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Talks on Criticism

IV.

"There are more things in heaven and earth . . ."

IN the heroic romance the hero judges his opponent by his eyes. If they flinch he will flinch. If they grow tender, so will he. Books are like that also. Judge them by what has happened to the author; and then by what happens to the reader when he reads.

A good book shows that some chemical change in the writer has preceded the writing. He has been excited, he has been moved, he has been angered, he has been amused, he has been touched, he has been depressed, or he has been exalted. A crude test of a book's excellence is the state of the author before and after composing. A mind's pressure has been raised and then discharged. What is the difference in tension worth? If this is crude, it is not because it is a difficult test to apply. To discover why a book has been written, or to measure the discharge of emotions, great or little, is not difficult. The hard thing is to distinguish between gusty explosions of cheap gases and the quiet intensity of high temperatures—between the staccato emotions of melodrama, underlined, relayed, megaphoned, and the power of sharp irony or the quiet of the really tragic. Temperature is a bad figure to use in writing of literature. Light is a better one, for the best light is light without undue heat.

And here, to return to the value of science in criticism, is something new in an old art. The science of criticism, until the eighteenth century, was rhetoric, but rhetoric concerns itself chiefly with literary effects not literary causes; it is the reader not the writer who is analyzed. When, in the Augustan age, critics became moral philosophers, the mind of the writer began to be actively discussed. His philosophy, his ethics, his prejudices were somewhat tediously dissected by all the eighteenth century critics. Tediously, because usually they did not care so much for what the writer was and felt as whether he conformed to Homer's principles or God's and the deist knew him. Thus Addison on Milton, and Pope on his enemies and friends.

But experimental science has given critics a new weapon and a new point of view—also new opportunities to make fools of themselves. The mysterious change in potential before a good book begins to be written, the state of the swan before the golden egg was laid, begins to seem less mysterious. There are psychological tests for the emotions and psychological names for mind states which define even when they do not explain. Opium and alcohol are betrayed in the choice of words, realism is sometimes a complex, fearful imagination may be a form of paranoia, and mediocrity a matter of inhibition.

The economists, too, have begun to scrutinize the writer. They explain his liberal passions by the rise of a new industrial class, expound his interest in very common men in terms of democracy, explain the change in his attitude toward women by her economic emancipation. Criticism of Dickens, George Eliot, Mark Twain, Henry James, Hardy, Masfield is shot through with economics, sociology, or psychology.

In short, thanks to the new sciences, what happens to the writer of a good book has become an important question because new and interesting answers are ready. Rhetoric has given place to a kind of psycho-analysis.

By this new method of critical analysis far more concrete results are arrived at than the Sublime, the Ridiculous, the Meritorious, and the Moral of

Fable

By GEORGE O'NEIL

ILED him on into the frosted wood;
Stamping our feet, beneath a larch we stood,
Breathing white edifices on the air;
And nothing else was moving there.

The branches hung as if they had not known
A day when any little wind had blown.
The snow above our heads wrought wondrously
A thousand gargoyles on a tree.

Freezing, we waited by the frozen brook. . . .
"Listen" I said, and hardly dared to look.
A drift slid suddenly across the ice,
A frigid hawthorne trembled twice.

Then, slowly, through the branches, marble-veined,
A hoof, a haunch, a heavy shoulder, strained;
A head swung down into a glassy heap
And smashed it with a sideward sweep.

I could not hold my tongue: "You see the horn!
That twisted golden bone . . . the Unicorn!"
I could not hold it back. And as I spoke
A splintered universe awoke.

The thing was gone. "You saw" I spun around
To read his eyes. He kicked a knotted mound,
And all the gargoyles tumbled on his head.
"I'm numb, I'm going home," he said.

This Week

"Annals of the New York Stage."
Reviewed by *George Pierce Baker*.

"Marquise" and "Fallen Angels."
Reviewed by *Oliver M. Saylor*.

"Whatever We Do." Reviewed by
Robert B. Macdougall.

"Him." Reviewed by *John Hyde Preston*.

