

Eliot floored them with the notes to "The Waste Land."

M. Josephson, alas, rather spoils its effect by rubbing it in—that is, by arguing solemnly that "Apollinaire" was of romantic and mysterious origin—that his mother was a Polish lady of a noble house and his father "a high prelate of the Catholic Church"—that he was born at Monte Carlo and baptized in Santa Maria Maggiore at Rome. This is too much. "Apollinaire," I make no doubt, was, like all Frenchmen of humor, a German Jew. His father was a respectable waiter at Appenrodt's, by name perhaps Max Spritzwasser: hence the *nom de plume*. His mother, I venture, was a Mlle. Kunigunda Schmidt.

### Art Criticism

CHINESE PAINTING AS REFLECTED IN THE THOUGHT AND ART OF LI LUNG-MIEN, by Agnes E. Meyer. New York: Duffield & Company.  
WILLIAM GLACKENS, by Forbes Watson. New York: Duffield & Company.

GEORGES SEURET, by Walter Pach, New York: Duffield & Company.

A HISTORY OF ART, by Dr. G. Carotti, revised by Mrs. Arthur Strong, Litt.D., LL.D. Three volumes. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company.

THE book on Glackens by Forbes Watson and that on Seuret by Walter Pach belong to a series called "The Arts Monographs," edited by Mr. Watson. Their appearance simultaneously with Mrs. Meyer's searching and beautiful work on Li Lung-Mien, issued by the same publisher, must inevitably direct attention to their superficiality as criticism and their poverty as printing. Mr. Watson is so careless as an editor that in his own brief and vague essay on Glackens he permits himself a reference to a plate (page 16) that is not to be found where he says it is. But the printing in both of these monographs is far worse than the text. Any competent commercial engraver could make plates just as good, and any self-respecting printer, if he took the trouble, could print them better.

Mrs. Meyer's book, now appearing in a second edition, is immeasurably more workmanlike. Her plates, though they

are unfortunately few in number, are carefully done in collotype, and her text is painstaking, accurate and extremely interesting. Li Lung-Mien belonged to the Sung period (960-1280), but she by no means confines her discussion to the Chinese painting of that time. Instead she attempts a study of the whole history of Chinese art, with particular reference to its grounding in Chinese culture. The relationship has been intimate from the earliest days. The painting of the West, especially in the modern period, has tended to isolate itself in an artificial world of its own creation. Painters are no longer citizens like the rest of us, interested in taxes, Teapot Domes, the price of wheat and the evidence for the Virgin Birth, but inhabitants of an Alsatia of their own, and highly disdainful of everything going on beyond its borders. Not so with the Chinese. Li Lung-Mien, like the great painters who went before him and those who followed after him, was primarily an interpreter of Chinese thought and the Chinese spirit—a social historian and philosopher even before he was a painter. His paintings thus retain the glow of life after eight hundred years. They are not merely pretty things; they are documents in the cultural history of a great race.

It is unfortunate that the Western world knows the art of the Chinese chiefly through its imitation by their intellectual poor relations, the Japanese. This is almost as if the architecture of the Greeks were known only through the parodies of it perpetrated by official architects at Washington. The Japanese owe almost everything they have to the Chinese, and they have debased and vulgarized everything. That they have surpassed their masters in mere technical skill is not to be gainsaid; even the worst of their work shows a great deal of cleverness. But they lack the simple dignity of the Chinese in the fine arts precisely as they lack it in life. They are an efficient but inferior people. The Chinese move less swiftly, but accomplish a great deal more. In almost every field of

art, from architecture to painting and from the design of fabrics to gem-cutting, they can show work of the very highest quality. Nothing they attempt seriously is ever cheap and obvious.

The Carotti "History of Art" is probably the most useful handbook of the subject obtainable in English. Its three volumes proceed no further than the end of the Middle Ages, but from that period back to the dawn of architecture in Egypt they sweep the whole field in an extraordinarily comprehensive and satisfying manner. The present edition presents no less than 1257 illustrations. All of them, of course, are necessarily small, and in some cases their scale conceals or muddles detail, but in the main they serve their purpose admirably. Not one of them is superfluous; each actually illustrates and clarifies the text. That text is succinct, well-informed and well-arranged.

### *Three Gay Stories*

THE HIGH PLACE, by James Branch Cabell. New York: Robert M. McBride & Company.

ANTIC HAY, by Aldous Huxley. New York: The George H. Doran Company.

THE BLIND BOW-BOY, by Carl Van Vechten. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

THREE capital comedies for marionettes—that of Mr. Cabell, perhaps, showing the most adept workmanship and that of Mr. Van Vechten being the most novel in plan. "The High Place" is in the manner of the celebrated "Jurgen," and all the ground that the author seemed to lose in the first successor to "Jurgen," to wit, "Figures of Earth," is here recovered in a handsome style, with some gains further on. "The High Place," indeed, is far more competently put together than "Jurgen." The fundamental idea is simpler; the structure is less complex and dispersed. In brief, the melancholy story of a dream come true. Florian de Puysange has a vision in youth of the perfect maiden, Melior. Her beauty is beyond all other conceivable beauty; she is perfect as the seraphim are perfect. But not unattainable! Florian hacks his way to her through dragons and monsters;

he employs magicians to aid him; he is helped both by the Devil and by a holy saint. In the end he wins his Melior, and discovers—That she is a shrew? No; nothing so obvious. He discovers that she is an unbearable and incurable bore.

The tale has charm almost without measure. It is clear-running, it is ingenious, and it is full of truly delightful detail. Mr. Cabell was never more shrewd, sardonic, iconoclastic, daring. He has made a romance that is captivating in itself, and yet remains a devastating *reductio ad absurdum* of all romance. It is as if the species came to perfect flower in a bloom that poisoned itself. I praise it no more, but pass on to its defects, of which there are two. The first issues out of the fact that the author appears to be down with a bad case of pronounophobia; in particular, the pronouns of the third person seem to affright him. The result is a multiplicity of such sentences as this one: "Thus it was not until the coming of Spring that Florian rode away from the Hôtel de Puysange, wherein he had just passed the first actually unhappy period of Florian's life." Why not "his" for the second "Florian"? The sentence is botched as it stands—and a botched sentence in Cabell stands out as brilliantly as a good one in D. H. Lawrence. A worse defect comes at the very end of the book. Cabell brings it up to a logical and delightful finale, and then tacks on a banal chapter explaining that Florian's adventures in two worlds have been but the fancies of a dream—that he has never actually wooed, won and married the incomparable Melior, that he is still a romantic boy asleep under a magic tree. It is almost as bad as if he had added a moral chapter advocating the World Court and the Coolidge idealism. Still worse, he prints a second appendix hinting plainly that Florian has been called back to life and youth in order to open the way for a sequel. Such crimes against sense and decency are too gross to be punished in literary courts. If there is a