




# As I Like It

BY WILLIAM LYON PHELPS



**T**HORNTON WILDER's new novel, "The Bridge of San Luis Rey," has made an impact on the professional reviewers deeper than any novel since "The Constant Nymph." And no wonder. Although I admired "The Constant Nymph" immensely, I think "The Bridge" a better book in every way. The style is better, the philosophy is deeper, the characters more original, the sympathy for human nature more tender. This is a work that no other man could have written. One hesitates to use the word genius, but there is something akin to that mysterious essence in the pages of this novel.

It is my firm conviction that Thornton Wilder is a star of the first magnitude; he will take his place among the leading novelists of our time. Since this is so, a little personal information about him may not be impertinent. His father is Amos Parker Wilder, one of the editors of the *New Haven Journal Courier*. When I was a freshman at Yale, Amos Wilder was a senior. He was one of the ablest and wittiest men in college, a shining light in public speaking. After graduation he was for a time editor of the *New Haven Palladium* and then for some years the editor of a daily paper in Madison, Wis. He took the post of consul-general at Hong Kong and after his return to America had charge of the interests of "Yale in China." But he is a born journalist, and is now in his right place again as a newspaper editor. He is a man of extraordinary men-

tal gifts, both with tongue and typewriter.

Thornton Wilder's mother, to whom he has dedicated "The Bridge," was Miss Isabel Niven of Dobbs Ferry, daughter of the Reverend Doctor Niven, pastor of the Presbyterian church. When I was twenty-three, I was teaching in Westminster School at Dobbs Ferry; one of my duties was to accompany the boys to church every Sunday morning. There were two Protestant churches in the village, and I was assigned to the Episcopal. As soon as the service was over I went to the Presbyterian Sunday-school, where I taught a class of clever young girls, two of whom were the Morton sisters, daughters of the late G. Nash Morton, whose articles I have frequently cited in this column; another was Isabel Niven, who had (and has) a brilliant and highly cultivated mind. She is the wife of Amos Wilder, and the mother of five admirable children, one of whom is Thornton, the author of "Cabala," "The Bridge," and several plays. It will be seen, then, that Thornton Wilder has an inheritance of brains from both father and mother.

He is thirty years old this year. As an undergraduate at Yale he was unusually versatile, original, and clever. He played and composed music, wrote much prose and verse, and stood well in the studies of the course. He was a shining light in the Elizabethan Club and in that small group known as "The

Pundits." He spent two years after graduation in Italy, a year at the graduate school in Princeton, and is now master of a house in Doctor Mather Abbott's great school at Lawrenceville.

I make no apology for these biographical details, for very soon everybody will be talking about Thornton Wilder, and "wanting to know."

An important event in Shakespeareana is the completion of "The Yale Shakespeare," in forty attractive little volumes. There are the thirty-seven plays, the "Sonnets," the "Poems," and "Shakespeare of Stratford," by Tucker Brooke, containing only the known facts of his life, and contemporary documents and references. The last volume to appear was the "Poems," edited by the distinguished scholar Albert Feuillerat, professor of English literature at the University of Rennes. Every play has the text complete, with just enough notes and supplementary matter to aid the average man, without getting in his way. This is the best edition of Shakespeare now on the market, both for students and the general reader.

"Kitty," by Warwick Deeping, is a good novel, continuously interesting, and, although it is a story of the Great War, the real war is the fight to a finish between two women, a man's mother and his wife. The foundation philosophy of Mr. Deeping's novels, from which they derive their force and significance, might be called Virile Independence. It is time to have done with social conventions that hamper the development of the free spirit; to let nothing cramp or limit a sincere and honest mind. "Kitty" is a charming novel; and I wish I could induce more readers to secure a copy of one of this author's earlier and less-known books, "The House of Adventure," for I feel sure they would enjoy it.

Gamaliel Bradford's "Life of D. L. Moody" is one of the best biographies he has written, which is saying a good deal. There are probably several million persons living who heard Moody and Sankey; and it is safe to say that no one who ever heard them has forgotten the experience. Moody was a mystic endowed with superlative common sense. He appealed to all classes, educated and uneducated; one of the greatest tributes came from the late A. C. Benson, master of Magdalene College, Cambridge. Mr. Bradford does not write from the amen corner, but his attitude is quite free from either irony or condescension. One finishes the book with the belief that Moody was a man of genius.

