

THE TIN WHISTLE

OR

REJECTED BY THE ORCHESTRA

by HERBERT J. SELIGMANN

ARNOLD SCHOENBERG'S FIVE ORCHESTRAL PIECES: 1921

The five orchestral pieces of Schoenberg—played by Stokowski and the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra—have freakish mastery, of instruments handled freely, giving a taster's delight, an auditory-tactile sense of sound quality intimate to the organs and senses, even gross organs. One, called Changing Chord, had such a muted, wailing, inhuman and formless chorus as of sirens and steam whistles heard on a great harbor through a fog. At other points the audience frankly shrieked and guffawed with laughter, quite unmaliciously, because its sense of the ridiculous had been touched. This was in disrespect to the uncanny sensitiveness of Schoenberg's to the timbre and quality of an instrument's sound. Sometimes one feels him too preoccupied with these inviting sound sensualities to be able to indulge himself in the flat and outmoded states of being known to many of the audience as "emotions." Perhaps we are to have no emotions and will use on the palette of life, finely brushed in, the wistful, despairing, gay, satirical, lyrical, gross, vulgar and preciously perfect, each moment tinged by consciousness thronged with them all. Stokowski cannily played the end of Act III of Wagner's Walküre immediately following the Schoenberg, with all Richard's tricks of orchestration, braying his brasses against a shimmer of strings, testing and tasting the quality of his instruments with many an effect of which Schoenberg need not have been ashamed. Poor Richard had been domesticated. Did not Beardsley draw the bosoms of Wagnerite dowagers in the prehistoric 1890's? There is enough of wind-bowel hurly-burly in Wagner—and the audience, not realizing what Stokowski had made so obvious, actually applauded during the opening bars of the Walküre selection, to signify their approval of the Safe and Sane.

ARNOLD SCHOENBERG'S PIERROT LUNAIRE

The International Composers Guild introduced Arnold Schoenberg's Pierrot Lunaire to New York. Only sombre and magnificent human expressions can be compared with it. It is as if a man fled to dreams from a hideous reality of desolation and destruction and found in his dreams, reflexion of the reality he had attempted to leave behind. The music plays with slightest nervous suggestion of violin, piano chord, flute or clarinet note, tenor of violoncello, fragment of lyric—all in crystalline, almost ghostly timbre, with the speaking voice reciting in impassioned and songless tonality the three times seven poems about which Schoenberg's composition is built. In this macabre unfolding of gibbous moon, pale blood drop and lost laughter is something of premonition of the end of a world, of a sensitive experiencing immanence of death, even death of dreams, so that with the very delicate fragments of them he may sit in the twilight of the soul and make music.

At moments the black and white garbed musicians seemed, beside the black-gowned intoner of poetry, Greta Torpadie, as ghostly and insubstantial as the flittering sound-fragments of consciousness that made the atmosphere in which the voice spoke. In the substance of both poems and music is the black mass, moonlight of sentiment fleeting in a witches cauldron, mutter of hates and cruelties—all caught in dreamlike flux. Poems are more formal, less moving than Schoenberg's mood in which they are fused. Death in life looks through this work of Arnold Schoenberg, magnificently; it is a chant from the quick of one about to die, a profound research into the qualities of sound that are close to movement of the inner self. Musical pattern is broken up, once again so that instruments and voice are brought closer to sheer utterance. Schoenberg is master of the modern instance, such a master that one wonders whether any but performers exactly and tragically attuned by their involvement in this moment could ever render his work. Louis Gruenberg's conducting and interpretation of Pierrot Lunaire revealed musicianship distinguished by rare delicacy of understanding.

MSS. Number One contained writings by Sherwood Anderson, Kenneth Burke, Waldo Frank, Paul Rosenfeld, Herbert J. Seligmann, William Carlos Williams.

MSS. Number 2 contained writings by John Marin, Alfred Stieglitz, Paul Strand, Charles Duncan.

MSS. Number 3 was entitled "What Is True Art?" by J. B. Kerfoot and W. Rhea Moreau.

MSS. Number 4 was entitled "Can A Photograph Have The Significance Of Art?" by Sherwood Anderson, Thomas H. Benton, Ernest Bloch, Oscar Bluemner, Stephan Bourgeois, Gilbert Cannan, Charles Chaplin, Thomas J. Craven, Elizabeth Davidson, Charles Demuth, Marius De Zayas, Arthur G. Dove, Marcel Duchamp, Alfeo Faggi, Waldo Frank, Hutchins Hapgood, J. B. Kerfoot, Gaston Lachaise, Walter Lippmann, John Marin, Kenneth Hayes Miller, George F. Of, Georgia O'Keeffe, Leo Ornstein, Joseph Pennell, Carl Sandburg, Evelyn Scott, Charles Sheeler, Leo Stein, S. Macdonald Wright, Carl Zigrosser, Bibliography.

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"MANY MARRIAGES"

Sherwood Anderson walks into a room and it is as if a force of nature, elemental wind or teeming hillside were there active and yet at ease. People tell him things, anything, strange things and it is as if he said—Yes, I know, I've been through it and know. The voice is deep and nervous, his stocky powerful figure wears tweeds, greyish brown hair drifts over the forehead and the face is impersonal as though wind and sun had beaten it and the inner man had passed through fires of destruction to impartiality and balance.

Sherwood Anderson must have gone through an experience that started the juices in himself, that made him dizzy so the world might seem new as it does to one who goes through fire and comes out alive. That is in "Many Marriages," his novel of 1923. To read it is to have the physical sensations Emily Dickinson wrote of, to feel cold so no fire will warm and as if the top of one's head were taken off, that are true signs of poetry. It is not to be escaped in this book. Sherwood Anderson is one of the hounds of heaven. What Ibsen said of each of his works, that it was part of a freeing and cleansing process, must have been true for Sherwood Anderson of *Many Marriages*. He has made the art of this story into a confessional of the mind of man, enabling such as want to accompany him to acknowledge themselves to themselves in terms of their own bodily lives. Sherwood Anderson's John Webster does well to wonder if he has been in the wilderness eating wild locusts and honey for there is this feast here, in the story of a middle-aged man leaving his wife to go with another woman, waking his daughter to a sense of life before he goes.

