



As I Like It

By WILLIAM LYON PHELPS



Two words that are constantly being associated, compared, and contrasted, are Science and Religion. Among the large number of new books dealing with each and both, I particularly recommend "Science and Religion. A Symposium," with a Foreword by Michael Pupin. This handy volume of 175 pages contains twelve essays written by scientists and by clergymen; the discussion is candid and sincere. It is a fair field, not a free fight.

In fact, the courtesy shown by the leaders on both sides brings a note of admonition from Dean Inge, who, in the second paragraph of his contribution, says:

The danger now is that both sides may be a little too polite. "There is no longer," we are told, "any conflict between religion and science." If by religion we mean theology, and if by science we mean naturalism, this is not true. Theology and naturalism are both theories about ultimate reality. They are both inveterate poachers; theology cannot be content with religion, nor naturalism with science; and when they meet on each other's ground, or on no-man's-land, they are likely to fight.

These twelve essays are twelve radio talks given in Great Britain in the autumn of 1930. The object is "to determine . . . to what degree the conclusions of modern science affect religious dogma and the fundamental tenets of Christian belief."

To thoughtful men and women, this subject is more important than disarmament, reparations, or even prohibition. I do not see, considering the necessity of presenting clearly various points of view, and by men whose standing commands respect, how a better jury of twelve could have been empanelled.

They speak in this order:

Julian Huxley, professor of zoology.
Sir J. Arthur Thomson, biologist.

J. S. Haldane (*not* J. B. S.), mining engineer, physiologist, philosopher.
Bishop Barnes of Birmingham, Church of England Modernist.

B. Malinowski, professor of anthropology.

Dean Sheppard of Canterbury, fairly orthodox Christian minister.

Canon B. H. Streeter, Christian philosopher.

Reverend C. W. O'Hara, Catholic: professor of mathematics and astronomy.

Sir Arthur Eddington, professor of astronomy.

S. Alexander, professor of philosophy.
Dean Inge, dean of St. Paul's.

L. P. Jacks, editor of *The Hibbert Journal*.

There is naturally less of what the Christian means by religion in the first paper, by Julian Huxley, than in any of the others. But from the scientific point of view, Doctor Huxley, though not religious, is devout. His religion is the pursuit of truth, that is, truth as demonstrable and verifiable. "If religion will but abandon its claims to fixity and certitude (as many liberal churchmen are already doing), then it can see in the pursuit of truth something essentially sacred, and science itself will come to have its religious aspect. If science will remember that it, as science, can lay no claim to set up values, it will allow due weight to the religious spirit." The first of these two sentences will of course never be accepted by Catholics.

Sir J. Arthur Thomson says: "At the present climax of Science there is Reason triumphant; what then in the beginning? Here our straining at the limit of our intellectual endeavour brings us back perhaps to the wisdom of the old words:

In the beginning was Mind,
and that Mind was with God,
and the Mind was God.
All things were made by it;
and without it was not anything made that
was made.
In it was life
and the life was the light of men."

Later, he asks: "May science be helped by religion? Most of my scientific colleagues would answer with a thunderingly emphatic negative . . . as spur and as reins, religion may help science toward the amelioration of life. . . . What we are surest about is that we need *more* science and *more* religion—ever so much more."

Professor Haldane addresses his remarks to those religious people who have modified their faith in the light of science. He is emphatically against the materialistic or mechanical view of the universe. Here he is in opposition to Julian Huxley. He believes in God "within and around us as Personality of personalities." This scientific man is almost mystical; but his point of view will never be taken by Christian believers; for he says, "freedom and immortality remain: it is only individual freedom and immortality that have disappeared." This seems to me like assuring the unemployed that they should be comforted, because, although they individually have no money, there is plenty of money in the world. I dislike to restate so crudely a position that seems to Professor Haldane elevated and even inspiring; but I see no more in it.

Those who have regarded the Bishop of Birmingham as Antichrist will mod-

ify their views on reading his contribution. To be sure, he has no use for Fundamentalists. But the Bishop of Birmingham is a Christian. "Now, I, personally, believe that the Creator and Lord of the Universe is God, as Christ revealed Him. In Him are beauty and truth: He is the source of righteousness and peace. His kingdom is the realm where all these qualities exist in perfection. Further, I hold that, as Christ taught, man was created that, by struggle and service to God, he might enter the Kingdom of Heaven." It seems certain that the Master would have gladly accepted this man among His followers; it ought not to be more difficult to enter the Christian Church to-day than it was to enter the original company of disciples. The Bishop's creed is "I have found God, and I will try to follow Christ." It is an error to regard such a man as an enemy of the Christian religion.

Professor Malinowski is interesting and enlightening in what he says of primitive religions. Furthermore, although I admire the spirit in which all these essays are written and the men who wrote them, I find in this particular one an ideal honesty and candor. Professor Malinowski knows exactly what religion is, and he wishes with all his heart he had it. He cannot be satisfied with vague phrases. He *knows* that God and immortality are essential to religious faith. No statement could be clearer than his:

The two main sources of religious inspiration are the desire for immortality and a craving for the communion with God. In affirming this I find myself in opposition to most current theories. Professor Huxley, who gave such a masterly summary of current views, specifically told us that God and immortality play no part in primitive religion. But I find that these are the twin needs which we all feel, which man has felt from the beginning, whenever he has been unable to face his destiny. In

all this, religious belief is not a mere emotional effervescence, still less an intellectual interpretation. Religion promises immortality for man, and it reveals to him his God or his gods. It is this active or creative side of religion which seems to me to be the most important, and on which I have placed the greatest emphasis. . . . Religion makes man do the biggest things he is capable of, and it does for man what nothing else can do; it gives him peace and happiness, harmony and a sense of purpose; and it gives all this in an absolute form.

You will never find a more honest or a more devout agnostic, or one who realizes more fully what he has lost. He says:

Personally, I am an agnostic. I am not able, that is, to deny the existence of God: nor would I be inclined to do so, still less to maintain that such a belief is not necessary. I also fervently hope that there is a survival after death, and I deeply desire to obtain some certainty on this matter. But with all that I am unable to accept any positive religion—Christian or otherwise. I cannot positively believe in Providence in any sense of the word, and I have no conviction of personal immortality. . . . The proud answer of a confident atheist . . . does not ring true to the humble agnostic. . . . I should say that God is a reality and not a hypothesis, and a reality of which I am in the greatest need, though this need I cannot satisfy or fulfil. . . . Is science responsible for my agnosticism and for that of others who think like me? I believe it is, and therefore I do not love science, though I have to remain its loyal servant. . . . Because, through it all and above all, though I am unable to worship any Divinity, I have almost come to worship, certainly to revere religion.

This man is not far from the Kingdom of God.

Next comes the Dean of Canterbury, one of the most beloved men in England; his opening sentences are disarming.

I represent nothing higher than the untutored intelligence of the average man. . . . Science is not the primary interest of my life. My main interest is the Christian religion; by which I mean, Jesus Christ, His views about

God, and His Sermon on the Mount. . . .

But not all the blame for the conflict between Religion and Science rests upon those who profess and call themselves Christians . . . for some years now, it has seemed that the leading minds in the religious world have appreciated the scientist's point of view a good deal better than the scientists have appreciated theirs. . . .

My first business, it seems to me, as a learner, a student and a teacher of the Christian religion, is to continue seeking more and more earnestly to know, and to interpret to others, the mind of Christ. . . .

Surely we need not less religion or less science, but more religion and more science—and, above all, better religion and better science. . . . If, for instance, the leaders of science and religion came together before the nations of the world to proclaim that to use scientific discoveries for the purposes of the destruction of human life is at once a denial of true religions and the prostitution of science, would it not give an enormous new impetus to the cause of international peace?

