

Theodore Roosevelt

I knew no more of military tactics than of the lost island of Atlantis; but something I had written in the old Everybody's about mobilization on the border caught his eye, and he invited me to Oyster Bay. We had a walk together. I remember that we met neighbors, and that I was introduced to them with a grace that went on steadily to a crescendo. At first I was "Young man written good thing Mexico. Worth your while to read it." Two neighbors more: I had become "Able young war correspondent, done one of the best pieces of reporting I have seen in months." On we went. By the time that we were home again, and the shadows of the Colonel's trees had begun to stretch themselves for the work they had to do at twilight, I bore, for one last friend well met, the title, "One of the most talented young strategists now writing for the press."

It was impossible, I suppose, to stand still for one whole afternoon. I did not matter. But there I was, and from the bounty of his enthusiasm he chose to see me moving forward. It was my guess that because he had pushed me on with his own hands, in his own estimation, where he put me I would stay—more securely than if I had come to him full-panoplied in fame.

Six months later I caught a glimpse of him in Washington. What I knew of war in Europe was limited to headlines on a printed page. But his quick eye picked me out for all the fact that he had seen me only once. "What do you think?" He turned away from the men around him for a minute. "Are they right in dropping the Chantilly plan? Will Nivelle break through on the Aisne front with those twenty-seven French divisions?"

Gandhi

He is one of the most unimpressive of all men at sixty years, and one of the most startling at close quarters—this lean mystic who has tipped the scales of empire till they almost overturn. I think it is a matter of eyes, and whether you can see them. What holds you, at a table's length, with the curious feeling that the man has come out shamelessly from the safe precincts of his self-reserve, is lost at twenty paces. There is only a man left: a frail man of fifty over whom illness has long brooded. He has no eloquence when he talks to crowds. The sun is hot. He has not even the ability to make himself heard beyond the first six rows of faces.

I have camped in dak bungalows on the road to Kashmir, and bought fish from men with brown skins who believe that Gandhi is the new Messiah; that he can heal the sick, restore lost arms, make cotton grow on banyan trees. I have talked with men in Bombay clubs who are waiting for the dykes to break and the forces Gandhi loosed to sweep the country. But of all the stories I have heard of the man, the most unexpected is one he tells him-

self: "When I went to England [he was nineteen, and went to study law at Middle Temple] I thought it necessary for me to take dancing lessons." It is a good picture for a man who likes colors: this young Asiatic lad, destined one day to challenge British authority in India, laboring away in a London flat at the intricacies of the waltz.

Rex Ingram

He was Rex Hitchcock when I knew him best. The Ingram did not come till later. A high-strung Irishman who ran to tweeds, and a Junior to my Sophomore at New Haven. He disliked his studies, sometimes wore galoshes on dry days, and for one week raised a black beard on a face as white and brittle as an Arthur Davies moon. He wanted to be a sculptor (still does, they say), and boasted that English rugby (which he had played) was a more brutal game than anything Yale tried with Harvard. Together, over a bacon sandwich and a glass of ale at Mory's, we discussed the novels of James Stephens, explored with care the bright dawns of our young manhood, and collaborated the production of humor for a much more humorous publication known as the Yale Record. His share was the drawing; mine the suggestion; jointly we contrived the caption underneath. I remember one achievement (Ingram's early drawings were like something done on hardtack with a hat-pin) that disclosed two students meeting at a lamp-post. "Where is the Medical School going to sit at the Harvard game?" asked one. To which the other answered "In the Vivisection."

When I saw Ingram again we had been out of college six years, and he was standing on a step-ladder in Hollywood shouting through a megaphone at two scene-shifters who had lost control of one wall of the Prisoner of Zenda's castle.

I myself had come across the Pacific after six hundred miles of Yangtze Valley, which, for sheer educational value, was an experience of a lifetime, handicapped only by the fact that my knowledge of the Chinese language comprised the two words icebox and mosquito.

Over a bacon sandwich and a glass of milk we recalled old days, and wondered at how little, then, we understood of life and all it means.

CHARLES MERZ.

Peace, Night, Sleep

"You shall have peace with night and sleep.
It was written in the creep of the mist,
In the open doors of night horizons.
Peace, night, sleep, all go together.
In the forgetting of the frogs and the sun,
In the losing of the grackle's off cry
And the call of the bird whose name is gone—
You shall have peace; the mist creeps, the doors open,
Let night, let sleep, have their way."

CARL SANDBURG.

Macbeth

Macbeth. Forty-Eighth Street Theatre, March 17, 1924.

WHEN I read in Shakespeare's play—

Who can be wise, amazed, temperate and furious,
Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man:
The expedition of my violent love
Outran the pauser reason.—Here lay Duncan,
His silver skin laced with his golden blood;
And his gashed stabs looked like a breach in nature
For ruin's wasteful entrance: there, the murderers,
Steeped in the colors of their trade, their daggers
Unmannerly breeched with gore: who could refrain
That had a heart to love, and in that heart
Courage to make his love known?

