting for him?

Giulio.—No, at ten I'm going to court.

Ranetti.—Then 'twill be necessary that I leave him a note in order that he go at once to Dr. Bruscio's. You know that the doctor is ill, he can't move.

Giulio.—Is he the client?

Ranetti.—Yes. Good isn't he? Rubbo, the manager of the theater, was to pay the doctor fifteen thousand francs last night.

Giulio.—Rubbo's good for a million.

Ranetti.—That's why he doesn't pay. I know him, he's as litigious as a bad attorney. And if he hasn't paid there will be a suit as big as a house. Where can I write the note?

Giulio.—There in the office.

Ranetti.—Good-day, madam. (*Goes into the office.*)

SCENE IV

EMMA and GIULIO.

Giulio (*EMMA sitting by the fire, thoughtful.*)—He's a good chap. (*EMMA doesn't move. GIULIO approaches her as if to awake her.*) Oh!

Emma.—You are good!

Giulio.—Why? Because I defended Fabrizio? He would have done better and even more for me. Don't you believe it?

Emma.—Yes. But, *you* are good.

Giulio.—It's so easy to be good when one is happy. I compare my life to his, and I find that I have so many reasons for being happy and he so few that I seem to be indebted to him. I have you and I have Gemma, business prospers, people like me. And he! Sunday when I went to meet you at your uncle's villa, I had taken the short cut which borders the Vasco. There I saw him all alone going up and down the bank with so forsaken a look! I called him and he came blushing because I had caught him in the flagrant enjoyment of poetry, as he said. Others of his age and of his standing in life get together Sundays and enjoy themselves; he looked like nobody at all. We were a few steps from the villa and I invited him to accompany me in order that he might dine with us. I couldn't prevail upon him. I turned two or three times to look at him as he was returning to town. Poor fellow! You pity him, don't you?

Emma.—Why?

Giulio.—It's quite evident. That father of his is so despicable! On market-days, all decked out as he is, he hides himself in a hole at the sign of the Three Doves and plays cards with the cattle dealers who come down from the mountain. Two weeks ago Rosso, the stage-coach manager, boxed his ears because he cheated.

Emma.—How terrible.

Giulio.—To think that Fabrizio might fall in love with some good girl and that he might be rejected because he is the son of

his father.

Emma.—Do you have a hearing today?

Giulio.—Yes, at ten.

Emma.—Will you be in at noon for lunch?

Giulio.—Yes, yes.

Ranetti (Within).—O good!

Emma.—Look, there's someone in there.

Giulio.—It must be Fabrizio.

SCENE V

RANETTI, FABRIZIO *and same.*

Ranetti ((Leading in FABRIZIO).—Come here, come here. They were talking of you a moment ago.

Fabrizio (Bows to EMMA. To GIULIO).—Good morning! The Bonola investigation has been put off for a fortnight; Martino went free.

Giulio.—Will you have a glass of vermouth?

Fabrizio.—No, thank you.

Ranetti.—I need you, you know.

Fabrizio.—Me?

Ranetti.—Yes, for a matter which can be quickly done with. Can you come with me now?

Fabrizio (Looking at GIULIO).—But!

Giulio.—Go ahead. I have a hearing at court but I'm not expecting anyone.

Ranetti.—I had written you a note, but if you come 'twill be sooner over with. In a half-hour 'twill be done; I'm entrusting you a good client.

Fabrizio.—Thanks.

Ettore (From the office).—May I come in?

Giulio (To FABRIZIO).—Just see!

Ettore (As above).—May I come in?

Fabrizio (To himself, dumbfounded).—My father!

SCENE VI

ETTORE *and the same*

Ettore.—May I come in here?

Giulio.—Sit down.

Fabrizio (Quickly to ETTORE).—Do you want me? Come.

Ettore.—Since I have the good fortune to be able to greet a woman, don't let me miss her. How is Mrs. Scarli?

Emma.—Well, thank you.

Ettore (To GIULIO).—I never have occasion to be with you, lawyer, but I know all that you have done and are doing for my son. There's no need to tell you that I am grateful to you for it.

Giulio.—Fabrizio helps me, we get along very well together.

Fabrizio.—Do you want to speak to me?

Ettore.—Yes. O Ranetti!

Ranetti.—How are you Count?

Ettore.—I'm well—if I stand in your good graces. And last night you made a lot of victims, eh? The day after a ball there's a general chorus of male imprecations hurled at you.

Ranetti.—Some officer?

Ettore.—No, the husbands. I see that the lawyer wants to offer me some vermuth.

Giulio.—O, excuse me! (*Serves him.*)

Fabrizio.—You see that I have much to do. Must you really speak to me?

Ettore.—I must so much that I went looking for you in court.

Fabrizio.—Won't you step this way—Excuse me, Mr. Ranetti, I shall hear what my father wants of me and then I shall be with you.

Ettore.—Are you going out with Mr. Ranetti?

Fabrizio.—Yes.

Ettore (To RANETTI).—Will you be long?

Ranetti.—A half hour.

Ettore.—Well, since I also need at least a half hour's talk with my son, I'll yield you first place. Business before everything else. (*To FABRIZIO.*) Are you coming back here?

Fabrizio.—Right here.

Ettore.—I ask your pardon, madam, and also the lawyer's if I make an appointment to meet my son in your house, but since I would like to speak to you, too, or rather to you first. . .

Giulio.—The trouble is that I must be in court at ten o'clock and (*he looks at the clock*) it's almost that now.

Ettore.—I shall talk to your wife.

Emma.—To me?

Ettore.—If you allow it.

Fabrizio (To RANETTI).—Is it absolutely necessary that I go with you?

Ranetti.—'Twould be better.

Fabrizio (To ETTORE).—Can't you wait till later on today?

Ettore.—Impossible; but I tell you that you have plenty of time; before speaking with you I shall have the pleasure of having a word with the lady here.

Fabrizio (To RANETTI).—Be patient, go without me.

Ettore (To FABRIZIO).—One would think that it annoys you to leave me here alone. I'm sure that the lawyer has no objection to allowing me to remain half an hour with his wife.

Giulio.—How can you imagine such a thing?

Emma (Softly to GIULIO).—But I—

Giulio (Softly to EMMA).—What's to be done? (To FABRIZIO) Then your father will wait for you here.

Fabrizio (Softly to ETTORE).—It's not a question of money, is it?

Ettore.—Whom do you take me for?

Ranetti.—Madam.

Emma.—Good-bye.

Ranetti.—Count.

Ettore.—Be prudent won't you? And wish me well.

Ranetti.—Always.

Fabrizio (Bowing to EMMA).—I'll be right back. (To GIULIO.) Good-bye. (He goes out through the office with RANETTI.)

SCENE VII

The same less FABRIZIO and RANETTI.

Giulio (To ETTORE).—Pardon me a minute, till I say a word to my wife.

Ettore.—Go ahead, go ahead.

Emma (Softly to GIULIO).—I have an idea.

Giulio (Softly to EMMA).—Be patient. Fabrizio will be back soon; you saw how bored he was. If I could stay, but how can that be? After all you'll see that he is very polite. I can't imagine what he wants of us. It can't be money, he wouldn't dare. But if . . .

Emma.—I haven't any; but think how embarrassed I should be if he asked for some.

Giulio.—No, no; he doesn't dare ask you. If I can get away, I shall go and be back. Well, good-bye.

Emma.—Good-bye.

Giulio.—Make yourself at home.

Ettore.—Thanks. (*GIULIO goes out from the office.*)

SCENE VIII

EMMA and ETTORE.

Ettore.—This is really an indiscretion at this untimely hour. But for beautiful women it isn't an untimely hour. They are beautiful all the time.

Emma.—Excuse me if I receive you here in the servant's dining-room, but in the parlor it's cold; there's no fire there.

Ettore.—But it's beautiful, it's charming here; besides this homelike appearance is so attractive. I had already asked Fabrizio many times to take me to your home.

Emma.—I lead this sort of a secluded life. In the small towns it isn't the custom.

Ettore.—Then I'm doubly indiscreet. But it's a question of a serious nature. I wanted to see Fabrizio about it, then I thought that it was better to begin with his best friends. And I'm glad to be able to broach the question first with you alone. Women are better allies than men.

Emma.—Sit down.

Ettore.—Yes, madam. But then you'll let me stand and you won't think it impolite if I can't stand still. I'm a little worked up. It's a question of a serious matter. I am talking to you for the first time, but I know that you are very indulgent. Your husband, too, is a large-hearted man; but if women know fewer things they understand more. I'm getting lost in preambles, because I don't know how to begin what I want to say. It's quite evident that my insisting on staying displeased my son. I'm something of a pupil of my son. He has a certain right to look into my life; I haven't that, I don't say of examining, because that isn't so, but at least of entering into the sphere of his. There are features of his life, of his habits, of his affections, which I must not know, or must let him believe that I do not know.

Emma (To herself).—Oh!

Ettore.—It's vexing, because I'm not old and I could be indulgent without loss of dignity. I'm sure that you approve of

these scruples, don't you? Won't you answer me?

Emma.—What can I answer? I don't understand what you mean.

Ettore.—What I say and nothing else.

Emma.—I can't explain the reason to myself.

Ettore.—Of what I say? It's very simple. What I don't know may perhaps be known by you.

Emma.—Speak.

Ettore.—Don't you know whether Fabrizio has here in the city—or elsewhere—some tie?

Emma.—A tie?

Ettore.—Yes—some love affair or other—'twould be quite natural at his age; some virtuous and melancholy little attachment. They all have them and especially the serious young men like my son. Don't you know about it?

Emma. No.

Ettore.—It's possible; doesn't people's gossip reach you?

Emma.—Gossip?

Ettore.—O little towns! I'm not clever, you'll agree? Yet I often hear here and there such pointed remarks, such ingenious thrusts, such subtle reasons, that I'm bewildered and frightened at them. At the Vasco Coffee-house there are geniuses in this line. Your husband is wrong in not going there; for a lawyer 'twould be a wonderful schooling. Between a couple games of cards some pretty deep things are said. There are people who keep an account, not only so to speak, but who really write down everything that happens in town, especially the things that seem insignificant. It's an arsenal of hateful arms! They know everything; at what time a person leaves home, when he returns, where he went, who he was, how he looked on returning. They are oracles which predict the future: for example I'll cite an unimportant fact to give you some idea. . . . Did you go to the ball last night? I don't know whether you did or not. Did you?

Emma.—No.

Ettore.—Well, day before yesterday at the Vasco Coffee-house it was predicted.

Emma.—I haven't gone for a year.

Ettore.—I believe it—but I say this to show you. . . . To give you another case . . . I don't even know whether my son went to this ball, do you?

Emma.—No, he didn't go.

Ettore.—You know about it, do you?

Emma.—Yes, I do. And did they predict that, too?

Ettore.—Yes.

Emma (Laughing with an effort).—It doesn't cost them much to be oracles. They know that Fabrizio is not a member of the club.

Ettore.—Ah there! Fabrizio isn't a member. But after all you can't in any way tell me whether Fabrizio is free.

Emma.—No.

Ettore.—Well, I must find out . . . for I shouldn't want to oppose the feelings of my son. I shall try asking your husband.

Emma.—Ah!

Ettore.—Who knows but what he may be informed and may help me in every way to find out.

Emma (Laughing).—To find out! Why then you really believe that Fabrizio . . . What an idea! I'm wondering what can have put that into your head . . . If you could only see him. He has so much to do, so many thoughts! And then you would understand, you would have understood, you too: when one is in love, it's evident, isn't it? Well, I see him every evening; he comes here, stays late, talks, plays cards with Giulio; and I'm here working, and I assure you . . . what folly! And then he would have told me about it, I'm sure that he would have confided everything to me. Indeed!

Ettore.—So much the better. Then everything is easier. I want to give him a wife.

Emma.—Ah!

Ettore.—Yes, he must put an end to this wretched life of utility. We weren't born to that station in life. I have found him a match suitable in every way. A girl who is young, pretty, well-bred, and with two hundred thousand francs dowry, to say nothing of hopes. An only daughter. Fabrizio will oppose me, he already has; but he must finally accept; it is absolutely necessary. And it must be done right away. I haven't time to wait. All who have any influence over him must help me. When I tried to speak to him about it, he broke off the conversation brusquely, brutally, for he took on a terrible tone with me! Now I must give a definite answer on which depend many things, many serious things . . . Excuse me if I talk so excitedly, but I told you to begin with: I am somewhat excited. I'm sure that you will help me to persuade him. It's necessary.

Emma (To herself).—Ah!

Ettore.—Because you see—and it's always the case—all these

illicit love-affairs are bound to end up ridiculously and there's no other end to them. At first everything goes smoothly: love, poetry, promises! You go cautiously, no one will ever find you out, and some fine day, everything comes to light, and then there must be an end to the love, the poetry and the promises. There are other promises which bind, those sanctioned by law. And now you've lost your golden opportunity and it never returns and you remain, your life shattered, scorned for your awkward failure more than you would have been for a foul act. People don't help you any more, and accuse you of ingratitude . . . and you have to begin life over again now that you're older and have fewer resources. There's the whole story. (*Staring her full in the face.*) Am I not right? I count your husband as on my side at once, but you must help me too, for we haven't any time for beating about the bush. We must act quickly! In Fabrizio's own interest we must decide at once. So much for that. He isn't marrying for love, isn't that so? What for then, since they no longer expect that? They have a tool. It's the daughter of Rubbo, the manager. Rubbo wants to make a countess of his daughter. Rubbo has a tool; what he wants, he wants. He came to me this morning—he wants an answer at noon. I must be able at least to give him some hope, but my word won't satisfy him. He's so ill bred! He wants to speak with Fabrizio today—if not!—You'll help me won't you? Won't you help me?

Emma.—Yes.

Ettore.—You'll speak to Fabrizio will you?

Emma.—Yes.

Ettore.—As soon as he returns?

Emma.—Yes, yes—but you must not be here.

Ettore.—All right—But first I'll tell him what it's all about.

Emma.—O—and what then . . .

Ettore.—I shall go.

Emma.—Yes. Let's do that way. When Fabrizio returns, I'll leave you.

Ettore.—What then?

Emma.—I've given you my promise.

Ettore.—You surely understand that it must be a serious affair since I've come to ask help of you in this sorry plight.

Fabrizio (From the office).—Here I am.

Emma (Jumps to her feet).—Ah! (*FABRIZIO enters from the office and approaches EMMA.*) (*EMMA softly to FABRIZIO.*) I couldn't stand it any longer. (*She goes out at the rear.*)

SCENE IX

ETTORE *and* FABRIZIO.

Fabrizio.—What has happened?

Ettore.—I don't know.

Fabrizio.—What have you said to her?

Ettore.—I've asked her to help me persuade you to marry.

Fabrizio.—What have you said to her?

Ettore.—It isn't time for questions now. Rubbo wants an answer. Do you accept?

Fabrizio.—No.

Ettore.—Listen!

Fabrizio.—Don't speak to me of it,—It's useless—come away!

Ettore.—Listen!

Fabrizio.—Come away, come away!

Ettore.—You don't know what it means—Fabrizio, I beg of you with hands clasped, do not refuse me.

Fabrizio (Frightened).—What is it? You frighten me.

Ettore.—You surely see that it can't be a whim.

Fabrizio.—Tell me the reason for it.

Ettore.—I wish to raise you from this life of wretchedness.

Fabrizio.—No! What do you care about me?

Ettore.—Oh!

Fabrizio.—How much do you owe him?

Ettore.—Is that what you think?

Fabrizio.—How much? Let's see if I have it.

Ettore.—How bitter you are!

Fabrizio.—O, I assure you that I would like to show you tenderness and reverence.

Ettore.—One wouldn't suspect it.—You humble me continually. You help me in my wretchedness, but you can't respect it.

Fabrizio.—Because

Ettore.—It isn't respectable; let me say it. You must understand that of the traits of my race none are more tenacious than those which are worthless; I can throw away my pride and lower myself with people who are my inferiors, but not with you.

Fabrizio.—It's not a question of pride. The little help that I am able to give you cannot offend your pride and can sustain mine. How much do you owe him?

Ettore.—It's not a question of money. You couldn't do that!

Fabrizio.—That Rubbo holds you in some way; what is it?

Ettore.—He has my word.

Fabrizio.—For this wedding?

Ettore.—I beseech you to consent.

Fabrizio.—Why does he wish to give me his daughter? I'm not a Narcissus to fall in love with women at a distance, and that puppet couldn't love anyway.

Ettore.—He wishes to make a countess of her.

Fabrizio.—Marry her yourself.

Ettore.—What folly!

Fabrizio.—Why yes, I yield you my rights of primo-geniture. The first son she bears you will be count instead of me.

Ettore.—Let's not joke.

Fabrizio.—I'm not joking. If you think that two hundred thousand francs are worth the title which we bear, well, it is yours more than mine, since I got it from you. You are robust, elegant, you are younger than I, I shall be the grandfather of your children. You can be attractive. If you were in easy circumstances again you would be quite at home. I never. The joys which you might hope for from marriage, this would give you all of them; of those which I might hope for, I wouldn't have a single one. Why go to all this trouble, to obtain, on their part, what I cannot give, and, on my part, what I don't want? It isn't in wearing your discarded clothing that I've been able to accustom myself to elegance. I feel so little that I am noble, I *do*! I have nothing but middle class virtues! I can work, I like work, I have no ambition, I am satisfied with every-day life. A little peace and assurance of the morrow suffice me. And to see you happy, and not to be obliged to play the ungrateful part of mentor with you, and to be able to show you filial devotion and respect I ask nothing else! Marry her yourself!

Ettore.—Rubbo isn't willing.

Fabrizio (Laughing bitterly).—You've already tried and you come to me in the last extremity.

Ettore.—You see that you are proud, you too!

Fabrizio.—That's so. And I don't make bargains.

Ettore.—But you advise your father to make them.

Fabrizio.—At your age agreements are clear, there's no possible deceit.

Ettore.—You wouldn't be the first man to marry in this way.

Fabrizio.—And if you stole, you wouldn't be the first robber.

Ettore.—When I tell you

Fabrizio.—Enough. One must have lost all sense of righteousness not to understand that my consent would be a dishonest act.

Ettore.—You think that it is more honest to enter into a gentleman's house, win his friendship, receive benefits from him, and seduce his wife?

Fabrizio (Violently).—Did you say this to Emma?

Ettore.—Now I'm saying it to you.

Fabrizio.—Answer me, have you said this to her?

Ettore.—Am I not right?

Fabrizio.—No one can suspect.

Ettore.—But everyone does suspect.

Fabrizio.—It isn't true.

Ettore.—And you denounce the slander to the husband.

Fabrizio.—Beware! I don't care to defend myself! But if you've said a word of this to Emma

Ettore.—Never mind, she has almost confessed.

Fabrizio (Overwhelmed).—She?

Ettore.—Right here, just now.

Fabrizio (Lowers his voice and looks around).—Hush! come away. Let's go to your house. It isn't possible that you have done this! A gentleman! Come away, come away!

Ettore.—No, you stay. Emma wants to talk to you.

Fabrizio.—To me?

Ettore.—Yes.

Fabrizio.—You've had her promise to help you?

Ettore.—Yes.

Fabrizio.—And she has promised you! You surely see that your suspicions are absurd.

Ettore.—You might be able to show me their absurdity even more clearly.

Fabrizio.—By marrying the daughter of Rubbo? I have a better way. By going away.

Ettore.—Do you still refuse?

Fabrizio.—Certainly!

Ettore.—And that's your last word?

Fabrizio.—O, the last!

Ettore.—Even if I should tell you that it's partly a question of the honor of your name?

Fabrizio.—You and I understand that word honor so differently!

Ettore.—Good-bye! (*He starts off and turns back.*)

Fabrizio.—Good-bye.

Ettore.—If you should change your mind, you'll find me at home till noon. After that 'twould be too late. (*Passes out through the office.*)

SCENE X

FABRIZIO, then EMMA.

Fabrizio (*At the door at rear.*)—Emma! (*Silence—then EMMA enters.*)

Emma.—Has he gone?

Fabrizio.—Yes.

Emma.—He has found out everything.

Fabrizio.—I know it.

Emma.—He won't be the only one.

Fabrizio.—I'm leaving.

Emma.—When?

Fabrizio.—As soon as I can. This evening.

Emma.—What will Giulio think?

Fabrizio.—He'll seek for some reason. I don't dare look at him. If he stared at me, he would understand; I couldn't find a word to put him off the track. But this warning comes in time. When I have gone, suspicions will fall. It was bound to end thus. What did my father say.

Emma.—I no longer know. So many things! I saw at once that he knew; at once, from the very beginning! He looked at me, he looked at me! His words were polite, but his look—outrageous! Then he must have threatened, but I no longer know. What torture! They all know, don't they?

Fabrizio.—No, my father sees evil so easily. He is so corrupt!

Emma.—Who has found us out?

Fabrizio.—For heaven's sake let's not give ourselves away. We must be brave to feign till this evening. I can't leave without seeing Giulio. We shall both be in his presence. He will try to dissuade me. We must be strong and feign. For his sake! for his sake! The one good that we can do him is to deceive him.

Emma.—We couldn't—let's be cowards—It's the last ray

of nobleness that remains to us. But we had foreseen it, hadn't we? At least we had foreseen it. We can't say that we didn't know of it all.

Fabrizio.—No.—Who knows how it begins? It is so subtle a poison, so deceitful! Who can see it at the beginning? It has so many names! It is pity, it is respect, it is faith! Who fears it? 'Tis only an ardor for good. It attaches itself to all the good and strong faculties of the mind and exalts them in order to weary them. When we are aware of its treachery it is master of us.

Emma.—Let's not try to excuse ourselves. We loved—'twas wrong—'tis over!

Fabrizio.—Emma.

Emma.—You want to go! And if it is revealed?

Fabrizio.—No, we'll find a way.

Emma.—What can we tell him from hour to hour?

Fabrizio.—I was already thinking of that. I have spoken to him of it. I could play this part no longer.

Emma.—Let's not think of ourselves.

Fabrizio.—I'm thinking of him. The discovery of my guilt might kill him; the continuation of his benefits would make him ridiculous.

Emma.—To leave thus is to run away—tomorrow . . .

Fabrizio.—Our love is wrong, Emma. If we do not arm ourselves with this fear love will take hold of us again. For a month I've been saying tomorrow and have been dragging my good intention from day to day. (*Approaching her.*) I love you so much, Emma.

Emma (Stepping back).—Don't.

Fabrizio.—And if tomorrow I no longer have courage? If I go to sleep once more feeling my baseness? You would beseech me in vain, Emma! How much have you not besought me! I would conquer you once more, poor, weak, woman! Don't trust me! If I wished to carry you away, you would follow me. (*EMMA starts toward him.*) Do you see, if I take you back? Don't trust me! I come of a race which is undone. My father is a cheat, I might be a thief.

Emma.—No, Fabrizio.

Fabrizio.—Now! even now, while my mind is on these fears, while I speak to you of him, and would die not to have offended him, if I look at you the flame of madness rises to my brain!

SCENE XI

MARTA *and same.*

Marta.—Madam!

Emma.—What! Where's the baby?

Marta.—She stayed down stairs to play with the druggist's children. It's the wash-woman who wants to know whether she brought yesterday a table-cloth which isn't ours.

Emma.—I don't know—you—

Marta.—The right number came back, but on folding them I saw that there was one which wasn't ours. (*Opens the closet and takes a tablecloth.*) Here it is.

Emma.—Give it to her.

