

Smith versus Levy, by Ludwig Lewisohn, on page 752

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Somewhat Metaphysical

ANALOGIES are more interesting than convincing and yet, often, they apply that tiny prick to the imagination that may set the world of thought in a new order. If their bastards are fallacies, their legitimate offspring may be the makers of light.

Reading (somewhat confusedly) of the fields of electrical force which do not float, or emanate, but *are*, in a true relationship to movement and each other, we let the not too mathematical mind sink gratefully upon an analogy in that psychological world of which we who write of things that seem to be as if they were must prevailingly treat if we are to be intelligible, even to ourselves. For the mind, the consciousness, the psyche—call it what you will—which is the chief subject and only cause of imaginative endeavor, is in every instance itself surrounded by a field of potential energy, and one way of stating the problem of criticism is to ask whether the creative writer has kept a true relation between the mind he writes of and its field.

We move and have our being in the midst of sets of characteristic reactions to our environment and still more characteristic forces exerted by the mind upon that environment. Each age, each culture, each group, each individual has its surrounding field which is intrinsically a part of experience, though by no means necessarily in the consciousness itself. Prejudices belong here, preconceptions of all kinds, the subtle inter-weavings of the stuff of nature as nature seems at the moment with the stuff of consciousness. Here is to be found the response to the glow of setting suns as well as the homely smells, the noises of the day, the opinions of our time. Here, once, was the sweat of slaves, and now the stench of oil and gasoline; the consciousness of man's pettiness, or the consciousness of man's might; pity or cruelty; the sense of permanence on the soil, or the restlessness of a continual shifting onward propelled by machines.

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Some of the great books are convincing because the "field" of the personality is there with all its implications as surely as in life: Homer certainly; Dickens (for the field may be symbolically, even humorously presented); Hardy surely; Hawthorne, whose rather uncanny power is due far more to his gentle control over auras than to any depth of character insight or skill in interpretive intuition. Milton could project the fields of stark, rebellious spirits, but in the later books of "Paradise Lost" fell into abstractions, which is to say into an isolation of character, as such, apart from its spiritual environment, and so declines into formal description and argument. His Satan was human because he was set in planes of experience and carried, even across chaos, his accompanying "fields" extending through attraction and repulsion into the blankness of space, yet never out of relation to his consciousness; his Christ was a theological concept, logical, but like a symbolic atom isolated in the universe. There is no such atom: there was no such Christ. In life, there is no abstraction, self-contained, intra-logical, and isolated; and there can be none in literature.

To descend from great things to small in the interests of clarity, all this may explain why, for example, the play, "The Age of Innocence," now being given in New York, is inferior to Mrs. Wharton's book. The essential drama is to be seen on the stage, the essential character types, but the "field" of that age of innocence in the 'seventies, so subtly

On a Night of Snow

By ELIZABETH J. COATSWORTH

CAT, if you go outdoors you must walk in the snow.

You will come back with little white shoes on your feet,
Little white slippers of snow that have heels of sleet.

Stay by the fire, my Cat. Lie still, do not go.

See how the flames are leaping and hissing low,

I will bring you a saucer of milk like a marguerite,

So white and so smooth, so spherical and so sweet—

Stay with me, Cat. Out-doors the wild winds blow.

Out-doors the wild winds blow, Mistress, and dark is the night.

Strange voices cry in the trees, intoning strange lore,
And more than cats move, lit by our eyes' green light,

On silent feet where the meadow grasses hang hoar—

Mistress, there are portents abroad of magic and might,

And things that are yet to be done. Open the door!

Knight-Errants*

By FORD MADOX FORD

I can never walk along the Boulevard St. Michel without thinking of Villon. . . . I am not ashamed to confess myself a devotee of Dumas . . . I should certainly desire to help any artist of talent, but. . . . In real life it is often your men who are round like tubs that make themselves knight errants. . . . I was with several ladies. . . . Once I was chosen as arbiter in a quarrel between James Joyce and Ford Madox Ford. . . . I could not keep pace with Elizabeth Asquith (Princess Bibesco). . . . Life is particularly good when it is spent in this Cityful of Celebrities.

