

# HIS MASTERS' VOICE

BY HENRY F. PRINGLE

BACK in the occasionally lamented days when the Democratic party still spurned the tainted gold of Wall Street for the honest coppers of humble folk, and Calvin Coolidge was but the strong and silent city solicitor of Northampton, a press agent was a gentleman who wore a checked suit, patent-leather shoes, possibly spats, a brown derby and yellow gloves. He breezed into town ten days ahead of the circus or the ten-twenty-thirt' show, bought the editor a few drinks, told an unprintable story or two, and received, in due time, a column of free puff.

Ivy Ledbetter Lee, who writes blurbs about the activities of such great American institutions as John D. Rockefeller (Senior and Junior), the Standard Oil Company, Charles M. Schwab, the Bethlehem Steel Company, the Pennsylvania Railroad—and others which he declines to divulge—is quite another type. Gone are the yellow gloves, the derby and the gaudy suit. Mr. Lee dresses with the conservatism of any high-toned and conservative American. His hobby is cathedrals, a taste acquired like that for olives, since at first they bored him. He is said to be one of the few men in New York who can keep millionaires cooling their heels in his ante-room. But diligent sceptics report that they have seldom seen any millionaires engaged in that occupation.

In the current edition of "Who's Who in America" thirty lines are devoted to Mr. Lee. He is also listed, unlike the gayly dressed pioneers of his profession, in the Social Register. He is a member of the best, the most worthwhile clubs. Among them

are the University, the Princeton and the Metropolitan of New York, the Rittenhouse of Philadelphia and the Travellers' of London. It is a fact that he rarely visits the New York Newspaper Club, to which he also belongs. His town house is at 4 East Sixty-sixth street, just two blocks from the exact social center of New York, as determined by scientists in the employ of the Social Register Association: it is in Sixty-eighth street, a few doors east of the Park. Miss Alice Lee, his daughter, was this year presented at the Court of St. James.

Mr. Lee has a suite of offices at 111 Broadway. When Mr. Rockefeller, Jr., offers the unappreciative Egyptians a museum or the liberal Baptists a church, one of Mr. Lee's secretaries at once telephones all the city editors in New York. He also notifies the Associated Press, the United Press and the other news associations. A statement, the secretary reveals, will be issued at 4 o'clock. At the designated hour, more or less promptly, a dozen reporters arrive. They are received cordially and handed typewritten statements. Are there any questions? If so, Mr. Lee answers them diplomatically. He expresses regret that Mr. Rockefeller is out of town, but says that any inquiries will be called to his attention. The reporters stuff the handouts into their pockets, one or two of them protesting *sotto voce* against the rôle of messenger boy, and leave. Mr. Lee has told them no funny stories, and offered them no drinks. But he will, that afternoon and the next morning, receive his column or two of free space.

Ivy Ledbetter Lee, however, is not and

never has been a press agent. The most confirmed realist would call him, at the least, a publicity agent. He prefers, himself, to be termed a public relations counsel. His contribution to civilization is that, as Mr. Arthur Brisbane once put it, "he interprets his client to the public and the public to his client." It is twenty years now since, seeing no future in newspaper work, he convinced the Pennsylvania Railroad that its locomotives would run more smoothly, its employés would be more contented and larger dividends would be earned if its activities were properly interpreted to the public. Those were the days when threats of government ownership were beginning to disturb the sleep of railroad presidents as they tossed in their private cars. Bitterly, but belatedly, they were beginning to deplore the unfortunate frankness of the public-b damned theory of railroad operation. Mr. Lee suggested to them that he could do much for them in the line of constructive work.

Moreover, he added, it also lay in his power to explain the mind of the public to the railroad. What Mr. Lee meant by this was that he could explain the nature and peculiarities of the newspapers. As the century began, newspapers were very much of a mystery to Big Business. Either they were harmless and polite, the type that the *Herald-Tribune* is to-day, or they had the scent of bloodhounds and the disposition of public executioners. The *World* was one of this second class. Big Business, to be safe, avoided all newspapers. It fled, panting and heavily, from their reporters.

On one occasion the late J. P. Morgan was returning from Europe. His trip had been solely for pleasure and he was out of touch with the financial situation. Had he been more sophisticated in matters of publicity, he would have chatted pleasantly, being careful to say nothing, to the ship-news men. But Mr. Morgan was taking no chances. He barricaded himself in his stateroom, and after a time the ship-news reporters abandoned the chase.