"Dominion Over Experience." By
Christopher Morley.

Next Week, or Later

Europe's Present Cultural Product.
By *Maxim Gorki*.

the earlier critics. That is the danger of the process. Write a book to prove that Poe was frustrate, Tennyson a portomaniac, Hawthorne a suppressed sexualist, etc., etc., and you have given your public facts they can readily understand. The pathology of drugs or the behavior of abnormal individuals is much more comprehensible than esthetics. Unfortunately there is a false simplicity in scientific theories applied by men not themselves scientists which must irritate real scientists as it certainly de-

(Continued on next page)

Cambridge on the Caboodle

By FORD MADOX FORD

ALL the world is said to love a lover and I am sure that the greater proportion of it loves Mr. E. M. Forster. I do myself—Mr. Forster as novelist. He has for so long occupied so peculiar a position in Hampstead which is a suburb of London singularly like Beacon Hill; I have for so many years gone in awe of him that I approach this,* his exegesis of the products of his art, with the feelings of a naughty schoolboy about to rob his headmaster's apple trees.

Hampstead to the north of London is a very singular place. It is Beacon Hill—but you could tuck Beacon Hill away in the corner of it and never find it again. It is with its rarefied atmosphere, its cold breezes coming from the north, its frosty inaccessibility, the Mecca of our intelligentsia. And, for many years Mr. E. M. Forster has been its prophet. Before him it was Mr. Henry James. In my young youth I was browbeaten into detesting Shelley by its inhabitants; just after adolescence I was nearly browbeaten into never reading James and my young manhood balked at the mention of Mr. E. M. Forster as the pony I used to have in those days balked at the sight of a perambulator.

So that, when "The Room With a View" was published, or a year or so after, happening to be shut up alone with it, and no other book, I took it up with trepidation. I remained, if not to pray, then at least to read all of Mr. Forster's earlier work. And, since then, I have ranged myself amongst his warmest admirers. He has retained for me, nevertheless, his aspect of aloofness, awfulness, chaste reason, tenuity, sobriety. I have tiptoed past his windows as the true believer used to do outside the tent of the Prophet—for fear of disturbing his reveries. I even printed him in the *English Review*.

Alas, what was my bewilderment as I read through the pages of "Aspects of the Novel" to find that Mr. Forster's attitude towards the art and craft that has given him honor and fame is practically that of the periodical called *Punch* towards the graver problems of life. He admires virtue, all the virtues, "O dear yes," but how he pokes fun at them! He cites an immense number of second class English novelists and jests over them for all the world like a contributor to *Punch* making fun of his own children for the benefit of the public. Thus childhood with all its beauty is for the English eternally sullied—and thus for Mr. Forster's hearers is the novel kept in its place.

This volume is made up of the Clark lectures delivered for Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1927. I have no means of knowing what Mr. Forster's audience was like. I have no doubt that it was young, sober, intellectual, chaste. . . . Or it may have been old and all that too. But it cannot have contained one novelist who was also an artist. Otherwise Mr. Forster would not now be alive.

I hesitated to arrive at this conclusion. I remained incredulous until halfway through the book. I find the language in which it is written extremely difficult to understand. I have had to read sentence after sentence two or three times over. I suppose I am too Americanized—but I dare say I never could have understood the persiflage of the Cambridge don when speaking of serious subjects—religion, love, poverty, or the arts. What the English call Things! You mustn't talk seriously about Things in good English society.

*Aspects of the Novel. By E. M. Forster. New York. Harcourt, Brace & Company. 1927. \$2.50.

But a university—at any rate an English one—exists to have the aspect at least of talking about Things. Yet it mustn't. The English youth goes to his university with the mentality of a Continental child of fourteen and the province of the university is to maintain him in the same mental status. Because, if the Englishman ever passed the stage of mental puberty the Empire would break up and there could be no more tea parties, club smoking rooms, Ranelaghs, Colonies, Anglican clergy, or Cabinet ministers. We could not keep on carrying the white man's burden if some god or some don conferred upon us the gift of the seeing eye.

