

thrash all this out again in one's mind. Those spacious times of Daly, when Mrs. Gilbert reigned and the young John Drew and Ada Rehan and the rest—seeing *The Shadow* I asked myself this: Just how bad was it then? How stuffy and foolish and elaborate was the theatre? Nowadays our actors lack training, they know little of what comes that way, for speaking, walking, manners. But then? Was it not really a matter then of certain talents that arose by this training to artistic distinction in plays and in productions that wasted most of it? Apart from these individual figures, how much was it all the tomfoolery of mere boys, gay dogs, farcical or virginal loves, smug matrons and droll sires; of buckram or saccharine sentiment, highhorse morals and axiomatic thinking; of adolescent stories for Victorian ears, stuff that Ibsen knocked as high as a kite? I don't believe any longer in those days myself. They had some great assets but on the whole our theatre is well out of them. I know that, in spite of certain noble talents beyond praise, those theatre days must have been expertly flat for the most part and essentially bourgeois and trivial in so far as any deep or important art went. And if on no other grounds because I know that the arts pretty largely hang together; what is true of one art in a generation is apt to be true of the rest, one way or another, in spirit at least. And there are cold records to be had in some arts still: Longfellow, for example, who was thought a great poet; Ruskin, the great art critic; *The Horse Fair*, that masterpiece of painting; and those stage versions that Irving, Daly, Tree made of Shakespeare, which are still extant, worse than Longfellow and *The Horse Fair*, Shakespeare cut, rearranged, covered up with draper's goods. The theatre fades but these remain; and the recollection of them can help us not to swallow wholesale too much discouraging tradition of past glory.

And now fortunately in *The Shadow* there are no John Drews or Ada Rehans to dazzle us; and Mr. Phillips has given us the play and Mr. Lonergan the production to show us how much sentiment and hopping about and tricky obviousness there may have been in those great days, how few pungencies, how few ideas, how much professional skill and care and how much well-trained and busy ado about nothing.

STARK YOUNG.

Chorus

They will pass and subside—these dusts of the spirit
and mind,

These dusts that are white like flame from the pits of
the moon;

They will end in a murmur of wind, in a hushing of cries,
Very soon, very soon.

They will pass and subside, and there will be quiet and
peace,

Though of such as may sit among ruins and weep in
the dawn

Alone by the wash of dead seas, in the silence of rains
And the dream of what's gone.

Very soon, very soon—in an hour, or the thought of an
hour,

They will pass and subside, and the challenge they cried
to the years

Be one with the memory that follows rebellion and light
And the ache of old tears.

GEORGE BRANDON SAUL.

The Bandwagon

HOW TO GET AN AUDIENCE

OKLAHOMA. G. O. Grant, county attorney, was kidnapped at Westville on April 3rd by masked men who "lectured him on morals."—*Bulletin of the American Civil Liberties Union*.

IN PRAISE OF IGNORANCE

Most Americans who are not confused by having too close an acquaintance with technical details can see that if Germany does not bear the economic burden that she placed upon France, France will have to bear it.—*The Outlook*.

A SECOND ATTEMPT

In a recent issue of the *Independent*, Boston University was credited with the glory of thrashing Yale two seasons running in football. Not the Methodist Boston University but the Roman Catholic Boston College accomplished that feat. To Boston University, however, unless reports err, is to be credited the glory of offering a course for the training of aspirants to jobs in summer hotels.—*The Independent and Weekly Review*.

PARTLY CLOUDY

While Mr. Bakhmeteff's title may be clouded in one sense, this Government believes it essential that he should remain here in an official capacity and will stand by him if the question should be pressed by Mr. Borah.—*The New York Times*.

THE COOLNESS OF CAL. COOLIDGE

Vice President Coolidge, who resides in the hotel, was up at that hour and looked out of his window at the crowd gathering below and the first fire engine to appear, but without knowing that the fire was in the Willard. When he realized that the hotel was on fire, he and Mrs. Coolidge dressed and went downstairs.—*The New York Times*.

"HEY DING A DING DING"

As spring comes slowly up the way, over half a million men, accustomed to spend their days mining coal far underground, are out in the sunshine in their little gardens with their children digging up the soil and planting vegetables, while seedsmen in coal towns report a record business. Coal operators, as their mines are not working, have gone to join their families and play golf at Pinehurst or Hot Springs.—*The Literary Digest*.

POT ADDRESSES KETTLE

It may have been good judgment or it may have been merely good luck, but whatever it was the decision of President Harding and Secretary Hughes to send no delegates to Genoa has been quickly vindicated. . . .

Neither Germany nor Russia in any true sense is interested in the official Genoa program. They are not now internationally minded—only nationally minded. It is not to be expected they should be anything else.—*The New York Tribune*.

Books and Things

SERIOUSLY speaking, is there nothing we can do about it? We are not worse offenders, we like to tell ourselves, than other nations, but for a progressive and vigorous people, young enough to break a bad habit, even if it be the language habit, is such an excuse quite valid? Perhaps the person innocently most to blame is Professor Watson. Has he not told us, in *Psychology from the Standpoint of a Behaviorist*, that "articulate language, which is limited to man," is "the main behavior difference between man and brute"? Can it be that our self-indulgence in articulate language, as often as a distinguished foreign visitor falls into our hands, is due to a craven fear that if we do not talk a good deal he may confuse us with the brutes? A fear not only craven, but also causeless, baseless, groundless. Take the most recent case in point. Suppose we had all joined, about a fortnight ago, a conspiracy of silence. Suppose not one of us had broken his oath. Would the danger have been imminent of M. Maurice Donnay's or of M. André Chevrillon's mistaking the members of the American Academy of Arts and Letters for some form of animal life lower than man? No. Almost a thousand times no.