But among the writers who had boarded the vessel at Quarantine was a veteran *Herald* man assigned to the specific task of interviewing Mr. Morgan. After the financier had retired to his cabin the veteran slipped a card under the door. Presently Mr. Morgan poked out his head. He declared, with some heat, that he had told the ship-news men that he had nothing to say. Nothing!

"I was not with the ship-news men," said the *Herald* representative quietly. "If you don't wish to talk it is quite satisfactory to me. I was assigned to see you and I sent in my card to make certain. Good day!"

The door opened more widely. Mr. Morgan emerged, apparently astonished that a reporter could also be a gentleman. For several minutes, then, he conversed affably. To-morrow, he said, he would again be conversant with affairs and would be glad to see a man from the *Herald*. The two shook hands. A slightly dazed financier again retired.

It was this state of mind, this combination of contempt for reporters and terror of newspapers, that furnished fertile soil for the growth of Mr. Lee and his imitators. The talents of the publicity agent are many. Not the least amazing, to the innocent business man, is his ability to predict the manner in which a speech or a public statement will be featured in the newspapers. He can forecast with uncanny accuracy whether it will get on the front pages and what the editorial comment will be. He can even guess at the size of the headlines. This clairvoyance is possessed, of course, by any good newspaper copy reader.

But of even greater importance are his services during that journalistic atrocity, the mass interview. Sooner or later every public figure must face it. When it is necessary, Mr. Lee is present to hold the hand of his client. A formal statement is prepared in advance. The reporters are presented to the great man about to be interviewed, not as hungry sensation-hunters

but as gentlemen—even as equals. But the mass interview remains a silly institution, for when any large group begins to hurl questions the net result is bound to be very little information. Some jackass from the tabloids invariably asks Joseph Conrad for his wife's favorite recipe, the Prince of Wales whether he still deserts his mounts, and the Crown Prince of Sweden whether he believes in Swedish massage. The efforts of the more intelligent newspaper men present are buried under the avalanche of imbecility. If the interview is aboard ship the photographers crowd up and snap twenty-eight shots apiece.

During all this confusion the public relations counsel is calm, smooth and efficient. He coughs when an embarrassing question is asked and his client smiles politely, regretting that some matters, really, are confidential. When the barrage of tabloid idiocy begins he turns it off with a joke or two. After the ceremony is over the reporters find that they have little to print but the statement handed them at the beginning of the session. This prepared statement, crudely called "canned," is to the press agent what gasoline is to a filling-station. By means of it he can place the desired emphasis on what his client is saying. It enables him to capitalize the laziness which newspaper men share with the rest of the human race. His story assured, the reporter is reluctant to exert his burdened mind by asking embarrassing questions.

One afternoon a year or so ago the city editor of a New York morning paper received word that a statement was to be issued at the offices of Ivy L. Lee and Associates. He despatched one of his bright young men. In an hour or two the reporter returned. Was it, the city editor wanted to know, a good story? What was it all about?

"Oh!" said the seeker after news, hauling a sheet of flimsy out of his pocket and handing it over. "I don't know. I haven't read it yet."

## II

A decade or so after the Civil War there lived in the small village of Cedartown, Georgia, a Methodist clergyman by the name of James Wideman Lee. He seems to have been a gentleman of unusual talents, a preacher of a distinction seldom found under the hot sun of the Cracker State. Although not of the sainted Virginia Lees, both he and his wife, who had been Eufala Ledbetter, came of excellent stock. When, in 1877, a first son was born to them, they named him Ivy, after the clergyman's uncle. The Rev. Mr. Lee prospered in his work for the Lord. In due time he became pastor of Trinity Church in Atlanta, the largest and most influential Methodist establishment in the South. For a time, also, he had a parish in St. Louis.

Young Ivy Lee attended the schools in Atlanta and St. Louis and then was sent to Emory College at Oxford, Ga., his father's *alma mater*. Emory was then a small, more or less educational, institution of the Methodist persuasion, favored by ministers for their sons. Since those days it has prospered under the patronage of Asa G. Candler, the Coca Cola King. Now it is Emory University, has an endowment of well over \$1,000,000 and is located in the outskirts of Atlanta. Ivy remained at Emory for but two years. The Rev. Mr. Lee was eager to have him study in the North, and so, for his junior and senior years, he was at Princeton.