So Mr. Forster deserves infinitely well of his college, his university, his country, and his Empire. As I have said, it was only when halfway through the book that I arrived at this, to me, amazing conclusion. Our present day national anthem runs:

Land of hope and glory, mother of the free,
How can we extol thee, who are born of thee?

And I can assure you that when, in foreign lands with Sir Edward Elgar's music I hear that modest query, tears of nostalgia bedew my lids. We are all right. We really are. But when the same question is addressed by a novelist to his art it becomes quite a different matter. It is no doubt the reason why Mr. Forster has to begin his lectures with the assertion that there is no first-class English novelist and, presumably, that a first-class novel never has and never will be written in England, at any rate by an Englishman—for all the first-class novels that were written in England during the last quarter of a century were the products of one sort of dago or another. So at least says Mr. Forster, premising in the mouths of the English reader the immortal words of my great Aunt Eliza—"Sooner than be idle I'd take a book and read."

This cry from the soul—this whole cry from the soul—was wrung from me by the following words which occur on page 146 of Mr. Forster's book: "*He (M. André Gide) is a little more solemn than an author should be about the whole caboodle.*" And there you have the whole attitude of the British don-critic towards our art. The novel, novel writing, form, language, construction, ancestry—all these things which are the object of serious study outside England in places from which come the first-class novels—all these things are "the whole caboodle" which, if you take seriously, you will never make fun of your children in the pages of *Punch*. You will be un-English.

Now I wonder how seriously Mr. Forster takes his own novels and with how much passion—how much *saeva indignatio*—he writes them. For, for a novelist to be great in the sense that Turgeniev, or Stendhal, or Flaubert, or Conrad were formally and stylistically great, or in the sense that Dostoevsky was great epilepto-romantically, or even Balzac, pantingly, spouting like a whale, fountains of fairy tales disguised as a *comédie humaine* . . . Or even Tolstoy, or Chekhov, or Maupassant, or Daudet . . . Or great as were undoubtedly Thackeray, Dickens, Smollett, Richardson, and Defoe . . . or great as was Henry James and are, if you will, Mr. Joyce and Theodore Dreiser—for the production of each of these forms of greatness there is necessary a fierce indignation, if not of necessity against external oppositions or institutions, then at least against that nature of things that will not let one write better than one does. A novelist must know despair, bitterness, passion, and must wear upon his forehead the sweat of agony that distinguishes his Craft and Mystery. It is out of those depths that he must call. Hang it all, this world that has known a million million thinking souls has produced, let us say, twenty great novelists from the day when the first word of "The Golden Ass" was penned, down to the last word of "Ulysses." And is this terrific immortality of twenty over a million million to be earned by the facile or lethargically optimistic inhabitant of Cambridge common rooms?

Mind, I am not suggesting that that is what Mr. Forster is; I am merely complaining that instead of telling us how "A Passage to India" was conceived, touched in, retouched, smoothed down, or here and there, heightened, he gives us these tea cup clattering disquisitions upon the Sir Willoughby Patterne of George Meredith. I would bet my hat that Mr. Forster's novels were not written out of his complacencies but during sedulous and rather dreadful days. Why is it not those that he has given us rather than these heartless disquisitions upon English amateurs with which any one of the readers of his novels could just as well have pro-

vided him? It is probably because Mr. Forster is too modest to write about himself. English gentlemen do not do this but modesty and novelists have nothing to do with each other and it is impossible for a novelist to be an English gentleman. No can do.

Heaven knows I would not fall foul of Professor Forster if he were not also the author of "A Passage to India" and certainly I would never fall foul of any novel of Mr. Forster's. Dog ought not to eat dog and the lowest of all crimes is the crabbing of another fellow's benefit. But, in as much as Mr. Forster is a novelist he is a priest and in this work it is as if with the one hand he elevated the Host whilst with the other he writes donnish witticisms about how the sacred wafers are baked. So I shed these tears.