The Reverend R. F. Dixon, of Wolfville, Nova Scotia, writes me that he is reading "Peg Woffington" for the third time, and wishes that there might be a revival of interest in Charles Reade. This is an excellent idea. Let all Scribnerians in Canada and in the United States who remember the works of this English novelist with pleasure, unite in giving Charles Reade a prominent place in the membership of the Come Back Club. When I was a boy I read all his novels; and, although I have not opened them for many years, I can remember many scenes and characters. The transfusion of blood in "Griffith Gaunt" and the duel; the shipwreck in "Hard Cash," when the deep voice of Cooper broke the solemn stillness—"Scuttled, by God!"; Peg Woffington in the picture-frame; the English skylark in "It is Never Too Late to Mend"; the opera-singer Klosking breaking the bank in "A Woman Hater"; and, above all, the terrific scene when the two friends killed "the Abbot," in "The Cloister and the Hearth." It is not necessary to make any attempt to revive interest in *that* romance, because it has an imper-

ishable place in English literature. I have often wondered if Charles Reade himself knew how superior this book was to the rest of his work. The other novels are interesting and well written, with good plot and characters; but "The Cloister and the Hearth" is one of the world's favorite romances.

George Macaulay Trevelyan has succeeded in one of the most difficult tasks. He has written a manual, a text-book, and at the same time a work of literary art, full of charm and beauty. His one-volume "History of England" is admirably compact, well adapted for use as a text-book in colleges, and yet it has no smell of the classroom. It is as interesting as a good novel.

I opened Trevelyan's "History" at random, at page 352, and found the following paragraph, which gives a good idea of the style:

As Drake entered Plymouth Sound after nearly three years' absence from Europe, his first question to some passing fishermen was whether the Queen were alive and well. Yes, in spite of all her enemies, she was still alive, and well enough to come next year and knight him on board his ship at Deptford. It was the most important knighthood ever conferred by an English sovereign, for it was a direct challenge to Spain and an appeal to the people of England to look to the sea for their strength. In view of this deed, disapproved by her faithful Cecil, who shall say Elizabeth could never act boldly? Her bold decisions are few and can be numbered, but each of them began an epoch.

To those who are interested in English literature of the seventeenth century I recommend the new edition of the "Poems and Letters of Andrew Marvell," in two volumes, edited by H. M. Margoliouth. For the first time a complete critical text of the poems appears, with the text of the "Satires" based on contemporary manuscripts. The second volume contains nearly

four hundred letters by Marvell, most of them printed directly from manuscript. Marvell's best-known poem is perhaps "The Garden," and the best-known lines in it are:

"Annihilating all that's made  
To a green thought in a green shade."

In this scholarly series of new and definitive editions there have already appeared Donne, Herrick, Vaughan, and Crashaw.

Mark Van Doren has made an admirable abridged edition of the famous "New England Diary" of Samuel Sewall, in one attractive volume. I have read every word of this book with intense interest. It covers the close of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth; the most picturesque, not to say bizarre, entries are of course those dealing with the old widower's second and third marriages, with the quaint courtships that preceded them. Although I am not a Freudian, there is plenty of Freud stuff here. "For every age love has its tortures," said the wise Turgenev. Apparently neither religion nor scholarship nor public office—in this case all three—can prevent an old man in love from making an ass out of himself. Such is life. Such it really is. Jehovah Jireh!

Professor George C. D. Odell, of Columbia, has produced a veritable *magnum opus* in "Annals of the New York Stage," two big volumes, abundantly illustrated, covering the century from 1721 to 1821. Although this work is the result of years of patient research and necessarily is made up to a large extent of statistics, it is animated throughout by the author's unashamed passion for the theatre; and it is this love of the stage, of the art of acting and presentation, that keeps up, all the long dusty road, the courage of both author

and reader. It is good news that succeeding volumes are already in hand.

Burns Mantle, the drama critic, has produced another volume in his excellent series, "The Best Plays of 1926-1927." This is a complete and invaluable record of the contemporary American stage; and whether one agrees with the "best ten" or not, one must commend Mr. Mantle for his absolute fairness in selecting them.

