

WINTER DAY'S WALK IN
NEW YORK

by SHERWOOD ANDERSON

A WINTER Sunday's walk down Sixth Avenue, from near Washington Square—a gray day—not windy—plenty of cars—not many people walking.

Talk with a friend walking with me—Alfred Stieglitz—Julius Caesar—Voltaire—is Georg Brandes' Caesar translated—do anyone know? "I don't know. I'm reading it in the German." The South—why southern poets can't bear Whitman, etc. Someone should explain that. There is an explanation all right. It would make a good thing for *The American Spectator*, that explanation.

Nature—a walk like this—on a cold Sunday afternoon in New York—as fascinating as my walk by rivers—in the woods in winter—dead leaves on the ground under foot—cold-looking farm boys walking in the roads with their girls—nothing more desolate-looking in winter than most American farm houses.

A crowd down by the Battery—men out walking with their wives. Most men out walking on Sunday afternoon with their wives look bored. The wives look bored. They are all going into the Aquarium to see the fish. Who's a fish?

Back of the Aquarium a fire boat—shining copper and brass—she looks like a little queen sitting there—Alice in Wonderland—so clean—so shining—so small and fat.

Swirl to take a trip in her—go up rivers—wash out a lot of towns on rivers. A lot of southern towns need washing. Wonder if there's any river goes up to Scottsboro, Alabama?

"My Alabama girl
In the moonlight,
I've hungerin' for a sight of
My Alabama girl."

What happened to that crowd of southern writers who started the agrarian movement in the South—"I'll Take My Stand," Allen Tate, Stark Young and others? Wonder if they weren't really thinking of sitting on the front porches of colonial houses down South and looking out over southern fields while the niggers did the work?

"Let the niggers do the work—do the work—
do the work—"

Let the niggers do the work."
A broad street up the East River front—Sailor's Mission—Spanish steamship at a dock unloading—fish wharves—fishy smells.

Canal boats lying in slips. The light is nice. You can't beat the New York light—New York climate. To a provincial, there is something in the air here that exhilarates.

Feeling gay—feeling nice—swell. Wish I could dance. Remember the kind of tramps that used to come on the stage in burlesque shows—small, swarthy fellows with black whiskers sticking straight out—black hair sticking straight up—high red cheek-bones showing—husky whiskey voices? Plenty of them down here.

Plenty of ragged drunks lying in doorways—Brooklyn Bridge from down underneath—Hart Crane—"Julius Caesar started the whole modern show, didn't he?"

Do certain civilizations make great personalities or do great personalities make great civilizations? Our *American Spectator* crew might take that one on for a talkfest. Places along the river front, strangely like Havre. Spent a week there once fascinated by the sailors ashore—out drunk, reeling and singing, on the wharves with their Molls. I liked them, and Havre.

The Murphys must have been big shots in the canal boat line—Elizabeth Murphy—Maude—Alice—Kate—Hattie. Asked a man why canal boats were always tied up, why they never seem to be used. "Hell, they don't do nothing. They just lie there. They ain't got nothing to do."

Like us—nothing to do—something to learn—how to do nothing. Swell—feeling good—walking, so strangely quiet. "Let's go over to Joe's and get a cocktail."

"Okay. Shall we take a taxi?"

"No, let's walk."

"Look—there's an old rope walk over there! Gee—it's hell—this being Sunday. I always wanted to see the inside of a rope walk."

NAT'IAN DIGESTS THE
THEATRE

"SHE Loves Me Not" (Howard Lindsay out of Edward Hope)—Despite the heavy girl-smuggled-into-a-college-dormitory basic idea, some jocose moments now and then.

"Birthright" (Richard Maibum)—It seems that the Nazis don't altogether like the Jews and the artist is mighty sore about it.

"The Dark Tower" (Alexander Woolcott and George S. Kaufman)—Expertly staged and mildly amusing murder melodrama.

"Roberta" (Jerome Kern and Otto Harbach)—Another very tuneful Kern score, but a dreary book.

