

every village has shops such as you might find in a metropolis and every city has meadows with pasturing kine; where airplanes hum daily over the low-lying dunes bearing the mail to distant villagers, and where every peasant owns a bicycle or motor-car, and lives at home like a gentleman. When you think that you are talking with a man of the world, you find him suddenly quoting texts from the Bible; but the preacher will deliver a discourse on the

modern romance, and yonder provincial patriarch has spent half his life in Sumatra.

I have dwelt for many weeks among these people; and even to-day I am constantly discovering new facets of their many-sided nature and experience. They make no effort at display. It is not wise to fancy that you have seen through a Hollander. It is better to be on your guard, lest he has long since seen through you.

THE LITTLE WORD

BY J. LEWIS MAY

From *To-Day*, September
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In literature, as in nature, it is not always, not indeed often, that the 'show places' appeal most strongly to the discriminating eye. They are apt to become hackneyed and, for the scholar, by nature, a timid and retiring sort of creature, enamored of lonely places, they lose a considerable part of their bloom from the contact with perspiring and noisy crowds of conducted, but seldom well-conducted, literary tourists, whose vociferous admiration is invariably expended on the obvious. The finer shades, the subtler *nuances*, escape the notice of these good folk, who career about the realms of literature like trippers in charabancs, making a great noise, creating a great dust, and strewing the slopes of Parnassus with the squalid remains of their vulgar junketings. Open-mouthed, eager and, withal, good-humored, the perspiring crowd of literary trippers render full and dutiful

homage to the 'beauties' pointed out to them by their complacent guide; but in their hearts they find the whole thing rather a bore, and are secretly relieved to get back to their pianolas and picture palaces.

Literature is an exacting mistress, and only those who court her long and ardently can hope to win her favors. A jealous goddess, she dwells on a height, apart, and she will brook no dalliance with the dusty divinities of the marketplace. I once knew a man, a poor man, who was given to reading Wordsworth. One day he acquired an interest in some company or other. He made money and went on making it. Now he rides about in a luxurious motor-car and the widow Clicquot furnishes his customary beverage — but he reads Wordsworth no longer; he has exchanged him for the *Financial Times*. He would blush if you spoke to him of his early

love before his friends of Capel Court. What, indeed, shall it profit a man — ?

Sometimes you light upon a possessor of a taste for literature in the most unlikely places. You may find him — very rarely I grant you — in literary clubs and coteries. I even know a journalist — this, I dare say, will appear incredible — a journalist, a sort of Jekyll and Hyde, who, when he is not writing wrong-headed things about politics, is given to inditing supremely right-headed things about poetry. I remember — it must have been a decade ago now — that I came across a little article in a newspaper in which he wrote, with a charm one does not usually find in newspapers, on the beauty of the small, simple word. That may not have been the title of the essay, but it was its subject, and among other illustrations of his remarks he quoted the second line from Wordsworth's sonnet, 'Composed upon the Beach near Calais 1802,'

The holy time is quiet as a nun.

He commented on the beauty of the word 'quiet' in general, and, in particular, on its austere loveliness in the passage cited. It is a delicacy that our literary Cook's tourist would assuredly have overlooked.

A second-rate poet may occasionally deviate into a passage of sonorous rhetoric. Young in his *Night Thoughts* sometimes does; and there are good passages even in that monument of tediousness, Bailey's *Festus*. But the great little word, the little word whose greatness one does not realize all at once, but which comes upon one afterward like a sudden revelation, with its fitness, its inevitability — that is the true hall-mark of the poet. Of course, there is a beauty as well as a use in the stock epithet. One does not tire, in reading Homer, of hearing over and over again of the 'rosy-fingered dawn,' of 'Odysseus of many counsels,' of the

'well-greaved Greeks,' of the 'black ships of the Achæans,' or of the 'wine-dark sea.' These set the stage, so to speak, and keep the *mise-en-scène* before us. Tennyson, however, had something different in mind when, praising Virgil, he spoke of

All the charm of all the Muses
Often flowering in a lonely word.

That very word 'lonely' is an example which would be hard to surpass of the *living* epithet. He might have said 'single,' but how inert and lifeless that would have been. So, too, when Keats, speaking of the nightingale's song, says it was perhaps the self-same song

that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth when, sick for home;
She stood in tears amid the alien corn —

there, in 'alien,' is an epithet that lights up the whole passage like a star; an epithet which, amid scores of others that would have passed muster well enough, is the only perfect and inevitable one, the only one that conveys that the very loveliness of a strange land renders but more intense the heart-ache of the exile.