The amphibious novelist Ben Ames Williams, who has written so many stirring tales of the ocean and of the farm, has made his most ambitious effort in the very long novel "Splendor," which is really an epic of journalism. This is an account of the life and adventures of a newspaper man, beginning with his work as a small boy on a Boston daily paper and carrying on to his development in middle age. I have seldom read a novel that seemed so truthful; one feels that all the characters and incidents are verifiable. There is not a single very good or very bad person, they are all rather betwixt and between; there is not a single extraordinary event. The style is as undistinguished as the material. Yet it is all interesting, because true. Possibly length was essential to the plan; yet I am certain the novel would have more readers if it were shorter by two hundred pages.

There is, however, one new novel that I wish were two hundred or even a thousand pages longer; that is the thrilling story "No Other Tiger," by the reliable A. E. W. Mason. I did not believe that he could write a more exciting yarn than "The House of the Arrow," which I read in 1925. But this is even better. From the first sentence on the first page to the last word on the last page—well, run, not walk, to the nearest book-shop and get a copy.

Young Lindbergh is as genuine and honest in his writing as he is in all his other activities. This boy is almost too good to be true, but he happens to be both good and true. In order to catch the tide, a book had been prepared from notes dictated by him, and when he arrived in New York he was urged to release this book. They told him that if it could be published at the "psychological moment" a million copies would be sold, but that if he waited the sale would not exceed a hundred thousand. He refused. He sat down and wrote many hours a day for some weeks, and produced his own book—"We."

Those who believe that "literary criticism" consists in denunciation should read "Notorious Literary Attacks," by Albert Mordell, who has unearthed in his previous volumes much important and valuable material. Mr. Mordell has collected fifteen reviews of famous writers, which are not only curious because mistaken, but for the light they throw on certain tendencies in nineteenth-century literature, as well as on standards of taste and social morality. Just about the best thing in the book is Mr. Mordell's introduction, which is full of wisdom and as near impartiality as can reasonably be expected from any one.

Willa Cather's "Death Comes for the Archbishop" is a beautiful book, beautiful in its setting, in its mellow tone, in its literary style. Only one who combines pictorial imagination with a command of first-rate prose could write such a narrative. It was a book written to please herself, which explains perhaps why it pleases so many readers of good taste. I advise all who enjoy this story to get a copy of that excellent periodical *The Commonweal*, for November 23, and read Willa Cather's illu-

minating letter, written by request. I quote a few sentences—the article is three and a half columns.

My book was a combination of the general and the particular, like most works of the imagination. I had all my life wanted to do something in the style of legend, which is absolutely the reverse of dramatic treatment. Since I first saw the Puvis de Chavannes frescoes of the life of Saint Geneviève in my student days, I have wished that I could try something a little like that in prose; something without accent, with none of the artificial elements of composition. . . . The essence of such writing is not to hold the note, not to use an incident for all there is in it—but to touch and pass on. I felt that such writing would be a delightful kind of discipline in these days when the "situation" is made to count for so much in writing, when the general tendency is to force things up. In this kind of writing the mood is the thing—all the little figures and stories are mere improvisations that come out of it. . . .

Writing this book (the title, by the way, which has caused a good deal of comment, was simply taken from Dürer's Dance of Death) was like a happy vacation from life, a return to childhood, to early memories.

A new novel representing the younger generation is "Rebellion," by Mrs. Mateel Howe Farnham. Mrs. Farnham is a daughter of the famous American novelist and journalist Ed Howe, and this is her first book. I find this story steadily interesting and the conflict between daughter and father dramatic and appealing. In a newspaper review the other day I saw the statement that this book had little to say to the sophisticated reader. I thank God I am not sophisticated. I have only one objection to this book and that is astronomical. As so often happens in modern fiction, the moon refuses to behave scientifically. On page 152 occurs this sentence: "A little timid new moon hung in the East."

Emil Ludwig's biography of Bismarck is a work full of information, insight, and sound judgment. It ought to please nearly everybody except Poultney Bigelow. An American octogenarian, who spent much time in Berlin in his youth, writes me:

