

wanted all kinds of experience. And we took it in no imaginary form. We were awake and alive on every instant, and recklessly hospitable to every passing flavor of reality or dream.

Is it not strange, then, and pitiable, that with all this wine of realization which is the soul of poetry in us, we should so many of us have learned to regard poetry itself as a peculiarly dead and sad and grown-up and bookish thing? This is because the grown-up people, not seeing that our lives were better than books of poetry, fearing that we might become too enamoured of the reality out of which these books were copied, forced them upon us prematurely as a thing we *ought* to enjoy. They held them over us as a practical discipline, a part of the routine interruption of our poetic enjoyments.

Every healthy young person is, I suppose, antagonized by the dull and heavy quietness of the old-fashioned schoolroom. It seems as though this dread atmosphere of dignity exists, if for any good purpose at all, for the purpose of giving a live child a chance to revolt. For many months in succession I can remember walking to school, consulting with my companions, and having in mind no serious purpose whatever but to devise new systems of mischief, whereby we might bring to the full fruition those experiences of risk and adventure that a public school affords. We were quite dominated by the desire to receive poignant experiences. We were more purely poetic than we have been since.

And yet, by the extreme irony of education, poetry was inflicted upon us as a punishment for these exploits whenever we got caught! We were compelled to sit down on a front bench, after school, and *learn poetry by heart*. And every one who has gone to Sunday School knows what it means to learn imaginative literature by heart when he would rather not. It means that it is not literature, and never will be to him so long as he lives. It is merely a string of words and phrases trained to slide through his mind without creating enough friction to produce thought.

When we were sternly planted there at the end of the day's fun, and compelled to learn the lines of some poet's verse as a punishment for having too much poetry in our own souls, there was established a separation of the poetry of books from that of life which only years of oblivion could overcome. For my part, I never read poetry with real poetic enjoyment until I was seventeen or eighteen years old. And when I did, it came to me as an overwhelming revelation that poetry is reality, poetry is the world. "Poetry," I said, "is life clothed in its own form, prose is life clothed in the forms of words."

All of which biography comes only to this wis-

dom: if we cannot lead a child into the pages of poetry with the same natural joy he runs into the school-yard at recess, it is a gratuitous injury to lead him there. Let him find them for himself when he will. Perhaps it were better he should never find them than that he should learn to rank them with Sunday and sobriety, and stiff collars, and good manners among the futile but inevitable burdens of a practical or grown-up civilization.

MAX EASTMAN.

CORRESPONDENCE

Not Ex Cathedra

SIR: Mr. Edward J. O'Brien in your issue of November 25th says quite correctly that "when Pius X condemned modernism he was not speaking *ex cathedra*." This is one of the main points which the late Father Tyrrell made when protesting against the *Pascendi* encyclical: it assumed all the powers of an *ex cathedra* utterance without assuming any of its responsibilities. It is quite possible that this encyclical will be repudiated by a future pope, but meanwhile Father Tyrrell and many others have been excommunicated. The Modernists would have been quite content to abide by the judgment of the Church. They were not content to have the dogmas of the Church interpreted according to the limitations of the most reactionary minds believing in them.

MAURICE JOY.

New York City.

Not Sure about Clayton Act

SIR: The probable decision of the courts as to the effect of the Clayton act upon the application of the Sherman law to the activities of organized labor has hitherto been regarded by many reasonably competent lawyers as at least not free from doubt. As one, therefore, who has some present responsibility relating to the enforcement of the anti-trust laws, I noted with great interest the statement in the article headed "Labor Is Not a Commodity," which appears in your issue of December 2nd, to the effect that the courts "inevitably must" decide that the unions are as subject to the anti-trust laws and to the process of injunction as they were before the passage of the Clayton act.