I WONDER why Mr. Huddleston did not add the words "cock-tails." Indeed, on reflection I am not sure that "A Cityful of Cocktails and Celebrities" would not more exactly as well as more alluringly have given the note of his voluminous and alarming volume. For the first words of his first chapter are to the effect that, for Mr. Huddleston, Paris is the city of the cocktail epoch whilst the last words of the book are those last-above quoted.

At any rate Mr. Huddleston presents us with innumerable—innumerable!—anecdotes; many old ones that it is refreshing to meet again and several new ones that are infinitely suggestive. With M. de Castellane he laments the disappearance of the cancan dancers and the frilled drawers of the Bal Tabarin; with Madame d'Uzès the disappearance of whatever it is that has disappeared from her hunt—and up to that point you might think that, with expanding waistcoat, he is the usual *laudator temporis acti* of the Third Empire. But he isn't—or he is that only sufficiently to satisfy the memoir-reader who has to be regaled with laments as to the days when people now snuffily going towards extinction in garrets did things of extreme insolence and great nastiness to the applause of unpleasant linkmen and hangers-on. Mr. Huddleston knows as well as I do that life in London or Paris—and in New York, too, for the matter of that—is a thing of infinitely greater amenities, light, and fine shades, than ever it was in the days when Yvette Guilbert—not to mention his and my selves—were as thin as eels; and when you could not go outside the dim inner ring of light of the inner boulevards at night without the most imminent of danger from very real and very unpleasant apaches. I don't know that I like the fact that all places of public entertainment, refreshment, and resort are now—in order to satisfy a supposed inner craving of visitors from a great sister republic—got up in a style of architecture modelled on the bathrooms of the great millionaires of Dayton, Ohio, or the public conveniences of Grand Central Station. But Mr. Huddleston knows as well as I do that the white-tile-illuminated manners of the night-clubs of Montmartre are as lambs-milk to wood alcohol compared with those that I am old enough and he nearly old enough to remember in those same haunts. At any rate if he had seen, as I have seen, the miserable wreck, Oscar Wilde, being tormented by brutes long ago, in those haunts of today, he would not have much doubt about it—and that is only one thing.

And indeed the only quarrel that I have with Mr. Huddleston amounts probably to the fact that he does not see Paris with my eyes. That of course is folly on my part, but, it not being my fortunate lot to "set down swift impressions in a high studio overlooking the hundred monuments of Paris,"

*Paris Salons, Cafés, Studios. By SISLEY HUDDLESTON. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company. 1928. \$5.

This Week

"Paris Salons, Cafés, Studios."

Reviewed by FORD MADOX FORD.

"This Delicate Creature."

Reviewed by ERNEST SUTHERLAND BATES.

"They Still Fall in Love."

Reviewed by ELMER DAVIS.

"The Cradle of the Deep."

Reviewed by FREDERICK J. O'BRIEN.

"The True Heart."

Reviewed by GRACE FRANK.

"The Diary of Tolstoy's Wife."

Reviewed by MANYA GORDON.

"Off the Deep End."

Reviewed by WILLIAM BOLITHO.

"Living in the Twentieth Century."

Reviewed by HAROLD J. LASKI.

"Sex and Youth."

Reviewed by MARGARET SANGER.

New Poems.

By EMILY DICKINSON.

A Reply to Mr. Simonds.

By JAMES T. SHOTWELL.

Next Week

W. D. Howells: Last of the Mountaineers.

By O. W. FIRKINS.

plotted in by dots and curves in the novel, is by supposed theatric necessity left out. Hence a feeling of disappointment and unreality, a sense that the struggle of the Countess Olenska to reconcile her American ethics with desires that are European, but also very human, is one of those typical dramatic (Continued on page 753)