Ivy had a happy boyhood. The walls of his father's home were lined with books, and the son was encouraged to cherish and know them. Atlanta had not yet been stirred by Rotary, and no Chamber of Commerce sought noisily to make it the metropolis of the South. It was still content to slumber through the long Summers, its streets fragrant with the honeysuckle that climbed the fences of its old houses. Not far from the Lee rectory lived a shy old gentleman named Joel Chandler Harris. He had been, in happier pre-war days, a

plantation neighbor to the Lees. Ivy often, as a boy and a young man, visited the home of Mr. Harris. In 1908, already rising in his chosen profession of public relations expert, he found time to return to Atlanta and write a book which was a labor of love. It was "Memories of Uncle Remus." Only a small edition was published, for private circulation among the friends of the old gentleman.

Members of the Georgia Lee family, pointing with pride to the career of their most eminent member, recall that Pastor Lee had a habit of reading newspapers with great care, of making voluminous clippings, and of sending them to people he believed might be interested. He was also, it is said, a very energetic correspondent. He wrote to his friends on every conceivable subject. He expressed in his letters his own opinions and asked for their opinions in return. In his later years he went abroad and during the course of the journey wrote at least one letter to every single member of his congregation.

Thus, the Lee family explains, Ivy inherited his taste for spreading ideas broadcast. And thus, too, he inherited his taste for an extensive correspondence. But instead of letters written in the courtly handwriting of the old school, his modern epistles are in many cases in printed form and sent out by the thousand. Instead of going to the members of a country congregation they go to business and civic leaders, to editors and government officials, and to all other men of vision. And the newspaper clippings, once cut by hand, are now assembled on a printed sheet headed "Information" and mailed from time to time from the offices of Ivy L. Lee and Associates.

The Ivy Lee clip-sheet "may be used as desired by those who receive it," according to an announcement that always appears in the upper right-hand corner. Newspaper editors, seeking filler material, are among those particularly welcome to it. By a strange coincidence many of the items concern corporations and individuals

who are clients of Mr. Lee. The Bethlehem Steel Company is mentioned in one issue. F. Edson White, president of Armour & Company, is also quoted. In another issue Charlie Schwab, LL.D., for whom Mr. Lee writes speeches, has a paragraph devoted to him. In still another issue the Copper and Brass Research Association expresses optimism about copper. One week's clip-sheet points out that the miners, refusing to arbitrate, were responsible for last Winter's hard coal strike. "Carriers in Better Favor With the Public" is the heading on another article—and then it is recalled that Mr. Lee works also for the Pennsylvania Railroad.

### III

The young man destined to become publicly the voice of many great corporations (and secretly the voice of perhaps as many more) was in 1898 graduated from Princeton as a bachelor of arts. So excellent was his standing that he was awarded a small scholarship. With it he sought further learning and for that purpose went to Harvard. There, for several months, he studied law. But his funds did not last, and soon he was found on Park Row, a cub reporter on the New York *Journal*, then a morning paper. Probably it is just as well that he did not go further in Blackstone. At all events, he now has small use for the legal mind, believing, as he once said, that "whenever a lawyer starts to talk to the public, he shuts out the light."

Mr. Lee advises his clients to avoid legal obscurities. He urged, in a recent address, the use by public utilities companies and others of language that the people could understand, and he held up Billy Sunday as a model. What Mr. Sunday "has done for religion," he said, would be an excellent thing for the railroads to attempt for business. "Billy Sunday," he continued, "speaks the language of the man who rides on the trolley-car, who chews gum and who spits tobacco juice. The people know

Billy Sunday and he knows them. He goes to the heart of a subject."

Ivy was a competent but not a brilliant reporter. He left the *Journal*, after a time, and worked successively on the *Times* and the *World*. The stars of his day report that he did not, at least not often, get really big stories to handle. But he had one characteristic that few of them possessed. Most of them despised the prominent men whose virtues and vices were first page stuff, but not Ivy. The energy of the stars began to wane, their facility of expression to die. They drifted out into other professions or remained to rot on copy desks. Ivy, meanwhile, was cultivating acquaintances. He never failed to impress his personality and his talents upon the consciousness of the great and good men he met in gathering news.