Starting out and finishing with a half-true assertion and ending with the same, Mr. Forster includes between those statements a vast number of ingenious tropes, metaphors, similes, figures, quips, and pawkinesses that as I have said make me have to read most of his sentences twice—as one has to read French verse twice, once for the sense and once for the rhythm. But it is no more than a half-truth to say that there are no first-class English novelists when by that you mean that we have no novelists as great as Dostoevsky, and Tolstoy. We have Defoe, Smollett, Dickens, Thackeray, each one as amateurishly great a story teller and moralist as either of the Russians who are in no sense artists. For it is merely quarrelling with a man's temperament or subject matter to say that "Vanity Fair" is not as great as "War and Peace" or "Humphrey Clinker" as great as "Crime and Punishment." But the Continental, not English, sense of the word "greatness" connotes, along with a great seriousness of approach to life, a certain consummate mastery over form, phrase, and inevitable progression, and it is perfectly true to say that Anglo-Saxondom has no first-rate novelist in the sense that Turgeniev, Chekhov, Stendhal, and Flaubert were first rate. One may make a reservation in favor of Conrad and Henry James to whom we are too near to judge with any certainty. But I am pretty certain that if we ever do prove to have any first-class novelists it is those two writers and their lineage that will produce them. Mr. Forster, very symptomatically, does not mention Conrad at all in his list of main references though he does mention Mr. Asquith. But neither does he mention Stendhal, Flaubert, Turgeniev, or Chekhov. He devotes, however, some rather patronizing attention, as we have seen, to M. André Gide, and though he does not mention Anatole France he cites M. Abel Chevalley. These omissions and inclusions are not queer; they are merely characteristic of Cambridge *intelligentsia* to whom Mr. Asquith must be more important than Joseph Conrad and Mr. Max Beerbohm than, let us say, Gogol. And so, introducing himself with a half-truth, the Cambridge professor must set out from an impossible projection. He insists that you must think of all the novelists in the world, from Apuleius to Miss Elizabeth Madox Roberts, seated together under a vast dome, all writing away simultaneously whilst you are to peer over their shoulders and perceive that they all write much in the same way, or with not such great differences as all that.

This is to inculcate at once the English doctrine that all art is just a "caboodle." The novel, you are to believe, has neither form nor craftsmanship; in the past it has exhibited no development nor will it in the future in any way develop. It is the handmaiden of society and the arts and, unlike Topsy, it has never even grown. Now that doctrine is a profound necessity to the British Empire for, as I have said, if we ever took the arts seriously—which is synonymous with thinking—we could not continue to bear up the white man's burden. That I dare say would be a tragedy for the world. I really quite believe it.

But the novel has a perfectly definite history and has developed as traceably as the pterodactyl from the amoeba, or the Japanese child's flying toy of twisted rubber, into the Handley-Page. The modern novel began picaresquely with the contemporaries of Lope da Vega and passed to England with John Mabbé's translation of Hermann Allemano's "Guzman d'Alfarache," or "The History of a Rogue," a picaresque but horribly moralizing work. "Guzman d'Alfarache" begot Defoe; Defoe, Richardson; Richardson, Diderot; Diderot and the

Encyclopedists, Stendhal, Flaubert, and Turgeniev; those three begot Conrad and Henry James and Stephen Crane, and those three again the modern American novelist. During all that time the novel progressed from being the merely barbarous stringing together of piquant rogueries and hypocritical moralizing to be the tremendous social engine that, with its rendering of our times it is today. If the novel as teacher, counselor, and guide to life has replaced the priest, the historian, the newspaper, and even Dr. Sigmund Freud—for the newspaper never was much trusted and according to observers is today not trusted at all, at least in this country and Dr. Freud has become nearly as obsolete as Darwin—if the novel has taken the place of all those formidable coercers of the past it is, be sure, because it has developed in its rendering of the lives and emotions of humanity.

This the Cambridge don will have none of; should he utter such heresies to Anglicans he would be false to his pious founders and the donors of his stipend. He lets the legions thunder past, utters a few quips, and goes to sleep again till next spring brings its new Clarkian lecturer.

