

sequently, as many openings for evasion. We want occupation as long as it will be necessary to convince our opinion of Germany's good faith. . . . I want to foresee everything and ask in case of non-fulfillment that occupation be prolonged."

Care must now be taken, therefore, in a possible French move, to distinguish between military and economic considerations. If the British should not at the last approve the move it is more than probable that the French would make it anyway. They have but slight confidence in British support, expect nothing from America in the near future, look for nothing in international action, and are therefore preparing to take matters into their own hands. As one Frenchman remarked, "Why not shape some French general into a d'Annunzio? Millerand in his reluctance is much like our Nitti. Why not make a French Fiume of the Ruhr?"

Quite apart from the merits of the various claims involved in the Ruhr dispute, would it pay the French to foreclose in this way on their debtor? One official in an important government post with whom I raised this question is himself somewhat dubious of the success of a French attempt at military control in the Ruhr. He has seen such control enforced in the Saar, however, and does not find it impossible. Here production is now some eight million tons of coal as compared with a peace time production of twelve, and to a potential production of seventeen. In the opinion of this official, military occupation probably would not work better in the Ruhr but need not work any worse. "At any rate," he added, "we would get a large quantity of the coal already mined, and would assure ourselves priority over a number of neutrals who are now buying the coal which should come to us." He recognized the necessity of giving the miners as well as the mine-owners some satisfaction from their labors. He admitted that part of the failure in the present system is the fact that the Ruhr has been called upon to mine coal in fulfillment of the terms of the Peace Treaty and without any assurance of full compensation either from the Allies or the German government. Before taking further military action, he stated, "We are going to try to increase deliveries from the Ruhr by offering them some satisfaction in shipments of iron ore."

Some other Frenchmen with whom I have talked have neglected the human factor in discussing possible French occupation of the Ruhr. They seem to think that it is possible to establish a permanent system in which German workmen will produce for France, at the point of the bayonet if need be. This opinion is not shared by French workmen, however. Jouhaux, the leader of the French General Confederation of Labor, remarked on this point: "It

is our profound conviction that all the measures of compulsion used against the Germans will fail in their purpose and leave or aggravate existing dangers. All politics and diplomacy which are based exclusively on the equilibrium of political and military forces, which disregard economic laws and which do not hold as indispensable the cooperation of the peoples in the common reconstruction are bound to fail. This policy will fail since they cannot set up effective labor again in countries crippled by the war because they spread disorder, upset the normal equilibrium and keep alive a latent hostility."

SANFORD GRIFFITH.

Robert Edmond Jones, Artist of the Theatre

NOT so very long ago, in a moment of impatience and discouragement that comes to all artists, Robert Edmond Jones said to me, "What are the designers of scenery who have caught the spirit of the new theatre going to do? Must we quit for a while and sit back and wait for the producers to catch up with us?"

"No," I replied. "That's no solution. You yourselves will simply have to learn to produce."

Since then, the sketches and models of Jones have been shown in the first one-man exhibit of the kind in this country at the Bourgeois galleries; and if the exhibit compelled one conclusion more than another it is that the art of Robert Edmond Jones is distinctly of the theatre and that it can achieve its aim completely only when the designer enters the theatre as producer and carries through to realization his original vision.

To this solution, there is no inherent obstacle apparent in Jones's designs and settings. On the contrary, there are many hints and indications that point directly to the possession by the artist of just the necessary instinctive gifts for such a development of his profession. There is something unfinished about his sketches and even his models that worries and baffles the connoisseur of mere pictures. They are sketches in reality as well as in name—working plans to be fulfilled only in the stuff and media of the theatre. Only those who know the theatre and who can fill in the blanks with an imagination born of such knowledge can fully appreciate them and assure the doubter that they possess all the requisite stimuli to the finished work of art in the theatre.