By 1903, five years out of college, he found progress in journalism too slow. With uncommon vision he began to see the possibilities of press agency as applied to Big Business. Within the next few years, he became spokesman for several corporations and began to dabble in political publicity, though the latter was not to his liking. The years of his greatest growth were from 1906 to 1914. During them he went to work for the Pennsylvania Railroad. Despite an interruption during which he travelled abroad for a Wall Street house, he was, by 1914, an executive assistant on the staff of the road. He was living in Philadelphia by that time and looming large as an influential citizen. Public speaking was one of his diversions—and also furnished him opportunities for spreading his ideas about salubrious publicity. Many of his addresses he has since caused to be published. They are illuminating documents. In May, 1914, for instance, he warned a gathering of railroad men that they were "in the midst of a swirling flood of legislation and regulation." He deplored the carelessness of certain officials in fighting the Full Crew Law. If, he suggested, this obnoxious statute were only called the Extra Crew

Law the public would swiftly grasp the unfair burden that it had placed upon the railroads in the name, but falsely, of safety. He deprecated, also, the custom of using the phrase "all the traffic will bear" in discussing freight rates. "We can never," he said in concluding the lesson, "be too careful in the terms we use."

It was in this same year, 1914, that the younger Mr. Rockefeller began to feel acutely uncomfortable under the bludgeonings of public reviling. His father, who had retired fifteen years before, had been protected by a thicker skin. Mr. Rockefeller, Sr., had blandly ignored the attack of the once militant Ida Tarbell, knowing, perhaps, that he would live to see the day when she would write a gushing eulogy of Judge Elbert H. Gary. But Mr. Rockefeller, Sr., had turned his affairs over to his serious and more sensitive son, and was busy with golf and the collection of bright new dimes for future distribution.

The immediate cause of Mr. Rockefeller, Jr.'s, discomfort was the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company strike. Ugly rumors were abroad concerning this dispute. There were charges, later admitted to be true, that the company in which Mr. Rockefeller, Jr., was a director and in which the House of Rockefeller held \$24,000,000 in stocks and bonds had paid the wages of the State militia, used to put down the strikers. Reports from the field were that the latter were living in tents and starving. The climax came when twenty were killed at Ludlow, Col., in a brawl with armed guards.

All of this might not have disturbed the builder of Standard Oil. But it troubled the more squeamish John D., Jr. He sought advice from his friends. They all recalled that "a young fellow with the Pennsylvania" was doing some fine work. They knew about his ideas, they said, because they received his form letters. Good, sound, constructive ideas! It was thus that the House of Rockefeller "took the public into its confidence." Mr. Rockefeller, Jr., decided suddenly that publicity paid. He

described his change of heart during his testimony, some months later, before the Commission on Industrial Relations, of which Frank P. Walsh was chairman. An investigation of the Colorado strike was in progress.

MR. ROCKEFELLER: When this situation developed last year, finding that it was difficult to get the facts before the public, I personally took pains to inquire who could assist us in what I believed an important public work. After careful inquiry I was told of Mr. Lee, and asked him if he could undertake to assist the operators' committee and ourselves in the matter of properly presenting the facts in the situation.

Mr. Rockefeller testified that Mr. Lee, graciously loaned for a time by the Pennsylvania Railroad, had been paid \$1,000 a month for his services. The funds came out of the pocket of Mr. Rockefeller, Sr., "as a contribution to the general public situation." A day or two after the testimony by his new employer, Mr. Lee was also called as a witness. He said that Mr. Rockefeller, Jr., had summoned him to discuss the evils of the hour in May, 1914.

For several hours Mr. Lee answered questions regarding his services to the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company. He had suggested, he said, a policy of "absolute frankness." The best way in which to educate the public, he had told the operators, was to issue a series of bulletins containing the facts of the situation and mail them to a list of prominent people and to the newspapers. It was these bulletins, written by Mr. Lee in Philadelphia but mailed from Denver to make it appear that they were the offspring of the operators, that later aroused unseemly curiosity on the part of the Commission on Industrial Relations. They also prompted Mr. George Creel—who later was to learn publicity methods on his own account—to write an article for *Harper's Weekly* in November, 1914. This he captioned "Poisoners of Public Opinion" and in it he charged, with high wrath, that the Colorado operators had "neither truth nor any saving instinct of decency."