As I have attacked Mr. Forster—though only as a don—with a great deal of violence, I hope somebody will ask me to review his next novel so that I may handsomely redress the balance. His book, indeed, is a very good book if you wish to acquire the point of view of a don upon literature. It contains fewer slips of grammar than is usual in collections of lectures and several pleasant little jokes. I dare say that if I had been present at the Clarkian lecture of 1927, given Mr. Forster's pleasant voice, cultured appearance, and personal magnetism I might have giggled like any girl graduate, though after that pink pottage there might have come the exceeding bitter cry. But the moral of the whole thing as far as England is concerned, and Mr. Forster is only a symbol of England, is this:—

The blacksmith says: "By hammer and hand all art doth stand;" the baker thinks he is indispensable to society and so he learns his job. Yesterday I was having my shoes scientifically and industriously shined in the Grand Central railway station by some sort of perspiring dago. I said that shining a shoe seemed to be a skilled and complicated affair. He said it was and he added that he guessed New York could not go on without him and his fellows for no one would walk the street without shiny shoes. Well, the novelist—the great novelist—must have the same conviction with regard to his own art. Then to the measure of the light vouchsafed him he may shine in his place and be content. But Cambridge won't like him.

Talks on Criticism

(Continued from preceding page)

presses readers of strong literary feeling. Someone discovers that psychologically the sexes merge gradually one into the other, and that those born in this marginal physiology have certain definite reactions to their environment. Quick, says the new critic, rummage through literature to find evidence of homosexuality, and when you have found it throw a flood of light on literary problems never before solved. Light, yes, provided that the theory is correctly understood, and the evidence is sound, but light on only a corner of a corner of literary genius. A psychological peculiarity may explain all of a monicule but only part of a man.

And yet to the first great question of criticism, the nature of the author's mind at the moment of delivery, science has given some such interesting answers that we have all leaned expectantly in that direction and let equally important questions go without answer at all. Tell me what the man is and I'll tell you what his book is, reverse Buffon's proposal to place the man by the style he chose to write in. The first has the spotlight just now in criticism, and a psychological study of a great man of letters has ten times as many readers as a venture in esthetics. By 1950 we shall probably have a new and far clearer conception of the physics and chemistry of that human machine which conditions authorship. Yet now only one question is being effectively answered and that only in part, as if one should say, why did the man fail?, and he answered, because he was drunk. But why was he drunk, and does success come from not being drunken? Criticism cannot stop with psychology.

The Drama in New York

ANNALS OF THE NEW YORK STAGE. By GEORGE C. D. ODELL. New York: Columbia University Press. 1927. 2 vols. \$17.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE PIERCE BAKER
Yale University

PROFESSOR ODELL approaches his task of writing afresh the annals of the New York stage with firm conviction of their importance. His quotation on the half title of Volume 2 of his predecessor, Dunlap, proves this: "The rise, progress, and cultivation of the drama mark the progress of refinement and the state of manners at any given period in any country." For Professor Odell, then, as with the best of recent students of drama, not merely the play but the acting, the setting, the manners, and the customs of each period, both in and out of the theatre, deserve consideration. He plans to work very inclusively.

He knows so well, too, preceding studies of his subject that he is sure what he wishes to add or to readjust in earlier histories of the New York or even the American stage.

Something of the historical background [omitted by previous writers] I have endeavored to supply. Material has been collected solely from contemporary newspapers, pamphlets, diaries, letters, autobiographies, playbills, account-books, etc. From such original sources I have tried to depict the city in successive eras, with all its prejudices and all its predilections, social, artistic, and dramatic. I have, in fact, desired to reconstruct a real theatre in a real city. And to reset and repopulate the earlier stages I have called in contemporary criticisms, from the days of their feeblest beginnings to a time when scholarly urbanity began to distinguish their writers. By aid of these discussions we are enabled to see bygone performers and performances as in the eyes of bygone spectators they really were.