However disappointing to one's sympathies, it would at least be a solution of one's professional doubts to learn that the answer was as simple and as certain as you proclaim. This in itself was sufficient inducement to careful reading of the article. And when one finds the Clayton act characterized not merely as an imperfect piece of legislation but as "a deceitful statute" palmed off on organized labor by "a pusillanimous Congressional committee" one confesses to a bit of astonishment. These are pretty strong words and one assumes that they are not used recklessly. It would seem that one was entitled to expect a supporting demonstration not only convincing but complete.

You analyze the general language of section six in much detail. You quote the first part of section twenty and dispose of it with a certain air of finality in keeping with the certainty of conclusion with which the whole article is marked. You say of the section regarding jury trial in

certain contempt cases that it is the only section of any value to labor but is a poor thing at best. With certain of the opinions expressed upon these sections there would seem to be room for some disagreement, at least as a matter of that technical legal argument for which you say laymen have no stomach. This, however, is a circumstance of relative unimportance.

For it is not what you say but what you do not say of the Clayton act which gravely troubles me. As I have noticed, you quote from the first part of section twenty certain language as to the cases in which injunctions may be issued. But you neither discuss the remainder of that section nor do you let fall the slightest word by which one unfamiliar with the statute would be apprised of its existence. Yet to some of us that part of section twenty to which you do not allude seems to raise questions of gravity and importance with respect to the problem which you discuss. For that part of this statute to whose framers you impute something very near dishonesty reads as follows:

"And no restraining order or injunction shall prohibit any person or persons, whether singly or in concert, from terminating any relation of employment, or from ceasing to perform any work or labor, or from recommending, advising or persuading others by peaceful means so to do; or from attending at any place where any such person or persons may lawfully be for the purpose of peaceably persuading any person to work or to abstain from working; or from ceasing to patronize or to employ any party to such dispute; or from recommending, advising or persuading others by peaceful and lawful means so to do; or from paying or giving to or withholding from any person engaged in such dispute, any strike benefits or other moneys or things of value; or from peaceably assembling in a lawful manner and for lawful purposes; or from doing any acts or things which might lawfully be done in the absence of such dispute by any party thereto; nor shall any of the acts specified in this paragraph be considered or held to be violations of any law of the United States."

You say with much force that "it is what he does, not what he is that lands a man in jail." Now apparently this section deals with what men may do and it specifically provides that certain acts shall not be violations of any law of the United States. Certainly the anti-trust laws are laws of the United States. Further, it specifically provides that no federal court shall enjoin the doing of those acts. And, apparently at least, some of the acts which are stated with no qualification as to the purposes with which they may be done or the circumstances attending their doing were not necessarily lawful prior to the passage of the Clayton act. For example, it was not necessarily lawful for a group of men in concert to cease to work and to persuade others by peaceful means to do so. Much might depend upon the purpose of the refusal, the directness of the relation of the interests of the particular group to the quarrel (e.g., whether the strike was sympathetic merely) and upon the circumstances attending the situation. Similar comment might be made as to others of the acts specified as not to be considered violations of any federal law. As to many there was at least doubt before the passage of this statute.

One does not need to believe that all doubt has now been removed to feel that this language at least demands some attention. I am sure that you cannot have intended

to ignore it and thereby risk misleading those of your readers who have not the statute before them. May not one ask, then, that you complete your demonstration of the inevitability of the judicial decision which you forecast so confidently and show that these unnoticed phrases do not to some extent mitigate the severity of the judgment which you pronounce against the Clayton act and its framers?

H. LARUE BROWN.

Boston, Massachusetts.