I know that what this passage says is true. I know that here under the poetic method we have one element after another thrown off from the centre of the mood; that the excitement in the poet's mind at this moment blazes and runs into innumerable reactions and nuances of feeling. Everything here in this verse springs from a centre and arrives, taken all together, at a unity. This passage is an exact rendering of an experience. Its particular truth consists in the whole of it; its metrical part, its images, its tone, all are inseparable from it and from one another. That it was a quality of statement more easily accessible in Shakespeare's own age is obvious. In that sixteenth-seventeenth century of his this elaboration and complexity and richness of mind were the common attributes of all art. Poetry, politics, crime, geography, clothes, furniture and letters and death-bed testaments ranged and glowed; all sought in their way magnificence, passionate power, luxurious extravagance, audacity, vast sighs and terrors and the fires of the soul. There is about this passage of Shakespeare's verse, then, the garment of the period. It carries its style as a Greek deity might have if Michelangelo had sculptured him, or like one of the Hebrew prophets in that grandiose torture and learned eloquence of the Sistine fresco. But even now, with the centuries passed over them, these lines for me have nothing difficult in them; to me they seem in any significant sense to be natural and inevitable. And I am shaken and lighted by them, widely, and exercised elaborately and richly, but no less truly for all that.

But often and often when I sat listening to the scenes of *Macbeth* in Mr. Hackett's production I had as I have never done before, a sense of the unnaturalness and futility of the poetic method employed. There the characters stood, in scenes that gave us castle walls and high chambers and halls, and read the verse not very well but not too badly; and for me most of it had no power, no stir, no shudder in it—not much drama and less poetry.

Mr. Hackett's *Macbeth* has many points of excellence; a fine voice and fair enough diction; a good presence and dignity; a serious mind toward the part, and a remarkably solid force by which he could dominate the scenes as *Macbeth* should. With the progress of the play Mr. Hackett is less interesting. And too often, it must be said, his reading of the lines suggests that, in any exact sense, they mean about as little to him as they would have meant to the original chieftain. Imagination played a slight part

in the portrait; and there was no primitive underlying shock and dark power and shadow of unknown forces. But yet Mr. Hackett's was a solid effort, with due evidence of study and of growth within rather prose limits. The other male characters were uninteresting and intermittent but not too bad.

Miss Clare Eames's acting in *Lady Macbeth* showed first of all what might be expected in so young an artist: inequality and a lack of sheer technical endurance. Miss Eames was at her worst in the banquet scene, where she needs more poise, more time and more concentrated rhythm. She was at her best in the earlier moments with *Macbeth* and in the sleep walking scene. In these she evinced a strange biting poetry, a pallor, a terrible pain and suppression, and such a quality of beauty, and of isolation within intense inner living, as few actresses could ever achieve. And finally Miss Eames was able to give to much of her playing, unequal as it was, an element of strangeness and of removal. She was, of course, very obviously out of key with the other playing, there was something subtle, immediate, personal, mediaeval, dantesque even, in most of her scenes; something of taut mentality and high nervous response, as contrasted with the sturdy peace maintained by most of the ensemble. But for my part I was deeply grateful to Miss Eames for being different; and I am obliged to say that save for three or four minutes of Mr. Hackett, the only bite and poetry in the performance came to me from her.

One thing, then, seems to me clear, and clearer than ever after this production of *Macbeth*.

I take my own case. *Macbeth* to me is the most astonishing of Shakespeare's plays, not so solid and perfect as *Othello*, not so comprehensive and profoundly universal and necessary as *Hamlet*, not so noble and large as *King Lear*. But these great plays have not in them so sudden and complete a power, so simple a pattern. In *Macbeth*, Shakespeare found ready to his hand, and more or less created also a theme that has in it something primitive and cerebral at once, something that seems to arise in a great shadow of forces out of the earth and through men's lives, something essentially barbarous and wild at heart, a shudder and an outline, set forth with a great directness and savviness and power. And the image of the sleep walk is, beside *Oedipus's* entrance with his blinded eyes, one of the two great visual patterns in all drama. And yet I sit through this performance at the Forty-Eighth Street Theatre for the most part unmoved, and even uninstructed, not to say relaxed.

The trouble for me boils down to this: a work of art depends for its truth not wholly on itself, alone; a part of its truth lies with the response made to it. It follows therefore that for each generation a restatement of the work of art must be made, a translation into living terms so that its truth may remain alive. *Macbeth* given in Elizabethan style,—even letter for letter, if we had the information to follow so precisely as that—would be a false thing, archaeologically interesting if you like but far from its profound truth; a mere dead fact. It ought to follow obviously then that this Victorian method of giving the play need no longer be true for us, no truer than the Elizabethan or Garrick's. In the Hopkins-Jones-Barrymore production, for all the inequality of the scenes and the acting hopelessly extraneous to the design, I remember to have had a shock of reality, a feeling in the Murder and Banquet scenes at least, of marvellous poetic truth.