"All Good Americans" (Laura and S. J. Perelman)—Bodiless wisecrack comedy.

"Growing Pains" (Aurania Rouverol)—Childish comedy on children.

"Mary of Scotland" (Maxwell Anderson)—It touches poetic beauty here and there but in its middle section fails in drama.

In Manuscript

"Within the Gates" (Sean O'Casey)—One of the true masterpieces of the modern drama.

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THE LATE LUKS

(Continued from Page 2, Col. 1)

snakes and seven tall Swedes! He's no more of a highbrow than May!" A glance of his keen, appraising eyes shot at May, a weird looking negress who was replacing the lunch dishes with large platters to be used as ash trays.

"Now May's not a highbrow and she knows it, so she's intelligent. Aren't you, May?"

"Sure, Mr. Luks," and May shuffled off chortling.

"She's a damn fine woman, May is and—"

"But look here—this is to obtain biographical data about you. We might do May another day. However, when I say personal, I don't mean too personal. Aren't there any facts we could use as framework?"

"Facts your grandmother!" He roared and blew his short nose with appalling violence. "What are facts?" and he waved them away with his handkerchief.

"Well, you studied painting in Germany and France."

"No, I did not, and don't you forget it. I studied *drawing* in that old Düsseldorf school, and they certainly taught you to draw there. The Germans couldn't paint, and the French couldn't draw. But they put you through a course of sprouts at Düsseldorf that *made* you draw. You couldn't help it by the time they finished with you. Look at old Albrecht Dürer—had no more sense of color than your uncle's sister's glass eye, but by God he could draw! And the French—PAH! I've no use for them. I worked in Paris and they said, 'Why don't you stay here, George?' and I said 'Stay here! What do I want to stay here for? The place for a real man is America. You don't follow tradition there, you *make* it! And by God, I've *made* it!"

Yes, he made it. The amazing spirit and life of his portrayed figures are the despair of the younger artists, as well as objects of admiration among his contemporaries.

Although nearly sixty-seven years old, George Luks appeared to be no more than fifty. He was short and heavily built, partially bald and his twinkling eyes were shaded by bushy brows. His mouth had a humorous twist and his vigor of action and of speech were so youthful as to startle and perhaps exhaust a milder person. His behavior was, to say the least, extremely informal. At the opening of the Whitney Museum, Mrs. Whitney held a reception for the artists represented there, and for friends of her own and theirs. People came to her, spoke and passed on, but George Luks stayed close and dogged her footsteps. At last, somewhat irritated, she turned and said, "Why are you following me about, Mr. Luks?"

"Because you are so God damned rich," he replied.

And more recently, while he was visiting friends, a small boy in the house burst into his mother's room where she was trying to sleep off the effects of a strenuous evening as hostess. "I wish that Mr. Luks would bring a maid along the next time he comes," said the child indignantly. "He came down bare-naked into the living room and just sits there and sends me up for his clothes and is cross because I can't find his garters. He says they should be under his pillow. And I don't see why, just because he's famous, it's nice for him to go to the dining room and eat his breakfast with just his underdrawers on, either!"

His language, as well as his conduct, was totally unrestrained.

"Women!" he cried. "Damned gold diggers, all of them! I know them. I've painted them. I've loved them and left them—I've even married them. They all know how to get your roll—and more power to them, I say. Of course a few of them have brains, but they don't really need them. And no more do these damned capitalists. All they need is greed enough to shut their eyes to everything but money. To hell with them! A friend of mine comes here the other night. He's as old as I am and as rich as Croesus, and the big stiff nearly weeps. 'With all my millions, George, I can't go and buy talent!' Hell! Of course he can't. Look at me! What do I care about money?" A flick of the hand dismisses money as a commodity unfit for decent men. "I'm a great man and a great artist. I don't care about money. I can paint millionaires and I can paint beggars. I can write, too, if I want to. But I don't want to. Writing, hell! Writing's dead. Men aren't taught to write any more. They're taught what the *people* want. The *people*! Pah!" and he spat viciously and without benefit of receptacle. "The *people*! Instead of educating the public to appreciate good stuff, they teach the writers what the stupid, wallowing people want! Give 'em what they want! Pah! Boloney! And you say they want to know about me. They know all about me *now*. The men—great writers, too, I tell you—who've written about me have told the world about George Luks."