It is an American saga Anderson is creating, our liturgical speech, something perhaps never so seen and attempted in the world. He has been likened to the Russian story teller and physician—the two professions more than coincidence—Anton Chekhov. Chekhov penetrated half lights of the soul, arriving at realities of life through the closest observation, things seen from the corner of the eye, smelled, tasted, the things so important to the main business of life that they determine it without being acknowledged. Chekhov too knew peasant, nobleman, country landowner, city aristocrat, student, prostitute. Something this way Sherwood Anderson wanders the American scene.

But he does more. He has arrived, through his own path at a truth known intimately to one or two other creative workers of his time—that oneness of a human being depends upon complete bodily sensibility, upon open, unashamed and therefore undiseased acknowledgment of every bodily function and rhythm. This truth is in the highly conscious, master observer's and philosopher's photographic prints of Alfred Stieglitz; songlike in Georgia O'Keeffe's painting; sober and strong in Gertrude Stein's words; rich and sensuous in Paul Rosenfeld's prose. Through this avenue to freedom Sherwood Anderson walks boldly to the love that has been and is now being starved and denied in our country. So he becomes in whatever prose he chooses to clothe it a singer of his dreams, a creator of the illusion in which life is heightened and rendered in its own sunlight.

To relax is to have the courage of surrender to oneself and to what Anderson calls the well of thinking within oneself. It is the gospel of the body, the house people live in, he has been writing and in his pages is the fervor and wonder of one newly awakened to the possibilities of clarity and loveliness in others and in self. In that gospel is implicit recognition of the passing in and out of one another of human beings, of the basic similarities in experience that no superficial distinctions in men and women can hide or expunge from humanity. The very texture as well as text of this gospel is the union of men and women in the livingness that is expressed through art—even the art of living. To read Sherwood Anderson's book is itself a ceremonial of no mean splendor.

MEMORANDUM ON GERTRUDE STEIN

Publication of Gertrude Stein's new book, "Geography and Plays," with foreword by Sherwood Anderson, is an event of importance to those who are recognizing her genuine contribution to literature. As Sherwood Anderson writes of himself, many were deeply impressed with her "Three Lives" when it made its appearance some years ago. "Tender Buttons" too was the center of a flurry, much of the excitement being quite irrelevant to the work Miss Stein was doing. Her essential introduction to the world as one intimately related with the other phases of contemporary expression occurred in *Camera Work*, Special Number 1912 and 1913, where her beautifully presented written portraits of Matisse and Picasso are accompanied by photogravures reproducing work of these men.

In the portrait she composed of each of them is something peculiar to him and to herself, no less arresting and distinguished than the slow, liquid, meandering and profound characterization of the mulatto girl in "Three Lives"—one of the few pieces written by any white person to give some semblance of penetration into Negro consciousness.

Gertrude Stein immensely simplifies the problem of communication between human beings by abstaining from any except the vocal symbols personal to her consciousness. A word is charged with her feeling, an aroma one comes to associate with her and no one else. It is not the thing she is talking about, but what she is saying. In this sense her writing has the value of painting and other plastic expressions. Her flow of word consciousness is always solid, no irrelevant moment is allowed by her own delicate censor to disturb its substance.

She is in elegant and refreshing contrast with the world which is talking *about* everything imaginable without saying anything.

NOTES ON GILBERT CANNAN

"Sembal": By the hard-hitting, stripped style he uses, one knows Gilbert Cannan deals only with the realities he has lived through. His novels are, as any novels must be that are not trash or journalism, records of spiritual adventure. This is true of Sembal in which one feels the revolt against Money as a dominating power, and bafflement at the inevitable differences of race—of Jew and gentile—built into the struggle that at one time absorbs most intellects, that of man and woman. Sembal, the Jew, is an instrument whereby Cannan interprets the fascinating race without nationality against a background of the essentially English.

The novel is, also, a product of the experience which many had during the war years. Almost it enabled men to isolate aspects of mankind in the manner of physicist experimenters who control the conditions of their experiments. Phases of society, habits of thinking went out of organic being in those years. It established new concepts of the residual human, all minorities except the soul of man became slightly ridiculous.

Moments of sheer beauty in vision Mr. Cannan conquered in his delineations—of a woman whose young Sphinx-like gesture, whose contour and fragrance are reflected in men and clash of self against self, of the Jew confronted with an environment he can dominate yet is not part of. In one character, Melian Stokes, is drawn sparsely the reversion of man from political and social illusion.

Cannan's people talk with appropriate directness. Their problem of survival is posited in terms of money lust and racial antagonism. This is the question that has confronted Europe. Cannan does not mince it. There is the physically unpleasant, inwardly cringing yet indestructible Jew, a figure that might have been an embodiment of a non-Jew's feeling about the Jew; opposed to him a fine illusion carried by woman, that is the basic reality of English culture. In the Jew the No Admittance of the well-bred English evokes bitterness and makes him and the thing he does to his environment more Jewish in the destructive sense. This approaches a statement of one of life's problems with something of the severity it deserves. Sembal is a vivid document of our time's spiritual drift.

"Annette and Bennett": "Form and truth blossom into flowers, live for a moment, then are gone, having brought significance into nonsense, simplicity into confusion." There is something of the work in that sentence. Cannan has a speed that is of his time, he has too much feeling to waste sentiment upon life or a work. To be casual is to have the elusive trick as flowers indeed have it. The writing in Annette and Bennett seems profusely tossed off and perhaps it is but at the same time the writer is on the way to accumulation of detail through which feeling is expressed, nowhere more completely attained than in photography which, in the hands of a master, renders majestic simplicities.

One goes from line to line, chapters apart, in Annette and Bennett. "The chemistry of the family should be the paramount study of the twentieth century for, properly understood, the energy of its hatred might be turned to some good purpose. It might be persuaded to turn its corrosive powers upon the horrors of life and away from its natural prey, love and spontaneity and good humor, all of which, being as natural to Annette as breathing, marked her down for doom by the family spirit in the Lawries."