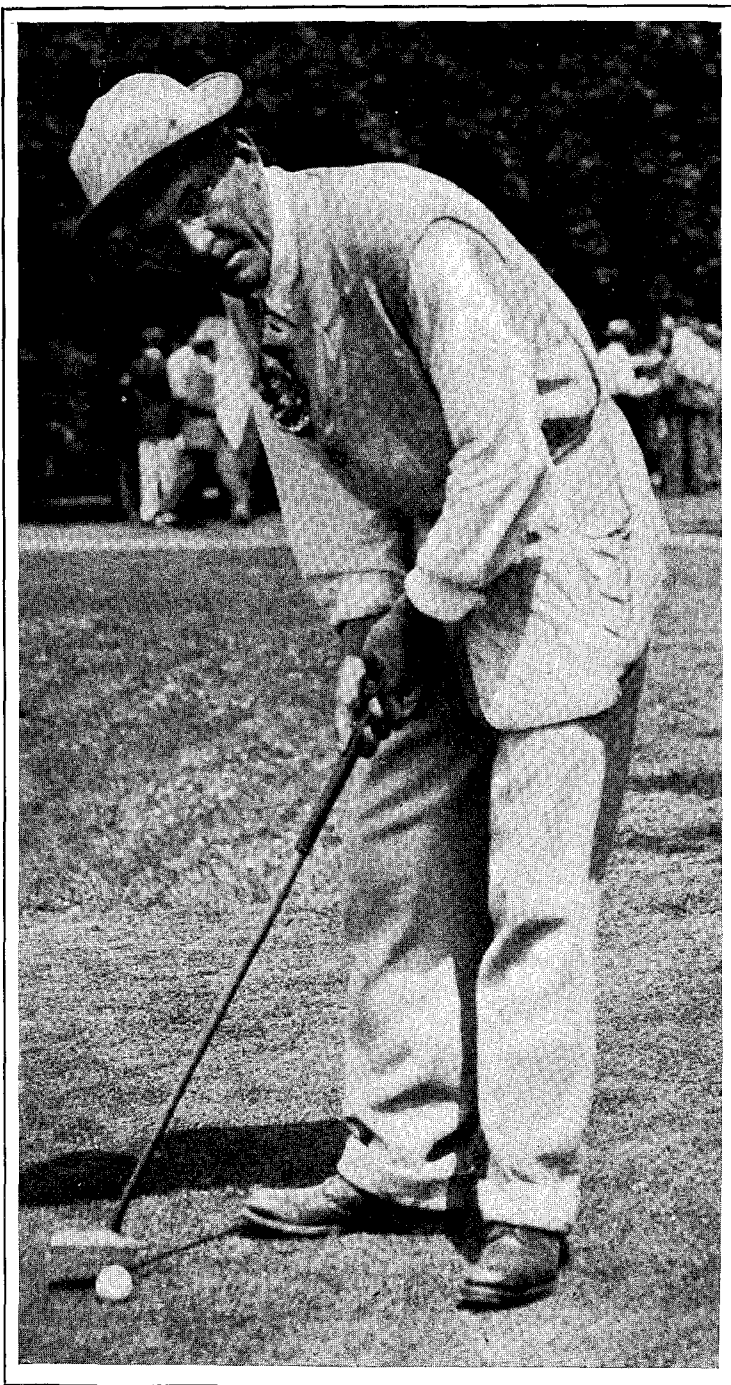
I have finished the Bismarck. It is a great book but I can easily imagine readers finding themselves mired in it. German politics are not of eternal interest. . . . I must say Ludwig explains a lot of things in Germany that had long puzzled me. William James and I years ago in Berlin read the *National Zeitung* and tried hard to make out what it was all about, and the various times I was there later I sought for a light and heard much talk, but German talk is not always illuminating. Ludwig is.

Any reader who likes Ludwig's "Bismarck" or his "Napoleon" is sure to like his book "Genius and Character," consisting of interesting and often profound biographical essays.

Among the new books of poems I especially recommend "The Bright Doom," by John Hall Wheelock. In 1922 Mr. Wheelock published a book of verse called "The Black Panther," which seemed to me original work of a high order. "The Bright Doom" contains the very fine poem "Affirmation," which Mr. Wheelock read before the Harvard Phi Beta Kappa at last commencement. What is specially notable throughout this new book is the unashamed ecstasy of living. Mr. Wheelock is not among the deniers of life, but among the affirmers; and, whatever a man's creed or philosophy may be, he should get some inspiration from the spirit displayed in these poems.

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The *London Times* in a recent tribute says: "... that ominous, almost sinister little figure with the black cigar and the Schenectady putter is still familiar to the imagination of all British golfiers."



(1904), received a fine tribute in a recent number of the *London Times*.

He never came back again, and among the thousands who watch golf today there are few who saw him play; but that ominous, almost sinister little figure with the black cigar and the Schenectady putter is still familiar to the imagination of all British golfers.

