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 nieui èmé 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.

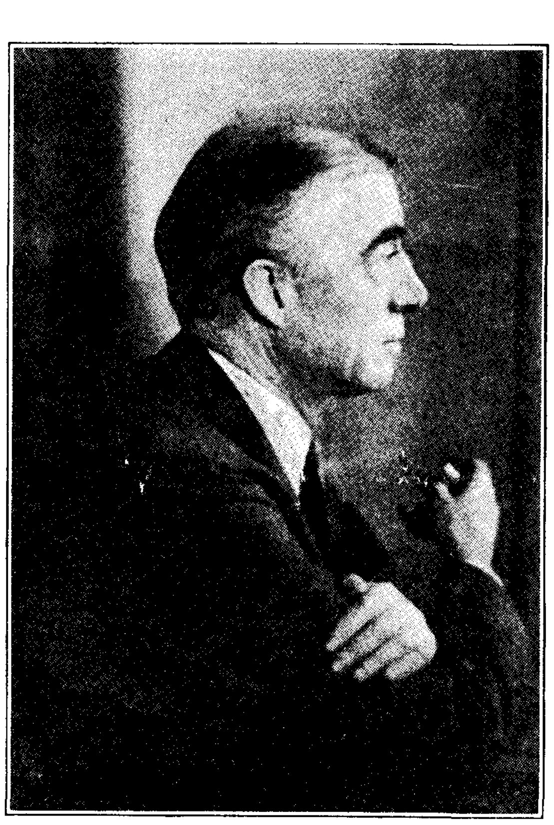
Connected with this freer play of the imagination, however—though not in the work of the two writers just mentioned—is a frequent ominous undercurrent of the horrible and the disgusting. Increasingly evident in Cabell, omnipresent in Joyce and Lewis, this links up disquietingly with the renewed popularity of detective stories and even with the despised tabloids—scorned but snatched, one observes, as avidly by the intellectual as by the "lowbrow." 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.



JESSE LYNCH WILLIAMS

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 forsee 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 boys and girls of twenty to pattern themselves on the characters in novels written by men and women of thirty and upward.

However this may be, Mr. Williams, conceding much virtue to the emancipated young people, none the less makes a most persuasive argument for certain other virtues that have lately been neglected. Craftily, he embodied the older generation in Mr. Harry Mounteagle; readers whose impulse to identify themselves with the protagonist might be impeded by his intellectual interests, will be mollified by the fact that he has three hundred million dollars. This opens the way for some amusing comment on the relation of the recently rich, the moderately rich, or the merely rich to the overwhelmingly rich, as well as the relation of money to science. Both scientists and millionaires might read this with profit.

The essence of Mr. Williams's argument is put into an address by Mr. Mounteagle to his daughter's guests:

> The trouble with you kids is that you are so pitifully ignorant of the two things that interest you—love and liquor. No wonder modern youth is so unhappy; you're out for a good time in life and you don't know the technic. You think all you have to do is to let yourself go and not give a damn. But you have to give a damn. The sybaritic enjoyment of life is an art.

By way of illustration Mr. Williams describes the reaction of an elderly scientist to an admirable old vintage Madeira. Here are three pages that all young people who have learned to drink since prohibition ought to read. Or perhaps, on second thought, they had better not; the nobler spirits among them would become incurably dissatisfied with a purged republic in which real Madeira will never be seen again.

Mr. Williams appreciates vintage liquor and vintage conduct. The Constitution has deprived us of the one; the war, or something, has for a time cast the other into disrepute. But he seems to hope that our behavior need not always resemble the raw whisky and synthetic gin which induces so much of it.

A Sentimental Journey

THE TRUE HEART. By SILVIA TOWNSEND WARNER. New York: The Viking Press. 1929. $2.50.

Reviewed by GRACE FRANK

WITH artful artlessness "The True Heart" recounts the odyssey of a girl Perceval, the sentimental journey of immaculate innocency in a sophisticated world. Behind the telling one detects a wide-eyed ingenuousness crinkled with irony, as if the smile of Mona Lisa had invaded the lips of a pre-Raphaelite madonna. Indeed it is precisely this nameless and unusual combination of imp and cherub, of humor and a lyric tenderness, that makes the story so delectable.