Mr. Cannan's fugue progresses and expands from family to money, so subtly interwoven with it. On the illusion called money families have been founded, never more than in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and it is with people living in those years, with that aspect of Today that Annette and Bennett is concerned. Humanity is living out theses. Money is one of them. The illusion of money is thrown against the figure of the old man, Jamie, sharing his love with dogs and cats and mice and drunken men, and wrecks of women—stealing away Sundays to his son's wife to talk with her in lovely understanding fashion.

"Seek love in the pity of others' woe. In the empty and outcast seek love there. . . . You read?"

"Poetry? No."

"You don't need to. You *are* poetry."

It is the poetry in human beings, women and men who marry because they want to, a free and careless something that turns its back on money, that has finally to confront the brute power of inhumanity money has meant in this age. Annette with an unborn child in her womb and Bennett, defrauded and in debt, are made to confront it. Men in their inhumanity have made a society more inhumane than nature. Nature is careless and indifferent. Money allows only its slaves to live—the viceroys and satraps of money, called bankers, and all the puppets on strings pulled by bankers, called government, politics, statesmanship, foreign affairs, Society . . . Not Mr. Cannan's terms exactly. He does these things better. He is a novelist.

Salvation, he intimates, moves in new ways, through surrender of all save the imperative to see and know. In the old man Jamie the theme is pursued, on his errand of mercy to save Annette and Bennett for the sake of his grandchild, the genius to come, life. Faced with mountains and silence and the clarity that comes out-of-doors he revalues the rubbish and meanness men have built into cities and through cities into their lives. Out of him issues foreboding of collapse: "I only know

that we are at the beginning of such a Hell as never yet has entered into the human soul. We cannot play our old part in it any more, husbands and wives, heroes and fools, tyrants and victims, we shall all be broken into the likeness of—the likeness of—a child, I think.”

To be as sardonic as Mr. Cannan is at times, one need only to have such power as his over words, to place oneself in the bosom of a family and draw the picture as exactly as possible. One member of such a family gives the story away: “Do you realize that there are hundreds and thousands of men and women waiting for their uncles and aunts to die and leave them money, and doing nothing else, a whole generation doing nothing else?”

As for mere death, some novels end with that. To some it gives definition as it does to life. It is at any rate a good thing to end a conversation on.

THE TOLLING OF CLIVE BELL

A taste of dissolution is good for the critic. One feels it in the late wartime and early peacetime essays of Clive Bell assembled in “Since Cézanne.” Mr. Clive Bell insists upon his own gallery of performers, in the interest of fastidiousness, of the good that is better than the best, without which civilization dies and American millionaires flourish. One forgives much for a light conversational manner over the newly dug grave. It is the grave of Europe Mr. Clive Bell stands over and his lightness takes on something of the quality of *beau geste*—though he is unassuming enough. But it is the dead he is talking about: European art, civilization, French culture, English manners, all with the rosy flush on their faces of the finally peaceful corpse. It’s all over. And here is Mr. Clive Bell still amiably talking about it as urbanely as a fashionable clergyman at an 18th century funeral.

Perhaps Americans have not yet the good humor of despair. One turns to Marsden Hartley from reading Clive Bell, not to make invidious comparison, but to reflect that possibly Hartley was forced to write so well because there is no conversation in America. We are not yet acutely enough conscious of dissolution impending to converse easily. So we must look for that art to such experimented intelligences as Clive Bell’s. He has much wisdom about critics, whom he is gracious enough to talk of humorously, without levity. He assumes the beasts exist—and says their function is to be enthusiastic first and then curious about their own enthusiasm. When he goes so far as to assume the existence of the monster called the public—and to assert the critic exists for it—one may demur. The public does not exist. It never did. It never will. It is a fiction of the critic, who is also a non-existent animal.

Mr. Clive Bell himself utters a valedictory over the ghostly creature. It is by the way in his dissertation upon what he calls impressionist method: “He (the critic) does not attempt to criticize in the literal sense of the word; he merely tells us what a book, a picture, or a piece of music makes him feel.” A simple task, as everyone who has tried it knows. One thinks of Francis Thompson on Shelley, Blake writing of the *Canterbury Tales*. They seem to fill the bill. And there are Huysman’s twelfth chapter in “*A Rebours*”, Goethe on German architecture, or in “*Sprüche in Prosa*”, a theological polemic or two of Lessing.

Mr. Clive Bell is himself at moments something of a critic. He evokes the mood, reveals for a moment a tantalizing glimpse of his faith and retires smiling. There is that delicately managed chapter on Wilsonism, or the patriotism of small English that might be small American if a few names were altered, running off beautifully into the remark, “Those terrible young fellows who were feared to be artists turn out after all to be innocent Pre-Raphaelites”—a chapter wherein Mr. Clive Bell attains the supreme height of treating the insignificant with distinction.

So one knows his preferences are not hasty. Of Picasso he writes often, once at least, beautifully. It is worth while to consult those pages, 206 and 207 and after, with the theme: “For him life proves nothing and signifies not much; it is the raw material of art.” Those pages like the best of Mr. Clive Bell are about more than Picasso. They have an echo from a stranger land than Picasso’s Spain. In the concluding “*Plus de Jazz*”, Clive Bell may well have earned the merit of a prophet two years before his time, even a seer of that which never came to be.

HENRIK IBSEN AS POET PHOTOGRAPHER

The keenness of photographic vision into life is in Ibsen's work. It is in that last play of the old master "When We Dead Awaken"; in the closing majesty of icy mountains enveloped in mist, as the sculptor Rubek and his model, immortalized in marble but never loved in flesh, climb toward their desire, to be borne deathward on an avalanche. Only the death of Little Eyolf brings Allmers and Rita to a sense of the futility of clutching after personal happiness. It is almost in an echo of hollow laughter that Erhard sets out from the house of John Gabriel Borkman in quest of life.

The grand theme dominates in Ibsen's plays. Ibsen was writing, as he insists in his letters, poems for a multitude which will not see or hear, inner truth as it welled up from his own life with the artist's character marks upon its form. So he was able to dominate the themes he chose from the very people and the industrial society in which he lived. The poet of life dominates just as in *Jude the Obscure* the poet of life dominates the bitter excoriation of the sins against humanity committed in the name of marriage.