Mr. Travis had a formidable rather than an engaging personality. He kept himself to himself; he played silently and dourly: . . . we were inclined to say that he ought to have been beaten. Yet one solid, uncompromising fact sticks in my head—namely that when Mr. Travis had reached the final, we were afraid, mortally afraid, that Mr. Travis was going to win. . . .

It is his putting that has become legendary, and it was wonderful. . . . I never have seen, however, such utter consternation as was produced by Mr. Travis's putting in that final at Sandwich, nor any putting that had about it such a suggestion of black magic. This was enhanced, no doubt, by the man himself. As he stood there after the stroke, still as a statue, watching the ball with those inscrutable eyes of his pursuing its inexorable course, he seemed a wizard to be burned at the stake. . . . As a game-player he had essential greatness.

*As he stood there after the stroke*—many players walk right after their putt up to the hole; Mr. Travis knew better than that. Indeed, most golfers would have profited by playing with Mr. Travis, for he believed in adhering rigidly to the rules of the game, not conceding putts, and not allowing other players and caddies to stroll ahead of the man who was to make the next shot.

But, after all, the best thing about Mr. Travis was not his golfing—the best thing was himself, his mind, his character. He had an interesting mind, a great range of information on many subjects, and was one of the best conversationalists I ever knew. I loved the man, and do honor his memory.

With reference to my remark in a previous number of *SCRIBNER'S* that during one summer I played golf ninety-two consecutive days, I take pleasure in printing a letter I received from one of the high-class amateur players of America, a man who has won important championships.

My own practise in Sunday golf does not coincide with yours, though I have no particular quarrel with the Sunday golfer. I cannot recall ever having played golf on Sunday since I began the game as a caddy in 1910; but I have done Sunday caddying when we needed the two dollars or so earned on the ordinary busy Sunday. But I did not play myself. . . . Two years ago I missed playing in an exhibition match scheduled for a Sunday, in which my friend Chick Evans and I were to be paired against Jock Hutchinson and the Marshall, Michigan, "pro." My no-Sunday-Golf resolution I didn't want to break. I would have felt uncomfortable had I played. . . .

Back in 1923 I entered the National Amateur Golf Championship at Flossmoor Country Club, Chicago. The first 18 holes of qualifying, on a Saturday, I finished with an 83; but I "rested the Seventh Day" instead of practising my shaky putts. In fact, I ran as far away from Flossmoor and the whole nerve-racking business as I could—to Wheaton, Illinois, where I listened that morning to a rather dull sermon. On the final 18 holes of qualifying the following day I had a surprising and highly gratifying 74, within one stroke of the lowest score of the day, Francis Ouimet's 73. Doesn't that argue for my case? In 1926, however, playing in the National Amateur held at Baltusrol, New Jersey, it didn't work so well. On Sunday I listened to an eloquent, wise sermon by Dr. Charles R. Brown of Yale, delivered in the St. Nicholas M. E. Church, New York City. The next day in the first qualifying round my total was rather well up in the eighties. Incidentally, Dr. Brown's sermon, "Familiarity and Reverence," contained several pertinent interpretations of the commandment, "Remember the Sabbath Day." . . . I wonder what he would have said on Sunday golf. . . .

As to church attendance, doesn't Dr. Oliver



Wendell Holmes argue about as persuasively as may be for those religious services presided over by an able minister of God: "I have in my breast a plant called reverence; I go to church to have it watered"?

I might have added, though I did not, that on every one of those Sundays in which I played golf, I also preached in the local church. I believe that if more Sunday golfers would go to church and more churchgoers would play Sunday golf, the results would be advantageous. Worship and recreation make a splendid combination for Sunday.

*Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work.*

An old divine said there was more profanation of the second clause than of the first. "Six days shalt thou labour." Perhaps if this commandment were universally kept, there would be enough food, fuel, and clothing for every one. Every lazy man breaks the commandment oftener than the workers.

Henry Welles Durham writes from Nicaragua, about the happy ending of "Lost Ecstasy":

I claim, with some personal knowledge of open spaces and roughnecks, that the moving-picture ideal union of refinement and vulgarity, would not last many days beyond the discovery of the incompatibility between the ideals of baths every day, and semi-permanent underwear. The gloomy hero of Locksley Hall was right about the relative places of wife, dog and horse after the honeymoon in such a romance. You recall in David Copperfield; "There can be no disparity in marriage like unsuitability of mind and purpose" which includes the habits of thought and belief produced by breeding. A thoroughbred mare and a jackass may produce a useful offspring but won't make a good team. The infatuation the author has imagined is quite possible, the happy ending implied puts the tale in the cinema class. . . .