Robert Jones came into the theatre not as a painter but as one who conceived the theatre as an art by itself and who was determined to master the

precepts of that art. His undergraduate friends at Harvard tell of his enthusiastic preference for a few curtains and a light or two over the brush and palette as a medium of expression. There is something almost ironic in the fact that he has become the most dangerous opponent of the old ways in the theatre. Five years ago when the swelling impulse toward a new theatre threatened to undermine the artificial and crumbling foundations of the old, the favorite retort of beleaguered Tories was that this impulse, arising on foreign shores, could have no significance on American stages and that its proponents were mere intruding amateurs from the other arts lugging their unwelcome and impractical theories into the theatre. Today, the defenders of reaction are compelled to face the fact that a young man with the unmistakably native cognomen of Jones, whose entire apprenticeship and labor has been wrought within the confines of the "commercial" theatre, has turned out to be the natural protagonist of the despised impulses and theories.

There is nothing either to his credit or to his discredit that Jones has pursued the development of his art within the channels of the established theatre. He might have attained similar results in the experimental camps of the rebels and the outlaws. Or he might have found their lack of organization an obstacle to his progress. To others should go a large share of the credit for the fact that he has not had to sell his soul on the way up—to Granville Barker who recognized latent talent and put him to work on *The Dumb Wife*, and even more to Arthur Hopkins who has steadily granted him freer rein from the days of *The Devil's Garden* and *The Happy Ending* on to *Richard III*.

Just how long Robert Edmond Jones will be content with the modicum of restraint involved in working for even so sympathetic a master as Hopkins, is the next question in his development as an artist of the theatre. There are signs in the recent exhibition which indicate that he is beginning to chafe under restraint of any kind. His imagination is bidding him do things to which no master of the elder theatre, however broad may be his viewpoint, will give assent. His conceptions demand a mechanical equipment which the present theatre is unable to offer and unwilling to provide. In spite of these handicaps, however, his mind is reaching out to such conceptions, in the mood of the producer—consciously or unconsciously—rather than in that of the designer. Some of the most striking sketches in the exhibit were studies in stage management more than in stage settings.

For one thing, Jones refuses to be bound by the present limitations of the proscenium opening. With

a single gesture, in the model for *The Seven Princesses*, he sweeps away all the false draperies which mask our neglect of the upper two-thirds of the stage's frame, and sends the eye up and up until the human figures below are dwarfed by comparison. To achieve the same result in the actual theatre, he must have a plaster sky-dome or some other mechanical expedient untried on our stage for shutting off sight of brick walls and scene lofts. For *The Will to Song*, a vast conception of human beings as waves in a storm-tossed sea, he requires a stadium or a circus far larger than that of Reinhardt, thousands of trained participants and great naval searchlights sweeping the night sky. For *The Cenci* he asks the squared circle of the boxer with an audience ranged all the way round its four sides.

No impractical dreamings, these, despite their refusal to comply with the means at hand for their realization. Through them all runs the mark of the instinctive stage manager, knowing his goal in terms of the theatre and keenly aware of the specialized media of his art. In the black and white sketches for *The Cenci*, particularly, he keeps in mind the fact that his stage picture must be perfect from all points of the surrounding circle, and he economizes his lines and his masses to intensify the varying moods. Here, as well as in *The Song of Roland*, where medieval warriors with their shields conjure up the effect of a castle, he uses human figures for architectural and symbolic ends, a problem solely in stage management.

In a comprehensive exhibit of his work, any artist risks, even challenges, critical examination of his development. Jones survives such a test more successfully than his modest nature could have hoped. In between the naive simplicity of *The Dumb Wife* and the subtle but lucid symbolism of *Richard III*, there are many steps, each of which has carried the artist forward in the mastery of one difficulty after another. It is necessary only to compare *The Dumb Wife* with *Caliban* or the *Hall of the Mirrors* in *The Birthday of the Infanta* or the scene with the gypsies in *Redemption* or the infinite variations in front of the ever-present Tower in *Richard III*, to realize how Jones has achieved an increasing power of luminosity in addition to retaining and developing his early sense of design and color. The fact that his luminosity is distinctly of the theatre and not merely of brush and paper was interestingly proved through photographs of *Richard* taken by a fellow-artist, Francis Bruguière.