It is because industrialism was perhaps the greatest sin humanity ever permitted, killing love in human beings as Borkman traded Ella's love for his personal advancement, that Ibsen's plays are particularly applicable to phases of our time.

Ibsen too was an opener of doors, a flinger open of windows upon stuffy dark places. Men have accustomed themselves to his ways of poetry, recognizing that once again, in the protean manner of creators, he has brought life closer to vision and understanding, from under the trappings and disguises imposed upon it.

It is hardly strange Ibsen should have been told he was no artist, no poet. So one or two photographers have been told in America. Ibsen in his time made reply: "If I am no poet I have nothing to lose. I'll chance it as photographer." And he added: "I shall not spare the child in its mother's womb, nor thought or mood (*Stimmung*) underlying the word in any human soul, which merits the honor of not being overlooked." Like many another trail blazer of the world he widens the concept of esthetic, writing to Brandes: "I bow, naturally, to the laws of beauty; but about their derivative rules I do not concern myself. They adduce Michel Angelo; in my view no one has sinned more against traditions of beauty than just he; but everything that he created, is nevertheless beautiful; for it is full of character. Rafael's art never indeed warmed me; his figures are at home before the Fall of Man,—and altogether, the southron has a different esthetic than we. He wants formal beauty; for us even the formally unbeautiful can be beautiful, in virtue of its inherent truth."

From verse to the raciest prose of common speech; from saga to the matter over which modern souls struggle. His task becomes, as he writes to Brandes in 1871, to *see*, not to reflect. The works embody the progress outlined in the letters. From early verse dramas builded out of saga and semi-historical material informed by personal experience, from the light social criticism of "The Comedy of Love," he proceeded in "Brand" to the struggle of the inflexible idealist endeavoring to realize his integrity against the compromising lies of church and state; in *Peer Gynt* to the spirit of compromise, of lies, grandiloquent dreams and poetizing, seeking to evade the definitive tragedy that confers upon the individual his distinction. By the time he writes *The Wild Duck*, Ibsen has matured. It is less effort then, to dispose of the idealist. The merciless eye is closer to life and the idealist, Gregers Werle, is only a shallow disturber of others' peace—misjudging the equally shallow romanticist Hjalmar Ekdal and destroying a household founded upon the illusions without which, as Relling correctly observes, most people cannot live.

The photographic and amoral attitude of this poet lead him to the modern concept of fate: "It is not a matter of willing this or that, but of wanting that which one absolutely must, because one happens to be oneself and cannot otherwise. All else leads only into lies."

Though he harked to the time of Julian the Apostate for his "Emperor and Galilean", to embody the argument within himself over Christian ethic against pagan impulse; yet his art, the art of the theatre in his hands was widened in accord with his time to include sociological and biological questions of disease and heredity. In *The Doll's House*, *Pillars of Society* and *The League of Youth*, current sentimental delusions about marriage, respectable pretense, and shallow political radicalism are thoroughly raked over. In *The Lady of the Sea* is analysis of a conflict of intentions where there is not freedom of choice, carried out almost in psycho-analytic fashion. Again, *Solness*, in the *Master Builder*, is linked to a woman held by grief to the past because her dolls were destroyed in the burning of their home; in him the trolls and devils of impulse are at war with his over-sensitive conscience.

Ibsen recognized, as he said, that art forms die like fabled monsters of antiquity. When he was abused for having written *Ghosts*, he relieved himself in *An Enemy of the People*—arriving at Stockmann's discovery that he is the strongest man in the world because he stands alone. He concentrates on identifying the outer world through vision with the soul of man, attempting to bridge by picturing it, the gap between man's activity and his knowledge. One by one he discards obstacles in dramatic technic and form so that, as he writes in 1882, his intention is to evoke the impression in his reader of an experience of Reality. To Björnson he writes, in the same year, of Rosmersholm, that it treats of the struggle every earnest human being has to undergo with himself, to bring his conduct of life in unison with his perception.

"The various spiritual functions do not develop side by side and equally in one and the same

individual. The impulse to absorb races on from gain to gain. Moral consciousness, 'conscience', on the other hand, is very conservative. It has its deep roots in tradition and, altogether, in the past. Out of this arises the individual conflict.

"But above all the piece is, naturally, a poem of human beings and human destinies."

Ibsen's work is especially relevant to America. We are a nation of Peer Gynts. Nowhere has industrialism so completely permeated the lives of masses of people as here, proceeding from this country as from a centre to engulf Europe. Of the onset of industrialism Ibsen's work is an ineradicable picture. It is in the boredom of sterile Hedda Gabler moving to destruction; in the speeding of workmen and entrusting of lives to rotten ships in *Pillars of Society*; in the venality dominating all but Stockmann in *An Enemy of the People*; it moves through the catastrophe of John Gabriel Borkman; and issues finally in the terrible indictment of our time from the lips of Mrs. Alving: "But, Manders, I believe almost that we are *all* ghosts. Not only what we have inherited from father and mother goes on in us. There are all imaginable old dead attitudes and all sorts of old dead belief and so on. It does not live in us; but it remains in our blood nevertheless and we cannot get rid of it. If I merely take up a newspaper and read in it, it seems to me I see ghosts slinking between the lines. Ghosts must be living roundabout in the whole country. They must be as numerous, I believe, as sand at the sea. And then we are so Godforsakenly shy of light, one and all."

WHITMAN'S PROSE

An elder Disraeli of our day might have added to grotesque episodes in literature, the comments of pundits on Walt Whitman. I recall a critique by the novelist Knut Hamsun, translated for and published in a German review, and devoted almost exclusively to ridicule of Whitman's verse. Another case is that of the esthetician, G. Santayana, who once delivered himself as follows concerning Walt Whitman:

"He had had no education and his natural delight in imbibing sensations had not been trained to the uses of practical or theoretical intelligence. He basked in the sunshine of perception and wallowed in the stream of his own sensibility, as later at Camden in the shallows of his favorite brook. Even during the civil war, when he heard the drum-taps so clearly, he could only gaze at the picturesque and terrible aspects of the struggle, and linger among the wounded day after day with a canine devotion; he could not be aroused either to clear thought or to positive action."

One is reminded of those who were taunted during the European war because it affected them only with painful boredom and distress at the mad waste of it and at the triumph of the insignificant that was its immediate consequence.