After taking this exception to a judgment of yours, and I enjoy reading them whether or not I agree with them, I come to a more serious grievance, which is against the leading paper in that same September Scribner's. . . .

In thirty years of adult observation I have noticed no material enrichment in the vocabularies, either of the construction camp, the fraternity house, or the gatherings of polite society. Only a short time ago, I was asked by a lady visiting here from one of the great centers of advanced culture in the Mississippi basin, if my wife still felt any ill effect from the recent injury to her limb. But she is in favor of women's riding astride and voting, or rather she takes all that for granted, and would be insulted if called a Victorian. . . .

During H. M. Tomlinson's all-too-short visit in America I had the pleasure of meeting him at dinner at the house of my friends Doctor and Mrs. Henry S. Canby. He is, as might naturally be expected, an extremely interesting man. He told me that not only was "Gallions Reach" the first novel he had published, it was the first he had ever written. He wrote it merely to see if he could; well, he could and did. "Gallions Reach" is an extraordinary book; having a combination of objective description, like the memorable shipwreck, and mental analysis; the diagnosis of the hero's mind and conscience being truly profound. No author likes to be told that he resembles another; I will not say, then, that Mr. Tomlinson's work resembles that of Conrad, but simply that it is worthy of Conrad.

After the dinner we adjourned to the Elizabethan Club, where Mr. Tomlinson read an excellent paper on contemporary literary tendencies, showing that he is an incurable idealist, a believer in truth and beauty.

In the Boston *Sunday Herald* for November 13 there was an interview

with Mr. Tomlinson, written by Mr. Carl Warton. The *Herald* is to be congratulated on having on its staff a journalist of such caliber, for the interview is beautifully written; it is dignified, but full of "news values." Mr. Tomlinson's tribute to the literary and educational value of the Bible is interesting.

Now how does it happen, that one of his vocational training, lacking in organized literary preparation, could become, even in years, so masterful an artist? Mr. Tomlinson thanks the Bible for it.

"It was the custom in our home," he said, "to read a Chapter in the Bible each night. The family gathered around the table and my father read. It was a custom we boys detested and yet, owing to the fact that my father had a good voice, we could not help listening and absorbing the measure and literary beauty the Bible unquestionably has. Moreover there were always good books around us. Shakespeare, Tennyson, Browning, Washington Irving. I always enjoyed Irving. It is the same with books as with music. Children who have never heard good music do not appreciate it in later life, as a rule. They do not recognize it. It is so with books. Children who do not come in contact with good books do not appreciate them and do not reflect them. There is no better starting point than the Bible.

"The Bible to me," continued Mr. Tomlinson after a pause, "is a miracle. It could not be done again. Forty men were given that job of translating, and they produced a book. Think what would happen today if 40 scholars should undertake it! They could never agree. The Bible was done by inspired men. The book reads like a personal document."

Good news for ailurians. My colleague, Professor Karl Young, who is spending his sabbatical year in the British Museum, sends me a long editorial from the London *Times* for October 25, headed "Russ." It is the obituary of the famous cat at the lion-house of the Zoo who lived to be sixteen years old. He spent his days and nights in

the company of the lions, and, while they had to eat the meat that others had killed, he caught and ate mice.

Thomas Caldecot Chubb writes from Paris:

I was sent your short comments in, I believe, the last number of *Scribners*, but instead of hurting me like everything, they pleased me immensely. They proved that my story was read which is the most delightful of all sensations.

In justification of my remarks—but *not* in defense of Iowa of which I know little or nothing—let me point out that with the exception of Holland Porter and the girl Leonie Paulin who were at least largely invented, virtually everybody in the story was based on someone I actually knew in Florence. The teaparty actually took place. There was a lady from Iowa. She was extremely tiresome and ordinary, to use no stronger words. She would have been—having created him, I claim the right to say—and she should have been extremely annoying to Holland Porter.

That much for Iowa, which except for the unfortunate lady in question—name and address not furnished on request, though they are in existence—may be the center of sophistication and refinement of the universe for all I know about it. . . .