but rather to write with the hesitation for which Mr. Huddleston expresses such high scorn ("All the greatest writers in the world have had, as it were, the rage, the carelessness, the vigor" . . . of correspondents of *The Christian Science Monitor* in short), it being my lot to write with hesitation and difficulty little niggling paragraphs in an attic commanding, on a level, the views of 116 chimney pots and the two towers of St. Sulpice—my lot not being to occupy the position of arbiter of the quarrels of celebrities, but to wait on the sidewalks whilst Mr. Huddleston in his gold-fringed, bicorne, gold-laced coat, with beside his satin shorts his heavily gilt duelling sword . . . (duels today truly are abolished—though, oh, wouldn't I give all I possess to fight one more—only one, before swiftly advancing age stiffen these once aggressive joints) . . . I then waiting hustled on the sidewalk beside the strip of red carpet whilst Mr. Huddleston in the Court Dress of his Journal and all those other illustrious ones trip up the steps of the Eldorado—and who is lighter of step and heart than our subject as, with his arm linked in that of President Poincaré, he whispers light suggestions for alterations in her latest poems into the arms of the attentive Madame la Comtesse Mathieu de Noailles (née, as I am glad to learn from Mr. Huddleston, Princess Anna de Brancovan), whilst from the steps above Colonel Lindbergh and Mistinguett with their gay laughter seek to draw him from the distractions of beauty and elder-statesmanship towards the beguilements of the sparkling cocktails that they wave on the perfumed air of the Ville Lumière's most victorious hostelry . . . The epoch of cocktails!

But I ought not try to write according to the prescriptions of Mr. Huddleston! Rage, carelessness, and vigor are not for me. I shall never get that sentence, meant to be in the style of Dumas, disentangled. So I had better let it be.



It should be borne in mind that in Paris Mr. Huddleston occupies a very singular position. If he were in England he would perhaps be a peer both temporal and spiritual. In Paris his "semi-public"—the phrase is his own—position as press-correspondent partakes of both qualities. I have often been struck by the pallid rigidity of prominent French and foreign functionaries of high grade whilst Mr. Huddleston interviews them. Presidents of Republics, of Municipal Councils, of Banks national and private, of Insurance Companies—it is all one; they stand before our hero as earlier victims must have stood before Torquemada or as school-boys used to stand before Dr. Busby. And from their pallid lips issue the confessions of which this singular, this almost unprecedented volume are made up. You see, Mr. Huddleston represents *The Christian Science Monitor* which we know to be a sound, moderate, and singularly uninterfering paper. But to natives of this side it looks different. The United States is known to be a Christian Empire, it is also known to set great store by Science. So its *Monitor* is taken as being its State organ, fully representing such Torquemadas as presiding in secret over an autocratic Federal Council have behind them the Ku Klux Klan, the Fundamentalists, and the secret Societies of Chautauqua and Dayton, not Ohio. (The United States, you know, looks like that from Paris.)

That Mr. Huddleston presents physically none of the austerity that used to dignify the nuncios of the Holy Office when Rome was mysterious and all-powerful is regarded as merely a part of the diplomatic skill of a Washington that is more dangerous, jack-boot rattling, and profitable to propitiate than were ever Rome and Prussia united. Here, they say, is the spiritual representative of the mightiest and most minatory empire the world has ever seen. He stands before them, veiled by his office, jocund in appearance so that they may be put off their guards, but panther-like in his pounces if any attempt be made to deceive him. And rustling behind his awful shoulders they hear the white wings—or should it be the hoods?—of an organization which can murder and ruin at distances circling the globe. So all their secrets are open to him; he is at once acquainted with what young women they take out to supper; the public companies in which they have shares; how much they will take to vote for certain interests; their interest in the more "morbid" passages of Proust—there is nothing barred to his penetrating eye, closed to his singularly retentive ear, or concealed, in the event, from the public. At the same time his genial appearance, his seeming

naivetés, his proneness to break into song and dance whilst recovering from the strains of too great pensiveness—as over Villon in a thoroughfare notoriously the haunt of thoughtless juniors—all these things make him a welcome visitor at the humble hearth of the artistic colonies of Paris. Here such things are discussed before him as are reserved for the presence of friends, a certain shadow of the awfulness of Mr. Huddleston's position lending confidence; and again the world benefits from the disclosures of this true servant of the public. So we have this immense volume overflowing with what in anyone else would be indiscretions—overflowing to the very inner leaves of the jacket-papers and the tables of contents. The singular thing is that publishers like the staid firm who publish the work in the United States can have been found to do so. No doubt they were brought to the pitch by the consideration that, in their words, the work contains "many devastating revelations of manners and morals." Personally, observing that according to the publisher's flyleaf there seemed to be devastating revelations as to myself too, before reading the work I got a friend to go through it and gum together any pages on which she found references to myself, so that the only statement concerning myself that I have come across because that reader missed it, is the one to the effect that Mr. Huddleston was once chosen to act as arbiter in a quarrel between myself and Mr. Joyce. This causes me a great deal of grief because such a statement is unkillable. I can only say that there never was a quarrel between myself and Mr. Joyce and there never could be since, as "an old man mad about writing," I would cheerfully hold my head out for the shillelagh of such a matchless virtuoso of prose at any moment when he might be looking for a head to crack. And I might add that quite lately—certainly long after Mr. Huddleston's account of a quarrel was invented, written, and set up—Mr. Joyce rendered me one of the most intimate services that one man of my persuasion can render another, and that the minute before I sat down to read Mr. Huddleston's book I had just been paying as delicate and sincere a tribute to Mr. Joyce's writing as has ever been paid by me to any man . . . And I have paid some! So there can't have been much of a quarrel.