In "Lolly Willowes" and "Mr. Fortune's Maggot," the imp was uppermost. In "The True Heart," the goodness and simplicity of the little heroine are so disarming that for pages at a time no limb of Satan tweaks the author's pen. Whether tweaked or not, however, that pen writes on precisely and melodiously, choosing its words with such careful consideration for appositeness of meaning and sound that the book will give uninterrupted pleasure to all lovers of beautiful English prose.

When Sukey Bond left the Warburton Memorial Female Orphanage to make her own way in the world she was barely sixteen, but she carried off with her five prizes for virtues that ranged all the way from good conduct to excellence in clear starching. The Orphanage had given her a great respect for anything that would take a good polish, and her own sweet nature made her pathetically ready to believe the best of everyone she met. Thus, faith, humility, and ignorance were her shields against whatever lay in wait for her. Through a kind patroness of the Orphanage she obtained a place as servant on a remote farm, and there she met young Eric Seaborn who "loved all helpless things, all wild things, all harmless and thoughtless things, for he was himself wild and harmless, thoughtless and helpless." Eric loved Sukey, too, and she at once took the gentle, half-witted lad to her heart, treasuring him with all the devotion of her faith and ignorance.

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There were those about her, however, who had less trust and more knowledge. Sukey, without quite understanding why, lost her Eric, and thereupon left the farm with no other thought in her head than to recover him. Then began her real adventures, adventures that brought her—always wondering and obedient and untouchable—into contact with many people wholly unlike herself: first with a proud and lovely lady who remained uncaptivated by the notion (this was part of a fairy tale that Sukey had made up) that she might become the grandmother of a servant girl's child; then, with a hairy, unshaven tramp who left Sukey none the worse for a swig from his bottle and a night at his side in a hay-loft; then, with Mrs. Oxey, the kind, spacious, bejewelled woman who reminded Sukey of a Bishop and who gave the girl a safe welcome even after she had discovered that Sukey didn't know a disorderly house when she saw one (Sukey was too polite to mention that she had noticed the steps needed washing); eventually, with Queen Victoria herself, the Queen who was "majestic and dumpy, but superbly dumpy, sitting there bolt upright with her crown on, dwarfing and mothering everything," the Queen who sighed when Sukey mentioned widowhood, and sighed even more profoundly when Sukey mentioned a son who was not a great comfort to his mother.

It will have been noted that this tale, like its hero, young Eric, has "an air of being only lightly tethered to reality." For all that, little Sukey is as plausible in her way as her more realistic predecessors—from Clarissa Harlowe to Elsie of "Riceyman Steps"—are in theirs, and Sukey's way is by far the more beguiling. It will be remembered—and in reading "The True Heart" it cannot be forgotten—that Miss Warner is a poet. Her reality is compounded of seeing, feeling, fancy, and wit.

A Sailor Lass

THE CRADLE OF THE DEEP. By JOAN LOWELL. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1929. $2.75.

Reviewed by FREDERICK O'BRIEN

JOAN LOWELL'S book is unusual because it is the autobiographical tale of a female American sailor, a merry, pretty, calloused girl of the California of the last generation. Except for a few historical gynanders of horny hands whose obsessions for salt water have been related, American sailors are exclusively male, and Joan was not of the *tertium quid* sort. She was made a sailor by the harsh tactics of her Turk of a father, and long isolation on the deck of a rude windjammer.

A dark man in his fifties brought her, wrapped in a blanket, aboard the four-masted schooner, *Minnie A. Caine*, in San Francisco harbor. He had the sailmaker fashion him a tiny canvas hammock which he hung from the roof of his own bunk in the captain's cabin. Joan was then eleven months old. She grew up aboard the schooner, and until she was seventeen years of age knew only the ocean as her element, the wind as her god, and her hell-roaring Old Man as her boss.