Amateur Rules

SIR: "Shall a lawn tennis player who manufactures or sells athletic goods be rated as amateur or professional?" The above question is not so impossible if the facts on which the answer is based are examined. Our amateur rules are copied from the amateur rules of England. In England there is a large leisure class which devotes most of its time to sports. This leisure class is naturally made up of English gentlemen, a class which by tradition and custom cannot use its hands to procure a livelihood. The leisure class in England, naturally, made laws in athletics which corresponded to its class distinction. In America there is no class distinction. Amateur rules which fit the situation in England do not fit the situation in America. "Shall a lawn tennis player who manufactures or sells athletic goods be rated as amateur or professional?" The one answer which is generally given to this question is: commercializing an amateur's reputation tends to make amateur sports crooked. Yet there are no evidences to prove this charge. If one analyzes the reason for this answer he cannot avoid tracing it to the prejudiced conclusion of an English gentleman.

Quimet's professional rating by the Golf Association has aroused the indignation of all America. If the Lawn Tennis Association feels compelled to follow the example set by the Golf Association, because it does not like the injustice of having an amateur lawn tennis player rated as a professional golfer, the Lawn Tennis Association will also bring upon itself the condemnation of America.

America leads the world in amateur sports, and American sportsmen seem entitled to amateur rules which are based upon American manners and customs.

G. FRANKLIN BROWN.

"Stonebridge," Needham.

Mr. Lindsay Crowned

SIR: I observe with pleasure that I have unwittingly brought a smile to the usually serious countenance of "F. H.," your distinguished contributor. He has become so impressed with the "genius" of Vachel Lindsay as to be amused because I thought Mr. Yeats "honored" the then obscure "corn-fed poetic chick"—I borrow F. H.'s happy phrase—in singling him out for high and public praise at the now historic *Poetry* dinner.

F. H. should remember that at that time, nearly three years ago, he had not yet spoken. Those of us who had the pleasure of printing and praising Mr. Lindsay before others were aware of him, may perhaps be pardoned if we felt a bit "nervous" as to the young poet's chances of fame until F. H. came to our rescue by making his somewhat tardy, but no doubt ultimate, award of the laurel.

Mr. Lindsay may now consider himself crowned, and his early admirers may compose their nerves.

HARRIET MONROE.

Chicago, Illinois.

After the Play

NO one who knows musical comedy is raving over "The Century Girl." A demand has been created for it in Manhattan, where amusement seems to have the scarcity value that water has in another place. Men are willing to pay seven dollars or more for a ticket, and the Century Theatre, a big theatre, is sold out every night. But the demand that has been created for "The Century Girl" is one thing, the satisfaction of that demand is another. The show is good, but not good enough. There is nothing about it, certainly, to make anyone wail that he, poor Peri, cannot afford it.

Everyone with eyes in his head, with as much rhythm in his system as a monkey, must enjoy bits of "The Century Girl." In the art that redeems musical comedy, however, it is singularly thin. That art is almost indefinable. It may sometimes be found in the previous condition of musical comedy offerings, in the style of a single vaudeville act. To keep it in the new form, where the expectation of something more than vaudeville is excited yet where no story is sustained or suggested, is more than Messrs. Ziegfeld and Dillingham have been able, or perhaps anxious, to do. But without this special presence "The Century Girl" is pretty generally disappointing. A musical comedy, after all, should do more than fill out old formulæ. It should have something in the dancing and the music and the costumes and the pantomime and the grouping which manages to transport one's imagination. It is idle to say that in a huge house it must be groundling entertainment. One finds exactly what one seeks in parts of its own program, for example the humor of the "little" bit for which Frank Tinney is given time. Frank Tinney makes you believe that it is easy for him to roam on and begin chaffing the orchestra conductor. Easy! Just as easy as it is for Sargent to "dash off" a sketch. Tinney comes into a house that has been starved for any sort of naturalness for an hour or so. In ten seconds, by what Woodrow Wilson would call the "wholesome contagion" of his voice, he surrounds everyone in the Century audience with *bonhomie*. Jokes which everyone knows are creaky except the very weariest of vaudeville hacks and the very laziest of managers—these jokes Frank Tinney turns inside out, to the delight of a long-suffering public. And he does it with an air reminiscent of all unaffected boys, the most engaging air in the world. He has mainly a rollicking familiarity, a touch of nature. He has no such range as the men who have sentiment and pathos such as Lauder and Chevalier. But the personality Tinney effuses, the gift he has for embracing the whole house in the joke he plays with, shows the art which is possible in musical comedy. His, it is true, is the comic art, and dancing and lirting and costume and drama each has a distinct idiom to be mastered by the producer and gotten over the footlights for common appreciation. But the special point about "The Century Girl" is the failure of the producer or his collaborators to get imaginative suggestion rather than flat-footed statement out of the tons of scenery and acres of raiment and gallons of color and yards of smile which the show so heapingly exhibits. The material itself is excellent. The scenery is sometimes superb, the raiment admirable, the girls young and good-looking, the spectacle dazzling. But it is an old story in the concoction of any result that man is not saved by ingredients alone. It takes more than a 100 per cent egg and a 100 per cent nog to make a 100 per cent eggnog. One has only to witness the solemnization of that remark-