In short I am so lost in wonder at Mr. Huddleston's work that I hardly know from what angle to begin expressing my bewonderment. There is his courage! I have heard of Bad Men in the West holding up whole saloons with one small tube. But here is a man holding up a whole city with a fountain-pen. There is the money he must have made by his devastating revelations! It is like thinking of Monte Cristo! His book is priced at \$5 and there is hardly an inhabitant of the United States who does not know Paris that will not purchase the work. Of course he will lose a great number of lunch and dinner engagements but what is that amongst so many! There are the singularly accurate accounts of public events in Mr. Huddleston's narrative. I have been present on several of the more humble of these occasions and was of course seated far from Mr. Huddleston. There was the press occasion—the tickets were purchasable—when the Prefect of Police and quite a naughty lady were present. Mr. Huddleston was certainly there. There was the momentous occasion of the meeting of Mr. Huddleston and M. André Gide in a booksellers' parlor. I distinctly saw Mr. Huddleston offer the author of "La Porte Etroite" a sandwich. . . .

Another thing extraordinarily to be wondered at is the singular—let us say, elasticity—of Mr. Huddleston's years. I have been loafingly familiar with the city of Mallarmé, Verlaine, and Alphonse Daudet for almost as many years as Mr. Huddleston seems to have resided in Paris almost more than the full tale of all my years, and whilst I was a boy of eighteen or so Mr. Huddleston seems to have been starring it with all the lustre of an adult correspondent of *The Christian Science Monitor* at the high tables with *ce pauvre Lélian, le Pauvre Théo*, or his daughter, with the authors of the "Tombeau de Wagner" and "De Profundis" . . . There in the full mauve of the 'nineties Mr. Huddleston sat at the high tables of the bistros and gargottes, sharing the glory of all those and of that other "poor" one—*ce Pauvre Oscar*. I, meanwhile, with other urchins, sat in the dim corners amongst the poorer, unknown students and prostitutes, wondering at—oh, almost adoring!—the great

ones at their distant feasts . . . Rimbaud, Verlaine, Mallarmé, Wilde. . . . Once even Mistral, the Félibristes, some of them, and Gounod—and of course Mr. Huddleston himself. . . . And I would creep home to my utterly Godfearing and respectable Paris-American family and be properly cross-questioned in the morning.



Now I am not—God forbid that I should be—attempting to swap anecdotes with Mr. Huddleston. I am only expressing my wonder that he should find Paris—real Paris which lies outside the American or the Ritz bars—so changed from the Paris that he knew so well in the 'nineties. For the thing that makes one so intensely love Paris is precisely its immutability, the profuseness of its unaltering mementos. It is no use telling me that the cocktail and the black-bottom distinguish the Paris-American home of today any more than Mr. Huddleston's and the Comte Boni de Castellane's lamented can-can or the Tarara Boomdeay dance and absinthe distinguished those same homes in the 'nineties. And, if you want the truth of it, if you compare the absinthe-sodden wretches that formed the fringe of Mr. Huddleston's friends with even the cocktail-canned tourist of today, it is, I am tempted to say, Mustard-Blossom to Caliban. The disappearance of absinthe alone has made a difference such as no material alteration in the direction of sanitary tiles and contraptions has distantly approached. But Paris can still arouse a passion of affection for its unchangeability. If the titular aristocracy and the intellectual, if the Paris-American and the English Colony, if the Catherinettes and the *petite bourgeoisie*, were not much the same as they were at the beginning of my consciousness of this scene—or even at the beginning of Mr. Huddleston's longer and how much deeper acquaintance—or if they were not all very much the same as they were generations ago, or if the spirit of the professor with whom I used to take tea in these apartments did not brood over them precisely as he brooded thirty-seven years ago when I used to take tea with him on a Sunday, I should not now be sitting in Paris. But it is the fact that the rooms are unchanged—and it is the fact that the chimney pots on my level communicate with rooms that were once inhabited by Marie de Medicis, by Fenélon, by la Fontaine, by Voltaire, not to mention Ponson du Terrail and Mr. Ernest Hemingway—it is those facts that make me—and how many others—sit in rooms like these and work out the arts of the future. You cannot glance aside anywhere here and not have suggested to you something august, something splendid, or some immortal irony or undying sarcasm.