In the case of Whitman, though, it seems strange that an esthetician should have ignored Whitman's Quaker antecedents which forbade his fighting; and should slightly have called "canine devotion" that which made many a wounded boy and man look upon Whitman as a healing presence in the horrors of military hospitals—so that doctors, recognizing the potency of his gentleness and magnetism would say of a case hopeless from the medical point of view, "Turn him over to Whitman—maybe he can do something."

That faculty is a sort of equivalent for the practical or theoretical intelligence Whitman lacked. One wonders if poets and artists of pure quality have not often lacked just such practical and theoretical equipment. Certainly in the larger sense there is something both practical and theoretical in the vision which informed the American scene with life and vividness for Whitman and made him unique expressor of it for his epoch in literature. It was not mere naiveté that made him forsake rhyme—and seek out the intensely personal vehicle for his utterance—knowingly offending the conventions—in the pursuit of his form.

To many critics and detractors of Whitman it seems his prose remains to be discovered in the remarkable volume of it published by Mr. Mitchell Kennerley. One wonders whether by any critic the grateful subject of Robert Burns has been more humanely and penetratingly rendered. There are pages of authentic American chronicle in Whitman, whose consciousness and clarity should give pause to the parrotings about Whitman's barbaric yawp, naiveté, innocence, lack of education, what-not. There has not been a more sensitive experimenter in prose in America than Whitman, nor, in the subjects he took pains to explore, a more penetrating and exact critic. His own magnificent sentence might be applied to himself: "But to speak in literature with the perfect rectitude and insouciance of the movements of animals, and the unimpeachableness of the sentiment of trees in the woods and grass by the roadside, is the flawless triumph of art." If Whitman lacked university training he was spared the regimentation and ossification of taste that has so well-nigh universally accompanied it. One wonders how many have ever more deeply experienced Homer than Whitman declaiming Chapman's translation at the surf on the then barren Coney Island shore. If his taste and enjoyment betray indiscriminateness, that is merely the final proof of his at-one-ness with the sprawling American culture that environed him and shouted through his nerves and veins.

No one has written more masterfully of poetry and the poet: "The known universe has one complete lover, and that is the greatest poet. He consumes an eternal passion, and is indifferent which chance happens, and which possible contingency of fortune or misfortune, and persuades daily and hourly his delicious pay. . . . The sea is not surer of the shore, or the shore of the sea, than he is of the fruition of his love, and of all perfection and beauty."

VAN WYCK BROOKS AND RANDOLPH BOURNE

Rereading Van Wyck Brooks' "Letters and Leadership" and the posthumous collection of Randolph Bourne's writing in "The History of a Literary Radical", one cannot help feeling that these two men belonged side by side in our time. Brooks, for one, has such an engaging portrait of Bourne in the introduction to Bourne's work. Their ideas too moved sympathetically, one reinforcing the other. Both were then searching for the values which would give fibre to their lives and the lives of others in the American environment. Both were set against the commercialization and institutionalization of values. Brooks drew suggestively biting pictures of prematurely aged American cities, deprecated the iron bounds set by pioneering America to adventures in the spirit—urged the claims of youth against the bloodless cultural veneer with its component materialist cynicism that dominated the older critics. He was saying Go! to the younger generation. Bourne's was the sprightlier, more versatile talent, whatever his indebtedness to Brooks for his logical framework. If Bourne was the impish scholar gypsy Brooks has suggested, and at the last a wistful child, Brooks remained always the scholar. Bourne soared and dived a veritable Puck in the chalice of satire, buzzed and flirted about the ears of his older or even-aged contemporaries. Glimpses of brightness, of women's eyes and chatter and laughter are in Bourne, he could be a parent for a day, the casual and stinging lash of satire is laid alongside pages of tremulous readiness for intellectual discovery and comradeship and of hope in the world's great experiment being conducted on American soil. This is all in "The History of a Literary Radical" as well as in the earlier "Youth and Life" in which Bourne announced himself as an essayist of distinction. The books are apart from the sombrero and more biting and lonely pages of "Untimely Papers." There Bourne found himself at grips with the stifling air of war hysteria and in a sort of solitary grandeur stripped masks from the hideous realities which all but himself apparently had acquiesced in. War made a solitary of the man preeminently gay and loving, forced him to turn at bay upon the powers he felt were crushing the breath of life out of all he held dearest. There are for permanent record of that dark hour and America's shame, his pages on the collapse of American strategy, the bankruptcy of her intellectuals, and his knife-keen assault upon the State, repeating almost in refrain what many a liberal spirit of our time has felt: "War is the health of the State."

Of the two figures, although Bourne is some years dead and Brooks has since added to his work the penetrating cultural criticism of his "The Ordeal of Mark Twain", Bourne is likely to live the more flashingly and brilliantly in his countrymen's memory. Like other Americans of faith he will perhaps be long in coming to his own. He was at odds with the drift of his own generation and in America lapses from orthodoxy are forgiven and treasured only by a few pressed in upon from all sides by a hostile environment. But Bourne's due, one feels, cannot be everlastingly withheld from him. He was not merely sensitive, he withstood the lashing of fate, that world storm of more than the elements that raged in men and, having closed all doors to him, finally beat him down. It will then be no small increment to the repute of Van Wyck Brooks to have been intimately merged for a time with the inquiring and joyous intelligence of Randolph Bourne.