Following this method, Professor Odell, re-examining evidence usually adduced, readjusts, amplifies, and corrects preceding historians.

The volumes make evident that in the eighteenth century it is well nigh impossible to distinguish between the amateur and the professional among the givers of plays. Oddly, too, it becomes clear that the present widespread interest in American universities and colleges in the giving of plays is not something new, but rather a recrudescence. At William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia, September 10, 1736, "the young gentlemen of the college" performed the tragedy of "Cato," and a week later Addison's "The Drummer; or, The Haunted House."

The diary of Dr. Nathaniel Ames, a graduate of 1761 (at Harvard), records performances, private, of course, if not surreptitious, of "The Roman Father" (1758), "Cato" (1758), "The Drummer" (1759). Before advancing B. A., Ames saw thus performed, usually in the chambers of a fellow-student, or in a Boston home, "The Orphan," "The Revenge," and "Tancred and Sigismunda." The players snatched a fearful joy. And I hardly dare open the rich records of the Linonian Society of Yale—the minutes for 1771 entirely in the handwriting of Nathan Hale. Once a year the student members of this society gave a play, usually at some large house in the town, where bountiful refreshments, kind friends, and the spirit of youth made glad a spring day. From 1771, with gaps during the early years of the war, these academic actors attempted "Beaux's Stratagems," "The West Indian," "The Wonder," "The Conscious Lovers," etc. Bidwell's original play of "The Mercenary Match" (was) written and performed during 1785.

Professor Odell's resurvey of the drama in this country in the eighteenth century makes clear, too, that it was then going through a process exactly the reverse of one taking place at present. Then, slowly, the theatre, at first more at home in Charleston, South Carolina, Williamsburg, Virginia, or Philadelphia, centered on New York as its home. Today the verdict of New York no longer determines completely the verdict of the rest of the country; other centers are developing with standards of taste in conflict with those of the city that has been the dominating center. It would seem from these volumes that in the eighteenth century either there was a curious uniformity of dramatic taste in separated parts of the country, or else that there

must have been relatively swift intercommunication of some sort, for one finds in the records constant repetition of the same titles for the plays given in widely separated places and periods, for instance, "The Conscious Lovers," "The Drummer," etc. Particularly, one becomes aware that, as far as comedies were concerned, Farquhar was the most popular dramatist of the day.

In keeping with his announced inclusiveness of method, Professor Odell lingers over the foot notes and special announcements on programs in which the managers or actors of the eighteenth century spoke to their audiences with the intimacy of a Balieff of today. Rightly, he feels the importance in any study of the manners and customs of the times of such gossip announcements. What more convincing proof that in the eighteenth century theatrical management had not, as yet, fully separated itself from the persuasive advertising of some present-day side shows is needed than this? "Those who please to favor her with their Company, may depend on seeing the Play decently perform'd, at least perfect, and that all or more than included in the Bills will be done." That "at least perfect" certainly has its implications as to previous disasters after too hasty preparation of plays. Could even Balieff be more intimate than this in a theatrical ad-

stage in particular which makes it possible for Professor Odell to recognize instantly the significance of each bit of evidence as he discovers it. Unlike Genest, Professor Odell is not interested solely in the main piece of the evening, but equally, apparently, in curtain raiser, after piece, or even songs and dances. Directly or indirectly, it is all drama to him. The volumes, then, are not a mere listing of plays performed, of actors playing in them, and dates. With untiring enthusiasm, Professor Odell reads, selects, correlates, and emphasizes. These volumes are, indeed, a compendious history, and as such must, hereafter, be indispensable.