Jones's tightening grasp on the theory of stylization is also evident. More and more he knits the various scenes in a play together by a firm but un-

obtrusive bond. The variety of these scenic leading motives proves his inventiveness, their unerring fitness bears witness to his taste. *Much Ado About Nothing* depends for its connecting thread on a fixed architectural arrangement of variant panels, a hint of the artifice which is at the heart of the comedy. Border designs are the keynote of the costumes for *The Birthday of the Infanta*, an incisive reiteration of the Moorish heritage in Spanish art. The Tower of London looms behind every scene in *Richard III*, as it must have done in the minds of all who dreaded its power in the days of the Plantagenets.

Stylization with Jones thus assumes symbolic as well as mechanistic significance. In fact, a natural and unpretentious symbolism is entering into all of the artist's work. Whether it be fully intended or not, it often amounts to a philosophical interpretation of the scene and the play in hand. In the setting for *Henry V* before Harfleur, an interlude in *Caliban*, the spears of the advancing army are set at an angle which will bring them abruptly against the cliffs ahead if the angle is not changed. Before them on a ledge above, Henry with lifted sword sets the angle higher and thereby symbolizes the function of leadership. In no other sketch or model is this philosophical interpretation of the play or scene quite so patent and simple, but its presence can be detected in all of the artist's most recent work without stretching the imagination.

The leading question roused by Jones in his exhibit is whether his impulse toward greater freedom is yet fully conscious. Is he aware of the complete connotation of his reaching out to new conceptions which is so apparent in his later sketches? Does he understand just what it will mean to carry those sketches to realization in the theatre today? If he does not, then he will have to be satisfied to struggle still longer under other masters. If he does, he must be both thrilled and appalled at the prospect which opens up before him.

OLIVER M. SAYLER.

Park Gnomes

The last leaves fall
In gusts of wind
And little old men,
Sere and thinned,
Little old men
Tattered and brown,
Rake the leaves
As they fall down,
Rake the leaves in Autumn fires,
Old, old leaves on their funeral pyres.

ELIZABETH J. COATSWORTH.

The Passing of the West

TO the east rise the blue tips of the Rockies, to the west enormous orange-flecked tablelands. Between them, bands on bands of desert, dotted with gray sagebrush and chapparall, falling south-westward. Wallowing over its quicksands, ruddy brown, writhing in tumbled eddies, a straggling shallow river rushes down endlessly. A few clumps of sickly willows line either bank. Beyond, blank and empty, but for the interspersing of parched foliage, sun-blackened boulders, and prairie-dog holes, rolls the desert, mile beyond mile on either side, an endless wide space of silence spied upon by the jagged range of blue peaks from which the sun rose this morning, and the long line of great tablelands to which he will descend tonight. Now the sun moves neither to left nor right; he hangs dead overhead and fills all the air with the raging blaze of an August noon. The prairie dogs are asleep in their burrows; a rattle-snake lies motionless on a stone; even the coyote that loves to go slinking alone through the sagebrush, has hidden himself somewhere and sleeps. Up above there is only the unwearied wheeling of an eagle, from side to side turning and turning in endless wide circles around the sun. The desert below him seems burning: ashen-yellow, red-yellow, faint blue and rose brown. Not a cloud flake breaks with its shadow the great space of sky and of earth. Only the river glides on ever fretting with its shallow brown waters the dearth. Silence—the silence of noonday: not a whisper, not even a breath. The desert stands wide, free and open, and the sky is a blue ring of death.

To the south the great floor opens wider till it seems to crumble away under the blaze of day into fantastic island-masses, miraged peaks hanging in mid-air. To the north it closes up again, range on range of mountains staining with faint blue the horizon. Between these two the desert rests, without a break, without a path, without a track. Up the crannies of the westward canyons are tiny mud-baked houses, standing on cracked shelves of yellow stone. These are empty and deserted and their inhabitants are gone. Down to the south, the Spaniard came riding centuries ago, with his pikemen, mules, and musketeers, seeking Eldorado. Mission bells toll over the desert, lofty pueblos lift old chants for rain. Northward, French and British traders cease their fighting, exchange beads for furs again. Spaniards, Frenchmen, British, Indians, each have been seeking Eldorado in their own way. Yet to this day the desert lies empty, a spot as lonely as when it was created, roamed over only by the buffalo and antelope. Now and then a little troupe