TOULOUSE-LAUTREC

Toulouse-Lautrec lithographs have, some of them, an unearthly glassy surface. He is frank as the black gloves of the French prostitute then were frank. She was not a teaser, she gave her body if not her lips. Through drooping line of vulgarity he searches out straining abundance of life. Yvette Guilbert's triumphant self is represented through her coarseness. His uglinesses have character, delicacy and distinction, like a subtly unpleasant odor. He is of the circus and in its midst, his line laughs at the seriousness of the clown, laughs at the performers in Hamlet or at opera singers. In the vulgarity of his people is the breath and spice of being, he has wandered open-eyed making his autographic record of Oscar Wilde's Paris and of Sarah Bernhardt and many a vaudevillian known to our time not even by name. He triumphs in light linear entertainment of the finest and most classical perfection. A lithograph of a skating rink slips and is slippery with movement, a scratched line in ice swinging his skating figure widely. He would perhaps have asked no higher appreciation than to be told he could accomplish with his point what acrobats do with their bodies: they masters of the moment, he possessing and perpetuating the moment and them as well. The exhibition of his work in the Scribner building* showed him searching out the person of Yvette Guilbert; perhaps in that soul he found the ineluctable line running into the face, and black depths, which he knew so well how to translate. A clownesse sits slumped in one lithograph, her black tight-covered legs spread wide, her hands dangling between them; the line is coarse; a yellow bodice is coarse in color. it is living. Toulouse-Lautrec could not do anything insensitive, he was biting not indifferent, incisive not brutal, his world could not overcome him. He had enough of the race horse in his lymph and bone to master the circus and circus people, comedy actresses and women in bed. All vaudevillians and clowns of Toulouse-Lautrec have fine dignity; per contra we are all performers. His laughter was crackling but always humane. Whom have we to laugh us in such fashion to our sanities?

*Under the auspices of the French Museum.

A MAN OF NATURE

W. H. HUDSON

There was a boy in South America who loved a red cardinal, a bird, and remembered the grief of its loss when he was an old man. There was a boy, become an old man, whose passion ran to open spaces and to notes and forms and brilliances of the intimations of immortality that fly overhead—birds. It was a boy and a man who had true imagination to love, for he preferred the objects of his love free as they themselves would be. Always the glitter of dew, the fresh scent of out-of-doors was in his mind, captured and held fluttering like one of those very birds above the printed page for the mind to apprehend if it will and can. It is neither in paper nor printer's ink yet it is here in the library, it makes the library walls, even the gray of wider prisons fall away and there are the spaces of marsh by sea waters. night-wandered tree spaces breathe and compose themselves in a serene silence everywhere, broken only by the flutter of wings and a drumming or clear piercing call. W. H. Hudson is gone. He is among the quiet dead. Yet his love remains, one of those fine clear lenses giving upon a world lovelier and more sensitive than the common eye can know. He would have smiled indulgently at one invoking his aid in evading the city for fresher, lonelier places. Did he not say of himself that he was one "to follow knowledge like a sinking star, to be and to know much until I became a name for always wandering with a hungry heart—"

It is a pleasure to think of W. H. Hudson—not only for the beauties he has created in those two fanciful evocations—*Green Mansions* and *A Crystal Age*—each with a shivering cry of horror shattering an elysium—not entirely for the South American tales and the pictures of gauchos—but rather for the serene open air feeling he carries with him everywhere. It is a singular mastery that holds sway in Hudson's pages. He is one of the few men who have ever, with that organ-like instrument, the English language, given the feeling, the sense of unearthly tinkle or strange raucous cry, all in its peculiar setting, that is a bird song. It is the scientist artist in fusion. He may go in a rapturous lyric of creation over the whiteness of common ducks shone on by the sun in a pool of trembling blue. Or he may hear an uncommon note of a ring-ouzel and deduce the bird's ancestry in the scale of creation. He may too, in the wide spaces that were nature's when he rode the South American plains, "go back" as he put it, take the reader with him on a voyage more magical than Sinbad's to a state of primitiveness when the civilized mind sleeps or abdicates and nature plays through a man's being as the wind does through grass. He is of the "gentlemen" of whom Hardy's poem discourses, men making way for something new and alien. For he loved what was simple and savored of earth—even to knowing and respecting nature's ferocities in animal and man. At cities one felt him straining, to be rid of the meaningless rush and striving, wishing to sit and think and listen and above all observe with every fibre. Everywhere it is creation's song he is celebrating, the bird straining his throat to release miracles of song, the old man in a country road full of memory; flower and beast, and in his romances the ineluctable music of creation that man's mind could make, shivered in the sharp touch of reality.

A rolic of old song runs through his pages, he has read the Elizabethans and, as few of them could, discourses soberly and exactly without losing focus on the scene or range of idea he had fixed. Altogether, one of the masters of life and English letters, to whom one can turn always sure of his realities and imagination in fusion, directing a pure and shapely utterance.

Be it said of him too that so early as 1893 when he gave to the world his "Idle Days in Patagonia," in a chapter given to whiteness and his experience of a first snow, he dwelled on Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, and on the dissertation in that book on whiteness in nature and its effect on the human mind—rejecting Melville's suggestion of a quality in white things that awes the human—and placing its cause in animism which he distinguishes finely from Tyler's conception, as being "the mind's projection of itself into nature, its attribution of its own sentient life and intelligence to all things—"

GEORGIA O'KEEFFE, AMERICAN

What is an ocean wave of the Maine coast—how represent the space of Texas plains and the skies over them—how translate the spirit of one living here and now, man or woman, or the life of plant—how phrase immaculately one's recognition of this magnificence?

Georgia O'Keeffe has answered these questions for herself, making her research in charcoal drawing, water color, pastel and oil painting. She has never been, as she informs us, in Europe, though she was introduced, as were multitudes of Americans, to modern European expression through the medium of "291." Her work, entirely and locally American, with a proud and unaccustomed mastery, is therefore unique.

Color is her language. Her body acknowledges its kindred shapes and renders the visible scene in those terms. A few bold delicate strokes lay upon paper a woman's figure in vibrant red, or green and slate shot with rose. Light radiates from interpenetrating color in designs of sunrise over prairie. Heavy depths of blue swing in smooth pastel, or rhythm and plunge of wave is lightly touched, even in white, against white paper.

From early language of line and wash to later pastels and oils a song unfolds. Canvas and paper are bathed in April skies and lush greens of spring, flaming Autumn among trees and waters even jagged dazzle of starlight or notes heard are given to the eye. Georgia O'Keeffe makes one wonder why the senses of hearing and of vision are isolated when the same body houses them. For color is as intimate to her as the musical note that passes through the ear to innermost organs of sense.

Growing and elemental things are close to her, she sets down exactly what they seem. Each thing she makes has its own life, unfolds simplicities of growing plant, of sea-mighty, sky-wide rhythm of the universe. Musician of color, Georgia O'Keeffe achieves liberation of the eye. Families of her apples laugh radiantly. White zenias stare quaintly. Winds blow among dark trees. The body knows tree and fruit, breastlike contour of cloud and black cleaving of lake shore from water's reflection—all things and shapes related to the body, to its identity become conscious.