Where one is likely to quarrel with Professor Odell is in his carrying out of his third purpose. He states for just whom he is writing. "I have desired to attract the lover of the theatre—the auditor who believes in plays and acting, and likes to read of the glories of a former day. I shall be pleased if my treatment is judged to be both sound and entertaining; with such dual purpose my pen glided happily along." It is in the desire to be entertaining that Professor Odell seems, to this critic, to hurt his book. The absolutely necessary detail of these volumes would make them large. The addition of the very valuable pictures would increase this necessary bulk. Yet, constantly the text reminds one of talk

in a study or by a fireside from some garrulous septuagenarian lover of the stage, gossiping of the art he has most loved. Professor Odell has written in a highly personal, prolix fashion; his is not so much the economy of style of the historian as the freedom of the essayist who bases himself on the chattiness of Charles Lamb. "I skip a whole year in tears at the poverty of the records." "Why do I bore the reader with all this? or rather, why do I believe it adds 'color' to my story? Heaven knows! but I do so believe. And how felt the actors thus harassed by ill-natured critics after a second death in the ranks, as they had been harassed but a few months earlier after the death of Mrs. Morris? Two of their comrades gone in so brief a period!" Moreover, why does Professor

Odell scatter throughout his pages scraps of Elizabethan or eighteenth century English; for instance, *perpend*, *eftsoons*, *methinks*, *withal*. If it is to give the atmosphere of the period treated, why have we no speech particularly characteristic of the period 1800-1821 with which the second volume closes? Certainly, if Professor Odell continues his rewriting of the "Annals of the New York Stage" from 1821 down to the present day, as every keen lover of the stage must hope he will, there is dramatic suspense in wondering what will be the catch words for the different periods he must cover in that nineteenth century. Are all these peculiarities of style merely signs that the original material was given as lectures to a group of students, for whom there would be, when the lectures were read by an admired teacher, something personally humorous, something pleasantly lightening in the treatment of the rather dry material? Very possibly this is the solution; but to the present critic, a book admirable in its thoroughness, in its amazing clarity in handling an utterly bewildering multitude of details, loses in desirable compactness and in dignity of treatment from certain qualities of its style.

These are, however, mere surface blurs. The book justifies itself thoroughly, and hereafter should be indispensable to all students of the American stage and drama. Will not Professor Odell bring his record down to at least 1900, or preferably to the present day?

What might be called an official work on the culinary art has recently been issued in the "Congressional Cook Book," just off the press, which contains recipes by the wives of Presidents, ex-Presidents, and others in official life.



Au Negre de Toulouse; from the painting by Stella Bowen (Mrs. Ford) now in the Paris Salon. The triptych represents the patron, patronne, and staff of the Negre de Toulouse, a Maitparnasse restaurant which is frequented by the majority of English and American writers either resident in or passing through Paris.

vertisement? "Twill be moonlight!" in other words, no "lanthorns" would be needed for the journey through the streets. Note, too, the persuasive adjective applied to the servant in the following statement: "Those ladies who would have places kept in the boxes will please to send a sensible servant to the theatre at three o'clock on every play-day." These gossip communications also throw some light on a recent supposedly cryptic political statement. "Gentlemen and Ladies that chuse Tickets may have them at Mr. Parker's, and at this Printing Office." Surely *choose*, clear probably to most New Englanders in its recent use, should be unmistakably clear in this instance.

Professor Odell lingers, too, over whatever bears on stage setting, particularly the drawing of scenes apart at their center:

... the absurd practice of changing the scene with the actors still on the stage, they entering at once on the business of the new scene, in a wholly different place, as if sliding walls or landscapes were the commonest of daily occurrences. This habit is seen in Act IV of "Ponteach," the first scene of which is "the Border of a Grove." Chekitan is left alone, and soon hears a "noise of Monelia striving behind the Scene." Then—*mirabile dictu*—"Going toward the sound, the Scene opens and discovers the Priest with her." Chekitan cries "What do I see? The holy Priest is with her"; and the action proceeds to its close. This odd practice, then, must have been known in the early days at John Street.

Through all the vast detail involved in his proposed treatment of his subject, Professor Odell moves clear-eyed and sensitive. Attempting to follow him a reader must marvel at the enthusiasm which could provide and maintain the patience to study minutely the advertising columns of rare old newspapers, and supposedly unpromising documents; at the memory which orders all this infinite detail; and at the background of information in regard to dramatic matters in general and the American