Marta.—All right. (*Goes out.*)

SCENE XII

EMMA *and FABRIZIO.*

Emma.—Just see! It's right, go! No, 'tis not possible! It's a disgraceful thing! This interruption of household things in . . . O! People want men to be idle, women useless . . . Yes . . . yes, leave this evening . . . this evening . . . You'll find some pretext . . . but . . . Oh! . . . Oh! Oh! (*Long pause.*) I must still speak to you of what your father wants. Do you know what he wants?

Fabrizio.—Yes.

Emma.—I have promised to persuade you.

Fabrizio.—O! (*With disdainful shake of the head.*)

Emma (*With involuntary passion.*)—No, eh?

Fabrizio.—Today I shall go to Giulio. I shall tell him that I want to free myself from looking after my father.

Emma.—Yes.

SCENE XIII

MARTA *and same.*

Marta.—I've done it.

Fabrizio (*Bowing to EMMA.*)—Good-bye.

Emma (*Bowing to FABRIZIO.*)—Good-bye. (*FABRIZIO goes out.*)

Marta.—I showed it to her and told her that when she returns ours we shall give it back to her. Do you want to take down the account?

Emma.—Now?

Marta.—Before I forget it. (*EMMA goes and gets from a drawer in the bay window the account book and the inkstand, then sits down at the center table.*)

Marta.—There were artichokes in the market already—but—very expensive! The lawyer's fond of them. But the idea of paying so much for them!

Emma.—Go on.

Marta.—Thread 25, butter 15, potatoes 3

CURTAIN

ACT II

(*Same scenery as for Act I. On the center table is a long white box and within it velvet cloth enough for a dress.*)

SCENE I

GIULIO, GEMMA, then MARTA.

Giulio (Holds GEMMA on his knees and bounces her saying).—

The horse that bears a heavy man
 Ambles along, ambles along,
 Slowly, slowly, slowly.

The horse that carries a boy along,
 Canters and trots, canters and trots,
 Rolly—polly—rolly.

When the king is on his back
 He gallops away, he gallops away,
 Boldly, boldly, boldly.

But on the day of battle, O,
 The horse goes tumbling to the ground,
 Lowly, lowly, lowly.

(Puts the baby down again.)

Gemma.—Again.

Giulio.—O yes!

Gemma.—Now the story *(Clinging to his knees.)*

Giulio.—Once there was a king

Marta *(From the rear)*.—She's coming right away.

Giulio.—What's she doing there?

Marta.—I don't know, she was shut up in her room. She says that she's coming right away. *(Goes out.)*

Gemma.—There was a king.

Giulio.—I don't know any more.

Gemma.—Who had a son.

Giulio.—And a daughter.

Gemma.—You see that you do know it.

Giulio *(With a puzzled air)*.—Listen, Gemma, when mama comes . . . let's say nothing

Gemma.—Yes.

Giulio.—She'll see that box which is there on the table and she'll ask: "What is it?"

Gemma.—Yes.

Giulio.—And we won't answer.

Gemma.—Good!

Giulio.—And she'll ask: "Who brought it?"

Gemma *(Suggests the answer)*.—We don't know.

Giulio.—You darling! "We don't know": that's just it. And then mama

Gemma *(Seeing EMMA)*.—Hush!

SCENE II

EMMA *and same.*

Giulio *(Making the little girl bounce)*.—The horse that carries a boy along

Emma.—Do you want me?

Giulio *(To GEMMA)*.—Hush! *(Aloud.)* Canters and trots, Canters and trots! Slowly, slowly

Gemma.—No: Rolly—polly!

Emma.—Did you send for me?

Giulio *(To EMMA)*.—When the king is on his back.
(EMMA is standing near the table without noticing the box.)

Gemma *(Softly to GIULIO)*.—She doesn't see it.

Giulio.—Wait.

Gemma (Out loud).—I see something on the table.

Emma.—Are you speaking to me?

Gemma.—On the table.

Emma (Sees the box).—Ah! what is it?

Gemma.—I don't know!

Emma.—Who brought it?

Giulio.—O, we don't know. Isn't that so, Gemma?

Gemma.—No: look, look!

Emma (Opens it).—Oh!

Gemma.—What is it?

Emma.—A velvet dress! Giulio!

Giulio.—That's the pin-money from the sale of the mills. Aren't you going to look at it?

Emma.—It's beautiful! thanks.

Giulio.—You're pale.

Emma.—No.

Giulio.—Yes, you are.

Emma.—I have a slight head-ache. This dress is very beautiful! But it's too expensive! it's extravagant.

Giulio.—I have been planning it for two years. Last year I had begun the first of January to lay aside a franc a day, then that Forgia, who was owing me eight hundred francs, ran away, and good-bye to presents. The other evening at the Pianna marriage-contract, Mrs. Sequis was there wearing a dress of this kind of velvet. But it didn't fit her at all, she seemed bulging out of it on all sides. Velvet is becoming only to slight persons; it makes the stout stouter. I was thinking: Ah, when I see Emma dressed this way! Hardly had Ranetti brought me the mill-money when I thought of it again. It will fit you wonderfully! you'll be beautiful in it!

Emma.—How did you manage to choose it alone?

Giulio.—Have I made a poor purchase?

Emma.—Why no, splendid!

Giulio.—Look, just examine it, it's smooth, it's thick, it's bright, isn't it?

Emma.—Yes, yes.

Giulio.—It's a mistake to think that men don't understand these things. Devotees know how to deck the Madonna. Men capable of willing very much, that is of loving vigorously and fundamentally, all have the sense of feminine adornment. The truth is that at the bottom of all their thoughts and acts there

stands the dear image which makes them think and act. And this is no weakness! All good and strong men love. Do you think me one of these?

Emma.—Yes.

Giulio.—You have a bad head-ache, haven't you? It's quite clear. Your eyes look burning and tired.—What did that Count Arcieri want? Was he the cause of your head-ache?

Emma (Trying to smile).—No!

Giulio.—What did he want?

Emma.—He wants to marry his son.

Giulio.—And why does he come to us?

Emma.—In order that we help him to persuade his son. The son's unwilling.

Giulio.—As a rule he's wrong. Who would be the wife?

Emma.—Rubbo's daughter.

Giulio.—Ah! Fabrizio's right. Rubbo's a bad case. How did you get out of it?

Emma.—He was very insistent.

Giulio.—I imagine so. Did you promise to speak to Fabrizio?

Emma.—Did I do wrong?

Giulio.—No, you did very well. And did you speak to him about it?

Emma.—No. He was here scarcely two minutes. (*She has closed the box, takes it and walks away.*)

Giulio.—Are you going?

Emma.—I'm going to put away

Giulio.—And what do you give me?

Emma.—What?

Giulio.—The pin-money.—'Tis you who ought to give it to me.

Emma.—What can I give you?

Giulio.—Oh! (*He takes her by the hands and draws her toward him.*) Here! (*EMMA makes an involuntary movement of resistance, which surprises him.*) Won't you come? (*She gathers herself together and gives him her brow. GIULIO kisses it. She then takes the child and covers her with kisses.*) Just pay me back in that way. I shall be satisfied.—Do you know what we ought to do? Take Gemma with us and go for a walk in the open. What do you say?

Emma.—Just as you like.

Giulio.—Gemma, go to Marta and tell her to dress you.

Gemma.—Yes, yes. (*Goes out at the rear.*)

Giulio.—A little air will do you good. You are always shut up here sewing things.

Emma.—I already feel better.

Giulio.—Today I'm taking a vacation. Do you know that this morning I reckoned that I had put away, put away, mind you, almost one thousand francs! And there are more than two thousand on the books. It's true that these are the good months, but here will be nine thousand francs income for the year. We're getting along; we're almost rich, Emma! Tomorrow I'm going to carry ten thousand francs to the bank. And eight years ago I didn't have a cent. You surely had courage to marry me. Our account was easily reckoned: zero times zero.—How pleasant to look back! I can say that I have worked like a Trojan, but you were such a help! Life has been pleasant for me. Do smile.

Emma.—Giulio!

Giulio.—We've spent hours sighing for clients. Do you remember how you would sit at the window to see whether anyone came in at the gate. And no one ever came. Do you remember that time when you came into the office, wearing a thick veil over your face, to ask for advice? What laughter! What a madcap you were! How you did laugh! And the house,—what a poor house we had!

Emma.—They've torn it down now.

Giulio.—That's so; to make the quarters of the Alpine soldiers. I was by there one day when they were tearing it down. I recognized our room up there, papered with that ugly olive-colored paper with blue flowers: there were still three walls standing, the fourth had fallen in the wind. I recalled a host of things! Am I making you sad? Well, the joys are with us: we have brought them all along! And nobody can demolish them.—What's the matter?

Emma.—Nothing.

Giulio.—Go and dress.

Emma.—Yes. (*She starts to go.*)

Giulio.—Marta's in the house, isn't she?

Emma.—Do you want anything?

Giulio.—Well, if Fabrizio comes let her tell him to stay for dinner.

Emma.—O, no!

Giulio.—Why? (*A little bell rings inside.*)

Emma.—I haven't thought of it. The dinner has already been planned.

Giulio.—Fabrizio doesn't put you to any trouble.

Emma.—No, but let it go.

Giulio.—Why? I'm happy today.

Emma.—I beg of you: don't think of it.

Giulio.—Just as you please, but I don't understand.

SCENE III

MARTA, RANETTI *and same.*

Marta.—It's Mr. Ranetti.

Giulio.—Come in.

Ranetti.—O, now I see! (*To EMMA.*) Do I make you run away?

Emma.—No, I was already going.

Ranetti.—Do you want me to tell you what's in there? (*Points to the box.*) There are eighteen yards of black silk velvet, two feet wide, made in Lyons. Giulio played the bravado today on leaving court. He went into Biondo's store with a resolute and austere air. He turned all the goods upside down, paid like a banker, and came home followed by Biondo's son, who carried the box. People stopped at the shop-doors to look at him.

Giulio.—And then?

Ranetti.—And then they talked of it at the Vasco Coffee-house. The card-players sent Mutria to Biondo's to find out about it. Shall I tell you the price, too?

Giulio.—I beg of you not to.

Ranetti (To Emma).—Let's see it.

Emma (Opens the box).—Splendid!

Giulio.—It's the mills, you see. You're a clever devil to have sold them so well!

Ranetti.—Beware, the devil's meal goes to waste.

Giulio.—There's no danger. Now what do you want?

Ranetti.—Guess.

Giulio.—O yes! See! my wife and I were going for a walk.

Ranetti.—Ah, I'm sorry for madam, but you can't go.

Giulio.—Why?

Ranetti.—Because I need you.

Emma.—I'll go with the baby. (*She goes out at the rear.*)

Ranetti.—They've challenged me.

Giulio.—Who?

Ranetti.—The officers, two officers. Two officers came to me on behalf of Lieutenant Rovi.

Giulio.—That one of the cotillion?

Ranetti.—Exactly.

Giulio.—And you come here and talk of other things as if there were nothing the matter!

Ranetti.—Was I to arrive breathless for a mere trifle? Is the world falling down? Fine thing! But I need you; and I'd like to get lawyer Fabrizio, too.

Giulio.—All right.

Ranetti.—Do you know where he can be seen now?

Giulio.—Fabrizio? Why, he ought to be here.

Ranetti.—Because there should be two of you, shouldn't there?

Giulio.—Yes, for form's sake. I can send to his home to find out whether he is there.

Ranetti.—I'll go.

Giulio.—No, I'll send Marta. (*Calls at rear.*) Marta. (*Turns to RANETTI.*) Don't worry!

Ranetti.—Are you amazed?

Giulio.—Amazed. Yes, these are perplexing things.

Ranetti.—O, I didn't expect them, but after I have made up my mind.

Giulio.—If we were to let you do it.—How did you receive those two?

Ranetti.—Very well.

Giulio.—Were they polite?

Ranetti.—Very polite. They asked me whether I was aware of having taken Lieutenant Rovi by the arm?

Giulio.—And what did you say?

Ranetti.—I answered that I knew it full well.

Giulio.—Marta.

Ranetti.—Useless to deny it. The more so because

SCENE IV

MARTA *and same.*

Marta.—What do you want?

Giulio.—Do you know where the lawyer Fabrizio lives?

Marta.—No, I don't.

Giulio.—In Mr. Peirone's house, the attorney of the prefect, do you know him?

Marta.—The one who has the hunch-backed, red-haired maid?

Ranetti.—Yes, Polonia.

Marta.—Where does he live?

Giulio.—Near San Biagio, the gate where the little lottery-place is. Only a short way from here. Go find out whether Lawyer Fabrizio is at home, and tell him to come here at once. Go quickly. (*She goes out. Again to RANETTI.*) Where can we find those two gentlemen?

Ranetti.—At the club at five o'clock.

Giulio.—All right. I expect to do that. I shall go with Fabrizio. Let's have over again the story of the occurrence. We were directing the dance

Ranetti.—By express order of the management. In my official capacity, then

Giulio.—You wouldn't obey the rules

Ranetti.—Prescribed. But

Giulio.—Let me say it. We asked you several times in a civil manner.

Ranetti.—Yes, but

Giulio.—Let me speak. You wouldn't yield. Then we, much against our will, were obliged to take you by the arm.

Ranetti.—We, we, we! 'Twas I alone who was directing. Not a soul budged to help me: I alone!

Giulio.—But it's customary to speak that way.

Ranetti.—O, all right, all right! But you go about it with too much fuss. I'd simply say: "Mr. Ranetti will not fight."

Giulio.—What?

Ranetti.—Will not fight.

Giulio.—I, too, would come to this conclusion, but by reasoning and by persuading them.

Ranetti.—What reasoning? Come to what? This is a fact. This is the point of departure not the conclusion. I'll not fight. All the rest is superfluous.

Giulio.—But then why send for us?

Ranetti.—To tell it to them.

Giulio.—You could tell it to them.

Ranetti.—For form's sake!

Giulio.—But I don't know whether Fabrizio will want to play that part.

Ranetti.—What part?

Giulio.—Of going to say flatly that a man won't fight.

Ranetti.—Since it's the truth.

Giulio.—Yes, but

Ranetti.—Do you favor the duel?

Giulio.—No, but either don't go, or discuss it.

Ranetti.—What? what? Not to answer is a **coarse** thing, and to discuss it is weakness. He who **discusses** admits that he may have been wrong, and that he ought to acknowledge it. I don't want to do that.

Giulio.—Deuce! but you're hard to please.

Ranetti.—Why? If it were the cholera, you would have seen how little I cared about danger, but to do a mean thing and get a swordthrust is stupid. If the lieutenant is willing to fight in the open with club in hand, I'll accept. Then we'll be on a footing. But I'm not well enough dressed for chivalry.

Giulio.—What do you want me to say? I think that Fabrizio won't care to know about it.

SCENE V

MARTA and same.

Marta.—Lawyer Fabrizio is not at home, he hasn't even been there for lunch.

Giulio.—All right. (*MARTA goes out. To RANETTI.*) You'll be at Dr. Brusio's for that case?

Ranetti.—No, that case will not take place.

Giulio.—Has Rubbo come out with his money?

Ranetti.—He paid. Not all in cash, but—a promissory note of eight thousand francs from Count Arcieri.

Giulio.—The father?

Ranetti.—To be sure.

Giulio.—And the doctor accepted it?

Ranetti.—You ask me that? With a good signature too!

Giulio.—For heaven's sake! I don't know what good signature that broken down man can have found!

Ranetti.—Don't you know? Why, yours!

Giulio.—Mine?

Ranetti.—Haven't you signed a note of the Count's?

Giulio.—I never signed a note in my life. Who told you this?

Ranetti.—I saw it an hour ago.

Giulio.—With my signature?

Ranetti.—Deuce! I know it, don't I?

Giulio.—But it's false!

Ranetti.—What?

Giulio.—It's false! Ah, you may be sure, I'll send that fellow straight to jail. You saw my signature?

Ranetti.—Isn't that what I'm telling you?

Giulio.—Ah, has it come to this?

Ranetti.—The doctor knowing that we have sold the mills was counting . . .

Giulio.—But it's false,—I won't pay even if they cover me over with gold. The rascal! I'll send him to jail.

Ranetti.—I'm sorry for his son.

Giulio.—Be sure of what you're saying, *Ranetti*; your mind's away today.

Ranetti.—What? because of the duel? I wasn't thinking of it even; but I tell you a note for eight thousand francs signed *Giulio Scarli*.

Giulio.—But you know that if I—eight thousand francs! How could the doctor ever believe?

Ranetti.—Who is there who would think of forgery? Besides you're so friendly with the son that you might very well,—I myself, when I saw your name, thought: here's one of the gifts of friendship. And I said to myself: *Giulio trusts him!*

Giulio.—I trust him! I'd trust *Fabrizio*, to be sure.

Ranetti.—With money and women you can't trust anybody.

Giulio.—Yes, come, lay aside your sermons now, *Fabrizio* isn't back yet. The essential is that I do not acknowledge the signature, and that the doctor must know it at once.

Ranetti.—You must prove it.

Giulio.—O, false signatures are easily known. Come along with me, let us go to the doctor's.

Ranetti.—Beware that he does not deceive us to begin with. Go straight to the king's attorney.

Giulio.—Well, let's go.

Ranetti.—And *Fabrizio*?

Giulio.—Poor fellow!

Ranetti.—Can he pay?

Giulio.—Never!

Ranetti.—Then there'll be a suit.

Giulio.—Oh! (*He sits down grieved.*)

Ranetti.—You understand that when his father has been

accused of forgery and found guilty, his career will be done for. It's certain that if neither you nor he pays, the doctor is not tender hearted, suit will follow.

Giulio.—Poor fellow!

Ranetti.—But haven't you told me that he has an income of two thousand francs?

Giulio.—That's so!

Ranetti.—Then he might manage it.

Giulio.—Yes, yes, yes. I wasn't thinking of that. With that resource he might manage things.

Ranetti (Sitting down).—If I see him I'll send him to you.

Giulio.—Yes, eight thousand francs, eh?

Ranetti.—Eight thousand.

Giulio.—Well—now go—leave me. No need of asking you to keep the secret.

Ranetti.—Oh!—And how about my affair?

Giulio.—Which?

Ranetti.—The challenge!

Giulio.—If you could make your excuses without me! Do you see?

Ranetti.—It's because you're president of the club.

Giulio.—Heavens!

Ranetti.—Be patient!

Giulio.—When's the appointment?

Ranetti.—At five at the club.

Giulio.—It's three now. I shall be there.

Ranetti.—And if I meet Fabrizio I'll send him to you.

Giulio.—No, don't tell him anything. And go—leave me to think—go.

Ranetti.—Good-bye. (*Violent ringing of the bell.*) This is Fabrizio and he knows everything: you can tell by his ring.

Giulio.—Not a word!

Ranetti.—Are we understood? I'll not fight. (*He goes.*)

SCENE VI

FABRIZIO and GIULIO.

Fabrizio.—Have you signed a note of my father's?

Giulio.—Who told you?

Fabrizio.—You know it already! Ranetti came to warn you of it. Even he didn't believe it! I'm disgraced.

Giulio.—Why no, Ranetti didn't come for this.

Fabrizio.—O, it doesn't matter! I'm disgraced!

Giulio.—And what if I had signed it?

Fabrizio.—It isn't so.

Giulio.—But if

Fabrizio.—It isn't so, it isn't so. Don't try to deceive me. You would have told me. First of all you wouldn't have signed it. You wouldn't put your name besides And then you would have told me. Well, all right! I'm the son of a forger.

Giulio.—Fabrizio!

Fabrizio.—O, it doesn't surprise me at all, you see. I haven't seen the note, but as soon as the doctor told me that it had your signature, I at once thought: It's false! at once! It seemed the most natural thing in the world! He himself this morning—now I understand! I'm sorry that it is your name that is there.

Giulio.—Listen, Fabrizio. I haven't signed it, it's true, it's useless to deceive you. You remain what you are and no one is any the wiser. Then it all comes down to a loss of money,—which is a very serious thing.

Fabrizio.—O!

Giulio.—No—very serious, to be sure. At any rate that isn't the worst trouble. There's the question of finding the money.

Fabrizio.—For that

Giulio.—We shall do this way. You give me a note in which you make over to me for four years the income

Fabrizio.—But

Giulio.—Let me finish.

Fabrizio.—I hope to have fixed up things.

Giulio.—Very well, you'll tell me your plans afterward; listen to mine now. You're more excited than I, and it's likely that I can reason more clearly. You make over to me for four years the income of two thousand francs which Maraschi passes over to you; moreover, since I'm not a lord, I'll oblige you to pay me an interest of five per cent. Your earnings will permit it. Besides this amount will be constantly decreasing. I'll acknowledge the signature and pay.

Fabrizio.—No—thanks!

Giulio.—Remember that I won't have to turn to anyone to get the cash. Ranetti brought me this morning eleven thousand francs as my share of the mill-deal that you know about. So I have the money.

Fabrizio.—Thanks, but the thing is already done. I have already almost fixed up matters, and tomorrow I shall have the sum.

Giulio.—In what way?

Fabrizio.—A transaction. I assure you

Giulio.—You object to my paying? but I'll give you the sum

Fabrizio.—It isn't that. I tell you that I have found a way.

Giulio.—Tell me how. If you hesitate it's a sign that it is some poor deal. I know well that you are not lacking faith in me.

Fabrizio.—I have realized the capital

Giulio.—Of your life annuity?

Fabrizio.—Yes.

Giulio.—With Maraschi? Has Maraschi consented?

Fabrizio.—Yes.

Giulio.—How much is he giving you?

Fabrizio.—More than I need.

Giulio.—By heavens! I hope so. You need eight thousand francs.

Fabrizio.—He's giving me twelve.

Giulio.—Twelve thousand francs for a life annuity of two thousand! To a young man of twenty-eight, strong and with thirty years life before him to say the least! And he pays you for six of them! What a robber!

Fabrizio.—I beg of you not to insist.

Giulio.—Fine request that is! You're crazy!

Fabrizio.—The important thing is to pay.

Giulio.—But since I'm paying!

Fabrizio.—I don't want debts.

Giulio.—But you're sure of paying me back.

Fabrizio.—I might die.

Giulio.—In less than four years?

Fabrizio.—Who knows! As for you, you have a family.

Giulio.—Well, let's do this way. You still own that cottage at Gardena.

Fabrizio.—Four walls.

Giulio.—Four walls that make a house. Pastôla wanted to buy it of you.

Fabrizio.—And I didn't want to get rid of it.

Giulio.—During your life. But if you must die within these blessed four years.

Fabrizio.—See here, Giulio, I have an agreement with

Maraschi. I thank you for what you want to do for me. I didn't doubt it. Let me go my way. I'm not a boy.

Giulio.—But you are, and a stubborn one. What you're doing is so absurd that—there must be some reason which you don't want to tell, for it doesn't occur to anyone. Yet, if I were offering you a dishonorable agreement. You even avoid looking at me; one would think that it burdens you to accept a little favor.

Fabrizio.—There have been so many of those already.

Giulio.—Ah, is that the reason? Listen, that's the reasoning of ingrates. Besides, what service have I done you?

Fabrizio.—You've taken me in, you've sheltered me, you've given me employment, you've shared your profits with me

Giulio.—Oh! oh! how you do count them! You must be keeping a record of them!