Georgia O'Keeffe's intensity suggests woman as Greco's was the release of nervous energy of a man. She is of the world family that bore Henri Rousseau, singer in color; whose paintings are hushed with jungle peace and celestial calm of monkeys staring from among great white blossoms upon an alien world. O'Keeffe's is an edged and more intensely swirling accent than Rousseau's dream-like calm. The sharpness of bodily experience is here, in bulging apples, in the thrust of Congoesque arch of fruit basket over gleaming whiteness, seeming to bend the lines of picture frame. Skies are jagged in immense revolution, flame laps the human body, grey billows, curtain like or opaque white of iridescent delicacy, shut out the world.

Her early work is an expansion of classic prescription. Solid seeming forms clash upon her design, seem to thrust out from her canvas, relieve themselves from surface. Still the texture, of uncanny, fairylike fineness, tapestry rough, pebbly, glossy or opaque is sustained; and sometimes rockets of color soar, dark planes, ribbons of flaming gold pass and are built in musical harmony. In the late green apples upon black surrounded by silver white, forms are held in their plane and green glimmers with the vibrant quality of red.

Then, too, her color cannot always be called pleasing. It is something more. As with object and design, so color clashes, of pink, yellow and purple, that would be common were they not so firm, are made part of Georgia O'Keeffe's distinction.

Through this work American aspects are identified and made personal, O'Keeffe has made the ocean wave or sky, flower or fruit, herself. She has added to America's chronicle hitherto unattempted truths of a woman's sensibility. It is in terms of the identity in her statement that all her works are related to each other and to life. She has made music in color issuing from the finest bodily tremor in which sound and vision are united.

A SIGNPOST TO FOUR NOVELS OF EMILE ZOLA

Alfred Stieglitz once narrated how, forty years ago, in Berlin, he had read through Zola's "Madeleine Féral" at one sitting; then, upon arrival of his roommate and a friend, had begun reading the book aloud to them, without interruption, finishing that second reading the same night.

Such enthusiasm is due "Madeleine Féral" and three other works of Zola that Stieglitz mentioned. They are product of enormous vitality focussed upon life. These works do not accord with the Zola legend. They show him not the "naturalist" people have in mind, rather the impassioned and fascinated observer, photographic in intention. He crammed the novel with more than narrative, as did Huysmans then; making of it as Ibsen made of the drama an instrument of vision; as Stieglitz in this time has widened the horizon of photography to make conceptual music.

It is as signpost to four almost ignored masterpieces of Emile Zola that the following notes are to be taken, passing on to others the suggestion made by Alfred Stieglitz—one of the stories out of his life, revelations that have sent many people upon eager searches.

I

Zola himself called "La faute de l'abbé Mouret," "cette oeuvre intime et de demi-teinte," thinking doubtless of its lyricism and exploration of the struggle with flesh and passion in an ascetic's soul. Life steams in the book, he has caught the sunwarmed odor of farm animals and the animal indifference of nature. This and the luxuriant wilderness of Paradou, comparable perhaps with the jungle in "Green Mansions," is the setting for Mouret's struggle to extirpate flesh in himself. It might have been a psychologist versed in ecclesiastical literature who found in Mouret's dreams, his adoration of the Virgin Mary and self-castigation, the same desire that united him in the Paradou with the elf-like girl woman, Albine. Mouret's forgetfulness in illness of his churchly office, the close attunement of his convalescence with season and sunlight, the introduction even of motives from the faded wallpaper of his sickroom, are of closest human observation and musical craftsmanship; culminating in the abandon of Zola's passionate evocation of forest, plain and living presences, all nature resonant with Mouret's and Albine's mating. It is all delicately observed, the struggle is never lost from view until asceticism triumphs in Mouret, killing his physical desire under the domination of his coarse sadhist friar. This figure, like the other minor ones of the book, is perfectly rendered. Zola has explored deeply the torture of mysticism and of dedication to a life of such religion as the Catholic Church offers the priest; as elsewhere he attempted the problem of the demand made by creative labor upon the artist—painter or writer. This work, like every fine emanation of living and suffering, pulses with the balance of something over nothing that imparts to sentience its intensity and its pain.

II

Hélène in "Une page d'amour", sits before a window giving upon the roofs and a wide view of Paris, and muses upon novels, after reading Ivanhoe. "Comme ce romans mentaient! Elle avait bien raison de ne jamais en lire. C'étaient des fables bonnes pour les têtes vides, qui n'ont point le sentiment exact de la vie." It is the *sentiment exact de la vie* Zola is always striving for. Hélène in the swing, early in Une page d'amour, is caught in a picture that might be cited for comparison with the more famous horse race of Tolstoy's "Anna Karenina."

Zola's feeling which escapes the stereotyped reputation he bears, is fine for the quick, bird-like, distant thought and gesture of Hélène's child. His discipline releases the lightness of pressure which alone can render the child's iridescent line. He can be intimate in drawing Jeanne and her companion, Lucien, without condescension, having a full sense of their spiritual dignity. He has too a sense of burlesque, of the children's Punch and Judy show as aspect of life, of the relentlessness with which change, sin, tragedy, sorrow intrude themselves upon natures calm and placid like Hélène's.

Seized in whatever access of the passion of composition Zola nevertheless directs his energies toward the *sentiment exact de la vie* compounded of such disparate elements. His is a single photographic eye gazing even inward on the dark of human beings, on the movement and turmoil awaiting exploration like the forces of nature they emulate.

In the vengeance of his power of evocation he creates diabolical struggles within the self—the self-torture of abbé Mouret, the ingenious jealousy of the child, Jeanne, the annihilation of Madeleine Féral. It is of the sense of contradiction which Zola's eye does not refuse to see in life that the finest and keenest agonies should occur in the most delicately organized natures. It is of the essential foreignness of the world that a sensibility fitted seemingly to taste profusely should in that degree be susceptible of torture.