People are often given to speculating how far these felicities, upon which the critics are wont to descant, are the result of deliberate effort on the part of the poet, and how far they are accidental. If by accidental is meant instinctive, then the probability is that they are in the main instinctive, for all beautiful things are born of instinct and the passions. When Shakespeare makes Lady Macbeth, sleep-walking with her taper, moan piteously, 'Here's the smell of blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this *little* hand,' little — so ordinary, so simple in itself — is here of a magical, an incomparable felicity. That *little* hand stands out luminous and white against the sombre, tragic background of the play, re-

minding us that, for all her resolution and intrepidity, Lady Macbeth is but a woman still, driven beside herself by ambition and lust of power, but beautiful and, in her agony of terror and remorse, to be pitied rather than condemned.

All this is not to deny that there may well be a beauty in passages in which no unusual words, no unexpected epithets are employed. Take, for example, that speech of Prospero's in *The Tempest*, which has been described as embodying Shakespeare's final view of life, and as being the inevitable quotation of all who would sum up the teachings of philosophy:—

These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
Are melted into air, into thin air:
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on; and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.

In that speech, magnificent as it is, magnificent to the point of sublimity, the epithets are certainly taken 'from stock': 'cloud-capped towers,' 'gorgeous palaces,' 'solemn temples,' 'the great globe'—these adjectives are certainly not far-fetched, and the passage as a whole derives its effect from the majesty of its harmonies and the splendor of its imagery. Nay—and I say this in fear and trembling—it seems to me that the pure poetry, poetry unalloyed

with rhetoric, is not reached until we come to the lines:—

We are such stuff
As dreams are made on; and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.

And these words, it will be noted, are *little* words. It is just conceivable that another poet might have written the previous lines, but

such stuff
As dreams are made on; and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.

could come from none but Shakespeare.

There have been periods in the development of English literature when the search for some startling word, some far-sought adjective became a kind of obsession. The extravagances of the Euphuists have not been without their parallel in our own day, but Euphuism and its latter-day derivatives have a pathological significance; and it is well for the health of the literary organism when such schools of preciosity die, Narcissus-like, of their own beauty. Nevertheless, it must not be thought that genius is exempt from toil and travail in its search for the inevitable, the perfect word. But genius, unlike its counterfeits, knows the *mot juste* when it finds it. The Euphuist really knows not what he is in search of, and rates as a treasure what is too often merely dross. Indeed we may invoke the analogy of the Golden Bough and say:—

ipse volens facilisque sequetur,
Si te fata vocant; aliter non viribus ullis
Vincere nec duro poteris convellere ferro.

HOW MOSCOW IS FED

BY LEWIS S. GANNETT

From *The Outlook*, September 10.
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PAYOK is the first word you learn in Russia. It means the ration. There are three main classes of payok to-day: the 'diplomatic,' the 'demi-dip,' and the ordinary. Distinguished foreign visitors — which means almost all foreign visitors — get the 'dip'; responsible workers — which means most workers in government offices, and factory workers in factories which show a high rate of productivity — get the 'demi-dip'; and other workers the ordinary payok. Peasants feed themselves out of their own crops. In addition to the payok most office-workers receive a small salary — often the equivalent, in market prices, of a pound of white bread or half a dozen eggs a month. These salaries were fixed in the days when money had been almost abolished as a medium of exchange; one aspect of the new economic policy is that they are to be raised tenfold. But that involves printing much more paper money, and has to await the advent of a large supply of paper. To-day factory-workers can exchange a small percentage of their product directly for food.

But a payok in the kitchen is very different from a payok on paper. A payok on paper includes eggs and fresh vegetables and fats, and sundry things which do not materialize on the table because supplies are lacking. The 'commandant' of a house gets as much of the payok of the occupants of that house as she can; but even in Moscow, in June and July, when I was there, it ran rather short of the schedule, and the famine is likely to make it do so

even more. Here, for instance, are the three classes of payok as they were scheduled on paper for June of this year in Moscow, and the actual diplomatic payok, which in addition to being the best on paper probably came nearer to realization than the others. The figures, except for eggs, are given in Russian pounds. A Russian pound is about seven eighths of an English pound.

	—On paper—			Actual dip
	Ordinary	Demi-dip	Dip	
Gray flour or bread . . .		10	10	10
Black flour or bread 30		35	35	35
Meat	7.5	15	30	10
Fat	1	2.5	5	2
Grits	5	7.5	15	12
Cheese, etc.		2.5	5	..
Sugar	1	2.5	5	4
Macaroni, etc.	1	2.5	5	..
Salt	1	1	1.5	1.5
Vegetables	30	30	45	10.
Dried fruit		2.5	5	3
Condiments		1	2	1
Tea25	.25	.25	.25
Coffee6	1.25	1.25
Soap	1.25	1.25	3	..
Eggs		30	60	..

That is not much food for a month. In practice the cheese, macaroni, eggs, and soap fell out entirely that month, even for the most favored, and the meat, fat, and vegetables were sadly reduced. Even bread is sometimes missing for days at a time; and in Petrograd and many other cities conditions were much worse than in Moscow. This black bread, which makes up the major sustenance of the ration, is a curious soggy composition, said to contain all