The coal barons, wrote Mr. Creel, had branded the white-haired Mother Jones a bawdy-house keeper and had caused the slander, through the kindness of a friendly Congressman, to be inserted in the *Congressional Record*. They had published a symposium purporting to give the views of Colorado editors regarding the strike. The editorial opinions, as set forth in this bulletin, were definitely favorable to the companies and hostile to the miners. Ultimately it developed, however, that but fourteen of the 331 editors in Colorado had collaborated on the document. These fourteen were employed by company controlled newspapers. One fascinating bulletin assembled by Mr. Lee described the wages paid to certain of the strike leaders. Mother Jones, for example, was declared to be receiving \$42 a day for her agitating. One F. J. Hayes was being paid \$32,000 a year. Later, before the Walsh Commission, Mr. Lee admitted that in all this there was a slight error. Wages which actually covered a year had been made, in compiling the statistics, to cover but nine weeks. Instead of \$32,000, Mr. Hayes had been paid only \$4,052.92 annually.

Cross examined on this miscalculation, Mr. Lee said that he deeply regretted it. Undoubtedly, he confessed, it had tended to arouse criticism against their leaders by the rank and file of the laboring men. The error should have been corrected immediately, but had, as a matter of fact, been allowed to stand for three months. In January, after the miners had succumbed to hunger and given up the struggle, a corrected bulletin was sent out. Chairman Walsh asked a great many questions about the bulletins, the manner in which they were written and the source of the so-called facts that they had contained. Mr. Lee's policy of "absolute frankness" had consisted, Chairman Walsh brought out, of disseminating propaganda containing anything and everything that the coal operators in Denver wished the public to believe. The official testimony is again rather interesting:

CHAIRMAN WALSH: Mr. Rockefeller told you to be sure to get the truth?

MR. LEE: Certainly.

Q. Just detail now what steps you took to ascertain the facts before you wrote any of these articles. Give all of the steps.

A. I had no opportunity, Mr. Chairman, to ascertain the facts from my own point of view. It was their story I was to assist in getting before the public.

Q. And therefore you did not question any fact that was presented to you, any alleged fact, as to its authenticity?

A. Not when presented by Mr. Welborn [Jesse F. Welborn, president of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company] or one of his committee.

Q. Did you make any effort to secure the statements of disinterested persons?

A. I did not.

Q. From the workers themselves or their representatives?

A. I did not.

BY COMMISSIONER GARRETSON: Your mission was that of the average publicity agent, was it not, to give the truth as the man you were serving saw it? [Laughter].

MR. LEE: That would represent a characterization on your part, Mr. Commissioner. I have tried to tell what happened. As to your characterization, I don't know that I can give an answer.

But all this is ancient history. The story is to be found only in the musty and worm eaten reports of the Commission on Industrial Relations, which nobody ever reads, and in that scurrilous volume by Upton Sinclair, "The Brass Check," which no one in this great Republic but Mr. Sinclair himself would undertake to publish.

#### IV

Meanwhile, Mr. Lee continues to prosper. Only recently Ivy L. Lee and Associates increased their office space. Gifted young men from the New York papers are occasionally added to the staff. But Mr. Lee is not easy to work for. He is nothing if not temperamental. He flies into rages when a statement is prepared without the proper finesse, when terms and phrases are used carelessly. These rages are terrifying but short lived. During them Mr. Lee proclaims loudly that stupidity is the prevalent characteristic of mankind. He pounds upon his desk until the inkwells rattle. But after a short while the storm is over, and then, not infrequently, he begs for-

givenness with tears of contrition and Christian brotherhood in his eyes.

But the newspaper men summoned to his office when an announcement is ready see none of this. To them, Mr. Lee is always a cordial and affable gentleman. He is smooth, but not oily. He never directs that a story must be published in a certain way. He hands out the canned statement, waits for questions, and then suavely terminates the interview. What he offers for publication stands on its worth as news. He uses no personal influence to get space, and boasts that he has not been in a newspaper office four times during the past twenty years.