Fabrizio.—Well, I'm proud; I don't want people

Giulio.—What is there for people to see? Come here, come here: today you can't argue to the point. But precisely for this reason I must supply the need. It is natural that now, wounded as you are in your dignity and vanity, your pride should grow bitter and that you see things out of proportion. And let us grant, you even think that I have been struck by the seriousness and urgency of the danger, let us grant that I have thought of a provision quite out of the question. Well, let's hear a third person who doesn't know anything about the case.

Fabrizio.—But

Giulio.—Not a stranger. See, I'll call my wife!

Fabrizio (Quickly).—No!

Giulio.—She has sound judgment, and knows how you stand.

Fabrizio.—No, no!

Giulio.—We've spoken together so many times of your affairs—you, yourself

Fabrizio.—I'll not have it.

Giulio.—O, don't fear, I'll not tell her a word of the note. She'll never know. I'll put the question to her. (*Goes toward the rear.*)

Fabrizio.—No—no, Giulio! I forbid it!

Giulio.—But you're mad! (*Calls.*) Emma! Emma!

Fabrizio (About to go).—Good-bye!

Giulio (Holding him back).—O no! Stay here. (*Pause.*) You feel, don't you, that she'll say you are wrong? You'll see, at her first words! It's so evident!

SCENE VII

EMMA and same.

Emma.—Did you call me? (*FABRIZIO makes a quick movement toward EMMA. GIULIO interferes.*)

Giulio.—No, no, no! Don't warn her. She mustn't know! (*GIULIO stands in the middle, EMMA to the right, FABRIZIO to the left.*)

Emma (Frightened).—What is it?

Giulio.—We want to get your opinion . . . (*To FABRIZIO.*) Speak yourself if you want to.

Fabrizio.—It's useless, I'll not accept this proposal.

Giulio.—Then I'll speak. Fabrizio must pay tomorrow a sum of eight thousand francs. He hasn't it, naturally. It's a debt resulting from a promise made by his father. To procure the money he thought of realizing the capital of an annuity which Maraschi, who is a robber, offers ten for, when it is worth thirty.

Fabrizio.—How do you expect a woman . . .

Giulio.—O, Emma's good at figures. I've offered him the sum.

Fabrizio.—And I won't accept.

Giulio.—As a loan, mind you. You know that this morning Ranetti brought me . . . with the interest. What do you say of it?

Emma.—But I wouldn't know . . . it's a question . . . how can I?

Fabrizio.—Of course!

Giulio.—As a loan I say—to prevent him from making a sacrifice.

Emma.—But . . .

Fabrizio.—You see that even she—This question is so embarrassing!

Giulio (To EMMA).—Don't you think?

Emma.—What do you expect? He's the best judge. If he doesn't believe,—he must have his motives.

Giulio.—Out with the motives.

Fabrizio.—I've stated them.

Giulio.—Sheer nonsense—and you Emma?

Fabrizio.—Ah, now you've seen!

Giulio.—Never mind, never mind, I was so far from expecting this.

Emma.—He doesn't want people

Giulio.—You too are thinking of the people. It's strange that you should think of objections which I never would have dreamed of. What will people know of a dealing between us two?

Fabrizio.—They'll know that I've paid—they know that I haven't any money—if I don't show where I got it

Giulio.—You've got it from me—we'll go to the notary if you like.

Fabrizio.—O,—and they'll say

Giulio.—That we are friends.

Emma.—And about you?

Giulio.—About me? What can they say of me?

Fabrizio.—No—but

Giulio.—What can they say of me? That I am doing for him what he would do for me. Don't you believe it? (*To FABRIZIO who is about to interrupt.*) Hold on! (*To EMMA.*) You don't believe that Fabrizio?

Emma.—Why yes.

Giulio.—And what then? A help of this kind is shameful for him who accepts and ridiculous for him who gives it, only if it is undeserved.

Fabrizio.—Giulio!

Giulio.—I beg of you to let me speak. I'm talking to her. Go if you want to. (*To EMMA.*) So you are on his side? And thus firmly, without hesitating a moment. I must have lost my head, for the thing seems so clear to me! It does seem as if it were fixed. It must be so. Explain yourself, Emma.

Emma.—I'm not going to give my opinion—I'm a poor woman—do you understand? I'm trying to guess what—he—. Probably Fabrizio realizes that you have a family.

Giulio.—Yes,—that's what he told me too! You're repeating what he said to me.

Emma.—It's certain that you can't impose upon him

Giulio.—My services, eh? You say that, you too! That's too much!

Emma.—No, but if his pride

Giulio.—This is certain, that if you had had an understanding beforehand, you couldn't have better agreed.—O Emma, don't you feel how wanting in generosity it is?

Fabrizio.—But just see how far from the point your question is!

Giulio.—It is so unnatural.

Fabrizio (Violently).—After all, this is enough!

Giulio.—It will be enough, it will be enough.—What a tone of voice you have! It will be enough. You've never spoken to me in that way.

Fabrizio.—Excuse me. But after all the thing is done.

Giulio.—Ah, you said "almost" before.

Fabrizio.—I must have made a slip; you know what state of mind I'm in.

Giulio.—Yes, yes, and even now you're worked up . . . and so is Emma.

Fabrizio.—It's natural that she . . .

Giulio.—O, you needn't justify her. (*To EMMA.*) You still have a headache, haven't you?

Emma.—Yes.

Fabrizio.—But look! Let's leave her, then we shall talk together.

Giulio.—O no, if the thing's done. This argument is the last word, for you have already signed, haven't you? With usurers if you don't sign! . . .

Fabrizio.—I have signed.

Giulio.—O, well!—Besides if you receive a benefit from me 'twill disgrace you . . .

Fabrizio.—I didn't say that.

Giulio.—Why yes,—and that's what Emma thinks too. What I wonder at is that you've had time—because you've only known of the debt for an hour.

Fabrizio.—I had already spoken of it before.

Giulio.—To Maraschi?

Fabrizio.—Yes.

Giulio.—Before needing to?

Fabrizio.—Because I want to go away.

Giulio.—Ah!

Fabrizio.—You know that I had already hinted to you . . .

Giulio.—Yes, in the clouds,—and now you've decided?

Fabrizio.—I can't stay here any longer. My father makes life miserable for me. I'm leaving tomorrow.

Giulio.—And weren't you going to tell me about it?

Fabrizio.—O, I would have told you!

Giulio.—At the moment of getting into the train.

Fabrizio.—I expected to speak to you of it today. Emma knows of it.

Giulio (Amazed).—You know it?

Emma.—Yes.

Giulio.—Since when?

Fabrizio.—Since this morning.

Giulio.—Fabrizio told you this morning

Fabrizio.—Emma had been given a message by my father.

Giulio.—You always answer when I question my wife. Are you afraid that she may make a slip?

Fabrizio.—No, but you seem like a prosecuting attorney.

Giulio.—However, 'tis clear, 'tis clear that you two seem

Fabrizio.—What are you thinking of?

Giulio.—I don't mean that! I don't know what I think. Nonsense! I see confusedly—(To EMMA.) You spoke with Fabrizio this morning, of the message which you had from his father?

Emma.—Yes.

Giulio.—Why do you lower your head? Did you tell him of the proposal to marry Rubbo's daughter?

Fabrizio.—Certainly!

Giulio.—Don't be in a hurry to affirm, you—you don't know what you're doing.

Fabrizio.—Why?

Giulio (To EMMA).—You told him of the proposal?

Emma.—Yes.

Giulio.—Remember, however, that half an hour ago, right here, you told me that you hadn't.

Emma.—I did!

Giulio.—You told me that Fabrizio had stopped for scarcely two minutes.

Fabrizio.—In fact

Giulio.—In fact she lied!—Why did you lie, Emma? There must be some reason. Can't you tell me? It's the first time you ever lied so far as I know—so far as I know, mind you! For I am so credulous! (*Overwhelmed.*) Do you see what I am thinking, do you see it, Emma? Say that you don't, say that you don't, Emma! For heaven's sake! Emma! (*He approaches her beseechingly.*)

Fabrizio (Quickly stepping between).—Giulio!

Giulio.—What are you doing? Defending her! Upon my word, you seem to be defending her! Then, has she cause for fear? (*With tone of command.*) Go away.

Emma.—Oh! (*Falls on her knees.*)

Fabrizio.—Giulio!

Giulio.—Go out of my house!

Fabrizio.—I swear to you that she

Giulio (In a terrible voice).—Go out! (*FABRIZIO goes. GIULIO falls weeping on a chair.*) Oh! oh! oh! oh!

CURTAIN.

ACT III

(*Same scenery as for the preceding.*)

SCENE I

RANETTI, MARTA *and then* GIULIO.

(*Ranetti is on the stage waiting. Marta enters from the office.*)

Marta.—He's been there all the time but hadn't moved!
(*She goes out.*)

Giulio (Enters).—Ah, so it's you, is it? What do you want?

Ranetti.—I've pounded for a quarter of an hour at the door of your office.

Giulio.—I didn't hear you.

Ranetti.—Your face is drawn and your eyes are heavy as a man's who has slept. It happens to me too, to take a little nap over my papers. Were you sleeping?

Giulio.—No, I was making up the final petition for the case of the Morena heirs.

Ranetti.—Heavens, how you were lost in it! I knocked so long.

Giulio.—It's an interesting question.

Ranetti.—That's the way you serve your friends, is it? You were busy with the petitions.

Giulio.—What should I have been doing?

Ranetti.—And I waiting at the club!

Giulio.—O, is it five yet?

Ranetti.—It's six. And you haven't even sent me Fabrizio.

Giulio.—Ah, Fabrizio! I haven't seen him.

Ranetti.—What? Since he was here when I came!

Giulio.—Ah! But see! Excuse me won't you? My head—
Let's go now.

Ranetti.—Where?

Giulio.—To the club.

Ranetti.—O yes, now! It's all fixed up. I was waiting for
you there to tell you about it.

Giulio.—Fine!

Ranetti.—The colonel found out about it. Of course, I
didn't tell him. But Bessola had seen the officers enter my house.
The question arose . . . do you remember? I told you
this morning,—the story of the butterflies—that Bessola . . .

Giulio (*As if in a dream*).—Yes. Bessola's mother was
French.

Ranetti.—And what has this to do with it?

Giulio.—Nothing. But I hear a word and my head goes off—
oh!

Ranetti.—Bessola was in the shop of Pastone, the boot-black,
which is just opposite the door of my house. You know that
he's pretty friendly with Pastone's wife, that blonde . . .

Giulio (*Intent on some idea he has in mind*).—Ha! ha! ha!
(*He laughs.*)

Ranetti.—When he saw the officers enter . . .

Giulio (*Still dreaming*).—Pastone's a hard case.

Ranetti.—Yes. Something of a thief, a cur, but . . .

Giulio.—And his wife is faithless to him—ha! ha! ha! (*He
laughs.*)

Ranetti.—Are you listening to me?

Giulio.—I'm all ears, my dear fellow. Go on.

Ranetti.—Now you've got me mixed up. Where was I?

Giulio (*Still laughing*).—Do you think that they meet
secretly? Ha! ha! ha!

Ranetti.—You're very happy!

Giulio.—Yes! it's springtime.

Ranetti.—Bessola understood that they were coming for the
cotillion affair, and he went straight to the club to break the news.
At the club was the colonel, a jewel of a man!

Giulio.—Single, isn't he?

Ranetti.—No, Chinese, decorated with the order of Brahma
Putra.

Giulio.—What's that?

Ranetti.—My answers are as much to the point as your

questions. If you want to make me talk—come—attention—you beat time and I'll respond and so we'll keep together.

Giulio.—Continue what you were saying. Go on.

Ranetti.—I've finished. The colonel inquired, called the officers, sent for me, then assembled us all in his house . . . the lieutenant was there too. Rovi, a fine fellow! If you could hear him imitate Ferravilla! you know that Milanese actor. I've never heard Ferravilla, but . . . he's exactly like him. The colonel asked me: "What do you want of Lieutenant Rovi?" I answered him: "I don't want anything; I've already got something from him; he called me a villain."—"And you, what do you want of Mr. Ranetti?" "He took hold of me by the arm."—"Well, ask him to take your hand now, and take him by the hand." And it was there that, shaking hands with me, the lieutenant said something—I don't remember what—in Milanese, but so funny that we all of us burst into laughter. Fine fellows! To think that they are going to war! This evening I'm giving a dinner . . . and tomorrow the lieutenant. He wanted to be first; but the colonel, who knows Latin too, said: "Cedant arma". . . You're coming aren't you?

Giulio.—I?

Ranetti.—Of course! You certainly, and I'd like to have Fabrizio too.—Fabrizio isn't leaving that you know of, is he?

Giulio (Suddenly attentive).—Why?

Ranetti.—Has he fixed up the affair of the note?

Giulio.—I don't know.

Ranetti.—You haven't paid it, have you?

Giulio.—No! no! (*Laughs.*) no! no! I haven't got to that point. No! ha! ha!

Ranetti.—What's the matter?

Giulio.—I'm suffering from a nervous attack.

Ranetti.—You work too much!

Giulio.—Well, when you're blessed with a family . . . But I'm not going to pay, you may be sure of that. He'll pay. He can do it.

Ranetti.—But he'll pay, you say?

Giulio.—O! I think so.

Ranetti (As if to himself).—Perhaps he'll send away his father.

Giulio (Suspiciously).—He'll send away . . .

Ranetti.—Yes, he'll make him go away.

Giulio.—Why?

Ranetti.—O, I'll tell you. I was looking for him to invite him and I stopped at the Golden Cannon to order the dinner. Since Fabrizio lives nearby there, I asked the Inn-keeper's wife whether she'd seen him pass. She answered me: "He was here a moment ago to order a carriage." "For when?" "For now. A closed carriage which was to go to the Vasco bridge." You understand that if he were going, he'd take the carriage at the inn; but he's having it come to the door of the house! It's clear that he wants to send off his father without having it noticed. Hasn't he said anything to you?

Giulio.—No.

Ranetti.—But doesn't it seem to you as I say?

Giulio.—Why, yes!

Ranetti.—That's the best yet! What's he going to do with those household goods? You know that he has in his household the Gazza girl, the daughter of the sacristan of the Duomo, that one who was twice in court for petty offenses. You know whom I mean, don't you?

Giulio (Lost in his own thought).—It's clear.

Ranetti.—If he should take her along, 'twould be quite a joke.

Giulio.—O, that was to be expected.

Ranetti.—The joke? Nevertheless! If his creditors knew it they wouldn't let him go

Giulio (Still dreaming).—Why? O if you think that I'm holding them back! As for me see they may do just as they please.

Ranetti.—You frighten me!

Giulio.—Frightening you? O no! I'll not frighten you. (*Smiles sadly.*)

Ranetti.—What's the matter?

Giulio.—Nothing!

Ranetti.—Is your wife at home?

Giulio.—Yes she must still be here.

Ranetti.—May I see her?

Giulio.—No, never mind. You want to tell her that I seem queer, don't you? Don't worry, I've been working bent over my papers for two hours and the blood has risen to my head! But the air will do me good.—Let's go.

Ranetti.—Are you coming to dinner?

Giulio.—With you?

Ranetti.—I asked you didn't I? With me and the officers.

Giulio.—Ah, why not? At what time's the dinner?

Ranetti.—At half past six; right now.

Giulio.—Surely—all right—well—all right. Then, we'll stay a little while won't we?

Ranetti.—Just as you like; we can stay till midnight if you want. If you knew where to find Fabrizio.

Giulio.—O, he won't come. This trouble with his father has affected him very much. He's such a sensitive man! Yes . . . yes . . . it's better this way. I'll dine with you.

Ranetti.—Come on, then!

Giulio.—Let's go out through the office.

Ranetti.—Aren't you going to let them know at home?

Giulio.—O!

Ranetti.—Why—but they'd be waiting for you—your wife and child.

Giulio (Dismayed).—Ah, the child!

Ranetti.—Shall I tell them?

Giulio.—No—I can't go.

Ranetti.—What?

Giulio.—I remember now that I've promised my mother to take Baby to her tonight. I'm sorry but I can't go. It will be for another time.

Ranetti.—I'll not insist, but you see, I'm going away worried.

Giulio.—Why no—What nonsense! (*Calls.*) Marta? Do you see? I'm calling Marta to have her dress the child. . . . I assure you.

Ranetti.—All right, all right! Good evening, then.

Giulio.—Good evening! and, thank you.

SCENE II

MARTA and same.

Marta.—What do you want?

Giulio.—Show Mr. Ranetti out and then come here.

Ranetti.—Why don't you come anyway to have a drink with us after dinner?

Giulio.—Perhaps! At the Vasco bridge, eh?

Ranetti.—What's that?

Giulio.—O no! At the Golden Cannon!

Ranetti.—Yes. We'll look for you. Lieutenant Rovi will

make you laugh like a boy. We'll have him take off Ferravilla again.

Giulio.—Very likely.

Ranetti.—Good-bye, then. (*Goes out with MARTA.*)

SCENE III

GIULIO *then* MARTA.

Giulio.—The child never—indeed! never!

Marta.—Here I am.

Giulio.—Put on Gemma's hat and coat.

Marta.—Do you want to take her out?

Giulio.—Yes.

Marta.—At this time? It's almost night. And what about dinner?

Giulio.—Do what I say. We'll dine later.

Marta.—I was coming to set the table.

Giulio.—There's time. Go.

Marta.—Is madam going out, too?

Giulio.—No. Where is she?

Marta.—In her room. Shall I tell her?

Giulio.—Is Gemma with her?

Marta.—No. She's playing with her doll in the corridor.

Giulio.—Did you pass by madam's room?

Marta.—I was there a minute ago.

Giulio.—What was she doing?

Marta.—She was straightening out things.

Giulio.—Ah! Dress Gemma. I must take her to my mother's. Be quick. And don't say anything to madam; there's no need for it!

Marta.—All right. (*Goes out.*)

SCENE IV

GIULIO *alone, then* GEMMA *and* MARTA.

Giulio (*GEMMA running in dressed, with her doll*).—Ah, here you are! (*He takes her in his arms, and covers her with kisses.*)

Come—leave your doll. (*She throws the doll on the center table.*) We'll be back soon. Come. (*Goes out with GEMMA.*)

SCENE V

MARTA then EMMA.

(MARTA opens the closet in the wall and takes out the plates which she carries to the table in the bay window, then takes the tablecloth from the drawer of the cupboard and goes about spreading it on the table.)

Emma.—Who just went out?

Marta.—The lawyer with the baby.

Emma.—With the baby?

Marta.—Yes—he didn't want me to tell you . . . he said that he would dine later. Meanwhile I was preparing things.

Emma.—Never mind, I'll do it.

Marta.—Later . . . what does he mean by later?

Emma.—I don't know.

Marta.—Fortunately we have a stew . . . I've already taken it off the fire.

Emma (Listening).—They've opened the office door. Look and see.

Marta.—It may be Lawyer Arcieri—he has the key. Shall I look?

Emma.—No, never mind . . . I'll do it.

Marta.—Is the lawyer going to dine here?

Emma.—No.

Marta.—Ah, why do they always tell me at the last minute!
(Goes out at rear.)

SCENE VI

EMMA and FABRIZIO.

(EMMA opens the door of the office. FABRIZIO enters.)

Emma.—I knew it.

Fabrizio.—I was hidden on the stairs. I saw him go out and I came in. You are to leave with me. I've thought of everything. You'll see—you're worked up now, but . . .

Emma.—No . . . let's not talk . . . let's not talk. Afterward—later . . . there will be something . . . but let's not talk now. How are you going to manage it?

Fabrizio.—The carriage is out at the bridge. You go out from the garden . . . you can get out through the garden, can't you?

Emma.—Yes.

Fabrizio.—At once, then.

Emma.—At once, at once. Where shall we go?

Fabrizio.—Wherever you want.

Emma.—It doesn't matter. Away from here. We'll have time to think . . . all life long, we'll have time. Wherever we go it's forever isn't it? And then?

Fabrizio.—Go get ready.

Emma.—Yes; will you wait here?

Fabrizio.—I'll make the rounds and wait for you at the little garden-gate; there's never anyone there.

Emma.—No—wait for me here—I wouldn't have courage and I need it. What would become of me in this house? I can't stay. What then?—Did you see? He carried away the baby.

Fabrizio.—Yes.

Emma.—Do you know why? He guessed what we would do.

Fabrizio.—No.

Emma.—He guessed what we would do.

Fabrizio.—Why no . . . How do you expect?

Emma.—O let's believe it . . . help me to believe it; isn't it better? And then I'm sure of it; these things are *felt*. Why would he have gone out now with the baby? Is that usual? My place is no longer here! With what right can I? Woe if he hadn't guessed it! Think . . . if on returning . . . he should expect to find me . . . if he should look through the house . . . Oh! oh! oh! no . . . no . . . he knows it . . . The house is all his now, all, all his! We shall already be far away . . . he'll return, he'll light the lamp . . . he'll take the baby in his arms . . . he'll caress her so much . . . my part!

Fabrizio.—Come! come! come!

Emma.—I'm going; see there's still a glimmer of daylight. It will be better to wait till it is quite dark. It will be more prudent!—Poor Fabrizio! What a chain for you! What an obstacle in your life!

Fabrizio.—How cruel you are, Emma!

Emma.—You'll say that to me, won't you, when I become a burden to you?

Fabrizio.—Just see how you are! If I don't carry you away

at once, you'll stay here, Emma. I'm sure that you'll stay.

Emma.—Am I not going for your sake?

Fabrizio.—Don't you love me any more?

Emma.—I'm going because I feel unworthy of this house.

Fabrizio.—So I have been!

Emma.—You too!—He was so fond of you.

Fabrizio.—Don't you love me any more?

Emma.—I love you—but I shall lose you by going with you.

Fabrizio.—It doesn't matter . . . come . . . don't go in there now . . . come as you are . . .

Emma.—Yes, yes, just as I am . . . wait . . . here's a shawl. (*Takes a very modest grey shawl, which is on the chair near the work-table.*) In this way . . . (*Points to the office.*) Let's go that way, eh? (*She leans on the center-table to get up and sees the doll; she shows it to FABRIZIO.*) Fabrizio, look!

Fabrizio.—What?

Emma.—Look. She expects to find me on returning. She'll ask after me so much! with her dear little voice. She'll ask so much! What will they be able to answer her?

Fabrizio.—Heavens! heavens! heavens!

Emma.—She doesn't know anything about it. She'll surely get accustomed to doing without me. How her father will love her! And she . . . what adoration!

Fabrizio (Discouraged).—Stay . . . do stay! . . . poor woman, stay!

Emma.—And when she grows up . . .

Fabrizio.—Good-bye!

Emma (Letting herself fall on a chair).—Good-bye!

Fabrizio.—I knew it, you see, when I came.

Emma.—Yes, so did I—I wanted—but I felt that I couldn't. Where are you going?

Fabrizio.—I don't know.

Emma.—Are you leaving at once?

Fabrizio.—Yes.

Emma.—What will become of you?

Fabrizio.—I shall work.

Emma.—Will you forget me? (*With a sad smile.*)

Fabrizio.—I hope not.

Emma.—Is your father going to stay?

Fabrizio.—Yes. I haven't seen him again. I've paid a large debt of his and I've left him . . .

Emma.—I'll think of him.

Fabrizio.—Thanks!

Emma.—Let's not say anything to each other!

Fabrizio.—No . . . we're parting forever.

Emma.—I shall pray for you so much!

Fabrizio.—Good-bye, Emma!

Emma.—Good-bye, Fabrizio! (*FABRIZIO goes out through the office.*)

SCENE VII

EMMA alone.

