

prepare the dinner. It would be the wish of Vilette that her family suffer in nothing. Never again would he so far forget himself as to let the food disgrace her memory.

That night the roast ducklings were garnished with stewed plums and smothered in a gravy that surpassed hope.

One day more and everything was settled. I made a trip down-stairs to congratulate Capeau. He stood in the kitchen door, chic in clean white coat and cap. An escaped bunny lay asleep at his feet, between rows of nibbled lettuces.

As he watched the furry thief, Capeau's right hand slowly whetted a knife across a stone in the palm of his left.

"Hi, Capeau!" I yelled; "just had a telephone call . . . the robber'll have to cough up!"

The little man jumped, looked up obliquely, puzzled by my slang.

"Monsieur mean . . . ?"

"Mrs. Jilson's got to pay back every cent!"

"Mais, comment, monsieur? I cannot have from Vilette. The jury say it . . . I am not her husband."

"No, Capeau, you were not her husband. But Mrs. Jilson has said it . . . you were madame's cook. Yesterday we brought in a claim against her estate for your wages . . . ten dollars a week for twenty years. That's ten thousand four hundred dollars. The court's ordered Mrs. Jilson to pay you from the estate of her sister!"

Capeau's face flushed. Then he sprang suddenly forward and threw his arms around me, his hands still holding the knife and stone. Passionately he kissed the lapels of my coat . . . he couldn't reach my cheeks.

I returned his embrace. Locked together, we danced about the yard, careering recklessly over cabbages.

We paused for breath.

"Capeau," I panted, "you came mighty near losing every cent you had in the world . . . it was a hair-breadth escape!"

"Bien, monsieur!"—his exuberance was undaunted by idiom—"there is, indeed, but one hair missing, but that I lose all!"

I slapped him on the back. "And I nearly lost my home; it was a close shave for me too, Capeau!"

"Oui, bien! Monsieur shave himself closer that time than ever before!" Capeau's voice rose. "But it is now thanks to monsieur, I get what is right; Madame Jilson, she get what is left!"

Too excited to realize what he was doing, he began vigorously sharpening the knife on the whetstone.

I looked for the rabbit.

It had vanished.

I turned back to Capeau. "Bien!" I mocked. "There is indeed but one hare missing!"

Capeau looked up sideways, a gleam in his watery eyes. "Even monsieur catch not all the thieves in the one day!"

"Beauty Persists"

BY MAXWELL STRUTHERS BURT

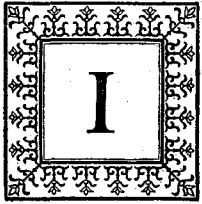
BEAUTY persists in loveliness of little things,
It cannot diminish, or alter, or be slain;
Were I as old as Jacob, if there sings
Along the hedge a sparrow after rain,
Beauty will toss my heart aloft again.

Beauty persists in an imperishable little thing;
When you, O friends and lovers, are old and gray,
Around the altered lineament will cling
A ghost of what was young, and you, and gay:
A wavering shadow upon a quiet day.

The Significance of Recent American Drama

BY ARTHUR HOBSON QUINN

Author of "Pilgrim and Puritan in Literature," etc.



IN view of the interesting and important developments in our native drama during the past few years, it is depressing to the close student of that field of art to read the patron-

izing or superficial treatments of the subject that have recently been permitted circulation. An example may be found in an article by Melchoir Lengyel, the Hungarian author of "The Czarina," to which travesty of history Miss Doris Keane has descended, in company with its adaptor, Edward Sheldon, from the latter's own brilliant vivification of the past in "Romance." M. Lengyel naively remarks that "should any one ask me what the world has gained from the work of the American playwright, I might recall several well-written dramas and comedies and remember their titles more easily than the names of their authors." He might at least have had the tact to remember the name of the adaptor of his play, a dramatist greater than he, whose tragic illness has robbed the American stage of one of its most promising playwrights. For the creator of "Romance" has illustrated again the fact that the shots of the Concord minute-men have not been the only American products that have been "heard round the world."

It is interesting to remember that it was just a century ago that Sydney Smith uttered his famous query: "In the four quarters of the globe, who reads an American book or goes to an American play?" in blissful ignorance of the crowds that had thronged Drury Lane a year before to witness John Howard Payne's great tragedy of "Brutus." Foreign criticism is a bit more enlightened now than in 1820, or than it was even forty years ago, when William Archer solemnly lec-

tured Bronson Howard for vulgarity in "Saratoga," when the lines to which he objected were not in the play at all, but had been inserted by the British adaptor! It is, perhaps, idle to expect an Hungarian or an English critic to know thoroughly the work of American playwrights when our native critics are so prone to discriminate in their judgments in favor of exotic products, especially if these are a bit peculiar, and if the critic's appreciation implies on his part a broad or even deep knowledge of Continental drama.

As for popular appreciation, the condition is even more discouraging. If one speaks about the encouragement of American drama to that irritating personage, "the man in the street," whose apprehension should certainly have been sharpened long ago by the complexities of traffic, he will inquire blankly, "Why should the American drama be encouraged?" and will return contentedly to those matters that are not for him empty of concern. But it does concern him, and vitally. Beside the intellectual and artistic life of a nation, its commercial and industrial achievements are but incidents, and there is no vehicle so powerful and so competent to carry the meaning of America to our assimilated and our unassimilated population as the drama. To provide that drama, notwithstanding M. Lengyel's ignorance, there are more than thirty playwrights who have produced on the professional stage in the last five years plays that are worthy of consideration. When Winthrop Ames offered a prize in 1913 for the best American play, seventeen hundred manuscripts were submitted in the competition. Quantity production means little, of course, but before turning to an examination of the recent work of American playwrights, it is necessary to emphasize the often-forgotten truth that an artist needs not only proper remunera-