"Well, there might be a few here and there who don't know *all* and might be interested," I ventured.

"Interested!" he glared at me in amazement. "Of course they'd be interested. I'm an interesting man. Go ahead and tell them. What the hell do I care? I don't give a God damn what you say! Hi there, May, get some more tea!"

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SUICIDE AMONG THE BABBITTS

by ERIC HOWARD

THE large number of suicides among the financial and industrial leaders of the Republic, and among the well-to-do generally since the stock market crash of 1929, emphasizes a fact hitherto not generally recognized. It has usually been considered that your successful business man is a hard-headed, practical fellow, with plenty of courage and stick-to-it-iveness. These heroes of commerce and trade, it has been thought, were men of mettle and of guts. Did a rival succeed in putting over a bigger and better deal? Then your business man (the hero of numerous stories in *The Saturday Evening Post* and *The American Magazine*) promptly set forth, a veritable knight of industry, and achieved a greater success. Your business man has been pictured not only as hard-headed, practical, with his feet firmly planted on terra firma, but also as a vigorous, aggressive, courageous doer of mighty deeds, a leader and a fighter.

What is the fact? The depression has revealed him as a confused and puzzled child whose balloon has burst. It has shown him up as a man whose faith has failed him, whose illusions have gone haywire, and, succinctly, as one who can dish it out but who can't take it. In an amazingly large number of cases, this hero of trade has become a helpless whiner, a weakling stripped of the garment of power he once flaunted gloriously, and a suicide.

Self-extermination, in the case of the defeated financier, is not the variety that Balzac described as suicide from ratiocination. Nor is it the philosophical type, by which a man who has lived fully decides to live no more. Instead, it is the pitiful gesture of weakness and despair.

The man who has lived by success alone has nothing to live for when success is gone. The man who believed that he was a strong and mighty fellow, of great importance to the world, is morally bankrupt when economic circumstances give him a kick in the pants and demonstrate that his success is not the product of his own superior cunning and wisdom. It is an unbearable blow to one's self-esteem to discover, for example, that one's investment in American Can is no more intelligent than betting on a dark horse in a race.

The self-made man, priding himself on having carved out his own career by reason of his superior strength, cunning and intelligence, is stunned by the discovery that he is helpless. His courage, ever dependent upon the jingle of dollars in his pockets, fails lamentably when there are no dollars to jingle. His faith in himself and in the world he has helped to make ebbs away. He consorts with others of his kind, and they endeavor to cheer one another, as they have done for three years past and are still doing. He discusses, childishly, the cause of the depression. He hopes, vaguely and blindly, for "times" to get better. He believes in God and Hoover; then he believes in God and Roosevelt. But in his heart is dull despair, childish fear; in his eyes a look of puzzled grief. The suicide of desperation follows.

Few artists or poets, few "dreamers," are so easily ruined by adversity. Few proletarians—and these few usually broken by disease or old age—are driven to despair by economic mischance. But your Babbitt, when he is wiped out in the market, when his wisely selected bonds become worthless, when his property is foreclosed, whines, wails, gives a creditable imitation of a White Russian cursing the Bolsheviks, and, often, kills himself.

He can't take it. That he can dish it out, while power remains

in his hands and dollars in his pocket, we have already seen—in his treatment of his employees; in his restrained and often enforced contributions to charity, usually well publicized; in his contempt for the financially unsuccessful; in his arrogance and snobbery, based upon the illusion of his own greatness; in his scorn for the weak and the helpless and the impoverished; in his treatment of menials; in the suspicion with which he eyes all who are engaged in "impractical" pursuits; in his persecution of those he regards as enemies of things as they are; and in the development of the current American code of ethics which prescribes that it's all right if you can get away with it.