Emma.—So, so. (*She passes her hand over her brow, and looks weeping at the door through which FABRIZIO has gone. Sobbing, she takes the doll, kisses it, places it on the sofa, then goes about setting the table. Suddenly she begins to weep bitterly, and throws herself on the sofa with her face in her hands. At this moment the bell rings.*)

SCENE VIII

The same, GEMMA and later GIULIO.

Gemma.—Ah you are here! (*Runs to her mother.*)

Emma.—O Gemma, Gemma! Yes, I am here! You thought you wouldn't find me! (*Takes her in her arms; meanwhile GIULIO enters and looks on.*) Had they told you that you wouldn't find me any more? No, my darling, no; I haven't gone away, no, dear, I haven't gone. I'm here. Your mama will always be here, always, always with you. My dear baby! With you! Your face is very cold, poor little thing! Come here till I warm it for you! Here! It's cold out isn't it? Gemma! Gemma! (*She notices GIULIO, puts down the baby and jumps to her feet.*) Oh!

Giulio.—Why do you put the baby down? Gemma, go out for a minute, will you?—a little minute! (*GEMMA goes out. To EMMA.*) You haven't gone.—You did well. It's because of the baby! You understand that I do not forgive. The memory of it cannot be destroyed. I thought that you were going: and I wouldn't have hindered you! But in this way, I shall better be able to do my part, which is to provide for Gemma. If some day she is rich, she will perhaps be able to marry a man who may not be obliged to give up all his time to work, and who knows . . . but what thus she may succeed more easily in

being an honorable woman. We are two partners in a useful undertaking and so it will be through life! These things never end . . . they drag on endlessly. Now call Gemma, and when she is ready, you will call me, too. I'm going into the office. My place is there! (*He goes to the office. EMMA remains motionless.*)

CURTAIN.

GEORGES RODENBACH

BY FEDERICO OLIVERO

THE background of the delicate and melancholy landscapes evoked in his poems is, without exception, the pale Venice of the North,—Bruges-la-Morte. To him each of the ancient houses revealed a marked individuality in the profile of its gable, in the shape of its diamond-paned casements, in the brown and ruddy shades of its finely weathered walls; each house seemed to mirror its tall and narrow façade in the motionless water, and to dream, ecstatic in the eternal contemplation, of its own image. And another world trembled and gleamed under their long rows in the dormant waters of the canals,—the unsubstantial world of reflections, a fantastic region of ghostly effulgence, peopled, as a magic sphere, with strange apparitions,—a dreamland, where uncertain figures were quivering among elusive glimpses of luminous clouds, of blue sky, of copper-coloured foliage.

The poet experienced an intense grief as he lingered in the lonely squares, bathed in the rosy light of sunset, streaked with the mauve shadows of plane-trees; the strangely human melancholy of the old town remained struck into his soul forever; its frail, forlorn appearance came to have for him a sad glamour, from which he never yearned to be free. The desolate city assumed for him the pathos of a human visage, the beauty of a fairy princess, pale in death, adorned with antique jewels of red gold, with amethysts and aquamarines. A mood of resigned, inexplicable sadness settled deeply in the poet's heart; it was as if he tried to model his soul on the mystic loveliness of the enchanted town.

His ideal world is 'The Realm of Silence;' not, however, of the weird silence of haunted lands, as conceived by Poe in his visions of wonder and terror, but of the dreamy silence brooding over ancient, magnificent palaces and autumnal gardens; it is an unearthly stillness made more intense by the drowsy chimes of remote church-bells, by rare footfalls, by the monotonous trickling of broken fountains. It is also 'The Realm of Remembrance,' the misty region where the things of the past appear

distorted into eerie forms, where the sorrows of life, so far from growing less poignant through the clouded distance, are increased to a wild, heart-rending pain by new elements supplied by fantasy and hallucination.

Sad was his conception of life; he instinctively recoiled from the cruel struggles of the world, and took refuge in the solitude of his poetic universe; Life passed by him—a pageant of wan figures drifting on the mournful wind—without stirring the calm surface of his soul; his sensibility was extremely keen, but only to abstract feelings, to refined impressions. Only the pale amber of the winter sun, the perfume wafted by blossoming lilac-bushes, the singing of 'béguines' from the cloister, entered his 'House of Vision,' as fugitive glimmers and echoes of the outer world.

Fernand Khnopff has painted, perhaps unconsciously, in his 'Recluse,' a fit emblem of his soul; in her grey eyes there are a strange ecstasy and a bitter sorrow, a proud disdain and a nostalgic yearning; she has sought a refuge in the unbroken stillness of a land far from the world; but she is now a prisoner of dreams.

Rodenbach loved the calm of forgotten rooms; in his secluded apartments he felt himself surrounded by invisible presences, by the fantastic beings which lead a secret life in familiar objects; simple, homely things impressed him with a sense of mysterious sufferings; the diaphanous cups, the slim glasses vibrating to some distant echo, the curtains seeming to retain in their snowy folds the pallor of moonlight, the lamps opening their golden eyes in the twilight, all these objects appeared to him endowed with a kind of spiritual beauty.—Our attention is made to converge upon common, apparently insignificant things; from them the poet shapes suggestive symbols of love, passion and death, and every emblem changes its significance through some slight alteration either in its colour or shape, or in its surroundings; sometimes their hidden signification seems to dawn slowly in our soul, sometimes it flashes suddenly upon our mind.

The literary activity of Georges Rodenbach may be divided into three periods; the juvenile poems [*Les Tristesses*, 1879; *La Jeunesse Blanche*, 1886], where the influence of Lamartine and Alfred de Vigny is still clearly visible; he first showed his original power in '*Le Règne du Silence*' [1891], which was followed in 1896 by '*Les Vies encloses*'; here the peculiar passion for the beautiful town shines in its full splendour.

O ville, toi ma soeur à qui je suis pareil, . . .
 Nous sommes tous les deux la ville en deuil qui dort
 Et n'a plus de vaisseaux parmi son port amer,
 Les vaisseaux qui jadis y miraient leurs flancs d'or;
 Qu'importe! Dans l'eau vide on voit mieux tout le ciel.
 Or, ceci n'est-ce pas l'honneur essentiel
 De redire en miroir les choses éternelles,
 D'angeliser d'azur leur nonchaloir changeant!
 Or, c'est pour être ainsi souples à son vouloir
 Que le ciel lointain, l'une et l'autre, nous colore
 Et décalque dans nous ses jardins de douceur,
 O toi, mon Ame, et toi, Ville Morte, ma soeur!¹

The leading influences were now Verlaine and Mallarmé; especially the exquisite 'nonchalance' of the former had a strong appeal for him; in fact, in spite of all the painstaking care with which he chiselled his images, combined the sounds and disposed his lines in skillful arrangement, a simple, straightforward diction attracted him far more than the artificial charm of a complex style. The subdued melodies of his verses seem to reecho airs unutterably sad, the song of vesper bells, the whisper of winds and water; they are the dirge of moribund flowers.

Mon âme, tout ce long et triste après-midi,
 A souffert de la mort d'un bouquet, imminente!
 Il était, loin de moi, sans la chambre attenante
 Où ma peur l'éloigna, déjà presque engourdi,—
 Bouquet dépérissant de fleurs qu'on croyait sauvées
 Encor pour tout un jour dans la pitié de l'eau.²

Rodenbach never fell under the influence of the 'Parnassiens'; he never introduced in his word-pictures the hard glitter of gems and metals of Leconte de Lisle and De Hérédia; he preferred the grey atmosphere of the 'Symbolistes,' where only now and then, rare 'nuances' shimmer through veils of opalescent haze. He loved the evanescent smile of a faded pastel better than a glaring composition of Rubens, just as he liked to sing of the pale flame of a lonely lamp rather than of a gorgeous sunset.

La lampe dans la chambre est une rose blanche
 Qui s'ouvre tout à coup au jardin gris du soir;
 La lampe dans la chambre est une lune blanche
 Qui fait fleurir dans les miroirs des nénuphars.³

A salient feature of this period is the frequent use of allegory, so that his aesthetic theory can be summed up in the formula: Poetry is the expression of feeling by means of symbols and verbal melody. In this way every thing becomes the emblem of a spiritual attitude, and therefore an inexhaustible source of inspiration. We are aware that the images scattered throughout each poem without any apparent link, are bound together by subtle affinities,—that they belong to the same psychological chord,—that they are but the myriad facets of a single gem.

The third period of his art is represented by '*Le Miroir du Ciel Natal*' [1898], which is all aglow with the radiance of a fervent mysticism.

Seigneur! en un jour grave, il m'en souvient, Seigneur!
Seigneur, j'ai fait le voeu d'une oeuvre en votre honneur.⁴

The fine poem 'Les Cierges' may be quoted as a characteristic instance of the last magnificent flowers of Rodenbach's poetical garden.

Les cierges lentement brûlent parmi les nefs;
Ils ont l'air de souffrir, peut-être souffrent-ils?
Ils ont l'air de mourir en spasmes de lumière,
De la mort s'effeuillant d'une rose-trémière;
Leur feu qui bouge a des adieux comme les lèvres.
Oh! les cierges, brûlure et pâleur oh! les cires
Qui sur les chandeliers des églises expient
Et compensent le mal avec leurs flammes pies;
Cires de qui l'orgueil est d'être des martyres.⁵

Some mystic poets have endowed their symbolic world with such an intellectual light, that a spiritual ray seems to enrich their images with a golden glow, even when they are taken from objects otherwise indifferent or vulgar; in the work of Georges Rodenbach several passages afford striking examples of this poetic transfiguration. The artist knows how to quicken our sensibility to new and deeper impressions by the subtle magic of his style. As he gazes upon old miniatures, a sumptuous arras, or delicately carved ivories,—as he looks in the purple gloaming at the perishing flowers in his lonely garden, at the silent rain of their petals strewing with pale rubies the lawn,—the sorrow of beautiful things, of the dumb victims of a destroying fate, lies

heavy upon his heart. At the same time we realize that there is in these objects something which before eluded our apprehension, an indwelling spirit, whose message strikes now upon our mind with a strange intensity.

Rodenbach loved these sad 'rêveries;' he felt an instinctive pity for his humble companions, for their poignant agony in the twilight, and the submissive passion of their death, as they disappeared in the rising tide of the nocturnal gloom; conscious of their melancholy beauty, he yielded himself entirely to their tacit influence.

Le soir descend, il est imminent; il approche,
Emblème de la mort que trop on oubliait;
L'ombre s'aggrave; tout s'oriente déjà
Vers la nuit; seul un lys plus longtemps émergea.
Les bibelots pensifs abdiquent sans effort
(Tristes un peu de se sentir des urnes closes)
A l'ombre qui leur fait une petite mort.
Et mon âme s'incline a l'exemple des choses.⁶

His mental attitude was the same towards his town; the stately, hieratic swans, gliding on the pearl-like lustre of the path traced by the moonbeams,—the brilliant patches of sunlight roaming on the black waters on a stormy day,—the languid scent of dead leaves,—the very outlines of trees and houses, borrow a new significance from his passionate sadness, and the silent tragedy of things seems to take place in his inmost heart. Bruges is often evoked by him wreathed with the dying splendour of Autumn, garlanded with the ruddy gold of chrysanthemums, veiled with the violet mist of a calm October; it is the season when remembrances seem to yield their sweetest fragrance, as flowers amid the dew of evening. Among the rushes, brightened by the dancing reflections of tiny waves, the last yellow iris shivers in the chilly breeze, while from the elm-trees the leaves are falling fast,—a glimmering rain upon the chalices of water-lilies and the dark, agate-coloured water of the solitary pond. The gilded spire of a church soars from high-pitched roofs into a bleak, sombre sky, tinkling with the crystalline melodies of 'carillons.'

Over the winding streets, the bridges arched upon the sepulchral depth of deserted waterways, over the sandy downs crowned with wind-mills, is diffused the hesitating luminosity of rainy days, when the fading light revives, in continual alter-

native, into a tender glow, as the clouds open and close their humid folds, chased by the fitful gusts of the seawind.

Le gris des ciels du Nord dans mon âme est resté;
 Je l'ai cherché dans l'eau, dans les yeux, dans la perle;
 Gris indéfinissable et comme velouté,
 Gris pale d'une mer d'octobre, qui déferle,
 Gris de pierre d'un vieux cimetière fermé.⁷

Rodenbach described this scenery with the exquisite workmanship that such a subject demands, bestowing on his pictures a kind of dramatic vitality, as if they were representations of tragedies acted in silence and mystery,—tragedies of which the characters were the living personalities of things. This apparently narrow poetic world allowed him full scope for the expression of his own individuality, because it was in itself complete, held indissolubly together by mystic affinities, governed by peculiar law, a perfect thing of harmonious beauty.

His poetry is intimately connected with the traditional art of his country; not only we feel in his work the mystic grace of Memling and Jan Van Eyck, but there is a similar comprehension of nature and life in the pictures and drawings of many contemporary artists,—in the sombre and pensive landscapes of Baertsoen, in the water-colours of Cassiers, in the fantastic etchings of Marechal; and the paintings of Fernand Khnopff and the sculptures of Georges Minne are instinct with the same fervour and ecstasy.

Turin, Italy.

I

O town, my sister, to whom I am alike, . . .
 We two are the mournful city, which now lies asleep;
 No ships are now in its harbour,
 None of the ships that once mirrored in its waters their golden
 flanks;
 But, what does it matter? The sky is better seen in empty waters.
 And is it not the most essential glory
 To reflect, as in a mirror, things eternal,
 To surround with angelic blue their iridescent, idle vision?
 It is owing to this perfect obedience to its will
 That the remote sky paints you and my soul with the same hues,

That its sweet gardens are reflected in our hearts,
O my soul, and you, a dead town, my sister!

Le Règne du Silence, pp 105-7.

II

My soul, during this long and dreary afternoon,
Has suffered mortal pains looking at a bunch of dying flowers.
They were there, far from me, in a neighbouring room,
Where my fear had brought them, already benumbed;
O withering flowers! and I had believed they would last
One day still, steeped in the living pity of the water!

Le Règne du Silence, p 9.

III

The lamp in the room is a white rose,
Suddenly blowing in the grey garden of evening;
The lamp in the room is a white moon,
And, at its splendour, water-lilies seem to open their chalices in
the mirrors.

Le Miroir du Ciel Natal, p 18.

IV

Lord! in a day of sorrow—I remember it, my God,—
Lord! I have promised to write a work in your honour.

V

The tapers burn slowly in the aisles;
They seem to be in pain; do they really suffer, perhaps?
They seem to die in pangs of light,
As hollyhock-flowers, shedding their leaves;
Their quivering fires seem to say farewell, as with lips;
O burning, pale tapers! They make expiation
For the sins of men, dying on the chandeliers, in the churches,
And to be martyrs is their pride.

Le Miroir du Ciel Natal, p 212.

VI

Night is approaching; it is now quite near,
Symbol of that death, of which we were too forgetful;
The shadows deepen; everything disappears
Into the night; only a lily emerged from the gloom longer than
any other objects.

The sad gewgaws in the room yield softly
To the power of the shadow, which receives their humble death;
And my soul follows the example of the inanimate things.

Les Vies encloses, p 42.

VII

The pale grey of Northern skies is always present to my soul;
I have looked for it in waves, in eyes, in pearls;
It is an undefinable, velvety grey,
The grey of an autumnal, tossing sea,
The grey of an old, forgotten churchyard.

Les Vies encloses, p 191.

IN MEMORIAM

TO ANNE SIMON

AT Colorado Springs, in mid-summer, Anne Simon, an unusual spirit, passed away.

Between the great pillars of power, that super-
vitality to arouse, to quicken, and to stimulate in
others, and an overflowing love that extended even
to inanimate things, there existed in her nature
sympathy, tolerance and understanding. To these traits were
added many qualities of charm, and gifts that made her the re-
markable Woman.

Anne Simon was the true friend, and penetrated to the
innermost sorrow and need.

She was the ethical teacher, and in her broad culture opened
the vision to her pupils for the finer Womanhood.

She was the artiste that loved the suggestion and the shadow
in music, painting and poetry. She loved the petal, the grace of
the single flower, and the concentrated beauty of the precious
stone. She left a remarkable journal of the great and golden
thoughts of the Masters, from Plato to Pater and D'Annunzio,
between which, unfolding like a modest flower, were her own
thoughts on art, religion, education, and beauty.

On her brow rested the touch of genius.

In her journal, she mentions the mystic stones, the Chalced-
ony, Beryl, Sard, Chrysoprase, Jacinth, Wine-Yellow Topaz.

Of perfumes, Frankincense, Champak, Spikenard, Hovenia,
Aloes.

Of words that had the power of evoking a mood for her,
Tyrian, Antigone, Chalice, Hellenic, Vesperal, Chimera, Faun,
Cenereal, Laurel, Pomegranate, Lutes, Papyrus, Ionian, Feudal,
Pastures, Lagoon, Alembic, Plinth, Porphyry.

As with all profound natures, she often craved silence and
solitude, and in the last days of her earthly life, she had no greater
delight than the quiet of star-lit evenings far out on the plains of
Colorado, or the deeper gloom or isolation of night, as it wove
itself about the fantastic shapes of that garden of stone, well
named the "Garden of the Gods."

Literature and music were her most beloved arts. In the
former, she was the profound thinker and student. She sought
the word in its many facets, and lingered lovingly over the phrase.

She speaks in her journal, of "the scholarly pleasure to know the first meaning of words," and of metaphors, "subtle as the flower-fragrance that one must listen for, in order to fix."

As an artiste, she was the exponent in her pianistic work of weights and grades of touch, that would be responsive to inner moods. Her last public performance was as participant in the evocative music of a piano and string trio of Debussy, given on the morning before her illness.

It is as Modernist, however, that Anne Simon is best known. She looked into the quiet pool, but loved the running waters. To her the peak was only the goal, that led to still higher vision.

Her own thought from her book is this: "He mistook the tent suitable only for a night under the stars, for a house built strongly enough for a life's occupancy."

In the Futuristic writings of Italy, she found the spirit and the unrest that brought to her the greatest stimulus. To her they signified the progress towards the newer epoch. During twenty summers spent abroad, she absorbed the progressive tendencies of many peoples and discarded their traditions.

She contributed to many numbers of "Poet-Lore."

Her "Appreciation of Marinetti, Futurist" shows the keen penetration and sympathy for the iconoclasm and upheaval of the Master, and in her translations, especially of his "Poems of the Sea," one feels that the shattering blows are given in their original splendor and might.

In contrast, she lingers lovingly over the poems of the gentle Pascoli. What she said of Pascoli might equally apply to her: "He was happy in touching visible things, yet always seemed to be looking for a casement, out of which his soul might fly."

In her journal she writes earlier: "The plum-blossoms are to be prized, because they appear in Winter on the naked boughs, and even in the snow. They fall before they wither. How much more beautiful than to cling to the bough and decay!"

"(In this way I would like to pass out.)"

The wish was gratified, for she passed quickly and without suffering into the "Great Beyond," to be welcomed there by her Peers.

It may truly indeed be said of Anne Simon,

"A Soul, whose eyes were
keener than the Sun,
A Soul, whose wings were wider
than the World."

FROM ELEGIE ROMANE--1887- 1891

BY GABRIELE D'ANNUNZIO

Translated from the Italian by Anne Simon

AVE ROMA

Exiled am I and also thinking of thee; of thee, O Rome, am I always dreaming; I am not Ovid, amidst the barbarians of unshorn hair;

neither does the breath of Cæsar strike me, but the fatal goddess who reigns in thy frightful and sacred land.

The livid Fever visited me in my sleep, and the mortal poison, alas, fills all my blood.

Lugubrious is my perishing, although this is not the ferocious Ponto, and not the Scythian arrow in the heart that I fear.

Under the serene heavens the exile is more painful for such a heart, for which nothing remains that he loved.

Tired is the flesh, and already my soul expires in this peace, not understood. Oh, let my shadow go to meet death!

All is serene. The wave is docile. The shore is incurved like a lyre, where day-lilies arise

like Asphodels which adorn the white cliffs of Ade. But it is not the peace the dying one desires.

He desires the immense, eternal silence which is the eternal fascination of the desert where thou arisest, O Rome.

What high mountain, what infinite ocean, or darkness is greater than this solitude?

Oh, may I die there. The dying one sees thee from far away, greater than the greatest things, and says "Ave."

May he say "oh thou, Rome, thou so sweet and so powerful! Ave, oh unique Rome, unique country of my soul!"

REMINISCENCE

And thou returnest, O Life? Thou returnest to me with a doubtful smile, and in thy hand bringest faded leaves.

And thou returnest, O Love? Thou returnest insidiously, and in thy hand bringest the ancient cup, full of adulterated wine.

Life says:—"See behind thee thy past! Here are sweeter fruits, other unknown pleasures."

Love says:—"Drink." He repeats the old words:—"Here is new intoxication, new sensations."

The Soul says: "Vain flatterers. I inclose in myself a supreme dream. This dream will never pass from me."

Yet the Soul turns and looks into the past. Oh silent, ghostly, bare forest, never forgotten!

IN THE WOODS

The Shadow follows my steps: it follows me everywhere; it looks at me. The one who walks by my side has not eyes so sweet.

Ah, why resurrect thyself from forgetfulness? Why dost thou suddenly re-enter my soul?

Perhaps one day we were here at this hour? The disillusioned eyes, the deluded soul sees these dear places.

These were like the places, where we loved life, where death appeared to us only a fable.

In front of us opened profound paths like these. She came smiling amidst the high stems.

The dark shadow of her beautiful hair beat like a wing upon her forehead; her long eyes appeared even blacker.

Under her tiny step the perfumes arose fresh: the dawns rained sweetly on the singing summits.

"She, she only is joy for me!" chanted my heart while she was passing. My heart sang:—"She, she only is joy for me."

"In her hands she carries more light than the first Hour; she is made entirely of ethereal things."

TWILIGHT

When (and at the thought of it my veins still tremble with sweetness) I, like one inebriated, departed from her beloved house,

into the streets still resounding with the last sounds of the day's work and raucous cries,

I felt my soul leap eagerly, and above, over the narrow wall, cleave the fiery zone which the autumn twilight in the humid heavens, amidst vast clouds, illuminated over Rome.

I was not conscious of hour or place. Was I in the midst of an illusive dream? Everything knowing my joy, did it make an unusual light around me? I knew not. Everything became light.

Motionless were the burning clouds; it seemed like the blood of murdered monsters pouring out in a vermilion stream.

The carnage grew in the high heavens, and seemed like the deed of a cruel archer through burning woods.

Gracefully from his capacious cheeks the Triton at those fires gave out the stream of water, spreading itself like hair streaming in the wind.

Trembling with lightning, burning with purple to the summit, free in the heavens, the great palace of the Barberini

seemed to me the palace I would choose for my loves; and my desire depicted for me there superb loves:

Passionate loves, and marvelous luxuries and profound repose; a greater force, a warmer life.

"There are" said the foolish Chimera torturing my heart, "there are still sweeter fruits, and other unknown pleasures.

"Then give to me"—my heart said—"give to me the new intoxication, the unknown happiness!"

My soul leaped for joy. At the summit of the slope, over the quadrivium, the fountains smiled wisely.

Fresh from the Quirinale there came perfumes on the wind to me; and rosy, I saw Santa Maria Maggiore.

IN SAINT PETER'S

Through the profound nave which had received so many human souls during the centuries, and where so many clouds of incense had arisen,

the solemn choir from invisible mouths resounded. The organ, from time to time gave out a rumble from the hidden forest of pipes.