It is perhaps because, being a devotee of Dumas and M. Breaud, that Mr. Huddleston is so avid of discoveries of changes. Indeed my last great wonder but one attaching to this work is that, disliking the art that Paris produces, he should have stayed here for so many decades. He will quote you page and page of Jean Jacques Brousson on France and page after page of Léon Pierre Quint on Proust. anecdote after anecdote from this book or that journal about this or that considerable artist—and though the general effect of all these quotations is to give a certain prominence to the subject of the moment, the final comment of Mr. Huddleston himself is always one of contempt or dislike, a repetition of his pæan to the prolific vitality of the journalist, or of his praise of the journalist—to be sure ever so amiable and able—who wrote of the sorrows of the obese. He arrives, as any opponent of work in Paris today would arrive, at the conclusion that "the current of modern art is back towards sanity."

Those words he quotes with approval from Sir Augustus John and with an equal zest he quotes Mr. Nevinson's eulogy of the art-world of London as set over against the art-world of Paris. And there is a splendid scene in which, after having treated Gertrude Stein with humor—"once I gave a reading of Gertrude Stein to a party of Friends. There was much merriment,"—and after pointing out that Mr. Wells calls "The Genius" of Mr. Dreiser a "dull piece of ineptitude"—though what Mr. Wells and Mr. Dreiser have to do with Paris only Mr. Huddleston knows!—and having given almost every worker in Paris—including I daresay myself—bloody noses and cracked crowns—there is a splendid passage in which Mr. Huddleston suggests how he struggles out from the herd of us lesser lights to commune with Mr. Galsworthy who has been communing with himself. And Mr. Galsworthy reveals to Mr. Huddleston that he has been

thinking that the English novel will return shortly to its own old traditions of sound workmanship—though whether Mr. Huddleston intends one to gather that that is Satan reproving sin or St. Augustine flailing . . . oh, say me . . . I don't know. But anyhow why drag in poor Mr. Galsworthy into a book on Paris? Mr. Galsworthy at least never meant to hurt anyone's feelings. . . .

Now there is no reason why anyone should not dislike modern tendencies or Paul Valéry or Proust or confess himself a devotee of Dumas or find it difficult to keep up with Princess Bibesco (née Asquith) or any other of the several Princesses Bibesco—for keeping up with a Princess Bibesco might well be a symbol of the Compleat Parisian. And there is no reason at all why any man should not have the literary and artistic tastes of, say, Gissing's Town Traveler. The only curious thing is that, if you should have those tastes, you should frequent districts and penetrate gimlet-like into the intimacies of circles whose tastes must be anathema to you. Why should he seek out regions of a great city where he *can* only find persons or subjects of conversation that are distasteful? He finds, for instance, that the Montparnasse district is a place distinguished by continuous and vulgar quarrels. I will cede priority or universality of knowledge of any district of Paris except that just north of the Luxemburg Gardens to Mr. Huddleston. But I say deliberately that, artistic feuds being a characteristic of all artistic congeries, Montparnasse is infinitely less quarrelsome than any other similar aggregation—much less quarrelsome than Greenwich Village or Chelsea, N. Y., and infinitely, infinitely less quarrelsome than Bloomsbury W.C. or Chelsea S.W. I have never, I think, quarrelled with any man in Paris and I know hundreds of other serious artists of whom the same could be said. And I will add this, that if there is any region in the world where the artist will find—particularly young artists—sympathy, assistance, and very beautiful fellowship to a higher degree than in these gray and venerable slopes I would be thankful indeed to go there—and die!