Canon Streeter draws an interesting comparison between quantity and quality:

Religion, like science, is vitally concerned with truth, it endeavours to express an aspect of Ultimate Reality; but the truth about Reality, with which it is concerned, is a truth of quality rather than of quantity. . . . If, and in so far as, Christ is the ideal man, . . . His personality is a mirror in which can be reflected the *quality* of Reality—that is, the heart of the Infinite being . . . and if His character is at all an index of the character of God, then St. John was right when he wrote down, "God is Love."

Now when we come to the next paper, that written by the Reverend Professor C. W. O'Hara, a mathematician and a Catholic, I am reminded of what members of the Philosophical Society in Victorian England used to say. This company included scientists like T. H. Huxley, poets like Tennyson, priests like W. C. Ward. Other members, when these meetings began, observed that the faces of the majority seemed doubtful, anxious, uncertain; but that the faces of

the Catholic priests showed the calm that comes from inner certitude. Thus Father O'Hara's essay differs from the others in its *tone*.

Christianity appeals to the historical records contained in the New Testament, and asserts that these records are trustworthy, that the events there narrated did happen, even when judged by the severest scientific criticism. . . . Religion, then, is concerned with a set of facts regarding God, what God is in Himself and His relation to man; and concerning man, his origin, his main work in this world, and his future destiny. It therefore teaches with certainty the vital truths concerning man's development in this world in order that he may reach a final state of perfection. It cannot admit any alternative primary scheme, but it can and does admit subsidiary schemes that promote the happiness of mankind on earth. For example, it can tolerate kingdoms or republics. It can tolerate and encourage schemes for the improvement of the human race, but not those which, while caring for the body, do so at the expense of the immortal soul.

Sir Arthur Eddington is no less certain on the question of free will.

I think there is no longer any need to doubt our intuition of free will. Our minds are not merely registering a predetermined sequence of thoughts and decisions. Our purposes, our volitions are genuine; and ours is the responsibility for what ensues from them. . . .

We have within us some power of self-criticism to test the validity of our own convictions. The power is not infallible, that is to say it is not infallible when associated with human frailty; but neither is reasoning infallible when practised by our blundering intelligence. I think that this power can be nothing less than a ray proceeding from the light of absolute Truth, a thought proceeding from the absolute Mind. With this guidance we may embark on the adventure of spiritual life uncharted though it be. It is sufficient that we carry a compass.

Professor Alexander is opposed to theological dogma, and to creeds and to what he calls mythology. We need "some simplification of our religious notions"; he suggests that perhaps we might confine ourselves to the actual

words of "the last of the Hebrew prophets, Jesus, . . . before Paul reduced Christianity to a system of religious thought." But he believes in God.

God is not a symbol of the goodness in the world, but does presuppose goodness. Deity is a quality distinct from and superior to goodness or beauty or truth. I can be enthusiastic for beauty or truth, but I have no worship for them. . . . The mystics are right; we worship or love in God, not his goodness, but his godship or deity.

As Dean Inge steps to the radio, the atmosphere clears; his powerful personality clears it. It is absurd to call him the Gloomy Dean; he is one of the happiest men in the world. He should be called the Downright Dean. His words are as unmistakable as blows. His proof of religion is experimental. We find God by trying to live like Christ.

There are three stages in the spiritual life—faith, knowledge, and love. Faith is a venture, a resolution to stand or fall by the noblest hypothesis, a decision because right is right to follow right in the scorn of consequence. But what begins as an experiment ends as an experience. Our venture is found to work; more and more we learn to know Him on whom we have believed. And so the best men and women—not all of us, by any means—reach the third stage, described by Clement of Alexandria. The first change is from unbelief to faith; the second from faith to knowledge; and knowledge, as it passes into love, unites the knower with the known. He who has reached this stage is equal to the angels!

Dean Inge has written many fine sentences, but nothing better than *What begins as an experiment ends as an experience*.

Doctor Jacks sums up, reviewing the various speakers; "The speaker who stands out most conspicuously against unconditional surrender is Father O'Hara. He respects science; he desires to live on good terms with her; but he is not going to be dictated to."

At that point I range myself, in principle,

with Father O'Hara. I think there is a majesty in religion which forbids her to surrender unconditionally to science. She also has great victories to her credit, victories over suffering and death. . . . Between beautiful enemies there should be no surrender on either side.

After one has read and reread these twelve speeches, one should then reread the prefatory remarks by Professor Pupin; they are, as one would expect from such a man, words of wisdom, sincerity, beauty, and aspiration.

This is so important a book that I make no apology for using so much space. I hope my citations will cause many readers to buy it, for it should be read and kept and read again.

I have not seen elsewhere a discussion of religion by men of various points of view conducted with such a combination of earnestness and good temper. It is often said that men cannot argue about religion without becoming angry. Yet in this little book, although the men are playing for the highest stakes in the universe, they have both candor and calm. Perhaps a discussion on this subject and in this manner could take place only in England. No one tries to overstate his case; no one tries to be funny; no one tries to score off an opponent or to make a point for the sake of making it; the men are intellectual aristocrats, and reveal the best qualities of the cultivated Englishman—unaffected simplicity and complete self-control.

Willa Cather, in her new novel, "Shadows on the Rock," repeats the success she attained with "Death Comes for the Archbishop." in fact, I think she has surpassed her previous work. The two books have a certain resemblance in that they deal with Catholic communities, one in the hot country of the Southwest, the other in the snows of Quebec. But they have an even stronger resemblance in their method. Miss Cather is writing

deliberately outside of the typical American manner. Instead of producing a narrative with plot and emphasis and climax, her two latest novels are alike in their quiet and evenly sustained style. They are pictures and interpretations of simple and devout people, where one page is on a level with the next. There are no exciting moments but the interest is steadily maintained. We get to know and to love these men and women; we share their life. This is social history written with impeccable art. Those who are looking for a novel with a "kick" in it had better leave "Shadows on the Rock" alone. It is a book of healing, of quiet and refreshing beauty. There is a sympathy, a tenderness in these annals that one would not have suspected in the author of "A Lost Lady"; it is as if Dorothy Parker should write like Coventry Patmore.

I salute a new novelist—Elizabeth Hamilton Herbert—whose first book, "Happy Sinner," is clever and diverting. The various members of an American family are clearly presented; the story itself has interest; the style sparkles.

If one wishes to observe the difference between a French and a British point of view, one cannot do better than read in succession two books on the Brontës: "Three Virgins of Haworth," by Emilie and Georges Romieu, and "A Short History of the Brontës," by K. A. R. Sugden. The style of the former may be guessed by its title; the latter has a Foreword, where we read "people are beginning to write fanciful tales about them, some almost under the guise of fiction, others obviously inventing things that have neither evidence nor probability. It seemed then that there was possibly room for a slim, handy, frigid work, in which the details and events of the career of the Brontë family should be set

out in order, without much embroidery or many theories, but containing most of the information now available, given in due proportion."

The translator of the French book is Roberts Tapley, and I am surprised to see constantly the vulgarism "Reverend Brontë." One might as well speak of Excellency Hoover, Honorable Borah, Honor Walker, Majesty George.

Among the living and the dead, there are men and women whose intimate friendship would be a high compliment; but can you imagine a greater sign of respect or a nobler tribute than to have enjoyed the affection of Emily Brontë? Surely there never was a woman of higher intellectual integrity; her proud and sensitive soul showered its unreserved affection only on a dog. And the dog Keeper, like his mistress, was an uncompromising patrician.

An original novel of distinction is "The Flower of Life," by Thomas Burke, where the sorrows of a humble scrub-woman are depicted with transcendent beauty. I have not read a book that resembles this. It might so easily have been a naturalistic, meaningless record of degradation. But although the facts are given without flinching, there is the element of transfiguration. It is the dignity of defeat.

Lewis Einstein, American diplomat, has written an admirable book on a familiar theme—"Roosevelt, His Mind in Action." Mr. Einstein is an accomplished scholar in history and in literature. He is an ardent admirer of the famous President; but his admiration helps rather than hinders his powers of psychological analysis. This is an able and illuminating study of Roosevelt's mind and temperament; and there are many shrewd observations on American politics.