The scene was an upper deck of the Paris, well forward, at the moment when she was beginning to raise our voluble coast. In imagination I distinguished two distinguished figures, standing a little apart, gazing westward and landward. In imagination I heard one of them speak to the other. M. Chevrillon, who has been here before, was speaking to M. Donnay. "Courage!" he said, and pointed toward the land. "You are nearing a land where you will be exposed, for the term of your confinement there, to luncheons (with speeches), to dinners (with speeches), to receptions by both lights, natural and artificial (with speeches), to speeches (with speeches). These speeches will be partly of the hands-across-the-seagoing variety, and partly tercentenarian. In so far as they are tercentenarian they will be about Molière, of whom you have lately heard, in France and again in England, much. In the United States you will hear more. Courage!" he said, and pointed toward our land, "for there lies the land where you will need courage." And it was so.

And it was so. Meals and speeches, speeches and meals, at New York, at Princeton, at Washington and Cambridge and Boston—had we nothing better than cookery and prose to set before these travellers from a country that excels us in both arts? It is as if a land as much younger than our land as ours is than France had sought to express itself, in honor of two distinguished American guests, by means of baseball and open plumbing. And yet, after all—unprotected though M. Donnay and M. Chevrillon may have felt against "perils by mine own countrymen"—and although they may five times have received forty speeches save one—yet nowhere—and even as I write my pen trembles with a patriotic pride that is positively pro-American—nowhere, at no woman's college or young ladies' seminary or school for girls, were they subjected to a performance of *Les Précieuses Ridicules*.

Let us remember this, let us repeat that we know not what's resisted. The trouble is that our French visitors, for knowing just this, are in an even worse position than we. And what wasn't resisted!—that, alas! they know. They know, for example, that Mr. Brander Matthews didn't resist the temptation to make a pun. "The Imaginary Invalid," he said, contrasting our now with Molière's

then, and touching upon Molière's appositeness to every time, "the Imaginary Invalid of today is a morbid student of psycho-analysis, making a Freudulent collection of his own complexes." Not the worst pun in the world, by a long chalk, but also, by a chalk longer still, not good enough. It is our duty, as respecters of our guests and as self-respecters, to avoid saying such things, to keep away from them, one hundred per cent away.

"Beware, at Jabbberfests, the Pun
Less prized in Paris than in Gath;
Conspue le Calembour, and shun
The humorous Brandermath."

What Mr. Matthews said, however, was said by a man who evidently knows and loves Molière. Mr. William Milligan Sloane—Chevalier of the Legion of Honor, France, and of the Swedish North Star—may love him too, for aught I know, but apparently with a love that has not led to undue intimacy. "There is no great thought," said Mr. Sloane, "when the thinker leaves his concept in embryo, naked and shivering, or at best inadequately clothed [see, on your programme, *What the Embryo Will Wear*]. The exact and adequate expression of a thought is the test of its truth: vagueness and confusion harbour only falsehood." Molière "left to all posterity that exactitude of thought and its expression which carries with it conviction, rendering argument unnecessary."

Possibly, when he said this, Mr. Sloane was speaking less as Chevalier of the Legion of Honor than as Chevalier of the Swedish North Star. A guess in which I am disposed to fortify myself by quoting something M. Donnay has written of Molière: "Un style plus correct au théâtre paraîtrait froid. Certes, il y a dans ses vers des inversions forcées, des expressions impropres, des chevilles, des ellipses rudes, des métaphores qui surprennent. On peut en être affligé à la lecture, parce qu'on lit des yeux et sans prononcer les mots; mais, au théâtre, éclairé, souligné par le geste, la physionomie et surtout la diction d'un bon acteur, ce qui nous paraissait laborieusement compréhensible prend un relief saisissant."

Seriously speaking though I have been, I am about to speak more seriously yet. There is one thing we can do toward bettering our treatment of Eminent Foreigners. One of these days, when my airship comes in, swift-sailing from Golconda, I shall undertake the task. My pockets crammed with Golconda gold certificates, I shall procure by advertisement the services of a Companionable Kidnapper with the gift of tongues. His duty it will be to go down the bay and smuggle Eminent Foreigners off incoming liners. His, too, the duty of slipping a well-chosen substitute into the empty cabin. All the wear and tear of eating and listening will be undergone by the substitute. The Eminent Foreigner, secure and obscure in his hiding-place, will peruse an accurate list of the dangers he is escaping, will gloat day by day over uneaten speeches and dinners unheard. His sojourn among us, although he may deem it nothing to write home about, will at least be painless, comparatively.

But to look forward until I shall be in funds is to look too far into the future. The present we have always with us, and to the present must we shorten our gaze. Our only solace is that for M. Donnay and M. Chevrillon the particularly wordy present they are bearing up against will soon be over. Before long they will have taken ship again. No ineluctable speeches will trouble their repose in transit. They need not listen to any louder sound or more sustained than the wind's voice on the North Atlantic.

P. L.