Why is it then that this amiable gentleman, who provides so many good stories, is so generally disliked by newspaper men? Chiefly, I suppose, it is because, like all publicity men, he is a buffer. Not his least important function is to shield his clients. Every reporter who has tried to see old John D., Sr., on his birthday knows this. So does every man who has been assigned to interview the son of the old man. Mr. Lee does not like to admit that he is a buffer. In an address before some teachers of journalism in 1924 he described how, if he were an active newspaper man, he would deal with press agents. He said that he would "insist upon seeing any of the principals" that he wanted to see. He would demand, he told the slightly surprised pedagogues, "first-hand access to anyone I thought had any information." The publicity man has "no right to be there" if he is "a barrier against newspaper men getting to the source of information."

At this point, however, Mr. Lee left the realm of imagination and returned to real life. He pointed out that reporters were not entitled to interviews about "any question." This philosophy makes the press agent entirely safe, for he himself is the judge as to whether the question is proper or not. And his judgment is based, not on the news value of what may result from the question, but on the welfare of

his client. In the case of the Rockefeller family, it must be apparent, there are few proper questions.

Nor is this "master of public relations counsel" any too finicky about confidential matters between himself and the reporters. When a story is destined for release he makes every effort to have it appear simultaneously in all the newspapers. On the afternoon of February 25, 1925—the story is still being told in the city rooms—the New York *American* received a tip that Abby Rockefeller, the somewhat turbulent daughter of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., was to be married to one David Milton. The engagement, Mr. Hearst's informant stated, was shortly to be announced.

This was obviously a story of the first rank. The engagement of Miss Abby was, in itself, an international matter. But Mr. Milton gave it an added flavor. He was the comparatively impecunious young apprentice attorney who had obtained, for Abby, a suspended sentence when she had been nabbed for the second time by an irreverent traffic patrolman. The city room of the *American* buzzed at the prospect of an old-fashioned beat: "Daughter of Oil King's Son to Wed Humble Speed Case Benefactor."

The reporter assigned to determining the truth of the rumor was a man who had already proved his ability, even although he had not worked in New York for long. He had never heard of Ivy Lee and went, naïvely, to the Rockefeller home. Mrs. Rockefeller was having a reception and could not see the reporter. But she sent a servant with a message, scribbled on the back of a letter. It suggested calling upon Mr. Lee at 111 Broadway.

The *American's* representative, journeying downtown in a taxi-cab, chanced to look at the letter on which Mrs. Rockefeller had written her message. To his surprise he saw that it was from a friend of the family, expressing delight that Abby was to be married to Mr. Milton. This was confirmation enough—the *American's* beat was assured. But the reporter

decided to do the decent thing and called on Mr. Lee. He told Mr. Lee that the story already was confirmed and that it was an *American* exclusive. But Mr. Lee, to the reporter's horror, said that beats were less than nothing to him. Inasmuch as the fact of the engagement had thus prematurely leaked out, all the newspapers would be notified. At 8 o'clock, he said, a formal statement would be given out at the Rockefeller home. The *American* man's protests were in vain. The next morning the story appeared in all the papers instead of in solitary splendor in the *American*.

The incident did Mr. Lee more harm than that usually astute gentleman is, perhaps, aware of. Ugly epithets were applied to him along Park Row, and reporters with important rumors will in the future seek authentication from every other possible source before they see him. It affected in no way, however, his relations with the Rockefellers. Mr. Lee was on hand again when Abby was united in matrimony, and provided alphabetized lists of the dignitaries who attended the ceremony. He was present, also, when Abby sailed on the *Paris* for her honeymoon in France. Again he fraternized with the, this time, suspicious newspaper writers. He told them, in man-to-man fashion, that the bride and groom were extremely nervous. It would be a graceful thing not to demand an interview. Mr. Lee was thus busily performing his duties when Mr. and Mrs. Rockefeller, Jr., boarded the vessel. Mr. Rockefeller, unconsciously brushing Mr. Lee aside, smiled jovially, as befitted a man who had just seen his daughter safely married. Then he led the reporters to a corner of the deck. The bride and groom faced them, still nervous.

"These gentlemen are your friends," he soothingly told Mr. and Mrs. Milton. A short interview took place. Everyone was happy.

Again there was gossip in the city rooms. "He's slipping," some of the more outspoken said. "Didn't John D., Jr.,

shove him aside when Abby was sailing?"