At seventeen she swam naked to the Australian shore from the burning vessel, with the dark Old Man, and some of the crew. Her father was seventy, a shipless mariner, perforce now a landsman. Joan took to wearing a dress, and the story ends. Her own, and her Old Man's sea days were over.

Her Old Man had a reason in his shellbacked soul for shanghaiing the babe of eleven months. Latest of eleven of his get, all bred in making of his home port every one or two or five years, Joan had lost four brothers and sisters within two years. The Old Man, dismayed at these blows of fate during his absence, said:

> This is the last one and'm going to save it. I'll take it away from the land and let the sea make it the pick of the puppies.

He knew no other salvation. Son of a Slav-Turk pair, deserted, reared in an asylum until he ran away at ten, he had been at sea since. He was a hard, dutiful, blustering, ignorant tyrant. For sixteen years, from puling infancy to tarry pucelage, Joan sailed with him on the *Minnie A. Caine* all about the Pacific Ocean, hunting trade and cargo in ports and off reefs from Australasia to the Marshalls.

> Rotting copra, putrid pearl oysters, sandalwood and guano, island produce and American lumber, oakum, tar, hempen ropes, tropic breezes and Alaska gales; they were her perfumes from babyhood to husky womanhood.

Her first tub was a codfish keg. She learned to swim in an old-sail tank on the deck. And she learned to float in it.

> "Throw your head back and puff your stomach up until you can see your belly button," ordered the Old Man.

Finally, in Newcastle harbor where several of the crew swam about the anchor chain, he threw her from the bow fifteen feet into deep water. She swam.

With rough cotton or rougher wool, salt encrusted, next to her tough, young skin, with old flour sacks for her nightgown,—sometimes mottoed, "Pure as the Drifted Snow,"—with sailors' smutty chanteys for bedtime stories, salt beef, dried fish, lentils, and rice for her diet, the deck her playground, and the lofty masts her gymnasium, Joan lived boyishly, joyously, and dangerously through infancy and childhood into an early and bewildered puberty, among men only.

The Cradle of the Deep rocks to the swish of the Old Man's lash. He swung it early and late upon his daughter as he did his mighty fists upon his male crew. John Henry, a sailor, defended Joan's "awful" surroundings to an American consul's lady in an Australian port:

> "Awful, hell!" snorted John Henry. "She ain't no damn fool like most women. Her Old Man uses a rope's end on her stern often enough to keep the foolishness outen her head."

The Old Man was a hellion for temper, and Joan his match in pranks. Once, after days of deadly heat, bare sips of wiggly water, mutiny, and despair, the men rejoiced in a shower. They set empty kegs to catch the run-off water from the upper deck. Joan stripped, greased her body with the galley soap of pork-drippings and lye, and danced in the rain on the upper deck, sending her scalding suds into the drinking supplies on the main deck. The men roared at her; the Old Man seized her:

> "What the hell's the big idea?" he yelled, so enraged with me he was pale.
>
> "It feels so goddamned good to get cool in the fresh rain," I answered.

The Old Man washed her mouth out with the fearful soap.

She tells a hundred incidents of her wild spirit, and her father's punishments. Besides there are tragedies, sudden deaths, mutiny, perversion, shipwrecks, and a lorn love affair. The curses, oaths, and rude language of labor in stress on land or sea are printed out, but they are mere red streaks in the fat meat of sentimentality that makes the body of the tale.

Joan Lowell, like all lasses raised where he-men abound,—aboard ship, in Alaska, among the rarin' cowboys, or the bearded miners, handles sex as she feels it,—sentimentally. Yet an episode of a sailor who was tortured by her curves, and who fled the ship in fear, is told realistically.

The yarn is coarse, strong, and well-knitted. It suffers from retrospect, and an idealization of her remarkable Old Man.

There has been incorporated in Baltimore a publishing house, of which H. G. Wells, Julian Huxley, famous biologist and son of the more famous biologist, Thomas Henry Huxley, and George H. Doran, New York publisher, are the guiding spirits.

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