"Pourquoi en aime-t-il d'autres? . . ." says Jeanne to her mother of Dr. Deberle after her child's jealousy has done utilizing nervous crises to separate the lovers.

Through all the volume is the pulse of Paris. Charpentier had no more passion for Paris than Zola. Hélène's window is always open to the city, it is yellow and blue in sunlight as if viewed through crystal, it darkens carbonaceous with twilight, the immensities of starlit heavens over Paris terrify, and as Paris is lighted at night, a glowing red incandescence utters the infernal note against the heavens over this cauldron, this maelstrom of lives. Here Zola essays the ruthlessness of the city, as elsewhere of the country, and its nervous traits are upon each of his individuals.

It is the city, of Paris, snowy and quiet, and the child Jeanne in her coffin facing that unknown, forever, that Zola realizes. To his cold, clear finale is a progression through aspects of the seasons and profound ironies. The unacknowledged desires of human beings, it is perceived, avenge themselves.

The flow of this novel has a dreamlike and unreal quality of life itself. A chill cemetery remains, snowy Paris and the dead child eternally in face of one another whilst Hélène and M. Rambaud, launched anew on the small business of existence, seem to evade the end of the book. With ruthless and giant vision life is rendered. This book, like existence, is crowded with detail almost imperceptibly bearing its reasoned, logical theme.

III

"God has not pardoned" Such is the epilogue spoken by a fanatical old house servant at the conclusion of "Madeleine Féral." It is the moralist's comment upon the unmoral devolution Zola's sculptural prose unfolds. Its theme is the fate people carry in themselves. Madeleine Féral's bodily recollection of her first casual love, and her husband's jealousy, are the issue they flee from and rediscover everywhere. They yearn over the abyss of that first love of hers; just so much the more is she possessed by the memories her body will not forget. Even in the cast of features of their child, Guillaume discovers a reminiscence of his best friend. It is conscious irony that distills of the lifework of chemical research of Guillaume's father, only the poison with which Madeleine quenches life. Not many have ever so gazed upon life as this work proves Zola to have done.

IV

"—Oui, mon vieux, à l'école, ils corrigent le modèle . . . L'autre jour, Mazel s'approche et me dit: 'Les deux cuisses ne sont pas d'aplomb.' Alors, je lui dis: 'Voyez, monsieur, elle les a comme ça.' C'était la petite Flore Beauchamp, vous savez. Et il me dit, furieux: 'Si elle les a comme ça, elle a tort.'" The joyous camaraderie of indigent painters, sculptors, writers is in "L'Oeuvre," Paris is a city to be conquered; life less a problem than the rendering of it. There are hymns to life from the lips of Zola's protagonist of genius, Claude, whose portrait is said to have estranged Zola from Cézanne upon whom it was modeled. Lyrical interlude of young girlhood, of the woman Christine giving herself to assuage the fury of Claude's agonies of toil; brilliant pictures of the society clustering about exhibitions when painting was conquering realms of light and color; the sparkle of ideas generated between the minds of working creative artists are in this book, a document of a period never to return. In this episode of the vast eternally creating nature Zola never tires of celebrating, he endeavors to render his faith in it—"and the audacities of language, the conviction that all must be said, that there are abominable words necessary as red hot iron, that an enriched tongue arise out of these mighty baths; and above all the act of sex, origin and continual achievement of the world, drawn from the shame where it is hid, returned to its glory, under the sun." Sandoz, the novelist, speaking out of the depth of Zola, wishes the public might have done him the honor to understand and rage at his audacities, not the imbecile filth ascribed to him.

Zola's protagonist, Claude, is confronted always with the toil and the desolating problem of painting—"Perpetual mirage that whips the courage of the damned of art, lying tenderness and pity without which production would be impossible, for all those who die of not being able to make life."

The mirage of art, of hopeless struggle with inert matter absorbs Claude. It becomes a monster stealing him from his wife. His fingers congeal her body piecemeal as they touch her skin, giving the touch, as his eyes have given glances, not of love and desire, but of the painter, appraising skin textures and surfaces, colors and contours. This monster of painting makes a thing of his wife, of it she has the jealousy of despair. It throws him in momentary and negligent abandon to a fashionable woman of the town, steals his money and his life. Sandoz too confesses his labors have robbed him of his mother, his wife, friends the world. "Plus rien, plus rien dans mon trou que le travail et moi, et il me mangera, et il n'y aura plus rien, plus rien!" Confronted with the child his work has killed, Claude cannot resist the temptation in the very hour of death's announcement to take a canvas for a study of a dead child.

It is a profound exposition of the nature of art Zola achieved, acknowledging its root in sweat, blood, the very substance of human suffering and experience; in contrast with the society in which works of the spirit are treated as things, subordinate to the social considerations clinging about money. For the artist, the workman in values, what significance has it? He throws his force in the unequal struggle of life against annihilation, hearing close to his ear the whisper of a vast cold penetrating Nothing. It is of this Sandoz speaks to Claude when they have been to the country and noticed the obliteration of all traces of Claude's and Christine's former home: "As-tu jamais songé à cela, toi, que la postérité n'est peut-être pas l'impeccable justicière que nous rêvons? . . ." And Claude replies: "Bah! qu'est-ce que ça fiche? il n'y a rien . . . Nous sommes plus fous encore que les imbéciles qui se tuent pour une femme. Quand la terre claquera dans l'espace comme une noix sèche, nos oeuvres n'ajouteront pas un atome à sa poussière."

Zola has written a chapter with the quality of a great organ playing, as Claude, risen at night and holding in one hand a candle, his shadow making gigantesque gestures, paints at the masterpiece that will give him no rest—his wife in desperation pleading her love, life itself against the obsession, the master, the god of painting that possesses him. "Non, ce n'est point assez," he exclaims—"Je ne veux pas aller avec toi, je ne veux pas être heureux, je veux peindre." This, the deepest wish of his life, carries him to death, he hangs himself after the surrender of flesh in wild abandon to the importunity of his wife.

For man, there is only work, this book seems to say. In the struggle of its impulse, embodied in genius, with woman, she may conquer, giving as she believes, herself in lieu of the effigy called art. But her victory may be at expense of the creative impulse, of life itself. It is a profound study of the pathology of art, of the finest values of European culture.