Deep in the shadow this vibration spreads itself to the sepulchre; the portentous mass seems to tremble to its very depths.

The great pontiffs watch from their summits in benediction;
at the iron gates there are angels and lions.

How solemn is the chant! From the monotonous wave a
voice rises, high, in a melodious cry.

The voice weeps, and it reveals to the world a divine sorrow.
The notes overflow, hot like tears.

The voice weeps, alone. Dost thou not hear it, Palestrina,
in thy cold tomb? Alone, the voice weeps, and to the world
narrates a divine sadness. The dead, do they not hear the
voice? Do not their souls leap shining to the ideal summits,
like a dove in flight upon pinnacles of gold? The voice weeps,
alone, in silence.

IN SAINT PETER'S

The apse is veiled in mystery. A reddish shadow fills the
void. At the end the impressive metals shine.

The four columns twisted by Bernini in spirals, with pagan
bronze, rise scintillating in the shadow.

On the cross hangs the great Miracle which offers on earth
a heaven to the tired human soul.

Golden lamps burn everywhere on the double steps, where
Pius VI is kneeling in prayer.

Mutely the mystery and the shadow condense themselves
in a veil of death. The hour vanishes. A step is heard fading in
the distance; then silence.

But suddenly the Sun, most proud violator, (oh triumphal
clouds in the cerulean

June!) cleaving the shadow from the summit, invests the cold
tomb where Paul III, bald and bearded, sits,

and under its kiss, Julia Farnese, naked, lives again all rosy
in the marble, as once on the bed of the Borgia.

FROM MOUNT PINCIO

The rain-bathed mountain rises, vibrating and fragrant with
fresh verdure; and the heaven of May smiles from the broken
cloud.

In the air peace comes from the beautiful, tearful smile,
which our soul, still desirous of the ideal, attains,

which lightens the cupolas at the summit and the high trees
that make great garlands on thy hills, O Rome.

Thou shinest sweetly, O Rome. Cerulean under the azure,
all enveloped in a slender veil of gold, thou art reposing.

Above ran the clouds, with long echoing thunder; and here is
the heaven of May smiling from the broken cloud!

So, after so great a war, after such disastrous nights, after the
bitter tedium, after the cowardly lament,

(far-away forever, far, O dream, from our soul; dreams, which
once we pursued too much, and in vain!)

the soul freed from all tempests, breathes; remembrance
grieves it not, nor desire blinds it;

no longer the care of ancient or new loves stings it, no longer
anxiety for other unknown happiness troubles it.

The Soul rests; it reflects life tranquilly and gathers in its
vast circle the soul of all things.

POETRY--WHEN THIS WAR IS OVER

BY JACOB I. LIST

ALMOST invariably, after a fierce, tragic-struggle—when the earth-trembling soil absorbs the precious blood; when the beat of drums leaves only lingering sound behind;—when the pestilence and groaning roar leaves only a dry-dead impress on the heart;—comes expressive silence,—tranquil peace.

The great law of reaction, which through all centuries has held the world stable; will once more appear, to bring the vision of clearer insight to the human mind—to bind and enfold with a more controlling force.

It is not presuming too much, when I say that after the din and clamor of war shall be a thing of the past, and the sword of death shall strike no more—silence shall become more dear.

What wonderful poetry, expressive of peaceful emotions, burst forth and bloomed, immediately after the American Revolution. The thought of liberty with all its hopes, spurred the souls of the poets to an expression, which no age previous to this embodied.

Immediately following the French Revolution a group of transcendent poets arose—young and fervent, flushed with the dawn of peace and new-birth, inspired with a deeper and kindlier verse; because of the unexampled violence and immeasurable life-waste.

At the culmination of the Civil War the South went to their homes broken-hearted, hugging silence to their souls, and making very misers of themselves for it—for the true life, the only life is made up of silence alone. It was the quality of that silence which alone revealed the quality of their pain and anguish.

After this war is over—and God grant it may be soon—a group of poets shall be born who shall reveal to Mankind, the “mysterious chant of the Infinite, the ominous peace and tranquility of the soul and of God,” who shall bring the great silence

nearer to them, and send the tragic soul-destroyer, the Spectre of Death, farther away.

The first-born of the poets shall carry the impulse of peace to all inhabitants on the earth, and they in turn shall caress and dry the tears of broken-hearted mothers,—crippled husbands and sons,—and it shall cover them with an impenetrable mantle of serenity, touch their lips, and awake their souls. They shall be the “Messengers of God” bringing with them the sun of life and a glorious peacefulness that shall be all the more dear, because of their keen suffering.

When the war is over these poets shall sing of an invisible goodness that shall radiate the sorrowful evenings, and flood the being with an irresistible charm—for these poets shall be earnest and far-searching, and their poetry shall be the “vision of the partial-God in man, in times of peace and war.”

A BRIGHT MORNING*

A COMEDY IN ONE ACT

BY SERAFIN AND JOAQUÍN ALVAREZ-QUINTERO

Translated from the Spanish by Carlos C. Castillo and E. L. Overman

PERSONS

DONA LAURA
PETRA
DON GONZALO
JUANITO

Scene: A lonely place on a public promenade in Madrid. A bench at the left. A mild autumn morning. Bright sunshine.

(DONA LAURA and PETRA enter at right. DONA LAURA is a little woman seventy years old, but her mind is quick and alert. She is neatly dressed, her hair is very white, and her hands show refinement and care. She leans on the arm of PETRA, her servant, and carries an umbrella, which she uses as a staff.)

Dona Laura.—Thank God, we are here at last. I was afraid some one might be occupying the bench. What a cheerful little morning it is!

Petra.—The sun burns.

Dona Laura.—And you are only twenty years old? *(She sits on the bench.)* Today I am more tired than usual. *(Pause. She looks at PETRA, who seems impatient.)* Go, if you wish to chat with your guard.

Petra.—He is not my guard. He watches the garden.

Dona Laura.—He belongs to you more than to the garden. Look for him, but do not go far away.

Petra.—There he is, waiting for me.

Dona Laura.—You may talk to him for ten minutes. Come back at once when the time is up.

Petra.—Very well, Senora.

Dona Laura (Stopping her).—But listen!

*Given for the first time in the Teatro Lara, Madrid, February 23, 1905.

Petra.—What is it?

Dona Laura.—You are carrying away the bread-crumbs.

Petra.—Indeed, I wasn't thinking.

Dona Laura.—Your mind was on the cockade of the guard.

Petra.—Here they are. (*Hands her a little package, and leaves at left.*)

Dona Laura.—Good-bye. (*She looks toward the trees at left.*)
The little rascals are coming. How well they know when I arrive! (*She rises, walks toward the right and throws three small handfuls to the rear.*) One of the boldest, one for the greediest and one for the dearest, the little ones. Ah. (*She returns to the bench and from it watches the birds as they eat.*) You are always the first to come down! Always the same; I know you, Big Head! You are like my administrator—large head and drooping mouth. There comes another, and now a third, and now two together, and still another. Three more—that little one yonder is coming nearer, too. There goes one up to the branch with his bread-crumbs. He is a philosopher. But what a flock! Where do they all come from? How fast the news must spread! (*Hum, Hum!*) (*Some of them must come even from the Guindalera.*) *Hum, Hum!* Come, do not fight! There is enough for all. I will bring some more tomorrow.

(*Enter DON GONZALO and JUANITO to left. DON GONZALO is an old irritable man, a contemporary of DONA LAURA; drags his feet as he walks. He comes in a bad humor; leans on the arm of JUANITO, his servant.*)

Don Gonzalo.—Vagrants! Worse than vagrants—they should be saying mass in church.

Juanito.—You may sit here; there is only a lady here.

(*DONA LAURA turns round and listens.*)

Don Gonzalo.—I don't care to, Juanito. I wish to sit on a bench alone.

Juanito.—But there is none.

Don Gonzalo.—That one there is mine!

Juanito.—Three priests are sitting on it.

Don Gonzalo.—Let them get up. Are they getting up?

Juanito.—Indeed, they are not. They are still talking.

Don Gonzalo.—They seem to be glued to the bench. When a priest settles himself no one can budge him. Come this way, Juanito come. (*He goes resolutely toward the right, and JUANITO follows.*)

Dona Laura (Indignantly).—Heavens, man!

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Don Gonzalo (Turning).—Did you address me?

Dona Laura.—Yes, Senor, I referred to you.

Don Gonzalo.—What is the matter?

Dona Laura.—You have frightened the sparrows away! They were eating bread-crumbs.

Don Gonzalo.—What have I to do with the sparrows?

Dona Laura.—I have something to do with them!

Don Gonzalo.—This is a public place.

Dona Laura.—Then do not complain because the priests have taken your bench.

Don Gonzalo.—Senora, we have never met each other. How dare you take the liberty of addressing me! Follow me, Juanito! (*Exeunt right.*)

Dona Laura.—A fiendish old man! Impertinence seems to come with old age. (*Pause.*) I am glad! They have also taken that bench away from him! There! It serves him right for frightening my little birds! He is furious! Yes, yes; search and search! Unless you sit on your own hat you will not find a place. Poor creature! He is wiping his brow! Here he comes! He raises more dust with his feet than a cab!

Don Gonzalo (Returning from the direction he went, and walking toward the left.) Have the priests gone yet, Junaito?

Juanito.—Don't dream of such a thing, Senor! They are still there.

Don Gonzalo.—For the sake of . . . (*looks around in perplexity.*) The city officials do not provide enough benches for these bright mornings. Well, I suppose I must share that of the old woman. (*He sits muttering at the end of DONA LAURA'S bench, and looks at DONA LAURA indignantly.*) Good morning.

Dona Laura.—Hello! you here?

Don Gonzalo.—I insist we have not met each other.

Dona Laura.—I answer since you greet me.

Don Gonzalo.—To my greeting, you should have answered, "Good morning." That is what you should have done.

Dona Laura.—And you should have asked my permission to sit on this bench—it is mine.

Don Gonzalo.—The benches here belong to nobody.

Dona Laura.—Didn't you say the priests' bench was yours?

Don Gonzalo.—Well, well, well! We have said enough. (*Between his teeth.*) Feeble minded old woman! She ought to be darning instead of being here!

Dona Laura.—You need not grumble. I will not go.

Don Gonzalo (*Dusting his boots with his handkerchief*).—Sprinkling would not come amiss either!

Dona Laura.—How strange that one should dust his boots with his handkerchief!

Don Gonzalo.—What?

Dona Laura.—Perhaps you use a brush for your nose?

Don Gonzalo.—What? Senora, what right have you—

Dona Laura.—The right of a neighbor.

Don Gonzalo (*Abruptly*).—Here Juanito, give me my book. I will listen to no more nonsense.

Dona Laura.—You are very kind.

Don Gonzalo.—If you were not so meddlesome.

Dona Laura.—A weakness of mine, is that I say all I think.

Don Gonzalo.—That of speaking more than is proper! Give me the book, Juanito.

Juanito.—Here it is, Senor. (*Takes a book from his pocket, and hands it to him. Paces the stage, moves farther away, and disappears, at right. DON GONZALO, still looking angrily at DONA LAURA, puts on a pair of antique spectacles, takes a large lens from his pocket and with the aid of these prepares to read.*)

Dona Laura.—You should next take out a telescope.

Don Gonzalo.—See here!

Dona Laura.—Your eyes must be excellent.

Don Gonzalo.—About four times as good as yours.

Dona Laura.—Indeed, it seems so!

Don Gonzalo.—A few hares and partridges could bear me witness.

Dona Laura.—Are you a hunter?

Don Gonzalo.—I have been and even now—

Dona Laura.—Indeed? So?

Donzalo.—Yes, Senora. Every Sunday I take my shot gun and dog and go to one of my farms near Aravaca—to kill time, you know.

Dona Laura.—Yes, time—that's all you can kill.

Don Gonzalo.—You think so? I could show you a boar's head, which I have in my office.

Dona Laura.—Indeed, and I could show you the skin of a tiger which I have in my parlor. Such an argument!

Don Gonzalo.—Well, Senora, let me read. I have no desire to talk longer.

Dona Laura.—Then keep still yourself. That ought to suit you.

Don Gonzalo.—I will take a pinch of snuff first. (*He takes out a snuff box.*) Will you have some? Do you like it?

Dona Laura.—That depends—is it of good quality?

Don Gonzalo.—There is none better. You will like it.

Dona Laura.—It clears one's head.

Don Gonzalo.—It does.

Dona Laura.—Does it make you sneeze?

Don Gonzalo.—Yes, Senora, three times.

Dona Laura.—And me three times, too. What a coincidence! (*After they take snuff they sneeze alternately.*) Ca-choo!

Don Gonzalo.—Ca-choo, oo!

Dona Laura.—Ca-choo!

Don Gonzalo.—Ca-choo!

Dona Laura.—Ca-choo!

Don Gonzalo.—Ca-choo!

Dona Laura.—Health!

Don Gonzalo.—Thank you, may it do you good.

Dona Laura.—And you. (*Aside.*) The snuff has reconciled us.

Don Gonzalo.—You will excuse me if I read aloud?

Dona Laura.—Read as you wish. It will not disturb me.

Don Gonzalo (*Reading*).

“Though only sad withal
Love is best of all.”

(This is from Campoamor, from Campoamor.
Dona Laura.—Oh!)
Donzalo (*Reading.*)

“Daughters whose mothers once I loved
Now kiss me as they would an image.”

These are Humoradas)

Dona Laura.—Yes indeed, Humoradas!)

Don Gonzalo.—I prefer the Doloras)

Dona Laura.—I do, too)

Don Gonzalo.—There are some of them in this volume.)
(*He looks for them and then reads.*) Listen to this.

“Two decades pass; and he returns—”

Dona Laura.—It drives me wild to see you with those spectacles.

Don Gonzalo.—Do you perchance, read without glasses?

Dona Laura.—Certainly.

Don Gonzalo.—At your age? I take the liberty of doubting it.

Dona Laura.—Give me the book. (*She takes it from him and reads.*) Listen to this.

“Two decades pass; and he returns.
They, into each other’s faces look and cry;
‘Great God! can this be she!
Good God! can this be he!’”

(*Returns book*) ✓

Don Gonzalo.—You have enviable eye sight indeed.

Dona Laura (Aside).—When I know the poem by heart!

Don Gonzalo.—I am very fond of good poetry and even composed some verses in my youth.

Dona Laura.—Good ones?

Don Gonzalo.—They were of all kinds. I was a friend of Espronceda, and Zorrilla, and Becquer. I knew Zorrilla in America.

Dona Laura.—Have you been in America?

Don Gonzalo.—Several times. The first time when I was six years old.

Dona Laura.—Columbus took you in a caravel, did he not?

Don Gonzalo.—Not so fast, not so fast; I am old but I did not know the Catholic kings. (*Laughing.*)

Dona Laura.—Ha, ha.

Don Gonzalo.—I was also a great friend of Campoamor. We met in Valencia. I am a Valencian.

Dona Laura.—Yes?

Don Gonzalo.—I was raised there and spent my early youth there. Are you acquainted with that region?

Dona Laura.—Yes, Señor. Near Valencia, two or three leagues away, there was a farm house, which will remember me still, if it is there. In it I spent a few seasons many, many years ago. It was near the sea, concealed by orange and lemon trees. They called it—what did they call it? Maricella.

Don Gonzalo.—Maricella?

Dona Laura.—Maricella. Does the name sound familiar to you?

Don Gonzalo.—I should say so! If my memory serves me right,—years enfeeble one's mind!—there lived the most beautiful woman I ever saw—and I have seen many in my life! Wait a moment, let me see. Her name was Laura. I do not remember her surname. (*Trying to remember.*) Laura, Laura—Laura Llorente!

Dona Laura.—Laura Llorente!

Don Gonzalo.—What? (*They look at each other searchingly.*)

Dona Laura.—Nothing. You recall to memory, my most beloved friend.

Don Gonzalo.—What a coincidence!

Dona Laura.—An unusual coincidence, indeed. *The Silver Girl.*

Don Gonzalo.—*The Silver Girl!* That was what the gardeners and fishermen called her. Would you believe it? I can see her now in that little window with the blue tassels. Do you remember that window?

Dona Laura.—I do. That was her room. I do remember.

Don Gonzalo.—She spent hours and hours, at the window—in my youth, I say.

Dona Laura.—And in mine also (*Sighing.*)

Don Gonzalo.—She was perfect, perfect; fair as snow; very black hair; black eyes, soft and tender; and from her brow radiated light. Her body was fine and slender, with gentle curves.

“What sovereign grace and line,
Moulds God in human form divine.”

It was a dream, just a dream.

Dona Laura (Aside).—If you knew she was by your side, you would see what dreams are worth. (*To DON GONZALO.*) I loved her very dearly, with all my heart. She was very unhappy. She had some sad love affairs.

Don Gonzalo.—Very sad. (*They look at each other again.*)

Dona Laura.—Do you know that?

Don Gonzalo.—Yes.

Dona Laura (Aside).—O what Providence permits us! This man is he!

Don Gonzalo.—Precisely. The gallant lover—if we refer to the same case—

Dona Laura.—To the one of the duel?

Don Gonzalo.—Exactly—the one of the duel. The gallant was—was a relative of mine, a boy to whom I gave all my affection.

Dona Laura.—A relative! She told me in one of the last letters the story of that most romantic love affair.

Don Gonzalo.—Platonic love. They never spoke to each other about love.

Dona Laura.—Your relative passed on horseback, every morning, through the little path among the rose bushes, and threw her a bouquet, which she was always at the window to receive.

Don Gonzalo.—And then in the afternoon the gallant rider passed again and received a bouquet, which she threw to him in return. Did he not?

Dona Laura.—That is true. They wished her to marry a merchant. A nobody, with no more titles than love.

Don Gonzalo.—And on a certain night, as my relative was walking about the grounds to hear her sing, that man suddenly appeared.

Dona Laura.—And provoked your relative.

Don Gonzalo.—And they quarreled.

Dona Laura.—And there was a duel.

Don Gonzalo.—At daybreak at the seashore. There the challenger was left, mortally wounded. My relative was first obliged to hide himself and then to flee.

Dona Laura.—You know the story in detail.

Don Gonzalo.—And you, too.

Dona Laura.—I have already said that she told it to me.

Don Gonzalo.—And my relative to me. (*Aside.*) This woman is Laura! What strange things God brings about!

Dona Laura (Aside).—He does not suspect who I am. Why should I tell him? Let him cherish his dream.

Don Gonzalo (Aside).—She does not suspect that she is speaking to the gallant himself. How could she guess? I will not tell her. (*Pause.*)

Dona Laura.—And was it you, perchance, who advised your relative to forget Laura? (*Aside.*) Now what?

Don Gonzalo.—I, when my relative did not forget her for a single second?

Dona Laura.—How then can his conduct be explained?

Don Gonzalo.—Do you know? Listen Senora; the youth first took refuge in my house, as he was afraid of the consequences

of a duel with a man so esteemed there. Then he went to Sevilla, and afterward to Madrid. He wrote I don't know how many letters to Laura, some of them in verse. I bear witness to this; but there is no doubt that her parents intercepted the letters, since Laura did not answer. Then Gonzalo in disappointment and despair, enlisted with the army in Africa, and there in a trench met his fate, embracing the flag of Spain, and repeating the name of his love: Laura, Laura, Laura.

Dona Laura (Aside).—Such a liar!

Don Gonzalo (Aside).—I could not have been killed in a more romantic manner.

Dona Laura.—You must have regretted that misfortune to the bottom of your soul.

Don Gonzalo.—The same as if I had been the victim. But then who can tell that the ungrateful Laura was not chasing butterflies in her garden within two months after the duel, indifferent to everything.

Dona Laura.—O no, Senor, no!

Don Gonzalo.—That is the nature of woman.

Dona Laura.—Although that be the nature of woman, the *Silver Girl* was different. My friend looked for news day after day—a month passed and then a year, but no letter ever came. One evening at sunset, when the first star was about to appear, she was seen by some one as she walked resolutely toward the sea shore—to that place where the chosen of her heart had risked his life. There she inscribed his name on the sand, and then seated herself on a rock, and fixed her gaze on the horizon. The waves murmured their eternal monologue, and covered little by little, the rock on which she sat. Do you wish to know the rest? The tide continued to ascend, and carried her away.

Don Gonzalo.—Heavens!

Dona Laura.—The fishermen along the shore say that for a long time the waves could not efface the inscription from the sand. (*Aside.*) You can't beat me when it comes to a poetic climax.

Don Gonzalo (Aside).—She lies even better than I! (*Pause.*)

Dona Laura.—Poor Laura!

Don Gonzalo.—Poor Gonzalo!

Dona Laura (Aside).—I won't tell him that two years afterward, I married a brewer.

Don Gonzalo (Aside).—I shall never let her know that I eloped to Paris with a dancer three months later.

Dona Laura.—Isn't it remarkable how chance has brought us together, and how an old adventure has caused us to talk to each other as though we were old friends?

Don Gonzalo.—Yes, in spite of our having begun by quarreling.

Dona Laura.—That was because you frightened the sparrows.

Don Gonzalo.—I was in an ugly mood.

Dona Laura.—Yes, indeed, I saw that you were. Will you come here again tomorrow?

Don Gonzalo.—Most assuredly, if the sun is shining. I will not only be careful not to frighten the sparrows, but will also bring them some bread-crumbs.

Dona Laura.—Many thanks, *Senor*. They are good folks and deserve all they receive. By the way, I don't know where my maid is. (*She arises.*) What time is it now?

Don Gonzalo (Getting up).—Almost twelve. And that rascal Juanito! (*He goes toward the right.*)

Dona Laura (From the left looking toward the rear of the stage).—There she is with her guard. (*She beckons with her hand for her to come.*)

Don Gonzalo (Looking intently at DONA LAURA.) (Aside).—No, I will not tell her who I am. I have become such a scarecrow! Let her remember for ever the gallant as he used to gallop past and fling bouquets to her in the window, with the little blue tassels.

Dona Laura.—How hard it is for her to leave him! Here she comes.

Don Gonzalo.—Juanito—where can he be any way? Perhaps he is absorbed in conversation with some maid servant. (*He looks first to the right and then motions as DONA LAURA has done.*) The devil of a boy!

Dona Laura (Watching the old man attentively.) (Aside).—No, I will not tell him who I am. I look like an old witch now. It is better to let him remember always, the black-eyed girl who used to throw flowers to him from her window as he passed along the little path between the rose bushes.

(*JUANITO enters at the right, and PETRA at the left, PETRA carries a bunch of violets.*)

Come, woman I thought you would never return.

Don Gonzalo.—Heavens! Juanito, it is very late.

Petra.—My lover gave me these flowers to give you.

Dona Laura.—How kind of him. I appreciate them very

much. (*As she takes them, one or two fall.*) They are very beautiful.

Don Gonzalo (About to depart).—My Senora, this has been a very great honor—a very great pleasure—

Dona Laura (About to go).—And it has been a great satisfaction to me.

Don Gonzalo.—Till tomorrow?

Dona Laura.—Till tomorrow.

Don Gonzalo.—If the sun is shining—

Dona Laura.—If the sun is shining, will you go to your own bench?

Don Gonzalo.—No Senora, I will come to this one.

Dona Laura.—This bench is always yours. (*They laugh.*)

Don Gonzalo.—And I repeat that I will bring some bread-crumbs for the sparrows.

(*They laugh again.*)

Dona Laura.—Till tomorrow.

Don Gonzalo.—Till tomorrow.