Among the salutary effects to be credited to the depression is this: That fine flower of our civilization, that milestone on the pathway of Progress, the typical American business man, no longer enjoys the esteem and admiration of the world. Whereas, formerly, we were all too willing to accept him at his own valuation, we now see him as he is.

He can dish it out, but he can't take it.

Drop a tear of pity, if you will. But Jovian laughter resounds throughout the states. This—this puzzled, helpless, weak little man—was our hero!

The Editors are comforted to know that at least two groups of the unemployed are being well taken care of—our 96 United States Senators, and our 435 national Representatives.

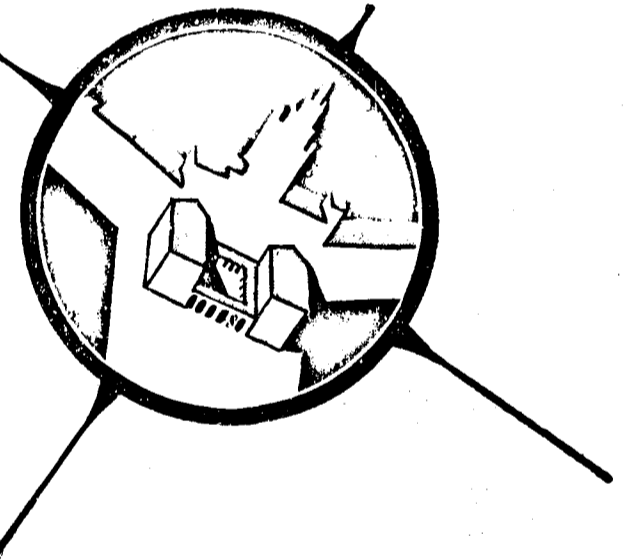
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"It is now the very witching time of Night
When universities yawn and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this World. . . ."—HAMLET.

BOYD DIGESTS THE BOOKS

"A NEST of Simple Folk." (Sean O'Faolain.) New York: Viking Press. \$2.50.—Here the author of "Midsummer Night Madness" once more proves that, despite censorship and an apparently complete apathy in Ireland toward intellectual and artistic values, the new generation of Irish writers will continue to shed lustre on their reluctant country. O'Faolain has qualities which far transcend in beauty and vigorous humanity those of the more widely touted Francis Stuart. (Published early in January.)

"Play Parade." (Noel Coward.) New York: Doubleday, Doran. \$2.50.—This omnibus volume contains "The Vortex," "Hay Fever," "Bitter Sweet," "Private Lives," "Post Mortem," "Cavalcade," and "Design for Living." These are not, however, the main attraction, which is an ingenious introduction in which the author expresses his inexpressible delight in himself and his career in such terms as no ghost-writing Hollywood press agent could hope to equal. It will explain the plays . . . and their admirers.

"The Post Victorians." (Various contributors.) London: Nicholson & Watson. 10/6.—Prefaced by Dean Inge, this volume assembles essays on such typical figures of their period as Lord Balfour, Arnold Bennett, Joseph Conrad, Ellen Terry, Lord Curzon, Kitchener, Keir Hardie and Lord Haldane. Rebecca West's chapter on Mrs. Pankhurst and James Agate's on Marie Lloyd in themselves are enough to justify the enterprise. Could one imagine an American book of this type admitting one of the eternal prototypes of Mae West?

"Characters and Commentaries." (Lytton Strachey.) New York: Harcourt, Brace. \$3.00.—Posthumously collected by his brother, these essays cover every stage of the author's career from the beginning up to his death. It has been complained that they show little growth, by those who now think it necessary to denigrate Strachey. The fact is, they show a sustained level of maturity which puts even the earliest essay beyond the reach of most of his critics. The last word of an eighteenth century gentleman.