able drink, or the ritual of the cocktail, to get a respect for process. And it is not by adding more and more, even of expensive ingredients, that the fine, rare flavor is assured. That is one lesson which "The Century Girl" conspicuously has not learned.

The simple-life formula can be overdone in the theatre. The Bard of Avon, we are told, did not use rich devices of lighting, but nothing prevented him except the accident of time. He departed from unities that were as precious to intellectual formalists as the bare stage to the Thoreaus of the property-room. He was no "pinched ascetic," and his simple stage no counsel of pinched asceticism. But for all the virtue in the immense resources that capitalized science has given to the stage, there is such a thing as killing the imagination by congesting it, even such a thing as sinning against the light when it is electric. Everyone with sense observes it with children. No one can be more distracted and bored than the infant who is submerged under a wagon-load of mechanical toys. The producers of "The Century Girl" have behaved like the parents of the hypertrophied infant. They have argued that if one chorus-girl is good, two must be twice as good, and so on progressively. So with costumes. So with items on the program. So with scenery. Such profusion may be amusing, once. But it is a tendency in American musical comedies that has been pushed to a limit. A scene snatched away before it has been enjoyed may dazzle the same kind of person who is impressed by a ten-course dinner, each course a horrible example of the speeding-up process if one at all conceives of dinner as an occasion for nourishment and wants more than a pleasant bowing acquaintance with food. Conspicuous waste must equally impress some impoverished imaginations in the theatre, but the dulness of such cornucopian exhibition is widely experienced and confessed.

The elation provided by Frank Tinney is not the sole genuine amusement in "The Century Girl." Sam Bernard makes a political speech which is extremely funny, and Miss Elsie Janis gives imitations and bits of character-acting as only an artist can. The stuffed-club antics of Harry Kelly seemed to me faintly amusing. They made me laugh, but only from the diaphragm. I suppose the hundred thousand people who have never seen this sort of thing before—the ever oncoming youth to whom the voice of Bernhardt is all-wonderful and not "still rather wonderful"—will laugh from the heart at the Ballet Loose and Kelly's idiotic piroquette. But Tinney and Elsie Janis touch something that is not simply primitive. They wear as gold wears.

The absence of fresh comedy is part of the story told by the fatuous representation of American's colonies, the outpouring of chorus girls as turkeys and so on, even the revolving naval spectacle. There is a yawning deficiency on the side of invention, not to speak of creation. Adhering to the established conventions of musical comedy, that is to say, there is still little happy surprise either in personality or the book. That happy surprise must in the end, I imagine, be the free quest of artists rather than investors in this business. Musical comedy has a surname which its producers should respect. They should turn all its ostentation and pride to something better than a parade of monetary outlay. They should advert to a public that, after all, does revel in Tinney and Lauder and Charlie Chaplin and Bert Williams and Fred Stone. The producers should adapt their lavishness to their inspiration. They should keep from forcing complicated Aeolians on Pan.

F. H.