I have my own nomination to make for the Ignoble Prize. It is "persist in using." I don't know about Mr. Elcock who shares my glory, but so far I have discussed Iowa for praise or defamation only once. Wouldn't it be more correct to let me "persist in using" before you say I do? Besides that I have a strong suspicion that the phrase is a fairly venerable cliché.

From Miss Mary L. Beech, of Medina, Ohio:

Whenever I have a bright idea which I plan to contribute to your "As I Like It" department, I'm certain to read my "original gem" in the next issue of the magazine. For instance, I despise "humans" and "gesture," but lazily allowed someone else to nominate each for the Ignoble Prize. Then, last August, after the Winchester verger had reverently removed the rug which covers the stone, I

copied Isaac Walton's epitaph, only to find that it was published that very month.

Henceforth the firstlings of my heart shall be the firstlings of my hand. Consequently I'm sending you an excerpt from a faded old diary belonging to my great-aunt, which I recently found in her Kentucky home. It is so deliciously mid-Victorian that I hope you will like it.

"... Kentucky, July 30, 1857. Sunday Mr. E— accompanied me home from church and renewed his proposal that I should be his. What shall I do with such constant, unwearyed love! It was a beautiful night. All nature was quiet and happy around us, with nothing to disturb the profound calm, for it was late! And there on the porch in the bright moonlight of the summer eve, I yielded to his fervent protestations of undying affection and consented to unite my fate with his."

### THE IGNOBLE PRIZE

From Frederick J. Shepard, of Buffalo:

*Society girl*, even if it be hard to suggest a substitute; but why is a member of fashionable circles any more a member of society than other human beings? Furthermore, for years I have been trying to get writers to say "woman voters" instead of "women voters." Nobody would say "girls students" or "ten feet rule" . . . even if the Bible does say "menservants" it does not say "maids servants" but "maid servants."

From Elin C. Nordstrom, of Manchester, N. H.:

The newspaper writer, who, in reporting Mr. Chaplin's visit to his wife, in one of the New York Tabloids, this summer, wrote: "The couple hoped each other was feeling well."

From Mrs. J. F. Herrick, of Washington, D. C.:

Has not the abominable and popular "All righty" a place among the Ignoble?

From Miss Ella C. Rowell, of Brooklyn. She quotes from the New York *Times*:

"Genaro, still an optimist, flaunts immigration authorities."

Having noticed this abuse (flaunt for flout) twice in one day in the New York *Times* I am moved to send you still another candidate for your Ignoble Prize.

Archibald Craig, of Jersey City, also vigorously attacks "flaunt" for "flout."

From Mrs. C. E. K. Burnham, of Norwich, Conn.:

The word "home" for "house."

From Clarence R. Lynn, Balboa Heights, Canal Zone:

(a) Yiddish dialect rot. (b) Modern Pepys' diaries.

From Miss Elizabeth R. Shaw, of North Girard, Pa.:

"He-man." Why not "it-baby" or "her-woman"?

Walter McKee, of Detroit, enters the Faery Queene Club. He read the poem through this past summer at the beautiful village of Port Austin, eight and one-half miles from my Michigan house. He agrees that the Thumb summer climate is the best in the world.

Miss Gertrude H. Haight, of Syracuse, N. Y., read the whole poem and tells me so in the rhymed archaic speech of Spenser himself.

On October 28 Mr. and Mrs. Flockhart and Amelia M. Woolrich, all of Somerville, N. J., joined the Fano Club. On October 31 Mrs. Emily T. Howe came in.

On the calendar of a Presbyterian church in Dayton, Ohio, there was printed (Nov. 13): "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my wife." A gentleman in the audience writes me: "My endorsement

comes through living with her for nearly 50 years—and hoping for more.”

In the Boone (Iowa) *Republican*:

### LADIES' AID

Following the musical program, Mrs. J. T. Miller read an article on “Personal Devils.” Seventeen were present.

J. M. Lightfoot, of Chesham, N. H., got a packet of matches on a trip to California whereon is printed: “Mail in this Cover and Secure FREE handsome leather tooth pick pocket case.”

### ASTRONOMICAL VAGARIES

Edson M. Peck, of Bristol, Conn., writes: “I, myself, once had the pleasure of seeing the full moon gently drop into the ocean in the early evening, on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera House in the second act of ‘La Gioconda.’”

