

example, in himself and normally the typical Nordic has as much sense of music as a cow. With Latin and other good aid we had begun to overcome this handicap and develop here a great musical foundation. At one blow we separate ourselves from the people in whom music is inborn and perennial, we revert to the Nordic ideal of life as all sordid struggle and bootless strife.

"Crazy, lazy Italians," said the Nordic woman. Are we so sure of that? What if one should say that the man lying on the sea-wall and looking at Naples Bay that morning had more joy than the rest of us ever knew, more joy and a deeper draft of life than he could have had from any drudging labor, more joy than all the tribe of American millionaires together ever had? The Nordic would be shocked and incensed. Yet who that has considered both sides of this question and is honest could fail to

vote for the man on the wall? In any rational view of life, was he not the richer?

A carter goes along the road from Palermo singing an aria from the opera he heard last night (for ten cents)—singing and looking at the clouds floating above Monreale. An American business man hurtles to work, his heart heavy with cares, his mind delving after ways to outwit his fellows.

Look for a moment upon life as something to yield joy, fruitage of satisfaction, the happiness that can come only from the sense of inward and spiritual exaltation; and which has the best of it, carter or money-grubber?

We have cast our lot on the side of the money-grubbing ideal, which is to say, on the side of materialism, which is to say, on the side of imperialism.

Have we done well?

MELTING SNOW

GRACE STRICKLER DAWSON

Across this open space where, frayed and tattered,
Lies Winter's drabbed shawl in disarray,
Discarded hastily, as though it mattered
Nothing at all since Winter could not stay—

Some one walks daintily in cool green sandals,
Wearing a scarf of filmy yellow light
Tangled with mist, some one who deftly handles
With coaxing finger-tips the ragged white
Fringes, and brushing all of them from sight,
Lights one by one the dandelion candles.

THE JOKE

DOROTHY E. NORMAN-SMITH

BARTHOLOMEW kept the grocery store in Lite Street, a large family, and his own counsel.

A bulky monosyllabic man was Bartholomew, known to his few friends briefly as Blot. All day long he sat behind the battered counter of his dark little store and read the sporting page of the daily paper, his thick jaws moving rhythmically as he chewed his tobacco. At six he would send out for the evening edition, and then continue to sit and chew and read the sporting page.

Lite Street did not understand Blot. He was in but not of it. Straggling in with aproned forearms, Lite Street would purchase from him its candles and mottled soap; its streaky rashers; its margarine, custard powder, and Keatings. But it got nothing else out of him. A series of grunts served him for answers. If he had to ask a question, he asked it, without any frills. And the moment the purchase was completed and his money safe in the till, he would resume his rhythmical chewing and his sporting page.

Blot, then, was scarcely a social success. Yet he had friends, who came from time to time to the dark little store in Lite Street. Then Blot's social sense would appear to rouse itself, and coming slowly from behind the battered counter, he would spit hospitably upon the floor

and extend a horny hand in welcome. Then Blot and the visitor would disappear into some back room, and the tinkle of glass would come faintly to the ears, and a scraping of chairs upon a wooden floor.

And one of the family—Violet, perhaps—would take Blot's place behind the counter till the visitor had gone.

The flower of Blot's flock was Violet. A large limber creature of seventeen, whose glossy flaming curls still hung preposterously down her back, to the ridicule and secret envy of Lite Street. Her skin—when she had cleaned up at the parental sink—was warmly white, her eyes a clear dark blue, her teeth milky between full crimson lips. She had a voice to charm angels and—when she chose—a vocabulary that could send a dock-worker reeling. She was lazy and gay and generous; primitive, greedy; sophisticated yet tragically childish. Blot worshiped her and took her amazing impudences with a slow smile, when any other of his children would have been clouted clean down the cellar steps.

Violet was not particularly interested in Blot's friends. They served as an excuse for abandoning the tedious housework and keeping shop, which was far more exciting. Otherwise, they appeared to her an undistinguished enough crew, known