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But a singularly startling thought has struck me whilst thinking out what I have above written. I read just after beginning this article which has cost me over a week to write—I read in a periodical a little article about events in a French village that was as charming, as sensitive, and as wise as Mr. Huddleston is when he talks of public affairs. And it was by Mr. Huddleston. In Mr. Huddleston's more portentous works are the punctuation, the grammar, the *cliché* phrases, and all the other signs of rage, carelessness, and vigor that Mr. Huddleston applauds. And that is confusing and in the end dulls the reading. But, in spite of that, suppose—only suppose that Providence really intended Mr. Huddleston—and the really beautiful little chronicle of village events that I have just mentioned almost gives one that impression—*really* intended our subject to be, not a great ranting, roaring writer of scandalous chronicles in a great city, but the minute, attentive, and even loving chronicler of a little village lost somewhere in the heart of the country! We so seldom do what Providence intends us to do. Only think that, if it had not been for the late Lord Northcliffe, Mr. Huddleston might have over a decade ago had the mill that we now understand him to possess. And from there what "Lettres de Mon Moulin" he might not have written; what "Chèvres de Monsieur Seguin—qui," like the rest of poor us, *se battégué touto la niéui émé lo lou—et puis le matin le loup l'a mangée*. Oh, poor us of the mountain in whose ears sounds, if intermittently, the "Hou! Hou!" of the great beast and who never really like to look over our shoulders for fear of seeing its sardonic eyes and the scarlet tongue incessantly passing itself over its tinder-colored dewlaps!

That too—that one sound of Paris that he has never heard—Mr. Huddleston might be privileged to hear if instead of pretending to the airs of a journalistic cross between Paul Pry and an ourang-outang beating the scarlet hair of its chest and roaring defiance to Montparnasse, the arts, the world, you, me, and the bedpost, he suddenly found himself transformed into a chiseller of cherry stones, a Mallarmé indeed and even, if you like . . . pardoned in Heaven the first by the throne between Aramis, d'Artagnan, and . . . Or no, filling the trunkhose of Porthos! At any rate that is a very beautiful little article.

Phantasmagoria

THIS DELICATE CREATURE. By CON O'LEARY. New York: Elliot Holt. 1929.

Reviewed by ERNEST SUTHERLAND BATES

JUST what is the meaning of the present-day revival of the fantastic? Is it merely a phase of the general attitude engendered by the Great War, which so far surpassed all the naturalists in its presentation of brutal and ironic fact as to make further literary endeavors in that direction superfluous? Or, as Francis Grierson and James Branch Cabell were never tired of asserting long before, was "realism" already doomed by its inherent insufficiency? Whatever the explanation, the trend of the hour is clear. Wafted from Germany in the work of Werfel or Gustav Meyrink, and from France in the slighter achievement of the *surréaliste* school, and appearing equally in the writings of such diverse authors as Cabell, Joyce, and Wyndham Lewis, the fantastic has come bounding back into favor. While the rear-guard of readers, twenty years behind the times, has been according Theodore Dreiser its belated welcome, the advance guard has been off after Elinor Wylie, with her "Venetian Glass Nephew," or Virginia Woolf, with her "Orlando," into pastures new—and pleasanter.

Connected with this freer play of the imagination, however—though not in the work of the two



JESSE LYNCH WILLIAMS

writers just mentioned—is a frequent ominous undercurrent of the horrible and the disgusting. Increasingly evident in Cabell, omnipresent in Joyce and Lewis, this links up disquietingly with the renewed popularity of detective stories and even with the despised tabloids—scorned but snatched, one observes, as avidly by the intellectual as by the "low-brow." A school of horror is disquieting because its significance is ambiguous; it is equally likely to indicate the beginning or the end of a period. Elizabethan tragedy rounded its course from Marlowe to Middleton, English Romanticism from Walpole to Beddoes, American Romanticism from Brockden Brown to Poe. Thus, if one is a Spenglerian, he may regard the current delight in fantasy and horror as an evidence of approaching chaos; if he is a good American, he may shout, for the hundredth time, that we are on the eve of a great literature. Without venturing upon either of these prophecies, it is sufficient here to indicate the fact that today writers of promise such as the authors of "Ariadne," "Ryder," and "This Delicate Creature" are entering literature not by the doors of realism but by the doors of fantasy.