L. Wayland Dowling, professor of mathematics at the University of Wisconsin, writes:

I read with pleasure your quotation from Professor Shapley's book “The Stars” in the November issue of *Scribners*.

This quotation reminded me at once of a statement in Fogazzaro's “Leila” which expresses closely the same idealism.

Signor Marcello and his young friend are standing on the mountainside in the evening and looking down at the lights of the village below, and Marcello remarks:

“Quei lumicini là nel buio, ecco la filosofia. Chi va intorno la notte con un lume così non vede più le stelle.”

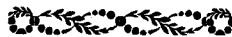
A man from Boston who has been reading Halliburton's books finds that his conceit is trying. His adventure was interesting, and, I think, showed good taste rather

than a surprising amount of boldness. . . . I still wish the poor fellow had not shrieked so much at the top of his voice, it's bad for the voice. Even after this recantation, I call the book the Vainglorious Adventure. . . . To point out Halliburton's exaggeration, take his swimming the Hellespont. My granddaughter did the same thing without any fuss at all. The whole book demands coloured glass and cotton in the ears.

Mrs. E. J. Swasey, of Riverside, Conn., writes that she is collecting the letters of her grandfather, Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll, for early publication. She will be grateful to persons who will send her any letters of his in their possession; the originals will be copied and promptly returned.

H. C. Chatfield-Taylor's admirable biography of Goldoni has appeared in an Italian translation by the distinguished scholar Edgardo Maddalena, Lecturer on Italian literature at the University of Vienna and Professor at the Royal Institute of Pedagogy, Florence. This is an honor to American scholarship and letters.

I recommend book-lovers and book-collectors to buy a copy of the first edition of Thornton Wilder's novel “The Bridge of San Luis Rey,” because it is certain to go up in price. Copies of the first edition of Robinson's poem “Tristram” (1927) have already gone up to nearly ten times the original value. Those who wish to know whether they have or have not a copy of the genuine first edition of “Tristram” can find out by looking at page 86, line 2. If it has the typographical error rocks for rooks, it is a copy of the genuine first edition.



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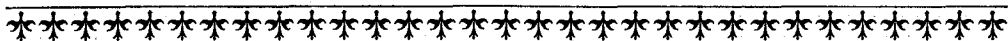




THE FIELD OF ART

# The Sculpture of Edward McCartan— The Winter Academy

BY ROYAL CORTISSOZ



SOME time before the year is out the people of New York will be looking at one of the most conspicuous sculptural decorations ever erected in the city. It is to take the shape of a gigantic clock, lifted sixty feet above the ground on the north façade of the towering New York Central Building in Park Avenue. The dial will be about thirteen feet high. The reclining figures supporting it, Transportation on one side and Industry on the other, will be nearly four times the size of life. A few symbolical accessories will be introduced into the more or less pyramidal composition, but this aims to be one of simple line and mass. Carved in limestone it will be decorative, but, as I have said, portentously conspicuous. Countless thousands will look up at it every day as they come down the avenue. They will note the hour. Also, I think, they will get an impression of beauty. The model promises that and there is good augury, too, in the previous works of the artist, Edward McCartan. This seems an appropriate moment in which to consider the origins and nature of his art.



He was born in Albany in 1879 and appears to have gravitated toward sculpture from his earliest years. He began to draw, instinctively, in childhood, and by the time he was ten years old he

had modelled in clay the figure of a lion. All through the period of his schooling these preoccupations continued and he was still in his teens when he came down to Brooklyn to embark upon his profession, entering Pratt Institute to study under Herbert Adams. An interlude ensued of brief employment in business, and then followed further training at the hands of George Gray Barnard and Hermon MacNeil, at the Art Students' League, which prepared him for three years in Paris. Injalbert was his master at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, but I gather that his attendance at this institution was of an intermittent character, hardly more important to him than constant visits to the Louvre and contact with antique and Renaissance sculpture. McCartan's French experience coincided with the resounding period in Rodin's vogue, and he shared in the prevailing enthusiasm for that master. He recalls especially the interest with which he observed the development of their patinas upon *Le Penseur* and *Les Bourgeois de Calais*, placed out in the open for the purpose near his own studio. But there is no trace of Rodin's influence in his work.

It was back in Paris, around 1908, that he made the first sketch for *The Kiss*, a marble of a mother and her child that stands in the Albright Gallery at Buffalo. But the modelling of this was not resumed until long after-