(*DONA LAURA walks with PETRA toward the right. DON GONZALO before leaving with JUANITO at the left, trembling and with great effort stoops to gather the fallen violets. DONA LAURA turns in a natural way and looks at him.*)

Juanito.—What are you doing, Senor?

Don Gonzalo.—Wait, wait!

Dona Laura (Aside).—Now I know it is he.

Don Gonzalo (Aside).—I am certain it is she.

(*They bow to each other again.*)

Dona Laura (Aside).—“Good God! can this be he?”—

Don Gonzalo (Aside).—“Great God! can this be she?”—

(*They depart each leaning on the arm of his servant. DON GONZALO smiles as though he were passing along the little path between the rose bushes, and DONA LAURA as though she were at the window with the little blue tassels.*)

CURTAIN

THE COMIC IN GERMAN FOLK-CHRISTMAS-PLAYS

I. THE SHEPHERDS AND THE BABY

BY F. G. JENNEY

THE popular German Christmas Plays are not pendants proper to the English Nativity Plays, as we have them in the mystery cycles, though like them they have their origin in the liturgical drama of the ninth and tenth century, and their roots in the same international ground of ecclesiastical tradition. The English mystery served its purpose and passed; it is for us essentially a phase in the development of the English drama. A form of art fitted to express an awakening national consciousness was given at the right moment to a people ready to receive it.

Very different has been the course of the mystery in Germany, where the Church never succeeded in ousting it from sacred precincts. The prohibition of dramatic presentations in the churches by Pope Innocent III, in 1210, resulted in little more than the decline of priestly influence on the productions. The most pretentious performances were, to be sure, transferred to the open air, and hence to a warmer season of the year; but these plays, the only real parallels to the English mysteries, failed to awaken a dramatic impulse in the people. For the drama requires for its inception a soil of common interests and general enthusiasms of which Germany, in her political disintegration, was incapable. The German folk-genius, always lyric, never dramatic, remained untouched by the great out-of-door spectacles, which continued as church shows, occasions for ecclesiastical display. And meanwhile the poetic imagination of the people was finding scope in the simpler productions that, in disregard of all prohibitions, continued to be performed in the church itself, without the formal sanction and supervision of the clergy. These plays have therefore the stamp of genuine folk-poetry, in their crudity of conception and utterance, and their ingenuous reflection of homely peasant life.

The retention of the Christmas play in the church, as a part

of the Christmas celebration, is due directly to the *Krippenfeier*, or manger-festival. This consisted in a simple song and dance around a manger, in which a wooden figure of the Christchild lay. The rite, at first restricted to the priesthood was soon opened to the congregation. In the beginning of the fourteenth century, the Babe was transferred from the manger to a real German cradle; and then and there it was that Christianity laid its first actual hold on popular affection, and became the folk-religion. At last, in the rites of this imposed faith, so subtle and so dimly understood, a fundamental emotion could find expression, the emotion of parental tenderness. The idea of the Christchild as the universal little brother took possession of the imagination. By the end of the fourteenth century the ceremony of the "cradle-rocking," in which every worshiper could himself lay hand on the cradle, was a deeply rooted institution throughout Germany. So vital was its appeal that it persisted after the Reformation, even in Protestant churches, till as late in 1700.¹

The spirit of the "cradle-rocking," the purely human feeling roused by the simple fact of baby-hood, was imposed on the nativity plays, which had hitherto not had the birth of Jesus as central theme, but had been in reality Epiphany plays. The emphasis now shifted from the formal adoration of a future king to the birth and babyhood of the universal brother. In connection with the manger-ceremonies there had grown up too the custom of antiphonal singing in the vernacular, the songs presenting in dramatic dialogue the conversation of the shepherds among themselves and with the angels, the journey of Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem, and the adoration at the manger. The mutual influence of plays and songs has been so great, that a treatment of one involves the other. The assignment of dates is endlessly complicated by promiscuous borrowings, and has a technical interest only, for this poetry is practically homogeneous. Plays belonging wholly to the fifteenth century are few; the majority date from the sixteenth century. The antiphonal songs are preserved for the most part in versions of the seventeenth century. Since both plays and songs have been the property of the most conservative stratum of society, they have been peculiarly insusceptible to the impress of modern ideas. The educated classes have ignored them.¹ The task of collecting them was begun by Karl Weinhold in 1853, and is still going on. The most

¹Wilken: *Geschichte der Geistlichen Spiele in Deutschland*, Göttingen, 1872. Tille, *Geschichte der Deutschen Weihnacht*, Leipzig, 1893.

complete collections are those of Saxony, Hungary, Austria, Silesia, the Tyrol and Bavaria.²

The comic element of the old liturgical play was furnished by the Herod action and caricature of the Jews. The vernacular plays, under the influence of the cradle-rocking make most of the scenes which give opportunity for the reflection of humble peasant life. Of most importance are the shepherd action, the part played by angels, the role of Joseph, and the search for shelter in Bethlehem. The traditional secular elements that do not lend themselves so well to a glorification of domesticity, the Herod and the Jew scenes, may be treated briefly.

In the shepherd action the folk-imagination finds itself most at home. It is inaccurate to say that the characters are drawn from low life; for low life is itself here on the stage, behaving as it believes it would behave under the given circumstances. The scene is always a Northern winter and a particularly chilly one. "Seven jackets and ten pairs of pants wouldn't be enough to keep the cold out," says a Bavarian peasant. The frostiness is made real by the eagerness of the peasants to find warm coats and mittens for the journey to Bethlehem, by their concern for the Child, lest it die of cold, by the cozy references to the warm tile-stoves at home, and the amazement at the angels dressed only in their shirts. Equally realistic is the dread of wolves and sheep-stealers, though the comic possibilities of this never-failing motive are nowhere in the German plays apprehended and developed to a complete farce,—as in the Second Shepherd's Play of the Wakefield cycle. The nearest approach to this is in the Seebrucker Shepherd Play,³ where Veichtel, the herdsman, fools the simple-minded Fritz by hiding his three lambs, wether, red cow and goat for an hour or two. The distress of poor Fritz excites more pity than mirth, even in the perpetrator of the joke. It is in just such indifference to what would be theatrically effective, that the charm of these scenes lies. There is nothing funny about the old shepherd Lenzai, who sleeps, snores, dreams of the wolf's coming, and starts up with the cry: "I'd lose my

²Hartmann.

³Collections referred to: 1. Weinhold, K.; *Weihnachtsspiele und Lieder aus Süddeutschland und Schlesien*. Graez, 1853. 2. Pailler, W.; *Weihnachtslieder und Krippenspiele aus Obersteiermark und Tirol*. Innsbruck, 1881. 3. Hartmann: *Weihnachtslieder und Weihnachtsspiele in Oberbayern*. München, 1875. 4. Schröer; K. J. *Deutsche Weihnachtsspiele aus Ungern*, Wien, 1858. 5. Lexer, Matthias; *Karntisches Wörterbuch, Anhang; Weihnachtsspiele und Lieder aus Kärnten*. 6. Mosen, G.; *Die Weihnachtsspiele im Sächsischen Erzgebirge*. Zwickau, 1861. 7. Piderit, K. W.; *Ein Weihnachtsspiel aus einer Nandschrift des 15. Jahrhunderts*. Parchim, 1869.

whole year's wage if anything should be missing," but it makes the wolf a very real factor in the background. We accept him with a faith that the wildest tale of wolfish depredations could not instil.

Of the Old Testament prophecies, with which the shepherds of the English mysteries are so unbecomingly familiar, these German Peasants know next to nothing. As they huddle about their fires they discuss, with the air of men exchanging ghost-stories, the remote probability of a Messiah. Fritz tells his comrades of a man, so wise that he could hear a flea cough, who had said that angels and kings would sometime come to Bethlehem.³ Of the occasion of their coming he is ignorant. We see how completely in the hands of the laity these plays were, and a laity not at all prone to over-estimate doctrine. A Wessener peasant contributes this. "At home I have an old, old book, so old that nobody can understand it; but my oldest boy, he can get a lot out of it, and it tells there of Christ's coming." Josel remembers that his grandfather used to say that the Messiah would be born in a stall.³ In the *Salzkammergut* play⁴ the men have even heard the Apocryphal legend of the *Templum Pacis* in Rome, that should stand till a maid should bear a son. In the night when this happens all the fruit-trees will be loaded and all the wells be full of wine; attendant circumstances that completely over-shadow in agreeable anticipation the event they are to honor.

The poverty of these peasants too, is no stage pose. In the last-named play, when news of the Augustan tax is brought to the women, one exclaims: "I don't know what's to be done. I've a whole bundle of cloth at home; we were all going to have a dress of it. I'll have to sell hemp and hair and wool and all now—the children will make a great row. Well, that's settled. I'll just have to go and bake noodels, I'm so discouraged." In all the plays the clumsy care lavished on the simple gifts betrays the extreme pride of the very poor in giving⁵. The first impulse of the herdsmen, after the message of the heavenly host has been comprehended—with a difficulty that gives much opportunity for ear-tweaking and elbow-nudging—is to secure a suitable offering. Very early this offering became in the people's mind identical with the "Weisat,"⁶ the gift of food for the mother after

⁴Pailler.

⁵Compare with the English shepherds in the Chester and Wakefield nativities, where after grotesque and abundant feasts, the shepherds appear at the manger with gifts, not of food or clothing, but a bell, a ball, a bottle, a spoon, and a cap.

⁶Pailler. 243.

the birth of her child. Underneath all the brawling competition to find creditable gifts runs great common sense and a peculiarly German appreciation of the seriousness of present-making. "How it would look to go empty-handed."⁷ "Won't the Virgin be surprised at all I'm bringing her."⁸ "I know what," says a shepherd in an Austrian play, "I'll take my best cow." "The more fool you," returns his comrade; "That's too much; the child wants to be poor. All it needs is a little soup, and something to suck on."⁹ There is speculation as to whether an unusual child like this might not have teeth to bite with.¹⁰ Black bread is rejected as too hard for it, cheese as too strong, rum as out of the question. But they bring plum brandy for Joseph, with instructions to take it moderately before going to bed, and under no considerations to administer it to the child.¹¹ Joseph's measure of beer is not forgotten.¹² "And we must take Joseph a present; something to warm his hands on; the poor old man must be nearly frozen." Elsewhere Joseph receives some knitted mittens. "And I'll just take along this lamb; it will make Joseph a square meal."¹³ As for the Mother, meal and rice are selected as most suitable for an invalid,¹⁴ and in the Wolfsberger play¹⁵ Stoffel warns Joseph thus: "Mind you don't let the Mother there have any cabbage just yet." Certain of the later songs reflect better economic conditions with the same glee in giving. The caps, jackets, and stockings are marked with the child's name.¹⁶ A jacket is described as becoming enough "to make any baby smile." It is a jacket lined with cotton and with green ribbons that tie. With a sly chuckle because their wives do not know what they are giving away, they tuck the garments into sacks, that the rain and snow may not spoil them on the journey.¹⁷ Playthings occur almost never.¹⁸ In a late song, a finch—warranted not to bite—and a tomtit are among the gifts; as the donor says: "Children are tickled to death when they hear a bird sing."¹⁹

⁷Pailler 420.

⁸Pailler 423.

⁹Pailler 481.

¹⁰Pailler 182.

¹¹Pailler, 416, 437.

¹²Weinhold 89, Pailler 222.

¹³Weinhold 17.

¹⁴Pailler 420.

¹⁵Lexer, Wolfsbergerspiel.

¹⁶Pailler 205, 467.

¹⁷Pailler 409.

¹⁸Compare with the spirit of the English shepherds.

¹⁹Pailler 437.

The visit to the manger is a great frolic. There is nothing desecrating in their antics, because nothing sacred has been apprehended. That objections to the hilarity of these scenes were not infrequent, however, is evident in the occasional apology for so much demonstration. "David, a merry herdsman young he did rejoice with heart and tongue," argue the Oberuferer shepherds.²⁰ "May the mice bite you and the cow hook you if you cheat me out of my song," says a Bavarian peasant.* The first merriment over, they gather up the gifts, scurry to get on their best jackets and make as creditable an appearance as possible. In an Austrian shepherd-song they even turn their shirts and shave.²¹ Physical deformity, a traditional comic motive of all mysteries, appears insistently, but not with the effect of brutality. Frequently the shepherds wear their coats and caps with the fur side out, and carry huge sticks,—a remnant of the custom of disguising as animals on the Kalends of January that the church had opposed violently as early as the sixth century. One of the number has usually a crooked back, goitre or other conspicuous infirmity. This individual must bring up the rear and bide at a distance from the crib, lest he frighten the Child. Even in this minor feature the central figure of the Babe dominates the action and gives the old traditional elements a new motivation and aspect. The rough men are aware of their uncouthness, and some one of them usually appoints himself censor of manners. "And when we get there there is to be no nonsense," runs a typical Austrian song. "The Child might tell on us up in Heaven. Don't chatter or laugh, but make a fine bow when you go to the manger. And tell old Lipp he is to be as still as a mouse if the baby should be asleep."²² In a similar song, Stoffel is to keep a sharp eye on Lipp, to make sure that he prays properly.

The journey to Bethlehem finds everywhere the most vivid representation; for what is more stimulating to the folk-imagination than the idea of an outing, of going somewhere? The Tyrolean songs are particularly rich in picturesque detail. We hear how they stride through the snow knee-deep, doing their clumsy best not to spill the cream or scatter the meal; how one loses his hat, another a button in their hurry, how Stoffel drops the egg-basket when the dog nips his heel, and how jolly it is that they've given the women-folk the slip, so that old Margaret

²⁰Schröer. Weinhold (Edelpocks Comedy).

²¹Pailler 192.

²²Pailler 415.

and Lisabethl and Annamiedl will have to come trotting after them.²³

On arrival he with the newly patched jacket must go in first.²⁴ "Hang on to the door-strap, all of you," warns the leader, "don't let anybody go sprawling into the room."²⁵ Sticks and hats are put aside. The shepherd-pipes—if by any chance they have been forgotten—are sent for; in one case the messenger is to bring the baby's rattle as well. Great is the consternation that the child has no cradle. A glance tells them that a feather bed is the first necessity here, and Hans is despatched to pluck a couple of geese and ducks and make one.²⁶ Joseph and Mary are urged to desert the stall and accept the hospitality of the peasant homes, where the Babe may sleep snugly by the stove.

The inclement weather makes natural the appeal to a world-old comic motive—the catarrhal cold. "My pipe is tuned to a turn," says Fachtl, "and if I don't get all choked up now, the child will like my music."²⁷ In the English Wakefield Shepherds Play, Slowpace tries to imitate the angels' singing and fails, because of his cold; in the German treatment of the motive there is more real anxiety than burlesque. In a Christmas play from Glaz, they go so far as to refrain from playing, lest the babe be frightened. But the response of the Child is on the whole satisfactory. He smiles at his shirt and grasps for his lamb. "He is clapping his hands because we tooted so well" exults a pleased performer. Comparisons are inevitable between this baby and their own offspring. "My Hans just isn't in it with this one; why his eyes are as black as cherries and he's as white as chalk." "When my Hiasl is the least bit cold *he* squeals like a cat."²⁸

They find the Babe in accordance with tradition, either naked or wrapped in Joseph's trousers. The ox and the ass that Joseph had brought to pay his tax are breathing on the child to keep it warm.²⁹ The antiphonal songs make much of this point. An Austrian shepherd relates that he found the babe crying itself to death for cold. He hauled up the ox by the horn, enlisted the services of the donkey, "and we all three did breathe on him."³⁰

²³ Lexer, Heiligenblutspiel.

²⁴ Lexer, Heiligenblutspiel.

²⁵ Weinhold. Kristkindellied aus Schlesien.

²⁶ Pailler 178.

²⁷ Pailler 433.

²⁸ Weinhold. Lied aus Mosburg.

²⁹ Pailler 29, 169.

³⁰ Pailler 243, 255.

Very general is the desire to kiss the child. "I'd give my finest cow, with the calf thrown in, if I might kiss it."³¹ Some muster courage to ask permission; many refrain, lest their rough beards scratch it. Quite as common is the impulse to help rock it, or cook it some porridge, or advise the parents as to the care of it. Neither Mary nor Joseph is credited with much discretion. Everybody's Little Brother is somehow too precious a gift to be left to this unpractical old man, who has not even provided a cradle, and an inexperienced young girl. They warn Mary to peel the apples before letting the child have any, and show misgivings as to her knowledge of cookery.³² She is reminded to take off her veil before cooking the chicken, and reproached for putting the baby under the noses of the animals. "Cover the child up warm" remarks a sly wit "for it will never occur to this ox here."³³ Joseph is told to look for dry wood for a fire, and taunted, that although he is a carpenter, he has not patched the stall.³⁴ Human goodwill has so far the ascendancy over religious awe, that it is quite in order for one of the men to promise the Baby-Messiah employment when he is big enough, as a shepherd-boy.³⁵

With all this familiarity is blended a tacit acceptance of some divine power in the child. But as children, who after the dutiful recital of their set prayers rush on to more relevant communications, so these shepherds acknowledge politely the redemption of their souls by God's coming to earth, and then plunge into an enumeration of their personal desires. The granting of these is but a fair return for their own generosity. "Remember that I offered to let you sleep on my stovebench."³⁶ "Don't forget that I gave you my best Sunday collar."³⁷ They pray for the safety of their flocks, the prosperity of their crops, and the welfare of their children. "Don't let my little Hans die of the small-pox."³⁸ Petitions for specific goods are infrequent, and where they occur are used for conscious humorous effect, as in the Hessian Play, where they pray for onions, leeks, cabbages, strawberries, blackberries, blueberries, gooseberries, mulberries, hawberries, then proceed to the various varieties of plum, and conclude with a request that their butter and butter-milk may turn out

³¹Pailler 257, 473.

³²Gratitude to the animals is however the prevailing note.

³³Lexer, *Wolfsbergerspiel*.

³⁴Weinhold, *Flattacherspiel*.

³⁵Weinhold 12, 22.

³⁶Pailler 235.

³⁷Pailler 458

³⁸Piderit.

well.³⁹ As to what this thing "sin" may be, of which they prattle so glibly, there is a wholesome lack of speculation. In some way or other the "Heavenly Papa" is in the present event, getting the better of the devil. Therefore let there be rejoicing. A song from *Heiligenblut*⁴⁰ expresses characteristically the prevailing sentiment.

'Tis Heavenly Daddy's trick
To punish the Old Nick.
He sends His little Son.
The devil gets a bang,
And Death may now go hang,
And we'll be happy, every one.

But the folk-brain has begun to feel the fatal fascination of the doctrine of original sin. Dogma is being slowly imposed on natural sense. In the *Salzkammergut* Play,⁴¹ two peasant women, pausing in their work to eat an apple, drop into a discussion of the Fall of Man. "O Lord, but apples are good. And how those in Eden must have tasted. I don't blame Eve for taking one. And of course, just let women once get hold of anything, the men are after it too. Eve wouldn't have eaten it though, really, because the horrid, rasping voice* would have warned her, if Adam hadn't butted in and forbidden her to."

Through the antiphonal songs runs the consciousness that somehow or other men's sins are responsible for the fact that this helpless child is suffering hunger and cold. "Who is to blame that God has come to this? Nobody but me,—it is a disgrace to us all."⁴² Exceptional, in its sturdy spirituality, is the petition in a crude *Mosburg* fragment "When we make Thee angry, Little Christ, don't mind giving us a few hard knocks, but then be kind to us again."⁴³

Their worship over, the herdsmen return to their flocks.⁴⁴ Nowhere do they fall out of their part, like the English Chester shepherds, who become monks on the spot. Their conscience smites them for neglecting the sheep, and they excuse themselves hurriedly, saying that their master will accuse them of having

³⁹Lexer, *Heiligenblutspiel*.

⁴⁰Pailler.

⁴¹Pailler 469.

⁴²Weinhold 12.

⁴³Lexer, *Wolfsbergerspiel*, Pailler 470.

⁴⁴Weinhold 19.

been in the public-house. Especially tactful is the leave-taking: "But I see how sleepy you are; be praised forever, Lord Jesus."⁴⁵

II. THE ANGELS AND PAPA JOSEPH

An important part in the shepherd-action is played by the angels. Before the sixteenth century their role in connection with the nativity event, is formal and colorless. Later they play an increasingly important part. A shepherd in the Salzkammergut play calls them the Messiah's Edelknaben (pages), and this is the prevailing conception, subject to fantastic variation. Of fear of these heavenly visitants, once they have been recognized as such and proved not to be bad ghosts or sheep-stealers, there is no trace. When a herdsman assures us that his very trousers shook as he listened to them, we must ascribe it to sheer excitement. The appearance of the angels is an indication that something unusual is going on, and curiosity, not awe, is the emotion aroused. In an Austrian song⁴⁶ Jagl and Tobiesl wake from a sound sleep: "Tobiesl, look here; who's this? Why has Jodl his coat on so early?" "Don't you hear Jodl snoring over there on the straw, by the sheep?" answers Tobiesl. "Don't you see that it must be an angel?"

In regard to the appearance and behavior of the angels, the Austrian imagination has been most picturesque. The angels attract the attention of the shepherds, not by the delivery of their message, but by their joyful antics. "Just see those angels flying around here like bats."⁴⁷ They are likened to bees, or skipping squirrels,⁴⁸ or bugs at the summer solstice. They dance for joy, seize each other by the hair and turn handsprings.⁴⁹ They are as thick as rain-drops, and scatter the sheep. They sing, whistle like mice, and play on all kinds of musical instruments. A peasant describes it to the Three Kings as follows: "It began to clatter and rattle like the Good Friday clappers. We thought Nicholas and Klauban and all that crew were coming. Then we saw that it was just angels. They like to have their fun now and then, you know." Another reports that he was awakened by an angel tweaking his ear. On both sides patience is required to make clear the reason for the commotion. "It

⁴⁵Pailler 474.

⁴⁶Pailler 349.

⁴⁷Pailler 159, 229, 250.

⁴⁸Pailler 411, 440.

⁴⁹Lexer, Heiligenblutspiel.

must be the Heavenly Father's birthday," suggests somebody.⁵⁰ The general conviction is, however, that there is conflagration going on in Heaven, and that the angels have escaped during the excitement. Occasionally somebody guesses right. "Messiah has come: I'll bet a cow he has."⁵¹ "I'll wager a pint of cream that the Savior is here at last."⁵² "I'll ask one of these angels; he'll tell, if he can talk." "If he can't understand, try another," suggests a comrade. "There's a little one, but he's too small to know our language. Hey there, angel, what's going on."⁵³

The musical skill of the heavenly host receives due appreciation. The attitude is one of patronizing approval, as of intelligent amateurs toward professionals. A peasant woman in the *Salzkammergut* play describes the angels as student-boys who spoke Latin, and fiddled and tooted better even than her husband. "Dear me, Ruep," says Loer, "you with your fiddle and I with my pipe make a poor show compared to this."⁵⁴ "How I should like to sing second to that," ejaculates another. They didn't strike a false note once." "My bag-pipe will sound like two cents after this." Toward the Latin of the angels the men take a would-be contemptuous tone that does not conceal their real admiration. "If I only understood a little Latin," groans a puzzled listener, "and could make something out of this."⁵⁵ Now and then somebody ventures to interpret. "Get out, Riapl, don't try to make us believe that you understand those angels."