Among the new "omnibus" books, I am glad to see an illustrated "Omnibus Jules Verne," containing in English the following complete novels: "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea," "Around the World in Eighty Days," "The Blockade Runners," "From the Earth to the Moon and a Trip Around It," all making one well-printed volume of 822 pages, and not too heavy for comfort.

Another excellent reprint is one of the masterpieces of Francis Parkman, "The Oregon Trail," copiously illustrated by James Daugherty, and with an Introduction by Mark Van Doren. A tall, handsome book.

To all who love rivers and steamers, to all who love to read of the old days on both, let me particularly recommend "Steamboat Days," written by Fred Erving Dayton and illustrated happily by the late John Wolcott Adams. Steamboats, "America's grand passion," played a prominent part in the development of our country. Fifty years ago I used to travel from Hartford to New York by boat. In June 1881 I saw my first boat-race at New London, travelling thither from Hartford on the Steamer "Sunshine." I wonder how many Connecticut people know that in this year of grace 1931 a steamer leaves Hartford for New York every weekday, and that the Connecticut river scenery is enchanting?

I am still hoping to travel by boat from St. Paul to New Orleans. Rivers are more romantic than mountains.

Professor Joseph J. Reilly, whose *Life of Cardinal Newman* is excellent, has performed a fine service to Newman and to lovers of literature in making a handy volume of Selections, called "The Fine Gold of Newman." This was emphatically worth doing, and Doctor Reilly has done it well.

A tiny booklet of great significance is "Luke," by John A. Scott, professor of Greek in Northwestern University. The only two books in the New Testament not written by Jews are the Gospel of Luke and the Acts; their author is here portrayed in a decidedly interesting way. His personality and his peculiar characteristics, his special contributions to the most important period in human history are described. The average reader of this little treatise will learn many facts he ought to know.

An edition, limited to one thousand copies, of a Bibliography of Sir James M. Barrie, prepared by B. D. Cutler, should be quickly sold out. It includes all the American unauthorized editions, and the illustrations are as exciting as a collection of rare stamps. An interesting chapter is appended on "Prices and Price Trends" and there is an Index.

A superb limited edition of the Poems of Kipling, in three large volumes, has just appeared. The edition is limited to 525 sets for sale and twelve sets for publication. It was printed from type and the type has been distributed, so that no more copies can appear. The first volume contains Kipling's autograph. More than one-half of the edition has already been subscribed.

Murder stories that I will guarantee as genuine thrillers are "The Mystery of a Butcher's Shop," by Agnes Mitchell; "Black Buck," by L. C. Hopkins; "The Fourth Plague," by Edgar Wallace; "The Murder on the Bus," by C. F. Gregg; "Three Fishers," by F. Beeding; "Murder in the Air," by D. L. Teilhet; and "The Murder at Avalon Arms," by Owen F. Jerome; while the ingenious Mr. Oppenheim has written a novel to please himself. It is not a mystery story, but is fully as entertaining, and is called "Simple Peter Cradd." I hope it will not

fill middle-aged husbands with unpleasant ideas and vain desires.

Burns Mantle, the drama critic, whose volume, "The Best Plays of 1930-31," is so essential as a record of the theatre that it should be bought and not borrowed, gives as his choice of the ten best plays seen in New York last season:

1. "Elizabeth the Queen," by Maxwell Anderson.
2. "Tomorrow and Tomorrow," by Philip Barry.
3. "Once in a Lifetime," by Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman.
4. "Green Grow the Lilacs," by Lynn Riggs.
5. "Alison's House," by Susan Glaspell.
6. "As Husbands Go," by Rachel Crothers.
7. "Five-Star Final," by Louis Weitzenkorn.
8. "Overture," by William Bolitho.
9. "The Barretts of Wimpole Street," by Rudolph Besier.
10. "Grand Hotel," by Vicki Baum.

This is as near to an official list as we shall get. Mr. Mantle's own standing as a critic and his fairness in selecting from the choices made by others make his choice worthy of respect.

To me the best play of the season—quite superior to all the others—is "The Barretts of Wimpole Street." And I should submit for serious consideration among the first ten, "Mrs. Moonlight," "Philip Goes Forth," "The House Beautiful," and "That's Gratitude," though I should certainly include from Mr. Mantle's list his Numbers 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10. From September to July, I attended fifty-five dramatic and operatic performances, including two "Barretts."

The following members of a famous family joined the Fano Club on May 22: Doctor James ("Bill") Judd, Louise, Robert, Alice Judd, and Louisa Palmer, all of Honolulu. The picture is now in the Museum. The Church of San Agostino was damaged by an earthquake, and the picture was removed for greater

safety. There are so many members of the Judd family in Hawaii that I have been informed that in those islands the rain falls on the Judds and on the Un-Judds.

Isaac Don Levine, the accomplished author of "Stalin," a book which helps us to understand present conditions in Russia by giving a clear outline of the rise of the dictatorship, "this cornerstone of Sovietism," has received the following autograph note from H. G. Wells.

I've been wanting to form some picture in my mind of Stalin & your vivid book comes as a Godsend. Thank you.

From Joseph R. Dunlap, of Washington, Pa., who writes:

One morning a tramping of heavy feet outside the window awakened me and in the moment between sleeping and waking, I seemed to see a young man viewing an old man who was striding by, and I "felt" the lines

"The veins on his forehead were big and blue,
And he recognized the Wandering Jew."

Here is a cat story from Calipatria, Calif.:

Gus Laderer, a prospector, found "Smutt," then a tawny half grown kitten, killing rattlesnake No. 1 several years ago. Rattlesnake No. 1 was a small sidewinder, and he struck again and again at the agile "Smutt" until he grew tired. The cat then pounced on him and shook him to death.

Laderer said as years went on "Smutt" went into rattlesnake extermination as a life work, and grew so proficient at teasing the deadly reptiles that he worked with graceful abandon. Then he met No. 36, a doughty veteran with a dozen buttons.

"Over confident," Laderer said, "Smutt would jump back only a few inches out of the big fellow's reach as he struck. Once he didn't jump quite far enough—a glancing blow, which made Smutt pretty sick, but which I was able to treat."

Laderer avenged Smutt by killing No. 36, but he didn't save the rattlers for the cat's collection. "That wouldn't be quite fair," he said.

Miss Martha Roberta Bailey, of Philadelphia, a 14-year-old pupil in the Olney High School, sends me a cat story.

About ten years ago my parents owned a black cat, which my father trained to box. When it would be about time for my father to come home, the cat would sit by the door and as soon as he would hear the key in the door, he would stand on his hind feet ready to box. My father would get the gloves as soon as he had removed his hat and coat, and proceed with the boxing.

Daddy had taught him to use the upper cut, cross counter, and straight lead. The cat became so proficient at boxing, that my father exhibited him to the people of the neighborhood and to his close friends. The cat could do many other stunts, such as to climb a rope ladder, turn somersaults, and obey at beck and call.

It is possible that cats are natural boxers, for the same post that brought me the above letter brought also from Alex. G. Hamilton, of Chatswood, Australia, this note about a black cat who came and stayed:

He had a trick of sitting up on his hankers, as we say in the north of Ireland, and if a finger was poked at him, he boxed in approved pugilistic style, so we called him Jacky Johnson, on account of his color and fighting abilities. There was a large turpentine tree in the garden (a relative of our Eucalyptus) and one evening Jacky climbed to the top. But for some reason he was afraid to come down, and kept on calling to me for help. So I had to get a ladder and release him.

The only respect in which cats show any stupidity is their fear of coming down from a tree. They never run down head first like a squirrel, and they will not come down at all if at a great height. From a lower branch they will descend tail first; and it is the only case where they are awkward. You must never laugh at them when they do this; they know they are then ungraceful, and will not forgive ridicule.

When last June I had the pleasure of presenting at the Yale Commencement

the famous engineer John R. Freeman for the honorary degree of Doctor of Science, I remarked among other specifications that he was so absorbed in his work that he had a poor memory for faces. A newspaper (outside of Connecticut) by a typographical error of one letter, made me say that he had a poor memory for *facts*—a fine qualification for a man of science.