"The Winding Stair." (W. B. Yeats.) New York: Macmillan. \$1.50.—The poet who wrote some years ago "the fascination of what is difficult has dried the sap out of my veins" here proves that this was far, indeed, from being the case. As the world grows more muddled and chaotic, advancing years have given to the poetry of Yeats a clarity and vigor which his middle period often lacked. Its beauty is undiminished, or rather enhanced by an austere strength.

"Over Here." (Mark Sullivan.) New York: Scribner's. \$3.75.—Continuing "Our Times" the fifth volume covers the years 1914-1915. Like its predecessors it has many virtues, except one: there is little sense of humor. It may be said that these particular years hardly lend themselves to humorous treatment. But what of the earlier volumes? Looking at this book as a record of the war period, one is impressed by the fidelity of its mood to that of those years. Mr. Sullivan gives little space and less sympathy to unorthodox views. He swallows completely the legend that the Federal government was neutral during the first two years. As that was the initial lie of August 4, 1914, its continued existence here must be regarded as true to the spirit of the times.

"Unmentionables." (Robert Cortes Holliday.) New York: Long & Smith. \$3.00.—Forsaking his accustomed paths, Mr. Holliday undertakes to investigate the history of feminine underwear "from fig-leaves to scanties." A delicate task which he has carried out so decorously that readers of the *Police Gazette* will be disappointed. His reading and bibliographies are extensive and his book constitutes a footnote to the ever interesting history of modesty. To my amazement I find no reference to the standard French masterpiece, *Le Pantalon Féminin*, by Pierre Dufay, where erudition surpassing his own is combined with an appropriate strain of Gallic humor.

Always faintly amused by the gyrations of the religious mind, the Editors contemplate without alarm the evolution of Aryan Christianity in the Third Reich. It has always been the function of Protestantism to re-write the Bible to suit the needs of the occasion. The Methodists having eliminated the Virgin Mary, the Unitarians having eliminated Christ, the Baptists having eliminated Christening, the Seventh Day Adventists having eliminated Sunday, why should not the Hitlerites eliminate the entire Christian theogony, substituting Thor and Odin—mit Hakenkreuz—for Christ and the Crucifix?

Looking over the safe the other day, the Editors discovered that they seem to have the \$1,313,500.00 in gold that the government reports is missing.

PERBERTY IN LOS ANGELES

by LILLIAN HELLMAN KOBER

WELL, about three weeks ago I wrote to Pa asking him if he couldn't please call his dogs off. But Pa couldn't do anything—he hasn't seen Ma since 1920. Anyway, he's married to a stout milliner now, and he lives in Butte, Montana.

Well, sir, here I've been happy in Tacoma, glad to be away from the De Guinzberg school, glad to be . . . well, anyway, I've been glad. All of a sudden comes this letter from Mama saying that it was very important that she and Aunt Minnie and Uncle Wallace see me right away and that they'd be out to Tacoma, if they could find it.

Well, I wrote Mama right away and said not to come here, for God's sake—this is a convent school and they might not understand Mama—and if they had to come, I'd meet them in Los Angeles. I figured Los Angeles wouldn't be surprised at anything.

Well, last week they arrived and I went down to meet them. They had rented a house on Cedar Drive. The man who owned the house was an Armenian theatrical producer and the costumes from several of his old chorus numbers were hung on the living-room wall. Mama said she thought the house was drab and decadent.

When I arrived the three of them were sitting at the bottom of the swimming pool. (Mama recently organized something called The Society For Atonement and she figured that was atoning for something.) It took me about ten minutes and a fishing pole to make them understand that I had arrived. When they had had four cocktails, evil smelling, and I had had a little elderberry wine, I said, "Look here, Mama, I'm very glad to see you and all that, but what is it that is so important?"

Mama smiled: "We thought you needed us, darling." I said that was kind of foolish on the face of it, but Mama said, no, to please remember that I was past fourteen now and would need expert guidance. I said I didn't understand and they all smiled and looked at the sky for about five minutes. Finally, Aunt Minnie said dreamily, "You're coming into the age of perberty, darling." After I had corrected her pronunciation, I said I knew it and so what? Then Uncle Wallace told me that it must be a beautiful time for a woman, a beautiful awakening. I asked him whether he hadn't ever come into anything like puberty but he said it wasn't exactly the same thing. That gives you an idea of Uncle Wallace.