But that was nonsense. Ivy is not slipping. He is in no danger. He can afford to smile (and does) about foolish theorists who call him a menace, who say that he tells but one side of a story, who growl that he and his kind are breaking down the fine old spirit of better days, when newspaper men went out like the Royal Northwest Mounted and got their facts. Mr. Rockefeller, Mr. Schwab, the Standard Oil, the Pennsylvania Railroad, the Bethlehem Steel Company, the Interborough Rapid Transit Company, the Eastern Presidents' Conference, the Copper and Brass Research Association—such are among his publicly known clients. He is close to Otto H. Kahn and assists that eminent patron of the arts from time to time. He is close, also, to Armour & Company, to the Washburn-Crosby Company and to the national association to which most of the manufacturers of cement belong. These he serves in a general advisory capacity, largely with respect to their paid advertising. His staff writes a market letter for Dominick & Dominick, a stock exchange house.

Not all of his work is for financial gain. He often volunteers his services for public causes. He took charge of the publicity for the American Red Cross during the war and did not even receive his expenses. When Bishop Manning, adopting Twentieth Century methods to build a Twelfth

Century cathedral, created a large campaign committee, Mr. Lee was among those on it. In this case, though, friction developed, and Mr. Lee subsequently resigned.

It is his proud assertion that he never offers for free publication material that belongs in the advertising columns. In the light of this definite position, and in view of his one time connection with the cathedral campaign, it is not out of place to examine a document distributed, about a year ago, by the Copper and Brass Research Association. It will be recalled that this organization is one of the more or less publicly acknowledged clients of Mr. Lee.

The article in question was mailed to a large number of newspapers as coming "From the Copper and Brass Research Association." It contained photographs of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine and of the choir which sings in that edifice. The reading matter described the beauties of the new church, "built to stand for ages." And then:

*Its walls are of massive masonry, while the roofs and other important metal parts, such as flashings, gutters and downspouts are constructed of copper, a metal whose worthiness has been proved by its centuries of service on churches and cathedrals in England and on the continent. Various water pipes are of brass.*

It probably is not necessary to point out that the italics were not provided by Mr. Ivy Ledbetter Lee.

## ALABAMA POETS

RUTH MCCLELLAN

### *Fancy*

SOMEDAY  
I shall die  
And be canonized a Saint  
I know that this is true,  
And also I am sure  
That I shall have a crown with little  
stars,  
Genteel as stars go,  
And a long white robe with blue lights in  
it  
As thin milk has blue lights.  
All day I shall sing my tiny song, on two  
notes  
Until I weary.  
And at night I shall put off my crown of  
little stars,  
Dreaming of you,  
Your voice too far away to answer my  
monotone song.  
And I shall wish that I were on your arm,  
Singing that naughty song we laughed  
at in the street,  
And that the Pleiades were far away,  
Instead of in my crown of tiny stars,  
Lying on a chair  
'Til morning.

### *Evening*

THIS April evening  
Wears the veils of  
Half-mourning  
Like one whose tears  
Are stopped  
At sounds of music.  
This April evening  
Wears the last pale lavender  
Of half-mourning.  
To-morrow she will take another lover,

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Donning the joyous garments  
Of betrothal  
And fold away the faded veils  
Of mauve and lavender,  
Scented with hyacinths and daffodils,  
Too early to be strong,  
Until another April mourns  
As lightly.

HART GILDRAND

### *Dance of the Nudes*

HIS old . . . senile with striving through  
many vacuous years. The girls in the  
ready-to-wear department, with their hard  
brilliant eyes and their lovers, laugh at him.

After hours, when the store is dark and  
deserted, he lags behind, setting things to  
rights. Golden mist from the lighted  
street comes into the upper floor. The dis-  
robed mannikins seem to him beautiful  
women dancing at dusk, dryads in the  
nuances of a forest.

Every evening the girls laugh at him as  
they hurry away. He dodders along so,  
after everybody else, setting things to  
rights.

SUSAN MABRY

### *Portrait of a Virgin*

AND I move on serene,  
And do not know of love,  
And am not shaken by its tempests—  
I am like the small slim olive-tree  
In the corner of the wall by the old  
mosque;  
The great gusts do not reach it,  
But it quivers with delicate emotion  
When the deep bronze gong in the turret  
is struck.