Doctor Freeman informs me that years ago a stenographer sent out his recommendation of a local bank, so that he stated that their "strong-box was overflowing with guilt-edged securities."

From Mrs. Katherine Britton, of Hollywood, Calif.:

When a resident of Eastern Pennsylvania, I heard a school-master, on adjusting a fire, say "Did you think I'd outen it?" Two women, neighbors, talking over a division fence were heard to say, evidently anent an attempted call, "Did you bell?" "Yes I belled," "Well it didn't make." A notice on a private house door in the same town read: "Bell don't make. Bump." Speaking of these peculiarities to a friend one day, he said, "Would you know what a man meant if you heard him say 'My off is all?'"—His vacation was over! In the West one hears the expression "the dog wants out" or the "dog wants in" and it is so common that it is used by people from whom one would not expect it.

Years ago a young divinity student had charge for the summer of our local church. On driving up the road in his buggy he offered, as was the custom, a "lift" to a native woman. Presently she indicated that she wished to alight. As he helped her down she thanked him, to which he replied, "Don't mention it." Sidling up to him lowering her voice, she said "I won't if you don't want me to!"

One afternoon last Spring, just before the final curtain in "Lohengrin," I heard a lady soliloquize—"When a woman wants a husband, a brother is pretty cold comfort."

A man's grandchildren are perfect illustrations of the "unearned increment."

A stenographer recently took down the expression "these our times" as "these sour times," and the revising orator decided to let it stand.

This summer I joined the noble army of authors who wrote the Works of Shakespeare. John Curtis, of the Charles Hopkins Theatre, writes that on the College Board Examinations, one of the candidates supplied the information that the play "As You Like It" was written by J. Lyon Phellups.

Books mentioned in this article are named below, with their publishers.

"Science and Religion," a Symposium. Scribners. \$1.75.
 "Shadows on the Rock," by Willa Cather. Knopf. \$2.50.
 "Happy Sinner," by Elizabeth Herbert. Farrar and Rinehart. \$2.
 "Three Virgins of Hawthorne," by E. and G. Romieu. Dutton. \$3.
 "A Short History of the Brontës," by K. A. R. Sugden. Oxford. \$1.75.
 "The Flower of Life," by Thomas Burke. Little, Brown. \$2.
 "Roosevelt: His Mind in Action," by Lewis Einstein. Houghton Mifflin. \$3.
 "The Omnibus Jules Verne." Lippincott. \$3.
 "The Oregon Trail," by F. Parkman. Farrar and Rinehart. \$3.
 "The Fine Gold of Newman," ed. Reilly. Macmillan. \$2.50.

"Steamboat Days," by F. E. Dayton. Stokes. \$6.
 "Luke," by John A. Scott. Northwestern Univ. Library. Fifty cents.
 "Barrie Bibliography," by B. D. Cutler. Greenberg. \$7.50.
 "Autographed Poems of Kipling." Doubleday, Doran. \$100.
 "The Mystery of a Butcher's Shop," by A. Mitchell. Dial. \$2.
 "Black Buck," by L. C. Hopkins. Little, Brown. \$2.
 "The Fourth Plague," by Edgar Wallace. Doubleday, Doran. \$1.
 "The Murder on the Bus," by C. F. Gregg. Dial. \$2.
 "Three Fishers," by F. Beeding. Little, Brown. \$2.
 "Murder in the Air," by D. L. Teilhet. Morrow. \$2.
 "The Murder at Avalon Arms," by Owen F. Jerome. Clode. \$2.
 "Simple Peter Cradd," by Phillips Oppenheim. Little, Brown. \$2.

An Affair of the Senses

(Continued from page 430)

quite believe her. André, when once he got an idea, was not easily dissuaded.

As the boat had arrived early it would be possible to reach Babwe that night. André bustled about among the porters seeing they lost no time shouldering their loads, occasionally slapping a face or striking a bare shoulder with his little stick. Tipoyes had been brought for himself and Céleste. When he helped her into hers he blushed a little and she too felt a certain excitement at his touch.

The chair was deep-seated and made comfortable with pillows. The bearers sang as they marched, their bare heels thudding on the clay of the path moulded as earth is only moulded by the tread of bare feet. The tall dim alleyways of the forest, hazy above with filtered sunlight, the play of light and shadow on the many-shaped leaves gave a pleasure she had never before felt. Although she would not let thoughts of Vermeersch come into her mind, a consciousness of him filled her luminously, as lamplight fills a room.

When they stopped by the side of the trail for lunch, André again began to talk about Van Praet: "You know this is going to mean something chic for us. The Babwe district is not enormous but to pass so soon from administrator to commissioner is excellent. It's a real piece of luck. I'm not of an age or length of service to expect the job of commissioner. This will advance us several years."

"What happened to Van Praet?"

"He is dying."

The boy who was waiting on them took away the plates and brought two large enamel cups of hot coffee. André was overflowing with good humor and contentment: "Oh, my angel, I am so happy to have you again! You don't know—you can't imagine—" The servant disappeared around the bend of the trail beyond which the porters rested beside their loads. André turned her face to his: "Céleste, you don't know how beautiful you are. So beautiful, so sweet." His face became grave. The expression reminded her of something but she couldn't think just what. He began to kiss her with a passion which, after a moment, she returned.

The wide veranda overlooking the river was a pleasant place to sit. It was a kind of

outdoor room running through the house, and under the high, thatched roof it was always cool. Skins were strewn on the stone floor and the heads and horns of buffalo and antelope hung on the walls. In front flowed the Babwe River, although it did not seem to flow but to stand still, a sheet of green-brown water where the forest hung upside down.

Céleste sat with some work in her lap but she was not sewing. Absently she watched a native canoe glide by, paddles dipping softly, swiftly. A naked old woman sat in the prow, a boy in the stern, and between them bright green sugar-cane was heaped. The canoe was as dark as their bodies.

She did not allow herself actually to think of Vermeersch. When she remembered all that, she was ashamed. How could such a thing have happened to her? And with a man like that. When she thought of herself in Brussels, of her father's house and her life there, it became simply incredible. It had not happened. No, she would not permit herself to think that it had or of him. And yet he was never absent from her. Often she wakened at night or in the early morning with a sense of him so real and living that she was filled again with the exact emotion she had felt on the boat. Again something large, releasing, vital enfolded her. Everything in the world was right. If it happened in the morning, she lay with closed eyes, shutting herself in with this awareness, which would disappear as soon as she was wide awake.

Except for these moments life plodded a flat and obvious route, never rising above everyday happenings, stupidities of the servants, bad food, André's calculations about the redistribution of posts, the occasional runner from Kundulu bringing papers or letters from home.

André did not like her periods of revery. He was jealous of them. If she lay dreamily after he got up he would say: "Well, well, are you going to stay in bed all day? Out here, you know, we work."

He dressed very precisely, stepping briskly about in his slippered feet and looking at himself in the glass. He desired her to breakfast with him and always talked about his work, in which he took a self-important interest:

"Therefore I said to the chief, 'you will bring only one wife and no musicians, and you will stand beside the compound gate all day, every day for six weeks.'" André rubbed his hands and chuckled: "And don't they hate to appear without their *impombu*! It kills them to leave their villages with only one wife and no music, just like any slave—instead of a chief. And standing in one spot all day in the sun, every day for six weeks, is no joke. No, no, they may not let us beat the big chiefs but we find ways to handle 'em."

"What had this chief done?"

"He was impertinent to me."

At other times André did not speak at all, but let it plainly be seen he was dealing in his mind with difficult and engrossing problems. His office was built off one end of the bungalow, and immediately after breakfast he withdrew to it to transact the business of the day. Often she could hear him shouting angrily and slapping faces with the palm of his hand or see a boy come reeling out from a blow on the chin. These were apt to be days when he was especially disturbed at not yet hearing from headquarters about his promotion.

