

other than our own, can hardly fail to inspire; and such sympathy is of no small worth to historic insight or to political understanding.

The eloquence of Mr. Chamberlain's speeches, so far as it can be appreciated through print, seems easy, unaffected, business-like. Deftness in the handling of detail is very apparent—and, with this, a certain effect of dealing with a matter *in extenso*, without undue economy or primness of speech, when in fact the treatment is very compact, colloquially drawn out though it may seem to be. By contrast the speeches of most modern American public men seem rather stiff and lumbering, though not necessarily less impressive. Instead of what is commonly called brilliance, one often finds in Mr. Chamberlain's speeches a shining common sense that is even more to be desired.

---

THE ENCHANTMENT OF ART. By DUNCAN PHILLIPS. New York: John Lane Company, 1914.

The pleasures of the artistic life are Mr. Phillips's true theme. A certain attitude or mood corresponding to that of the so-called "intellectual life" is impressed upon us by his subtly composed and daintily worded essays. Though these are in spirit not at all didactic, they are thoroughly rational. The author makes his chief aim, indeed, the deepening through suggestion of the feeling for beauty, yet at the same time he outlines general ideas with sufficient clearness. So far as his ruling purpose is concerned—the purpose of stimulating his readers to enjoyment by sharing with them his own inward sense of beauty—Mr. Phillips is conspicuously successful, the enchantment of a highly cultivated literary art contributing no little to the total effect. His general conceptions, extracted from their interesting context, have a significance of their own, and call for separate consideration.

Beauty, Mr. Phillips is content to believe, is, in the last resort, a personal matter. "We can no more make all people appreciate the same beauty than we can make all people dream the same dream. Beauty is as vague and various and variable as human personality itself." The appreciation of beauty, then, is essentially the same thing as the appreciation of life—"not life in the abstract, but our *own* lives, our *own* experiences, our *own* moods and emotions." It cannot be, therefore, that what we really mean by beauty is identical with, for example, Greek idealism of form. It is something very much freer, more personal, more varied and variable than that. Since beauty is of this nature, it follows that impressionism is the true and universal mode of expressing it, and impressionism is really the secret of all true pictorial art. Emphatically, according to Mr. Phillips's view, the term should not be confined to the designation of a certain peculiar technique. What, then, is impressionism? "In its only logical sense," replies Mr. Phillips, "it means the concise expression,

through concrete symbols or suggestions, of single, personal impressions, both realistic and romantic."

In the light of such views it becomes comparatively easy to reconcile some apparent contradictions in art. For example, there is the quarrel between the public and the artists as to whether the subject, the meaning, of a picture is the thing of most importance, or the manner in which it is painted. To Mr. Phillips, neither the subject nor the execution is an idol, for neither is identical with beauty or with its necessary mode of expression in paint. The painter, if left to himself, goes to one extreme, the public to another; and it is the business of the critic to mediate between the two. Generally speaking the public cares relatively little for the products of the purely decorative imagination in painting; many painters seem to care for little else.

With considerable acuteness the author applies his principles to the explanation of the peculiar and subtle effects upon our minds of the works of certain artists—notably those of Giorgione and Watteau. With a rare comprehensiveness of thought he extends his doctrines of beauty and of impressionism into the field of literature. That impressionism exists in poetry he makes very plain; that the function of impressionism in literature is necessarily limited he makes equally clear. Even in "Shakespearian Beauty," however, elements of personal expression and of decorative imagination are found. "The Shakespearian world is our real world dramatized and intensified beyond mere powers of observation through a witchery of decorative imagination and through a very lyrical self-expression."

All this is rather clarifying. One cannot help feeling, however, that something more than the mere enjoyment of art is at stake. Mr. Phillips's definition of beauty is not merely tentative; it is philosophical. It denies the existence of any seizable underlying principle. We should expect, therefore, to find the author at variance with such a critic as Paul Elmer More, and such, indeed, proves to be the case, the difference turning upon the significance of the work of Walter Pater. To Mr. Phillips, Pater is merely an admirable impressionist; to Mr. More he is a false prophet. To the one it is his vision that matters most; to the other, it is his implied teaching. The difference in point of view becomes more apparent when Mr. Phillips begins to speak of the Romantic Spirit. "It is a curious truth known to all art-lovers," he writes, "that when an impressionistic style expresses a romantic spirit it is difficult to distinguish one quality from the other." Thus impressionism (that is, art) is sometimes, though not always, fused with the romantic spirit, and, in order to get the full benefit of art, one must fully accept the latter. What one feels, indeed, throughout the whole series of essays is that in order to enter fully into Mr. Phillips's artistic world one must be somewhat of a romanticist at heart.

## EDITORIAL COMMENT

---

### THE PROTEST TO ENGLAND

"WE are fully aware," says the *Spectator*, generously, while ducking its head to dodge a Zeppelin bomb, "that it is a much easier job to be a belligerent than a neutral." Moreover, it continues, "looking ahead, it is just as well that we should take account of the possibility that in some future war England may herself be a neutral State, and as anxious to uphold the rights of neutrals as America now is."

This is quite characteristic of British prudence, and we doubt not voices the sentiment of the British nation. Nevertheless, the *Spectator* continues with friendly frankness:

It is unfortunate that the American Government, acting admittedly under a purely commercial pressure, should have protested against the action of the British Fleet, and said not a word about the conduct of the German Army. In many important instances the German military forces have violated Conventions which were drawn up at The Hague by representatives of all the Powers of the world, including the representatives of the United States. As the greatest and most powerful of all neutral States in the present war, America was under a peculiar obligation to do all that she could to insist upon the sanctity of The Hague Conventions. We do not suggest for a moment that America should have gone to war, though even that step would have been justified according to the code of ethics which prevails among individuals in every civilized country. A bystander is, in this country, at any rate, and we fancy in most countries, under a distinct legal obligation to interfere to prevent crime. Judged by The Hague code, crimes have been committed by Germany, and the American Government have not interfered; they have not even protested. There can be little doubt that the mass of the American people, as well as people on this side of the Atlantic, would have attached even greater importance to President Wilson's present protest against British naval action if that protest had been preceded or accompanied by an equally strong protest against Germany's breaches of The Hague Convention.

This also is a wholly temperate expression of British opinion. Only those—of whom we happen to be one—who have sources of private information can realize how resentful, even bitter, the English really feel at our refusal to protest against Germany's conduct. That Mr. Roosevelt should put aside such an opportunity to attack