"Well, for God's sake," I said, "don't tell me you got me all the way down here to tell me about puberty?" (Four weeks ago I had started to translate Xenophon's "Memorabilia" into English and I resented this time lost.)

Mama put her hand out and picked one of the Armenian's roses. She held it to her nose and looked at me over the thorns. "Now, darling, even though you saw fit to leave the modern, intelligent life that I struggled,—sacrificed my life, I might even say,—struggled to give you; even though you saw fit to leave Madame De Guinzberg's excellent guidance, preparatory to life, I might say. . . ."

"Start that sentence over again, Mama," I said, "I can't follow you."

Uncle Wallace shook his head: "If you'd pay more attention to life, Eden, and less to grammar, you'd find yourself a fuller, richer person."

"I like grammar," I said, "and I think you don't like it because you don't know any." (Uncle Wallace eats lunch at the Colony every day and occasionally publishes a little prose which is always copied from "A Night in the Luxembourg.")

Mama threw her rose in the pool and seemed to find some significance in the fact that it floated. She sighed about that for a while and then turned again to me. "Eden! Please realize that it is now, at this age, that your first desires awaken, that your emotional life becomes, becomes" . . . she waved her arms and Aunt Minnie said, "Becomes something to be reckoned with. You must meet these problems frankly and we are here to help."

I said, "Why don't you stop going to those doctors, Aunt Minnie, and talk some sense!"

"You see," Aunt Minnie screamed to Mama, "you see how unresponsive she is! She has no feelings, no emotions." Aunt Minnie started to cry.

Mama leaned over. "Eden! You are hurting us very much. We have made that hot, fatiguing journey"—they really came out with three servants and four drawing-rooms—"treked across the continent, because after all you are my child, and I must see that your life, sacrifice myself, I might say, and certainly the mother instinct". . . Well, by this time I had my eyes closed. I was thinking of the beautiful, severe prose of Xenophon.

"Mama," I said, "try to collect yourself."

Aunt Minnie stopped crying to say, "There she sits, there she sits, talking of 'collecting oneself'! Our generation which went through the war with high disillusionment, struggled to tear these things down, to establish a new freedom for the man and the woman—and there she sits telling us to collect ourselves!"

"Minnie," Mama said, "you are in-her-ent. Let us deal with this more calmly. Now, come, dear, confide in your mother."

"Mama, there is very little to confide. My year has been pleasant; I arise at seven and retire at nine. For the last four weeks I have been translating the 'Memorabilia' and Father Coughlin—a Jesuit and an educated man—thinks that it is not without merit."

"But Eden," Mama said, "have you no stirrings?"

"Stirrings, stirrings!" Aunt Minnie screamed. "You are mincing words. Have you felt no yearnings to embrace the boys in the field, to tell your secrets to the skies, to lie in the dells and crannies?"

"Mama," I said, "make Aunt Minnie shut up."

"But, my dear," Mama said, "you are coming into puberty and we must get that settled."

"A big, handsome animal," Aunt Minnie sobbed, "certainly that is normal."

"It is normal," said Mama, "and of course we will forgive you and assist you." Mama suddenly arose and took me in her arms. "Minnie," she said over my shoulder, "you have never been a mother."

Well, she cried for about fifteen minutes and Uncle Wallace told me that he thought it was one of the most beautiful moments of his life. "A huge, cloudy symbol of a high delight," but of course he misquoted. Then he said it was like the bleeding of an inner heart.

Well, I finally got away. I don't think they noticed because they were going to a party for a prize-fighter. A big, handsome animal, Aunt Minnie called him. I wanted to get back to Tacoma to see an outdoor production of "Il Penseroso."



She magic life
CRUISING CUNARD

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