Then one morning he had hardly gone to his office when he came hurrying back, rather pleasantly excited: "Look here, Céleste, here's a letter from Morel. He wants me to go to Joinville to see Louvois about that Forminière property."

Joinville—Louvois; these words roused such memories she could not trust herself to look at André.

"We ought," he added, "to start to-morrow morning at the latest."

"We?"

"Why, certainly, you're going, aren't you? You wouldn't like to stay here alone, I suppose."

"Why not?"

He looked at her doubtfully. The idea of leaving her at Babwe without his protection was a novel one to him. Formerly she had gone with him whenever he made a journey. "Don't you want to come?"

"I've been travelling so much lately."

She did not wish to go to Vermeersch's post. It had been, she now realized, a continuous and painful effort to keep him out of her mind, and that effort would only be made more difficult if she saw him again. Besides, what good would it do—if André were with her?

"I suppose it's safe enough here," André was saying, "with the soldiers and the capita. That way I can go and come more quickly."

"Will you be long?" she asked absently.

"Not very; I have to see Vermeersch, too." She did not speak.

"He's the administrator at Joinville. You don't know him."

She hesitated. "Why, yes, I do know him," she said at last.

"But he was in the Uele during our first term."

"I know. He was on the boat, though."

"What boat? From Stanleyville?"

"Yes."

"But you never spoke of him."

"What was there to say?"

"Very little good, at any rate. Was he drunk all the time?"

"I don't think he was drunk."

"Maybe he's had his come-uppances from somebody. Men like that have no place in the service nowadays. That kind of thing was all right in the frontier days, before we became a civilized colony, but it won't do now."

"Frontier," she murmured.

"What did you say? You're very queer this morning, Céleste. Do you feel all right?" He was suddenly anxious.

She picked up her embroidery frame and began to sew. She could feel his gaze upon her, and looking up caught his glance, now become admiring and affectionate. "Just the same I hate to leave you here," he exclaimed, "especially as you really don't seem quite yourself."

She tried to shake off her preoccupation: "Perhaps I am tired of you. Maybe I just want to get rid of you for a while!"

He laughed, pleased with the little joke. "Ha, ha, that's it, is it? Kiss me, you darling." And then, going back to the subject that interested him, he began to talk about Vermeersch. "No wonder he doesn't get his promotion, drinking like a fish—to say nothing of this business of black women. Though I must say he's no worse than a lot of others in that respect. They're all pretty bad." André having come out to the Congo a married man had no patience with that phase of colonial life.

She rose and walked to the veranda's edge. Black women—just an affair of the senses. André asked her some question but she did not hear. "Well," he exclaimed, a little piqued, "if you won't listen to me, maybe it's a good thing I am going to leave you alone."

Alone! If he were to come when she was alone! If she were to hear the song of the bearers and run out of the compound and see him striding along at the head of his safari, his long arms swinging—and André in Joinville! She smiled.

"You act as if you had some joke of your own," her husband complained.

"No," she said.

Six days passed and when at last she heard the marching song of the bearers she did not rush out to meet them. She knew it was André and she merely walked through to the opposite side of the veranda, where she could see them come up the path. André was in the lead, but when she called down to him he did not reply or, for the moment, look up. Then he raised his face and she was frightened. He was pale and his eyes looked as if he were coming down with fever. A porter ran past him with a load and André struck him ferociously with the rhino whip he liked to carry on safari. She heard the singing of the lash on bare flesh, saw the fellow stagger and fall back. But he was too well disciplined to cry out with the pain.

"André, are you ill?"

He only strode past her into the house, incapable, it seemed, of speech.

It is both sad and revolting to witness the entire revelation of another's anger and sorrow. Gossip, of course, had done its worst, and little by little she learned what he had heard and believed. Moreover, her own peculiar behavior, it seemed, the day when Vermeersch was mentioned, fitted in with the talk and made it less incredible to him than it would otherwise have been.

Vermeersch, then, had been her lover. She had been seen in his arms on deck and he had visited her room at night. The whole colony knew it. Her name had become a scandal and they were laughing at André from Joinville to Matadi. His rage and humiliation brought on strangling sobs from which Céleste averted her eyes. It was clear too that the most incomprehensible and shocking part of it all, the ultimate crucifixion to André, was that it should have been Vermeersch. That his wife could have disgraced herself and him with a man *like that* was above all else what he could not face. At times she thought he would strike her, at others almost feared he might kill her. And he ended by possessing her in angry despair.

That night long after he went to sleep she lay awake. When she had first heard what André told her she felt cut in two. Something began to hurt inside and she felt light-headed. It was like a blow in the stomach. At the same time it seemed to her it couldn't be, that it was not possible a thing so humiliating, so ridiculous should have happened to her. She

knew only too well the ferocity and malice of colonial gossip. There was so little to talk about. And she knew too how the esteem in which she and André held themselves, their propriety, would add to the relish with which the scandal would be told. Now she must take her place before them humbled, a different person from what she wished, believed herself to be. Now she was just another Walewska or Madame Louvois. Worse, because they had never been accused of anything so definite.

And yet—how unreal, how unjust. She took no credit to herself that he had failed to come into her room. That he had not done so was only an accident. The point was that what had happened to them was entirely different from what happened to other people. It was pure and beautiful, as removed as the stars from what it was represented to be when it was told with relishing guffaws around the Hindu's bar in Joinville. Ah, how could an experience looked at from the outside appear so different from what it really was—from what one felt inside!

The light in her room whitened. She could hear the crowing of roosters from the direction of the native village and the gentle morning music of the doves. Then a new idea came. What if this tale were told in Belgium? What if her parents with their limited and inflexible views were to hear it? And their friends?

The thought lifted her out of bed. She walked to the window. The river was smoking in the cold air of dawn, the sky above the forest clear as a pearl. For a moment the tension relaxed. Her common sense told her that both she and André were exaggerating. All this was nothing but a tempest in a teapot. The miserable scrap of gossip would not travel very far, nor be of interest very long. There was not enough in such a tale to keep it alive. If André could only realize that, too. She turned to look at him in bed. He was sleeping with a strained, frowning look on his face. He was not, she knew, the man to take a thing or leave it. He would not accept these accusations to the point of doing anything about them, nor would he agree to disbelieve and forget them. Her heart sank.

She took a folded blanket from the foot of the bed and went into a storehouse at the other end of the veranda where there was a cot. She wrapped the blanket around her and lay down on the mattress. Now she heard voices from the servants' quarters, smelled the morning fires. Then into the room filled with dawn twilight plunged a shaft of ruddy gold. Jubilant cacklings came from the forest. The rat-

tan mat hanging before the door lifted and she felt a puff of cool breeze on her face. Gradually the ruby reflections paled into the practical light of day and she went to sleep.

To her relief she did not see André next morning. He had retired to his office when she got up and had his luncheon there. In the afternoon, to escape him, she took a long walk along the river road. When she got back she found him on the veranda. He was sunk in a deep chair, his face buried in his hands.

She sat down without speaking. After a moment he dropped his hands and leaned back wearily. It occurred to her these dramatic attitudes must make it all a little easier for him to bear. He saw himself a wronged and tragic figure and at least some of his attention would be occupied in sustaining this gloomy rôle.

"Well," he said finally, "so you're back. I'm glad you feel there's nothing more important to think about than long walks."

"What do you mean, André?"

"What do I mean? Hasn't it occurred to you now why nothing is done about my promotion?"

She felt sick—so that was to come into it too!

"They aren't going to advance a man whose wife is mixed up in scandals. If I proposed to remain an administrator all my life, like some people, it wouldn't matter. But I had other ideas and I supposed you had. Quick promotion out here was only the first step. But jobs in the ministry and diplomatic service go to couples whose home life is irreproachable."

"So that's it, so that's it!" She almost shrieked the words. It was a relief to her to feel so angry. "Well, I tell you there is no scandal. Nothing has happened. The person who was seen at my door never came in. The idea of a malicious little story like that affecting official business is ridiculous. You're ridiculous."