It is as a writer of promise and as an index of tendencies that Con O'Leary, the author of "This Delicate Creature," is of interest, rather than through the actual achievement of his novel. The opening paragraph makes one think mistakenly that he knows exactly what kind of book he is reading. "Boda nestled in Freddy Norlott's arms. Her husband was downstairs." According to temperament and age the reader smacks his lips or stifles a yawn,

and proceeds along the same corridor for fifty pages. Then the scene suddenly shifts, the air sharpens, and the author's real purport appears.

His heroine, Boda Coakley, the beautiful and high-spirited daughter of an impoverished Irish nobleman, has married, for his money, a rather stupid English peer twice her age; has remorselessly betrayed him for a slightly less stupid young Oxford Blue; and is leading, without qualm of conscience, the frivolous and empty life of her aristocratic set. She, of course, patronizes celebrities, and from one of them, an East Indian explorer, she obtains a marvelous drug, Nirvabogœa, which has the property of causing one to become all those, human or animal, whom he has ever injured. Eager for thrills at any price, she takes the drug.

There follows a vision of no less than seventeen injured lives. Boda is ridden as a race horse, is tossed as a mouse, is torn to pieces as a hare, is shot down as a pheasant, is run to earth as a fox; since she has rejoiced to wear furs, her own skin is stripped off by the animals of the jungle; as the young soldier whom her recruiting kiss persuaded into the war, she goes through the horror of battle into madness; as the wife of one of her Irish tenants she suffers eviction and starvation; she is a chorus girl, a prostitute, a beggar; she is her own husband and endures all his torments of jealousy. The other characters of the story reappear in these various lives, usually in the rôle of avengers. Small wonder that when Boda comes out from under the influence of the drug she is a changed lady. Sobered by her experiences, she returns to her husband's arms and consents to give him a longed-for heir; the erstwhile flapper is become a domestic soul, and salvation lies before her.

The dangers as well as the opportunities of such a plot are manifest. It takes the artistry of a Virginia Woolf to move serenely through a phantasmagoria. With Mr. O'Leary the result is too often mere confusion. There are altogether too many Henries in the field. The lives follow one another in rather hit-or-miss fashion, with little consecutive reinforcement. Granted that Nirvabogœa is a strange drug, since it is at heart so highly moral a drug one is surely justified in asking that it be also a logical drug. One could wish, too, that its morality were of a somewhat profounder character. Nevertheless, if the book tends to become a series of episodes, these episodes are, many of them, remarkably well done; if the author's generous sentiment toward our brute relatives occasionally leads him into absurdity, one may still be grateful for the generosity; and if the central thought be hardly deeper than that of "The Prince and the Pauper," it is at least a thought. Mr. O'Leary's attempt to present the fanciful, the sensational, and the horrible, in the service of an abstract idea is of distinct significance and interest.

The Younger Generation

THEY STILL FALL IN LOVE. By JESSE LYNCH WILLIAMS. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1929. \$2.50.

Reviewed by ELMER DAVIS

HERE is a hilarious story of the ways of Nature with two modern young people—the rich and disillusioned Miss Mounteagle and the proud and single-minded Mr. Cope. If the end can be foreseen from the beginning—it is indeed betrayed by the title—you will not foresee so readily Mr. Williams's devious ways to that end; for he crams into this amorous history a tremendous amount of behavioristic reporting. Mr. André Maurois lately sounded a mournful requiem over the passing of romantic love, perhaps the most remarkably forceful engine that human ingenuity ever devised; love today, he concluded, has become a sort of sensual friendship. In the case the history of which Mr. Williams reports, there was more sensuality than friendship, but if the emotion which eventually possesses his hero and heroine is not romantic love, it is something that has the same appearance and produces the same effect.

But the story, after all, is largely a vehicle for the opinions of one of the wittiest members of the younger generation of 1897 on the various younger generations that have paraded in review since the war. Mr. Williams seems to think that the most recent of them are going back with the pendulum—back to long hair, chastity, and a certain amount of earnestness. Instances to the contrary he sets down as Nature's imitation of Art, the tendency of