The costume of the angels is largely conditioned by the exigencies of presentation, all the parts in the sixteenth century play being taken by young men. This explains in part why the conception differs so markedly from that of sacred art. The angels are considered to be the errand-boys of Heaven, and their livery does credit to their office. "The landlord at the Star hasn't a waiter to compare with them."⁵⁶ They have coats like rain-bows, or with streaming ribbons, or snow-white jackets. One has a golden mail-pouch, as fitting equipment for a messenger.⁵⁷ They are as "neat as noodels." Frequently, however, a state of undress conflicts with peasant standards. In a song from Linz

⁵⁰Pailler 423.

⁵¹Pailler, *Salzkammergutspiel*.

⁵²Pailler 473.

⁵³Weinhold, *Flattacherspiel*.

⁵⁴Pailler 419.

⁵⁵Pailler 158.

⁵⁶Pailler 215.

⁵⁷Pailler, 446.

the angel has only a shirt, without trousers or coat, and it is remarked that he must have been hurriedly awakened and despatched, and so have left his garments by his bedside. Another song excuses the angel for his coatless condition, on the ground that the vigorous exercise of singing naturally made him warm.⁵⁸ In a Flattacher church-play Joergl declares: "I'll get the boy a coat this very minute, as a reward for bringing good news like this." In the same play the angels are urged to stay and have all the apple-fritters they can eat.

Such familiarity easily becomes patronizing. Since the angels are servants in Heaven, something may be expected of them in a serving capacity on earth. They must lead the way to Bethlehem:

"You angel, run ahead, I say,
Be so kind, and show the way?
If I speak too rude and rough,
Give my foot a warning scuff.
There—we're here now, I suppose,
Hold on, till I blow my nose."⁵⁹

This same shepherd bids the angel hitch Joseph's ass to a cart standing before the stall, and hurry back to the city to fetch a feather-bed. In a Tyrolean song a peasant assures Joseph that he didn't mind the journey in the least, because the angels were so entertaining. In another from Muehlkreis they are suspected of elfish pranks;

"The shining little boys are fluttering about,
And I tell you the old daddy has to keep a sharp eye out,
For they're lively little rascals,—if he'd give them half a chance,
They'd gobble up the porridge that he's cooking, in a glance."⁶⁰

Not even the mighty potentates angelic escape familiar treatment. Raphael plays his bag-pipe, and Gabriel and Michael beat time for the dance.⁶¹ "And Gabriellaughed at us behind our backs," comments a shepherd, with the traditional sensitiveness of the peasant to the scorn of upper-class servants.

⁵⁸Hartmann.

⁵⁹Pailler 175.

⁶⁰Pailler 411.

⁶¹Hartmann 106.

As might be expected from the ruling costume of shirt and coat, the wing-motive is not emphasized in the plays. The descriptions in the songs are more in accord with the common conception of sacred art. "We saw little boys scampering around over our heads. They had feathers on their backs, and they stood right up in the air as firm as little trees."⁶²

JOSEPH

Joseph is the pre-eminently comic figure of the Christmas Play. His vaguely defined role in the nativity event makes it inevitable."⁶³ The caricature began early, perhaps in the Latin liturgical drama; for a stage direction of the Benedictbeurer play (1300) prescribes that Joseph shall appear in decent clothing,—an indication perhaps, that the church felt obliged to check unwarranted liberties here. By the fifteenth century license had reached its most extravagant pitch. In the Hessian play Joseph is subjected to a sound beating by the two maids Hillegard and Gutte, as punishment for his presumption in demanding their services for the child. His degradation culminates at the close of the action, where he shrinks from going out to buy bread, lest some one beat him, and sends for beer to comfort himself."⁶⁴ The point is obvious. In vain did the Church seek to wrap Joseph in a mantle of awe, in vain did it canonize him. To the naive mind he has always been the deceived husband and the gullible old man. Even the English mysteries, adhering so closely to Apocryphal tradition, do not make of Joseph a dignified character. He is not only old and weak—and so the butt of crude hilarity,—but ashamed, apologetic, over-anxious, and in spite of the unremitting moral support given him in visions by patient angels addicted to fits of sulky irritability. This querulousness is not characteristic of the German Joseph, who, nonplussed as he often is, is never spiteful. In fact, the relation of Mary and Joseph before the nativity has but a cursory attention in the German plays. That the Apocryphal tradition was familiar, is evident in many echoes of it, as where an angel appears to explain Joseph's position in the family group at a moment when the shepherd's attitude toward him is becoming embarrassing, or comes in response to Mary's prayer, to soothe and retain to her

⁶²Tille; Geschichte der deutschen Weihnacht.

⁶³Piderit.

⁶⁴Weinhold, Kristkindellied aus Schlesien.

her humiliated spouse. But this legendary material nowhere modifies either the action or the tone of the play, and persists merely as extraneous matter. Evidently the lay-mind felt no imperative need of grappling with the logical difficulty involved and the popular Joseph betrays in his behavior no subtle and corroding complexes. He is lovable, good-natured, and above all, awkward. The English Joseph is clumsy by reason of sheer age. The Chester shepherd jeers: "Hartles is he nowe, for aye to his heales he heedes." The German Joseph is constitutionally awkward. His habitual manner of entry on the stage is that so anxiously avoided by the shepherds.⁶⁶ To him falls the performance of such domestic duties as present themselves. He it is who must light the fire, cook the porridge, wash and warm the child's garments, rock the cradle, and receive congratulatory visits. All this he does with consummate inefficiency and heart-breaking pains. In the older plays⁶⁶ he upsets the jug with the last drop of milk. From the sixteenth century on, he has suffered from a chronic cold. In the Oberuferer play he coughs after every speech, and in Edelpoeck's comedy he has paroxysms of sneezing which make futile all his efforts to light the fire, and distract the attention of the audience during the birth. The pulmonary weakness of Joseph appears later in perfectly serious antiphonal church-song, where he holds his breath, lest he wake the Babe.⁶⁷ Even in a Christkindlied of Thuringia,⁶⁸ a form of dramatic entertainment very different from the nativity play, where the figure of Joseph is barely recognizable, he is still coughing violently as he passes his snuff-box to the spectators to receive contributions.

The German affection for Joseph is strong. He is "a darling old father, with hair like silk," But some contempt is ever his portion. A Rosenheimer peasant says to Mary:

"Take now this tiny load of bread,
That thou and thy small son be fed,
—But listen, Mother Mary, give the old daddy there a crumb."

And the Austrian shepherd Vietl tells how he unpacked his bundle of offerings at the manger. "Why, old Joey lit on those things I brought like a beggar." When the rough men are permitted

⁶⁶Hartmann, *Lied aus Obergund*.

⁶⁷Obersteiermarkspiel (Weinhold); Rosenheimerspiel (Lexner).

⁶⁸Pailler 358.

⁶⁹Pailler, Introduction, 11, 12.

to hold the baby, Joseph fidgets and urges them to return it to its mother. One of the men declares he would have decamped with it, had he not felt the suspicious old man's eye on him.

Edelpoock's comedy of the sixteenth century, utilizing all the motives of the popular Christmas play, presents Joseph in his complete role of servant, host, and childish old husband.

Mary.—

O Joseph mine, the night is cold,
Such weather who could have foretold?
The very shingles snap and creak,—
Quick, dear Joseph, do not speak,
But help me wrap my child warm
Against the bitter wind and storm.

Joseph.—

O Mary mine, don't blame me if
The clothes are still all frozen stiff—
I washed them, but they would not dry,
God help us, or the babe will die.

He makes a frantic search, finds that he has neglected to wash everything, and Mary wraps up the child. The details are worse than commonplace. Later, Joseph thanks the Three Kings thus:

It would be only right and meet,
That I should give you now to eat,
Should cook you something hot and good,
—But see, the fire is low, and wood
Is costly, and the times are hard;
I've still some cabbage left, and lard;
Be seated, Sirs, and let me bake
As best I can, a little cake.

The Kings deftly decline and withdraw.

ON THE WAY TO BETHLEHEM

The flight into Egypt is too hasty to give opportunity for character-drawing, but the return is leisurely and is represented in detail. At the command of the angel Joseph prepares for the home journey.

Joseph.—

So far without a cart. I wonder
How I can carry so much plunder—
Bowls, plates and pans, spoons, swaddling clothes,
Lantern and candles,—goodness knows
How I'm to buy the bread, and fill
My bottle; eight-pence have I still—

Mary.—

O Joseph mine, load up not so
With bottles, dishes, pan and platter,
The baby's things are all that matter,
So newly washed, and cheese and bread,
The lantern too,—'twill serve our stead,
The rest we'll find upon the way.

Joseph.—

Lord save us—must my bottle stay?
Not that—and though the bundle here
Were twice so heavy, Mary dear.
Poor, weak old man, what should I do
Without my sip of wine or two?
Whatever's left, the bottle goes.

Mary.—

O well; it must then, I suppose;
Obediently and with good-will
As well befits me, I will fill
Your bottle.

As they approach the first inn, Joseph remarks that he hopes the landlord has good wine. Mary is astonished.

Lord love us. Do you mean to say
Your flask is empty this first day?
It should have lasted three, I think.

Second only to the child itself in direct appeal to familiar experience, is the journey of the parents to Bethlehem and their treatment at the hands of the inn-keepers. For here the Biblical narrative impinges on everyday peasant life. The village inn is the center of rural society. The landlord knows his patrons and

is known of them with an intimacy born of relentless interdependence. The English nativities offer no realism in the Inn scenes, but treat them as transitional episodes that give opportunity for moralizing. In the York play Mary is too conscious of divine protection to have any claims to sympathy, and in the Chester play Joseph seems actually to relish the idea of spending the night in such lowly quarters, for the example before men.

“Marie Sister, south to saye
 Harber I hope gette we non maie,
 * * * * *
 To make men meeke, leeve I maie
 Shewe hym heare will he.”

Nothing of this self-sufficiency vitiates the pathos of the German situation. Mary begs a Bethlehemite piteously for a swaddling band⁶⁹ and reminds the landlord that it is raining and that she and her child are wet through.⁷⁰ The search for shelter has had a strong hold on popular sympathy. Hartmann tells of a custom in Giesing and the Au of the so-called *Herberggesaenger*. Neighbors assembled quietly at night fall, set little figures of Joseph and Mary on the table, lighted two candles and sang the *Herbergelieder* (shelter songs).

The figure of the landlord appeared early, as the Servus in the church-rite of the cradle-rocking. In the fifteenth century he is still singing and dancing with Joseph around the cradle, but his part has been expanded. As Arnold, in the Hessian play, he refuses the suppliants admittance on the ground that they will soon need a cradle, and his house is too small for one. Seltenreich, the Obersteiermark innkeeper explains unabashed his policy of extracting enough from his wealthy patrons to make it possible to entertain the poor free of charge. His wife appears however in time to prevent Joseph and Mary from profiting by this unjust stewardship. In the Rosenheimer play⁷¹ it is likewise the host's wife who shows no pity, and sends her too soft-hearted husband to the kitchen, to figure out his guests' accounts, while she dismisses the beggars. In some of the plays they wander from one inn to another. The excuses made by the landlords are various.

⁶⁹Hartmann. Note to Lied 127.

⁷⁰Weinhold, Obersteiermarkspiel.

⁷¹Hartmann.

“Shame on you, faithless man, to take a woman along on such a journey; it can be nothing but jealousy; you didn’t dare trust her at home.”⁷² For some hosts Joseph is too old; for others Mary is too young; or such a combination of youth and age is revolting.

Edelpoeck’s comedy deals at great length with the vices of inn-keepers; their propensities to give short measure, make false entries, serve warmed-over scraps, and water their wine,—“just as though we were foreigners,” sneers the author, “and liked it that way.”

As might be expected, in the complete absence of a dramatic sense, the people’s imagination found an unfruitful theme in the Adoration of the Magi, or Three Kings, the very center of the old liturgical nativity. The coming and going of the three majesties is a perfunctory performance, occupying little time. A sense of intrusion is apparent. Was not this babe theirs, the people’s? Then what had rich strangers to do with it? Nothing in the episode save the complexion of the Moor King rouses lively interest. And the dominant mood of the Christmas play, an affectionate guardianship of the Little Brother, is able to bring even this discordant note into a kind of harmony. Anxiety for the babe is the first and strongest emotion. The Moor is taken for a devil, and subjected to devil-exorcising formulas,* or a chimney-sweep, or bogy, or gypsy, and they fear he will frighten the child.⁷³ They refuse stubbornly to show the way to the stall, suspecting kidnappers; for the luggage of the strangers look as though they had sacked whole villages, and in their high collars they look like Frenchmen. In the St. Oswalder and Gumundener plays Mary herself is alarmed at the noise. If the child should be taken away the peasants will gnash their teeth and scream at the top of their lungs. One of them, who has put on his Sunday collar before venturing to accost the travelers, is finally persuaded to direct them to the stall. But he tells the Moor to wash his black off first. “I should be a pretty one to let in black people. The white child won’t like you.” Great is his wonder when the baby put out his hand to Balthasar.⁷⁴

The terror inspired by the black king gives a late motivation to one of the oldest accidental jokes of the nativity ludus. “How far is it to Bethlehem?” asks a messenger. “Oh, not far from Jerusalem,” answers the peasant. “And how far is it to Jeru-

⁷²Weinhold, Obersteiermarkspiel.

⁷³Pailler 351, 461.

⁷⁴Pailler 301, 461.

salem?" "Oh, not very far from Bethlehem." The joke, which arose originally out of the simple question in the liturgical play, "what seek ye in the manger?" persists without special point or reason for being until the Rosenheimer play puts the question into the mouth of the Moor. Then the interrogated peasant explains to us afterward that he was too frightened to know what the Moor asked him.

The role and character of Herod in these plays show that this theme too made no fundamental appeal to the folk-imagination. The Christmas mood was one of homely joy and simple good-will, of which the child in the manger was the outward symbol. The conceptions of this child's kingship were vague, and not in the least pertinent. In consequence, the reasons for Herod's jealousy and bloody precautions did not sufficiently appear, and the opportunity for telling theatrics was naturally ignored in a poetry that is essentially lyric. The fifteenth and sixteenth century Herod is mild indeed, compared with the English and later German conceptions.⁷⁵ In one particular alone was the Herod action indispensable. The unholy decess gave occasion for the appearance of the troop of devils, a remnant of the old mystery too dear to popular taste to be lightly lost.⁷⁶ Worthy of note is the fact that only in this capacity of escorting Herod to eternal torment were the devils retained in the people's play. In the Latin and very early vernacular plays they are militant in the night of the nativity, even attempting to deter the shepherds from going to Bethlehem. This motive could not persist in the great bulk of nativity poetry, springing as it did from purely human sentiment.

Lastly, what became of the traditional Jew of the Church mystery? For the Christmas as well as the Easter play inherited this strongly comic element. In the Benedictbeurer play (1300) the doubting archsynagogus imitates the Jews in grotesque movements. The early vernacular pieces elaborate these scenes. The Jews of the St. Oswalder play are caricatured in comic pantomime, are taunted for their avoidance of pork and for cheating Christians, and made to execute a repulsive dance-song. But these scenes are connected only in the most illogical and clumsy way with the action. There is no organic place for them in the people's nativity, which, in its chuckling good-humor, is far

⁷⁵Under the influence of the "Storm and Stress." See Pailler, *Brixlegger Weihnachtsspiele*.

⁷⁶Hartmann, *Rosenheimerspiel*.

indeed from the mood of jeering execration and hatred. Such scenes were natural in church-shows, imposed on a heathen-hearted people; as accompaniment to an action whose key-note is homely domesticity and neighborly good-will, they were out of place, were felt to be so, and where they exist are mere jarring echoes.

What is the attitude toward Christianity evidenced in the German Popular Christmas play? The question presents itself insistently. Is it, as some maintain that of a healthy, rollicking heathendom, that finds the stories told it by the Church fascinating to the imagination but irresistibly funny? Or is the ability to treat sacred things intimately and humorously inherent in an unspoiled folk, and our inability to do so a perversion due to Puritan Protestantism? It seems to me that the Christmas plays contribute little evidence for either contention. For all the earnestness and all the fun-making arise from a simple occurrence of everyday, human appeal,—the birth of a child, under circumstances that make an unusual appeal to sympathy. That the mother is for the most part reverently treated, bespeaks, perhaps, natural religion, by no means an awe inspired by the Queen of Heaven. It is not the coming of the Messiah, but the phenomenon of human babyhood, that the folk is here celebrating. Natural life interests have been imposed upon the interests of a dimly-understood religion. The spirit of this poetry is that of children, acting out a story that has appealed to their imagination. A dramatic, or even a theatrical sense is lacking; only those features of the story are attended to, that find a parallel in the experience of the actors. The people have accepted doctrinal tenets tacitly, as children accept what they do not in the least understand, and, precisely like children proceed to talk about it with a familiarity and an elaboration of imaginary detail, that causes their informers to shudder. There is no question here of reverence or irreverence, however unseemly such child's play in holy places has appeared to the sophisticated,—from the thirteenth century until now.

IN THE SOFT AIR

VILLANELLE

BY LECONTE DE LISLE

Translated from the French by Celia Louise Crittenton

In the soft air, in the sky of rose,
A showery golden stream creeps and glitters
On the bluffs that the dawn bathes.

Winged flower at the opening morn,
The bird awakens; flies, and vanishes
In the soft air, in the sky of rose.

The bee drinks thy soul, O rose!
The heavy tamarind tree murmurs
On the bluffs that the dawn bathes.

The mist flutters, and does not dare
To spread in the breathing freshness
In the soft air, in the sky of rose.

And the sea, where the sky rests,
Makes a vast and gentle noise
On the bluffs that the dawn bathes.

But thine eyes divine that I loved
Are closed, and forever,
In the soft air, in the sky of rose.

RESPONSE

BY GUSTAV DAVIDSON

In my most quiet need your letter came,
Trippingly, like some light-hearted breeze
Sporting its faery form amongst the trees,
Or like an amorous song too sweet to name,

Stirring the gentler yearnings in my frame.
Dear letter, and thou dearer thing that wrote
The words therein, each breathing like a note
Of music, putting mine own poor art to shame!

How shall I answer?—You whose heart of love
Finds room for me, so spacious is its realm,
Must teach me utterance as gracious too—

In words or music? And if aught above
These two there be that can the heart o'erwhelm,
It is in silence, which now speaks to you.

THE HONOR CROSS*

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

BY M. E. LEE.

Scene: Interior of a Cottage.

Time: Forenoon.

CHARACTERS

A MAN.

HIS WIFE.

A YOUNG GIRL.

AN OFFICER.

A BOY AND PEOPLE OF THE VILLAGE.

SCENE

Interior of a neatly furnished cottage, the main door and windows at back. An adjoining room at right, bright coppers, candles and a picture of the Madonna, adorn the high shelves. Chairs, a table with tea-service constitute the furnishings. The first glimpse of Spring is visible through the windows.

The wife.—A robust comely woman in the thirties. The costume of the housewife, cap, kerchief, and apron, portray her.

The Girl.—A child still in her teens appears much older. The impress of a recent illness upon her tragic face is noticeable. She wears a loose dark gown.

The Man.—A stalwart handsome creature in his prime. His faded uniform forms a dull background for a conspicuously new metal cross, which gleams upon his breast. About his eyes, accentuating the pallor of his face, is bound a white cloth.

The scene opens. The two women are together. The girl is seated propped in a chair, near the table, her head buried in her hands. The wife stands near brewing tea. She fills a cup and places it in the listless hands of the girl.

*Copyright 1916 by M. E. Lee. For all performances address the author.

Wife.—There—drink down this cup of strength.

Girl.—I haven't now the heart to drink.

Wife.—Ah, for my sake do—you've been so ill.

Girl.—And yet you let me live, you knew, you *must* have known, I wished to die, just like the—child.

Wife.—Too many now have died,—I am thinking since this War began. The women know, they have *always* known, life is a sacred trust, to cherish, keep, protect, and that is why we strive to *save*, not crush it—now say no more but drink.

Girl.—Ah! Let me talk I have so much that's locked away. You never heard—and while my eyes were closed these past few weeks, when you sat by and watched me patiently, I did not rest. My mind revolved just like a hoop I played with when a child. The more t'was lashed, the faster it would go—faster—faster 'til, (*Her head drops on the table exhausted, the WIFE moves quickly and pressing the bent head to her breast and stroking it soothingly she lifts the cup of tea to the girl's lips, while she drinks mechanically. Trying further to divert her, she calls attention to some blossoms on the table.*)

Wife.—See, these are the first blossoms of our Spring, turned green and flowering in *this* warm room.

Girl.—Is that Anemone?

Wife.—Yes, why?

Girl.—That was the flower that grew about our home. My father made a bed of it, to greet me when I came from school—last Eastertide. (*Seeing the girl's desire to talk, the wife draws a stool and sits near, listening intently.*)

Girl.—I tried to care for it with all we had to do. My brothers had been called away to serve, leaving my father home—with me, and so I strived to take a hand, and help him in the field, We labored day by day, the work was new, I soon grew brown and strong. And then—one day a regiment camped near our place. They crossed the border line, they said, "to see our soil," my father cautioned me to be polite, he never hinted then, there could be harm.

Wife.—So they were not the people of your birth; who were they then?

Girl.—Some spoke our tongue and some—I was afraid to ask.

Wife.—Of course you were too young to understand, just out of school.

Girl.—At last my father too was called, to see a brother who

lay ill with fever from the trenches, in a town near by—he never saw our home again, they took him prisoner.

Wife.—How learned you this?

Girl.—A soldier from *that* regiment—

Wife.—Go on—

Girl.—He brought the horses to our fields to graze each morn, and helped me with my work. I needed aid.

Wife.—He knew you were alone?

Girl.—Ah! yes—he *tried* to cheer me too.

Wife.—Then what became of him?

(*Silence.*)

Girl (With effort).—One evening late the order came to move, nearer the firing line.—It was so sudden, terrible, we left a thousand things unsaid, undone.

Wife.—The wedding pledge, a priest was never sought then?
(*Beast.*)

Girl (Low).—The time was all too short, they left at dawn.
(*She covers her face with her hands.*)

Wife (Alert and eager now for more).—And then—?

Girl.—I struggled hard alone, fearing to ask of those about my home, who were left poor, and helpless just as I—until I could not stand the strain, but crossed the line to seek this village—V—

Wife.—Why V—?

Girl.—Because he once spoke to me of a place named that, I thought it might have been his home.

Wife.—And so you did not even know his lair. Poor child.
(*Aside.*) Clever one to cover up his tracks, even at tramping time. How did you pass the line, they tell me all are watched most searchingly?

Girl.—They thought I looked too young and frail to do much harm, so let me by. And then *you* met and sheltered me when I fell ill, it seem so long ago, but what's ahead for me? (*A knock is heard at the outer door. The wife rises and opens.*)

Boy.—A message from the office. Open quick! It feels like fat news. (*Pressing the paper upon her to open, which she hesitates to do.*)

Wife.—It might be worse. He's been a long time growing strong, they write me from the hospital.

Boy.—Nay, open quick! I *saw* it, it *was* good!