The blood rushed into André's face: "The person who was seen at your door! Why was he seen at your door? What was he doing there? Your infatuation for him was the talk of the boat—for that debauched scoundrel. Oh, my God! And what about people seeing him kissing you on deck?"

She began to cry. She rocked back and forth in a very ecstasy of weeping.

"You tell me she lied," he shouted, "you tell me that. Swear to me that and then explain why this fellow was at your door at two o'clock at night. God! the thing is beyond believing." He walked back and forth talking, trembling with anger.

After this she began sleeping in the store-room. André did not like it but he could not ask her to return to him. Sometimes he came in and she wakened to find him standing beside her bed with his lighted candle in his hand. He was usually in pajamas and dressing-gown, his short black hair standing straight up on his head. She let him talk without interruption and he finally went away unappeased, and disturbed by her silence.

And now Céleste began to think incessantly about Vermeersch. It strengthened her to invoke his personality. His independence and force brought similar qualities to her. He must of course have heard the gossip and be terribly distressed for her. She thought, I could not have suffered more if he had been my lover, and from that she slipped into wondering in what way things would have been different if he had been. She thought there was something extraordinary in that sense of oneness that had come to them so soon, a mysterious bond. Breathlessly she allowed herself to remember their mutual passion and was consoled by the thought that he must now yearn for her as she did for him. Sometimes she turned toward the southwest where Joinville was and concentrating all her force sent him a message across the forest: "You must know I am thinking of you," she said, "answer me back." And she waited, hoping to hear with an inner ear some echo from him. But, of course, none came.

There had been a death in the village and she lay for a long time listening to the funeral din. It was not the organized chant and drumming of dance music but something wilder and more broken—furious cries, songs, a hectic drunken brawling with an undercurrent of some strange emotion she could not define. Then she saw a light wavering down the veranda. It was André, and he began talking before he came in:

"Look here, I don't like your sleeping here, especially to-night. You better come back to your room. It may be safe enough but I don't like it."

"I'm quite all right, I prefer it here."

He looked down at her and she could see he was not thinking of her lying there in her bed but of something else, something she suddenly felt, about which he hesitated to speak. Then he put his candle on a table and sat down on her bed. "You know, Céleste, I try not to be unjust. I know you feel badly about this, too. I would be different if I could, but you must admit it's only natural—" He broke

off as if determined not to go into the cause of his discontent again. At least not now. Although she could no longer see his face very well, she was more than ever conscious of that double train of thought, for André, like most devious persons, was exceedingly transparent.

Then he put his hand on hers. She thought there were tears in his eyes: "I am unhappy," he said.

She knew that in saying this he was sincere. Poor André! She was sorry for him and for herself, for everything that had so inexplicably happened. And yet nothing flowed from her heart to him. She saw his side but with no feeling for him. He took away his hand.

"The point is"—he broke off—"I am willing to believe those women were lying. Indeed, it is easier to disbelieve such a story than to believe it. I don't know that I ever actually believed it—" Again he paused. "But the point is we can't have such talk going about. We can't have it."

Yes, he had something in mind. More was coming but she could not imagine what it might be.

"We've taken this thing as if we were nobodies—and we're not. The thing to do is to put these common people in their place."

A vague fear spread through her. The only course, she knew, was to let this small flare-up of malice die out of its own unimportance. But she realized that about everything touching him, the figure he cut before the world, his ambitions, no argument was possible. He was talking without looking at her:

"Now, the obvious thing is to write to your uncle, the Minister of Colonies. You can tell him you think he ought to know that one of his officials made you the object of unwelcome attentions on the boat and that in a moment of drunkenness this man attempted to force his way into your room. You can explain that your unwillingness to be friendly with the other women made enemies of them and they were only too glad to—misrepresent the incident." André was talking in his official manner, with flourishes, and he did not look at her. "You will add that you would feel badly if this er—unfortunate gossip were to reach your family in Brussels, that you even feared it might be unfavorable to my career. And that you are writing him the truth so he will see the innocent do not suffer instead of the guilty."

So that was it. That was what he had devised. He knew perfectly well that if this had been the truth she would have told him in the beginning. It was a lie but it offered a way out

so advantageous that he had already begun, she saw, to believe it. On the basis of this story he no longer had cause for jealousy, their relations would be automatically restored, and at the same time he could ruin Vermeersch, whom illogically he would continue to hate as he had never hated any one or anything before.

". . . That will teach these colonial ladies to watch their tongues. And it is not likely to do M. l'Administrateur de Joinville much good." He smiled involuntarily, the sharp smile that rises from bitter satisfactions. He rose, pulling his robe about him. Evidently he was not going to give her any time for argument. "In fact," he added, taking his candle, "I have written the letter for you. All you need do is to copy it in your own writing. The runner will wait till afternoon to take it to Kundulu." Bending over he looked into her face with a strange expression. Was it malice?—triumph?—uncertainty? For the first time she felt André harbored thoughts at which she could not guess.

"Until to-morrow, ma chérie," he called back, almost gayly, as he went out.

They were facing each other at breakfast. The rains had begun and a solid sheet of water drove down slantwise, falling upon the ground with such force that it was flung back and a cloud of spray rose everywhere from the earth. The river hissed and boiled under the lashing and the forest rocked its treetops despairingly. Nothing as yet had been said about the letter she was expected to write. André had assumed his self-absorbed, important air and Céleste postponed speaking as long as she could. Then the half-naked figure of the courier from Kundulu was seen running down the alley of palms that led to the house. As he ran he crouched forward holding a woven mat over his head. The soldier escorted him onto the veranda and he stood respectfully in one corner, the water trickling down his bare chest and long brown legs.

André opened the mail-sack. The rain stopped as suddenly as it had begun and the noise of falling water gave place to a fresh and sylvan silence. The sun looked out brightly and turned pools and great hanging drops to crystal. And one by one little birds began to chatter softly. Then she saw André fall upon a certain letter. He had not, however, read more than a few lines when he shouted something in a voice so shrill and unlike his own that she looked at him in terror. He read on, his hand trembling, his lips uttering—"Yes, ah, that's it"—ejaculations of which he seemed

unaware. Suddenly he jumped to his feet, upsetting his chair and stood glaring down at her. "There, there," he gasped, as if it were all he could do to get the words out of his closed throat, "read that!" He flung the letter down before her. "You—I"—then he thrust his face close to hers—"I'd like to kill you." And, as if he could only escape the temptation by fleeing from her, he rushed from the veranda.

Céleste, unnerved by the strain of the past weeks, began too to tremble and the words before her danced so that it was some moments before she could read what was written. One sentence in particular, in which she saw the name of Vermeersch, she felt she would never be able to decipher. Then, confusedly, she began to gather the meaning. The promotions had come and André had been entirely passed over. Morel was made commissioner of the large district of Joinville, and Vermeersch had been given the job André had expected. He had been made commissioner of the Babwe district, with headquarters at Kundulu, and was, of course, André's chief.

Terrible, of course, this was for André. But it was so much less frightening than the vague fear she had felt when she saw Vermeersch's name that she felt only relief. Moreover, anybody but an insane person could see these promotions were the natural ones. But on this subject André was not sane. What the outcome would be she could not imagine. Just now, she couldn't keep her mind on André. She could think of nothing but the fact that Vermeersch was coming to their district. And the certainty filled her that he had brought about this transfer himself. *He had come here to be near her.*

She swept from the veranda onto the terrace. The sun was blazing and she felt its familiar heat on her flesh like the hot breath of something alive. The river glittered like gold. The rich foliage draping the compound flaunted a violence of green all washed and spangled and reflecting the blue of the sky. In such a world what was there to think of but joy and love?

Then she heard André's voice. He was standing on the porch shouting to her and holding something in his hand. He would not come out because he had not got on his helmet and was afraid of the sun. She turned and walked away from him down to the river.

But André found his hat and followed her. He held in his hand the letter he had written to the Minister of Colonies. He began to talk excitedly about intrigues and plots hatching against him—careful to blame her for nothing. She understood why. What he had written to

her uncle he must seem to believe. It was evident, he declared, that some deep design was afoot to make him ridiculous and ruin him. But he would stop all that and he reminded her that the runner was waiting to take her copy of his letter to Kundulu.

"Come," he urged. He put his hand on her arm.

She shook him off, feeling suddenly outraged at his touch. "Well, that letter," she cried out, "that letter—I'm not going to write it, I tell you. I'm not going to write it."

Their eyes met and they looked at each other like enemies, secret, bitter enemies who have come face to face for the first time. Coldness, hate—what were these forbidding aspects of their souls, not known before? The eyes she looked at she felt she had never seen. Nor did her own eyes belong to her but to some unknown woman. Coldly they stared at an André who had become merely an ugly, ridiculous, and tiresome little stranger.

Was there something in the violence of that moment which enabled him to read her thought? At any rate he suddenly gave up. He turned and walked quickly to the house. She watched him go. His white drill suit hung loose, his shoulders sagged, the cords on his thin neck stood out under the weight of his head held high. Unexpectedly pity for him overtook her. She felt sad enough to die. Poor André, poor fellow! She wanted to call out, to be tender, to console him. But she could not quite do that either. She hated André—and she cared for him too. She was no longer his, but she was not free from him. He was her husband, the person who in all the world, until recently, had been closest to her. Marriage. At that moment life seemed complicated to her beyond anything she had ever dreamed.

She heard nothing now about official matters. She did not know what changes had yet been made or anything at all about Vermeersch. The rains evidently had started too soon because, after a few abandoned downpours, the sun shone continuously. When she went out in it in her helmet and carrying her green-lined umbrella, the sun seemed to crush her to earth. Her only solace lay in thinking about Vermeersch. Everything in the world was different because he had made the definite move toward her of getting himself appointed to their district. It was all he could do and she looked upon it as a priceless avowal.

One morning André's boy brought his tin travelling boxes from the storeroom and the

signal drum began sending out a call for porters. She asked him nothing and he made no comment until next day when he was about to set out: "I am making a tour of inspection."

"When will you be home?"

"I don't know."

Was he going to Kundulu? Had Vermeersch come there yet? Was Vermeersch going to make his survey with him? André, probably guessing how anxious she was to know these things, told her nothing. Discreetly, after he left, she questioned the courier who had come that day. From him she learned that Vermeersch was in Kundulu and that André's tour was taking him in the opposite direction.

Looking at the runner she thought: He comes and goes so easily. It is not far to Kundulu. And yet I am a prisoner. I never go away from Babwe. Day after day, month after month I am here. I have nothing to do, nothing to think about. I have no one to speak to, not even André. I think, think, think, always the same thoughts. I am always lonely, tormented by André's bad humor. Suddenly her life seemed insupportable. It seemed she could stand it no longer. A feeling of panic, long suppressed, rose in her: I shall go mad, I'll die, I can't stand it. And Kundulu so near!

The thought of Kundulu rooted itself in her mind. Anything, anything for a change. Just to see faces, trees, houses she did not see every day. But of course it wasn't that. It was Vermeersch. It seemed to her if she could see and talk to him, if it were only once, only for a few moments, it would give her such happiness she could have courage to go on. If she could tell him how unhappy she was, how much she cared for him, hear from him how much he cared for her, everything would be all right. She could never see Vermeersch alone if she went to Kundulu with André. Thus it became quite plain that she must take advantage of the opportunity and go now, regardless of consequences. She would leave the next morning and return the following day. No baggage, only a tipoye and bearers. For some reason she felt convinced André would not return before the end of the week.

Céleste, her hands folded in her lap, kept smiling and looking at her plate, on which was a scrawny leg of fowl covered with pinfeathers and a bad-smelling red sauce. Sometimes too she looked around the dreary bedroom of the inn as if there were something interesting to see and she had just come in—although she had been there two hours.

Then she rose absently from her untouched tray of food and began walking back and forth.

She felt very light; it seemed as if she weighed nothing at all. Her lips kept smiling a little and once or twice she said something out loud—after all, or well, really, I don't know—and did not finish the phrase. Her mind was confused, crowded with thoughts that stifled each other, but happy, excited thoughts. At last, at last! She had needed his strength so badly, needed so badly after those hard months to see the man of her heart, to rest in his love and understanding. The tears rushed into her eyes. She saw them meeting again on that ideal plane of which she had dreamed, where each recognized the other through all that was pure and lofty in their hearts.

The house of the district commissioner stood on a little hill above the river. A short drive led to it from the road along which the straggling village of Kundulu was built. She knew the place, having called there with André during Morel's term. When she turned into this drive she could see a light burning in the house above. It shone brilliantly behind the dark trees, and here and there a ray penetrated the foliage and struck across the path. The drive led to a terrace before the house and she saw that the light came from a gasoline lantern burning on a back veranda. Beside it a native soldier sat sleepily on guard, his spiked gun beside him. Everything else was dark. The rest of the house and the trees rising above it were just a black mass cut out of a sky sharp with stars. Her footsteps made no sound and the soldier did not rouse himself till she spoke. Then he sprang up and saluted, rolling brilliant, startled eyes.

"I have come to see the B'wana; is he home?"

The man stared at her a moment, then turned and shuffled along the veranda. Before a wooden shutter he stooped and spoke in a low voice. There was an answer she could not hear; then, as the boy turned away, Vermeersch's voice called some further order. The black took up his lantern and led her to a porch room at the end. It was strewn with wicker chairs and tables and there were one or two lamps with shades. She wished the boy had lighted one of these and taken away his unpleasantly bright light.

As she waited she could hear some one moving in the room beside the porch. Her cheeks burned and her hands were cold. Dank airs rose from river and forest, and made her shiver. Nearby a bird or animal repeated over

and over a clear cry, neither sad nor gay, that sounded like a child's whistle, or the whistle of a locomotive heard a long way off. Then the door opened, slippered feet came slap-slapping over the tiled floor, and Vermeersch stood in the doorway. He had pulled trousers and a uniform coat over his pajamas, and his face wore the dazed, rather unwilling look of a person just roused from sleep. She had risen, her eyes were shining, a smile seemed to curve from some unknown depths inside her and irradiate her lips. Faintness was about her heart. When he should see who it was!

"Mr. Vermeersch"—she felt herself move, float toward him—"it is I." Now she was near him, before him, within reach of his arms. He stared down at her:

"My God! Yes, yes, yes. I was wondering who it could be." He did not put out his arms but his hand and he shook hers, still looking at her in the same surprised way. They exchanged a few perfunctory remarks.

The smile remained on her lips, but she was suddenly aware of herself standing on Vermeersch's veranda, and it seemed to her she was standing in an awkward position with a queer expression on her face. There was something she had planned to say to him. It was to have been a joke. And now, feeling it was no longer what she wanted to say, she said it: "You have forgotten me."

"No, no, no, not at all." He glanced over his shoulder at the door he had left open and went back and closed it. One of the shutters of a window that opened from the bedroom on his side was ajar and he pulled a chair against it. "Now, then, yes, won't you sit down, madame?" She sat down with the bright lantern light troubling her eyes. He lighted a cigarette, making a shield before his face with his large, well-shaped hands, then sent out a puff of smoke and dropped into a chair that creaked under his weight. "Everything all right at Babwe?" But he did not wait for an answer. "I have been wanting to see your husband but I've hardly got settled. I only moved in the first of the month." He glanced at her, then looked away. "Is he, your husband I mean, in town to-night?"

André, he was talking about André. "No." She patted her lips with her handkerchief and then patted her hair. She was conscious of sitting very straight and of her eyes fastened on him. And now it seemed that an explanation was to be made. In spite of her confusion she managed to say: "I was in Kundulu. I knew you had been made our district commissioner, and as we were fellow travellers——"

"Of course. I remember. I remember that time. It was on the trip from Stanleyville." He seemed glad to be able to show he remembered which journey it was.