Wife (Tearing open she reads in a hushed voice).—Released this day into your care, with the highest honor bestowed upon him by his country, for brave deeds and courage at the battle of

R—Lay, *The Cross of Honor*. (*The message flutters to the floor, while she stands transfixed repeating, "Brave deeds and courage at the front." The boy in youthful enthusiasm grabs the message and rushes out crying—afar.*)

Boy.—*The Honor Cross—the Hon—*

(*The girl with effort rises, and goes to the wife, who continues to stare before her. She starts to take her hand, but instead lifts the hem of her apron to her lips in silent recognition of the news—The wife seizes her convulsively in her arms sobbing with joyful tears.*)

Wife.—*You do not comprehend, it is my husband who has won the cross. (The curtain is lowered for one minute. When it rises the room is unoccupied, but wears a festive air, of flowers about, fruit on the table, wine, the candles, too, burn high upon the shelf lighting the pictures. Twilight has fallen. The sound of voices draws nearer, presently the door is opened, and the husband is seen blindly leaning upon the arm of a fellow officer, followed by some of the village people.)*

Officer.—*Home! Home at last my brave fellow, sit here—(The crowd press to him in silent admiration, touching his sleeve and hands.)*

Officer (*Aside to an old woman, softly*).—*Where is the wife? (She points to an adjoining room.) Go—prepare her with this news, he lives, but never will see day again. (She impulsively covers her eyes and enters the other room soon reappearing with the wife placing her finger to her lips.)*

Woman.—*There, go to him. Remember, Honor crowns thy house.*

(*The wife takes one swift look and rushes towards him kneeling reverently at his feet, while he places his hands upon her bent head in a sort of benediction. Simultaneously, all kneel in prayer, a hushed stillness prevails, the door of the adjoining room opens. The girl is seen standing apart, gazing on the Scene, she makes no move to enter. The wife feeling her presence looks up, sees her and stretches out her arms—saying softly*).—*Come, kneel with us.*

(*The girl fascinated now with the blind man's face advances stealthily until she beholds him in the full candle-light—*)

Girl (*Muttering*).—*Kneel! Kneel to him?*

(*The man clutches at his heart and spreading out his arms in space, murmurs awe struck.*)

The Man.—*Whose voice is that?*

The Girl (*Swaying close to his ear, hisses*).—*I—the child you—*

(The wife has not heard this, her eyes are closed in prayer once more.)

(The girl now turns her gaze upon the bent head of the wife, slowly withdraws her clasped hand and retreats to the edge of the kneeling figures; her eyes rivetted upon the wife, she reaches the door which stands ajar, glides out into the night. Her figure is seen passing the windows while the crowd within continues to chant.) "Oh Mother of Mercy we beseech thee—"

CURTAIN.

SONG OF THE STARS

BY CAMILLE FAIRCHILD

The music of their song is strange
 The song that stars are singing—
 Dost mind the tones within their range
 Carrillons are ringing.

The music of their song is sweet
 Attuned to pitch of aeons
 Dost feel the rythm and the beat
 Of their glorious paeans?

Their song was never known to voice
 Echoed by the light of suns
 Stars sing together and rejoice
 In chords, and sweet chromatic runs.

ABENDFEIER

BY E. ZIEL

Translated from the German by E. M. Patten

The evening lamp now shines, from out the gloom,
With steady gleam,
On table and on bed, through the small, narrow room,
Its light is seen.

The brushwood crackles, homelike, in the grate,
And flames aloft,
The old clock, near the curtained bed of state,
Tick-tacks so soft.

The parents read the gilt edged bible old,
In harmony;
The children, o'er the primer's colors bold,
Bend earnestly.

Grandmother at her wheel, spins, lost in thought
Of days of yore;
The sweet old song she sings, in vain I've sought,
But found no more.

Outside, the autumn storm hurls 'gainst the pane
The rattling limb,
While on the neighboring tower, the weather vane
Makes fearsome din.

What matters now to us the wintry blast,
The storm and wind,
If we our best beloved, snug and fast,
Together find?

TO THE PRINCE OF MOROCCO

BY ELSE LASKER SCHUELER

Translated from the German by Louise Mallinckrodt Kueffner

Softly speaking—

To yourself all stars you have taken
From over my heart.

My thoughts are curling, circling,
I must dance.

Always that you keep doing which makes me look
up—
Life's blood to weary.

I can not carry the evening
Over the hedges now.

In the mirror of brooks
I find my image no more.

Ah, from the archangel
His soaring eyes you have stolen.

But the moist seed-strength I sip
Of their blueness.

Slowly my heart is sinking
I know not where—

Perhaps in your hand.
Everywhere it lays hold of my weft.

ANACREONTICS

BY JACOPO VITTORELLI

Translated by E. K. Herron

I

Silence! Irene, the most lovely,
Opens her lips, she is singing.
Hush, while such music is ringing,
Let fall not a leaf or a flower.

Be silent, O restless young sparrow
Up there where the elm leaves brush thee;
Be silent, Silvanus, and hush thee,
Good shepherd, thy pipes for an hour.

Lo, how old shadowy Brenta,
So wrinkled, lies tranquilly sleeping!
See, how the blossoms are peeping,
And the grass on the plain grows tall.

No fantasies are these visions
Of leopards, gentle and fawning;
This is no mirage of the morning—
The city of Teban's wall.

II

O plane tree, happy plane tree,
That I myself once planted,
How many a May undaunted,
You've raised your head to heaven!

And how so quickly, tell me,
Have you stretched your arms thus broadly,
While you stand unmoved and lordly,
By the angry storms unriven?

A name that I once saw graven
 Deep in your young bark's greenness,
 Has tempered the wild wind's keenness,
 And silenced the tempest's roar.

I bear it too in my bosom,
 By love's hand deeply written,
 But the storm that my heart has smitten
 Wails there forever more.

III

How white the pale moonlight is glowing,
 How dark blue the night sky is growing,
 No motion, no faintest breeze blowing,
 There trembles not even a star.

Only the nightingale flying
 From hedgerow to treetop while trying
 To find his lost mate, with sweet crying
 Calls to his love from afar.

Out from her flowery cover,
 Heedless of all save her lover,
 She answers the sad heart above her,
 O, mourn not beloved, I am here.

How sweet, O Irene, such affection!
 Ah, but never you'll seek my protection,
 And never you'll ease my dejection,
 Or shed for my sorrow a tear.

IV

Draw thou not near to the urn here,
 The urn which my ashes incloses;
 The ground where my body reposes
 To my sorrow is consecrate.

I hate thy vain lamentations,
 And the hyacinths too, thou dost offer.
 What to the dead is a proffer
 Of tears, or of flowers, so late!

AIRSHIPS

711

Emptiness all! Hadst thou only,
When life was heavy with sighing,
Flung me a hope, descrying
The heart too burdened to weep!

Ah, to what useless mourning
The forest refuses to harken!
Respect the shadows that darken
My spirit, and here let me sleep.

AIRSHIPS

By CAMILLE FAIRCHILD

Hovering over foreign seas
Like aquamarine rurales,
They float and skim and sweep,
Unmindful of the mighty deep
Listening to the silences
Of space.

Sails are pinions
And like unto Endymion's
Rest these halcyon days
Reflect their flight so many ways
Sped on by ship-boy minions
Of air.

THE GLEANER OF SAPRI

BY LUIGI MERCANTINI

Translated from the Italian by E. K. Herron

They were three hundred, young and strong of tread,
And they are dead!

I went forth in the morning, I went forth to glean,
When far across the water, a strange boat was seen;
Her long, drifting smoke-trail, showed black against the blue
And gleaming through the smoke I saw the tricolor flew.
Straight to the island of Ponza steamed she,
There tarried a little, and again put to sea;
On, to our shore she came, and landed a band—
O, not to make war, but with arms in their hand.
They were three hundred.

O, not to make war, but with arms in their hand,
And they bowed themselves down, and they kissed our sand.
Slowly, one by one, I watched them pass anear,
All had a smile, and all had—a tear.
They looked like robbers from the caves, half fed,
But they took not so much as a morsel of bread;
And I heard them utter but this single cry,
“Here are we come for our country to die.”
They were three hundred.

They were led by a youth with hair of gold,
And heaven-blue eyes; I made me bold
And touched his hand, though my heart beat so,
I said, “Noble Captain, O where do you go?”
He replied, looking on me, with purpose high,
“O sister, I go for my country to die!”
I felt myself tremble through all my heart;
But only could murmur, “May God take your part!”
They were three hundred.

That day I forgot in the fields to glean,
And I followed afar, past the golden grain and green.
Twice they encountered the gendarmes' band;
Twice they were spoiled of arms in their hand.
But, when they reached the Certosa's wall,
They heard the drums and the trumpets call,
And amidst the volleys of shot and shell
From a thousand foes, face up they fell.
They were three hundred.

They were three hundred; they had no wish to fly.
They seemed to be three thousand, and they only wished to die
But they wished to die with their swords in hand,
And first their blood covered all the land.
For a while I looked and for them I prayed,
Till the tears blinded me, and I fell dismayed,
For no more could I see the young Captain bold,
With the heaven-blue eyes, and the hair of gold.
They were three hundred, young and strong of tread,
And they are dead.

THREE SONGS FROM "BUCH DER LIEDER"

BY RAINER MARIA RILKE

Translated from the German by Sarah T. Barrows

THE ANGELS.

Their languid lips are wanly smiling,
Their shining souls are without seam:
A longing as for sin's beguiling
Is ever flitting through their dream.

Each one is very like his brother;
In God's fair fields they're silent all,
Like intervals, one and another
That in His might and music fall.

Save when, their gauzy wings unfolding,
They gently wake the sleeping wind:
As if God's broad and deftly moulding
Hand turned the leaves that He is holding
In the dark book of origin.

A GRAVE HOUR

Who now weeps anywhere in the world,
Without cause weeps in the world,
Weeps over me.

Who now laughs anywhere in the night,
Without cause laughs in the night,
Laughs at me.

Who now goes anywhere in the world,
Without cause goes in the world,
Goes to me.

Who now dies anywhere in the world,
Without cause dies in the world,
Looks at me.

PRESENTIMENT

I'm like a silken streamer in solitude flying.
I presage the winds that are coming, and share their sighing,
While on the earth below there's nothing stirring;
The doors close gently as yet and no fitful gusts in the chimneys;
No windows tremble as yet, and from dust the air's free.

But I feel the coming wind, and am disturbed as the sea.
And spread myself out and roll myself to a cone,
And flutter and flap and am all alone
In the mighty storm.

EVENING SONGS

BY VÍTĚZSLAV HÁLEK

Translated from the Bohemian by Otto Kotouc

I

“Unmeet it is for man to lack
In song,” once God in judgment spake,
Created man a poet then,
And bade him this allotment take:

“So long as thou liv’st know no peace,
But only learn of pain instead;
And disappointed too in hope,
In tears eat thou thy daily bread.

“Torn be thy heart and bled from wounds,
But thyself only see thy bleeding;
Though hounded over every bound,
Love thou but all the more and sing.”

It is us singers’ common lot,
The world may only know our songs,
To know what prompted us to sing,
To none within this world belongs.

II

O Lord, of every claim to gift
I have, my soul here now I free;
But leave to me the gift of song,
That only do I beg of thee.

If thou shouldst take my gift to sing,
Naught longer then is life to me;
And gav’st me Fortune for my song,
I care not fortunate to be.

III

Whoever plays with golden strings,
Him honor more than thyself even;
For know that God did love thee so,
He needs must send him thee from heaven.

'Tis terrible when plague and want
To God's chastisement must belong;
Of punishments the greatest though,
Is when a nation lacks in song.

That race indeed has yet to die,
That had its prophets still to sing;
And every song that's born in heaven
In even death new life doth bring.

IV

Cast ye not stones at your prophets,
For like the birds bards are alone:
They never will return to him
Who casts at them a stone.
A nation seeks God's punishment
When unrevered its bards it wrongs;
And direst is the curse of God,
Whenever he withdraws his songs.

A poet's heart is truly pure,
And likewise from all wrath apart
And from his heart whate'er he sings,
That carry thou within thy heart.

V

A hundred years passed 'ere I came
Upon the grave that once was mine;
The sexton sang my song and piled
My bones with others in that shrine.

“O sexton, find for me that heart
From which you snatched the song you sing!”
The sexton wondered long and sought,
Save bones he could not find a thing.

Then from his grave he rose and spake:
“That, sir, with us no difference makes,
Ten hearts can’st thou perchance possess,
The grave wastes all of them it takes.”

He finishes digging, and I sighed:
“O heart of mine, there thou didst end.”
The sexton as consoling adds,
“When hearts stop song, so all doth tend.”

QUOTH THE DUCK

BY CHARLOTTE PORTER

“Ack-ack! Ack-ack!
What I have! What you lack!
Ack-ack! Ack-ack!”

Through the Fens in laughing scorn
Raucous rings the wild duck's quack,
Acrid in the April morn.

“*Ack-ack! Ack-ack!*
What I have I say you lack.
Ack-ack! Ack-ack!”

City households tame and bland
Round about in order filed
Leave at heart alone and wild
In the Fens the ducklings stand.
There he riots in the pools
And laughs his laugh at city fools.

“*Ack-ack! Ack-ack!*
What I have, what you lack:
Free skill, native nack!
Ack-ack! Ack-ack!”

“*He who only hears may see*
Through the air my wide flight free
To the settle-down and vim
Of my swift and silent swim
Lordly on the water-brim.
In the air and over-land,
Glad and easy my command!”

Through the Fens the City rounds,
Three o'clock sounds, sounds, sounds.

“*Ack-ack! Ack-ack!*
Sleep's dull citadel I sack
With my acrid April quack.”

QUOTH THE DUCK

*Though these urbans, pillow-bound,
 In the toils of habit wound,
 Hold their eyes shut, let them find
 Sight of me within the mind—
 Inner sight of human lack—
 Free skill, native nack.
 Ack-ack! Ack-ack!*

While they drowse they see it yet—
 Mid-air swoop of wheeling duck
 Curving down till the sharp wings pluck
 Strings of passive music set
 Listless in the waiting wet.
 Ah!—The water welcomes skill,
 Lends her latent might to will
 Playing on the liquid string,
 Chorded with it, wing and wing.
 On and on in rhythm ride
 Bird and water unified.
 Noise and drudging have no place
 In the stilly singing grace
 Each has from the other won.
 Ease and gladness, art and life,
 Met and mated, waiving strife,
 With their world in unison!

*“Ack-ack! Ack-ack!
 What I have and urbans lack—
 Free skill, native nack.
 Ack-ack! Ack-Ack!”*

AMONG FRIENDS

To insinuate that books are the only friends who never fail, would be unfair, but certain it is that they are the only friends whom we cannot alienate. We may neglect them for other pleasures, forget them in time of sorrow, or overlook them in performing trivial duties, but instead of chiding us when we return, they reward us by revealing truths and beauties which we never saw before. We need never be afraid of making new friends of this kind, since they make no demands upon us. If we want them they are there, unless some one has borrowed them, and that is no fault of the books but rather is a proof of their value. If we do not choose to read, it is unnecessary for us to sit up with a sick friend, we can walk boldly out of the house to indulge in venial pleasures and we do not have to explain afterwards where we went. One should have no qualms, then, in introducing new books, for one cannot be reproached for bringing together friends, whose later dealings are unfortunate. Rather one might look upon oneself as a public benefactor. If the reader does not like the books, he need not read them, they can part with no hard feelings, with only, perhaps, an uncomplimentary reflection upon the critic's taste.

At the Edge of the World by Caroline Stern is a volume of verse as charming as its title, but a description of poetry is as unsatisfactory as a description of food; the best that can be done is to give a sample.

"Butterfly, butterfly, spread out
your wings,
Bear me aloft and away;
Away to the mystical region that
rings
The edge of the practical Day.

To the violet land at the edge of
the world
Where fancy may rove at will,
May float where the opaline shadows
lie curled
At the elf-queen's guarded sill."

The *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality* gives the title to *There Was a Time* by Anne Murray Larned. It is a delightful little volume written in the same spirit as *A Child's Garden of Verses*. Perhaps *A Sad Thought* will give a fair idea of Miss Larned's poetic ability.

"It makes me sad to think of all
The things I cannot see;—
The pleasant places in the world
So far away from me.

I'm sure there must be lovely spots
Where I can never go.
To think that they are there, and I
Shall never even know!"

Songs of Daddyhood by Albert Edmund Trombly is another collection of child verses, although the larger share of the volume is devoted to miscellaneous poems, among which is the following:

MY GARDEN

"Within a secret garden-close,
Which none except my spirit
knows,

I dwell alone, aloof, apart,
 Attentive to my voiceful heart;
 And what it says from day to day
 No vulgar ear will hear me say;
 Yet in the world I play a rôle
 To mask the purpose of my soul.
 Men think they know me well,
 but I
 Was never seen by human eye,
 And kings who conquer sea and
 land
 Can never touch upon my strand;
 Not Love himself could ever win
 The sentinel to let him in!
 My wall is proof against assail
 And though men batter, I'll not
 quail.
 Alone, apart, aloof I dwell,
 My heart to me is heaven and
 hell!"

In *From Dawn to Eve*, the author, Julia Wickham Greenwood, shows the modesty of William Morris in *An Idle Singer of an Empty Day* in her poem *I Have Said Nothing Yet*:

"Listing, intent, the beatings of
 my heart
 To hear if it can sing."

Again in *I Dare Not Praise You*:

"I must be silent, I am small and
 weak,
 While song and love are bound-
 less as the sea."

The same feeling of repression is evident in *Remembrance*:

"Like a child that its mother
 rouses
 No answering word I spake,
 I only smiled, as I listened
 Like a child that is half awake."

Once more we see it in *The Dream is Past*:

"My love shall never hint its grief
 aloud—

I'll smile to see you pass, wait
 till you're gone to weep,
 I am so proud."

One of the lyrics short enough to be quoted in full is *The Bridge*,

"I built a bridge of jewels to the
 sky

That you might follow in your
 thoughts, my love,
 And stand with me where birds
 and spirits fly
 Far from the little earth they
 sing above.

High on the mighty arch I waited
 there

Far in the lonely heavens I
 prayed in vain;

Until my radiant bridge of jewels
 fair

Sank slowly with me to the
 earth again."

All poetry lovers will be interested in the translation of *The Rime Nuove of Giosue Carducci* by Laura F. Gilbert, already known to readers of *Poet Lore*. The translations are fluent, and in most cases bring out the splendid music of the original.

Other volumes of poetry which must be left for the reader to explore happily without chart or compass, are:

From Idaho to You, by Laura E. Darrow; *My Soldier Boy*, by Mrs. John A. Morison; *Blue Bird Songs of Hope and Joy*, by William Laurie Hill and Halbert G. Hill; *Epitaphs of Some Dear Dumb Beasts*, by Isabel Valle; *The Singer*, by J. T.; *Journeys of a Soul*, by Nathan Appleton Tefft; *Mystery, or the Lady of the Casino*, by David F. Taylor.

Two notable additions have been made to Badger's American Dramatists Series: *Told by the Gate* by Malcolm Morley and *Six One-Act Plays* by Margaret Scott Oliver. *Told by the Gate* might have been called *Six One-Act Plays* quite as truthfully, for that is what the volume contains. The plays are as full of interest as the life of the author. Malcolm Morley's youth must have been blighted with a curse for he entered the English Civil Service at the age of eighteen, but fortunately for his personality, he escaped young and became an actor. With mammoth self control, I refrain from mentioning another earlier English playwright who also had experience on the stage. For two years Morley toured England, seeing the melodrama, the farce, and the burlesque of life as only a strolling player has a chance to see them. He first wrote to supply lyrics for a concert party of which he was a member. He maintains that the lyrics were very poor indeed and had little in them to inspire any musician, but certainly no training for any kind of artistic authorship could be better than the writing of lyrics.

Since 1912, Malcolm Morley has been in this country. Formerly he was a member of Nat Goodwin's company and at present he is with Mr. George Arliss. But to make a very obscure quotation, "The play's the thing." The titles of the six little plays are: *Told by the Gate*, *The Masterpiece*, *Recollections*, *The Cosher*, *Beauty versus the Beast*, and *A Motor Mishap*. With the exception of *The Cosher*, which might be termed the cockney version of Gorki's *Submerged*, the plays are tinged with a light and humorous cynicism, not enough to be in the least depressing, merely enough

to give a pleasurable seasoning. One quotation taken from *Beauty Versus the Beast* will perhaps be a fair sample. "An innocent lambkin may be a very picturesque object in a story book, but in real life, it's a positive blot on the landscape."

Mrs. Oliver, the author of the other volume of plays was one of the early pupils of Elbert Hubbard and lived in the Hubbard household till she became proficient not only in making but in marketing Roycroft products. Then she was put in charge of the Roycroft shop in Philadelphia, the first to be established outside East Aurora. Later she founded and helped to edit the *Butterfly Quarterly*, a magazine run by Mrs. Oliver and George Wolfe Plank, the artist, at first as a plaything and later as a serious venture. The contributors included George Moore, Gordon Craig, and a number of other eminent authors. Mrs. Oliver first wrote plays for the Rose Valley Colony to act in their community hall; she herself took part. Four of the plays in the present volume are taken from sketches used at that time. For their further elaboration Mrs. Oliver toured Spain and Africa, at the same time gathering material for a four-act play which later will be produced in New York.

Margaret Scott Oliver is an accomplished musician, a miraculous gardener, and a good formalist in poster design, but her artistic temperament finds ample expression in the wide range of her six short plays. The first, *In the Hand of the Prophet* is an Arabian tragedy, the last, *Murdering Selina*, opens with a newsboy teaching an old maid the fox-trot.

A drama of an entirely different

type is *King St. Olaf*, a Norwegian historical drama in five acts, by Gustav Melby, the author of *The Seamless Robe*. *King St. Olaf* will be of great interest to all those who admire the grandeur of the Scandinavian character and literature.

Lovers of Elizabethan Drama will delight in Frank W. Cady's live editing of George Peele's *Old Wives' Tale*. Professor Cady successfully produced the play at Middlebury College and the photograph of the setting then used is particularly interesting and decidedly Elizabethan. The antique board binding of the book will appeal to all book-lovers.

There is but one work of fiction to be introduced, *The World, the Church, and the Devil*, by John Archibald Morison. Anyone who can resist reading a novel of that title, probably would look at nothing more frivolous than the reports of the Smithsonian Institute, so why enlarge on the subject?

Before the war broke out the next best thing to an extended trip abroad was to read a good account of travels by one who had made them. Now it is that, or nothing. Anyone who wants to read something of Europe besides harassing war articles will welcome Grace Levings' *Travel Sketches*, a delightfully informal, illustrated volume, by one who has been across seven times.

Perhaps the arrival of a new history of English Literature is liable to be regarded in much the same light as the arrival of the

latest addition to a family which is already inconveniently large, but in spite of that, Robert Fletcher's *History of English Literature* will be welcomed by all those who are not satisfied with any volume now on the market. Professor Fletcher writes in an artistic but non-technical way and the book is not only incredibly practical for schoolroom use, but delightfully readable as well.

Students of Psychology will not fail to read Professor S. J. Holmes's *Studies in Animal Behavior*. The subject is an important one and it is masterfully but clearly dealt with by one who has made a careful study of the subject.

Motives in Education by D. F. K. Bertolette, is an important addition to Badger's *Library of Educational Methods*. *Democracy and Peace* by James Bissett Pratt, a pacifist who believes in war, belongs in the *Present Day Problem Series*, also published by Badger.

Their *Library of Religious Thought* has three new additions in *Vision and Restraint*, by Robert L. Jackson, *Conflict of Jesus* by George Shaw, and *Main Questions in Religion* by Willard C. Selleck. According to common custom, the religious works have been reserved until the last. Perhaps this custom has arisen from the idea of keeping the dessert until the end of the meal, or perhaps the purpose was to leave the reader, if possible, in a sacred mood; but it seems more likely that it was to suggest that too often men leave consideration of religion till the end.

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