"Yes," she said.

"The damnest trip, too, that was. You know we got stuck? Yes, four days on a sand-bar. The suffering was intense, ho, ho, ho! Not a drop of liquor left in the bar after the first night."

She laughed too. But she had begun to hear the river. A low, continuous murmur, and the great Congo could be divined, rather than seen, a void in the darkness, down there below the bank. Vermeersch was talking about the sand-bar and the trouble they had had getting off, but she was able only to catch the drift of what he said, enough to say things herself once in a while—to say what was necessary. But listening too to the river. Unhurried, unresting—who had used those words? On it flowed through the quiet, savage forest to the sea. The river gave her courage. Suddenly she blurted out: "The time has seemed very long since that journey."

"Well, now, that shouldn't be." He was wider awake now, he was beginning to be himself. "Why has it seemed long?"

If he could ask her that, what was there to say? "I don't know."

He laughed. "Then, it can't be very serious, can it?"

She felt his glance on her hair, her throat, her bare arms, felt it slip down her body, appraising her feet even, in their satin slippers. She looked up and met his eyes. The blood rushed away from the pit of her stomach, leaving a faintness there. How to explain the power they had upon her. He got up and opening a cupboard took out a bottle of brandy: "Will you have some? Not a drop? No?" He poured himself a small tumblerful. He laughed the indulgent laugh he reserved, she knew, for women, and then, sitting down beside her, he began to say nice things to her, things he might have said to any stranger, to any indiscreet—and pretty—woman who came to his house alone. She closed her eyes.

He took her hand, and when she did not draw back he began passing his fingers up and down her bare arm. Along with the pain in her heart a reeling sense of giving up, a terrible yielding that drew every part of her.

"I had forgotten," he murmured, "about little Babwe. No, no, if I had remembered I shouldn't have been so sorry to leave Joinville."

Words slowly sinking into her conscious-

ness, little by little, like waste objects, not too heavy, drifting down through water. "So sorry," she repeated, "to leave Joinville!"

"Well, yes." He let go her hand to finish his brandy. "Of course one doesn't refuse promotions when they're thrust on one. But I liked Joinville—no better hunting in the whole colony." He poured himself another drink, still talking about Joinville.

She did not hear him. Joinville—not his desire that he had left there but against it. And Babwe he had forgotten. Her hand was once more in his. He had raised it to his mouth and was kissing the palm. She could feel the softness of his lips, the delicate scratching of his mustache, his breath on her palm and wrist. Faintness seized her. She struggled to her feet. Vermeersch looked up at her in surprise.

"I must go," she said.

"Go?"

"Yes, it's late. I only wanted—" She broke off. What had she not wanted!

It was plain he had no idea what to make of her and that he was both a little angry and, or so she imagined, a little relieved. "Well, well, as you prefer, of course." He dropped her hand and lighted a cigarette. Now she felt lucid and hard:

"I am sorry I disturbed you so late." Her voice was polite. She smiled, looking at an antelope skin under her feet.

"Not at all." He rose. "I'll walk with you to the end of the drive. It wouldn't do, I think, to go clear to the hotel. People talk, damn them."

"They have already talked," she said brazenly.

"By God, that's a fact." He laughed, but in a perfunctory way. It was clear he was puzzled by her coming, her going, her attitude. But he went on talking about the gossip. "Those two damned women, Louvois and the other. They did say something. But that's all forgotten. I had forgotten it myself. Well, dear young lady, since you insist on going, to my deep regret—"

He picked up the lantern and she thought she saw him stifle a yawn. She had never felt hate before and now it filled her to the brim, wrung, exhausted her. Hate for him and pity for herself. Vermeersch preceded her across the veranda. A sudden wind blew up from the river with a rustling of leaves and creaking of hinges and she saw the naked arm of a native girl reach out of the window of Vermeersch's bedroom and pull the shutter to.

It was cold in her stone-floored room and

the candles were burned down to their sockets. The long letter on which she had been furiously at work was finished. It was a more convincing, ingenious and ruinous affair than the letter André had written. When it was done she read it over carefully. Her uncle was fond of her and he had a great regard for the moral tone of the service. Yes, the letter would do a satisfying amount of harm. She blew out the candles and got into bed.

But although she got into her bed she could not sleep. Her excitement had mounted to a pitch where excitement itself, even pain, were almost pleasurable. She felt outside herself, unreal and taut as a wire. And now, in the dark, things began to seem different. Vermeersch was before her. She saw him as clearly, no, more clearly than she had seen him a while ago in his house. She heard his voice—never was a man's voice so pleasing. Then a thought pierced her. Why had she come away? Why had she not stayed with him? The reasons that had brought her away seemed all at once puerile and lifeless.

Her face was burning, her heart beating fast. She found herself sitting on the edge of her bed, and after a moment she began to walk back and forth, or sat down sometimes on a chair. Sometimes too she held the candle to the mirror and looked at herself. Her eyes had never been so big and round and bright. He had always admired her eyes. Why had she not stayed? When she was tired walking she got back into bed. But when she tried to sleep, pictures kept flashing before her and troubling her. There was a fair with everybody whirling on carousels and wheels and the air full of balloons. There was a train passing, there were men dancing in an empty square. Or some face she had never seen, a dreadful face with supernatural eyes, looked suddenly into hers. Sometimes she got up and walked again. After a time that seemed neither long nor short, that did not pass at all, she knew it was morning. She must sleep, she must try again. And although she felt as wide awake as ever when she lay down, undoubtedly she did sleep, for when she next opened her eyes André was in her room.

He was standing by the table reading a letter. She stared at him, trying to realize his presence and what had happened. Then it came to her what the letter was he was reading. She laughed out loud. She sat up in bed and began to laugh in this queer loud way. André looked up from the page, but she saw that his eyes were full of the words in the letter and that he scarcely saw her. He was so

absorbed he did not even notice how she laughed. He nodded and smiled, showing his satisfaction with what she had done and, with the smile on his lips, returned to the page.

André and the table slid away and away till he looked as small as a doll standing on the farther edge of the great gulf that had opened between them. She was alone on her side, not even Vermeersch was with her. For the first time in her life she was completely alone. She saw this in a way that was more than a thought, more than a vision. She saw it as a truth and forever.

André, away off, was fluttering something at her. The letter. So that was what she was capable of! Last night if she had stayed, would she have written it? No. But she knew, this morning, she couldn't have stayed. You couldn't be different from what you were. And she was glad she hadn't. Just an affair of the senses—well, that was not enough. Perhaps because she was a woman. Or maybe for some other

reason. Anyhow, she was glad it was not enough.

He was talking. She listened carefully as one listens to a voice one has difficulty in hearing and gathered that she was to take the letter and add something—oh, a very little thing, André had thought of. He put the sheets in her hand, still talking. She felt the paper in her fingers and began tearing it into little pieces. And tearing the paper she had to cry out to André: "I went to his house last night. I couldn't live any longer without seeing him. He was with a Mangbetu girl. He had forgotten me." Then she began to sob.

André, beside himself, was so outraged he filled the room with noise. She lay back, still crying. Vermeersch cared nothing for her. André would never forget what she had told him or forgive her. For years he would remember and feel like this. But she said to herself, It had to be. And she knew there was something in it she would not have been without.



I Shall Walk To-day

BY GRACE NOLL CROWELL

I SHALL walk to-day upon a high green hill,
I shall forget the walls and the roofs of the town;
This burden, strapped to my back, shall be unloosed,
And I shall leave it there when I come down.

Warm is the hill upon which I shall walk to-day;
Gold is the sun upon the close-cropped grass,
And something of the peace of grazing sheep
Shall permeate my being as I pass:

Something of the look within their eyes
Of upland pastures, and of clean wind blown—
The tranquil, trusting look of those who know
A shepherd watches, I shall make my own.

And I shall gather the little wind flowers there,
And press their sweetness upon my heart to stay,
Then I shall go back to the walls and the roofs of the town,
Stronger than I have been for many a day.