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BLAST

WAR NUMBER



JULY
1915.

WINDHAM
LEWIS



BLAST 2

BLAST 2

Edited by

WYNDHAM LEWIS

Black Sparrow Press Santa Barbara 1981

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This second number of BLAST was crudely typeset and letterpressed at
minimum expense by a London job printer. However the bold rough-hewn
type, broken letters and uneven inking only add to the powerful
typographical effect. The present publisher has chosen not to clean up or
refine the original version in any way.

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BLAST

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EDITORIAL.

BLAST finds itself surrounded by a multitude of other Blasts of all sizes and descriptions. This puce—coloured cockleshell will, however, try and brave the waves of blood, for the serious mission it has on the other side of World-War. The art of Pictures, the Theatre, Music, etc., has to spring up again with new questions and beauties when Europe has disposed of its difficulties. And just as there will be a reaction in the Public then to a more ardent gaiety, art should be fresher for the period of restraint. Blast will be there with an apposite insistence. Art and Culture have been more in people's mouths in England than they have ever been before, during the last six months. Nietzsche has had an English sale such as he could hardly have anticipated in his most ecstatic and morose moments, and in company he would not have expressly chosen. He has got here in rather the same inflated and peculiar manner that Flaubert is observed to have come side by side with Boccaccio and Paul de Koch.

We will not stop talking about Culture when the War ends !

With this rather sinister reminder of responsibilities being incurred, we may pass to this War-Number.

Germany has stood for the old Poetry, for Romance, more stedfastly and profoundly than any other people in Europe. German nationalism is less realistic, is more saturated with the mechanical obsession of history, than the nationalism of England or France.

This paper wishes to stand rigidly opposed, from start to finish, to every form that the Poetry of a former condition of life, no longer existing, has foisted upon us. It seeks to oppose to this inapposite poetry, the intensest aroma of a different humanity (that is Romance) the Poetry which is the as yet unexpressed spirit of the present time, and of new conditions and possibilities of life.

Under these circumstances, apart from national partizanship, it appears to us humanly desirable that Germany should win no war against France or England.

When we say that Germany stands for Romance, this must be qualified strongly in one way. Official Germany stands for something intellectual, and that is Traditional Poetry and the Romantic Spirit. But unofficial Germany has done more for the movement that this paper was founded to propagate, and for all branches of contemporary activity in Science and Art, than any other country. It would be the absurdest ingratitude on the part of artists to forget this.

More than official Germany, however, stands for Romance. The genius of the people is inherently Romantic (and also official!). We are debtors to a tribe of detached individuals; and perhaps Romance (but we hope not too much). It is for this reason that of those two figures,—our Genial and Realistic Barbarians on the one side, and the Champions of melodramatic philosophy, on the other, we dispassionately prefer our own side!

I hope that so far, partiality has not "pierced" or percolated too much.

We have all of us had so much cause for uncomfortable laughter at the beginning of the War in reading articles by our leading journalists proving that "the Hun" could only see his side of the question, that this was the peculiarity of "the Hun," whereas other races always saw with their neighbours' eyes and in fact were no race at all, that we have become rather shy on this point.

Germany, in the things of the spirit, was long ago subjugated by France, as a slight acquaintance with her best young gentlemen will convince anybody. But she still mysteriously holds out in the material and political domain; (commerce the key to this enigma, of course.)

It is commonly reported that the diplomatic impossibility of a visit to Paris, from time to time, darkens the whole life of the Kaiser. The German's love for the French is notoriously "un amour malheureux," as it is by no means reciprocated. And the present war may be regarded in that sense as a strange wooing. The Essential German will get to Paris, to the Cafe de la Paix, at all costs; if he has to go there at the head of an army and destroy a million beings in the adventure. The monstrous carnival of this race's thwarted desires and ambitions is what 1914 has sprung upon us, without any really fundamental issues being involved, and yet the absolute necessity to resist and definitely end this absurd aggression from the centre of Europe.

We are, in a certain sense, then, up against such a figure—namely that of the fantastic arrogance of a Prussian officer engaged in an amorous adventure. The Martinet and the Coquette are mingled. He is also a Samurai.

This anyhow, is the Commis Voyageur, and accredited personal figure that Germany's obscure commercial forces have engaged (because of his distinguished, frank and alluring manners), to represent them, and whom they have incidentally armed very thoroughly.

Copies may also be obtained from—
"BLAST," 4, Phené Street, London, S.W.

NOTICE TO PUBLIC.

1. The delay in the appearance of the second number of "Blast" is due to the War chiefly; secondly, to the illness of the Editor at the time it should have appeared and before. But as this paper is run chiefly by Painters and for Painting, and they are only incidentally Propagandists, they do their work first, and, since they must write about it afterwards. Therefore the Review of the London Vortex may not always appear to date, but two further numbers will probably come out before next January.
2. In the déménagement of "Blast" from its offices in Ormond Street certain papers, unfortunately, were lost, and several addresses of yearly subscribers cannot be found. Should any yearly subscriber (that is, under present conditions, a person entitled to four numbers of "Blast") not receive a copy of the present number, we should be much obliged if he would send a postcard either to John Lane and Co., Bodley Head, Vigo Street, London, or to "Blast," 4, Phené Street, London, S.W., and a copy will at once be forwarded him.
3. Correspondence from Readers will be printed in the next number.
4. Because of the year's lapse since the last number of "Blast" appeared, and seeing also that for some months now it has been out in book form, Mr. Hueffer's novel "The Saddest Story" will not be continued. We deeply regret that circumstances have prevented us from printing the whole of this admirable story, which in its later portions is, if anything, finer than in that early part we printed.

We may draw attention to the fact that Mr. Hueffer has produced a "Blast" of his own in his book on the German spirit, "When Blood is their argument."
5. We have subscribers in the Khyber Pass, and subscribers in Santa Fé. The first stone in the structure of the world-wide reformation of taste has been securely laid.
6. The next number will contain :—
 1. Notes from the Front by Wyndham Lewis.
 2. Poems and a story by Ezra Pound.
 3. Poems and Vortices by J. Dismorr.
 4. War Notes by Wyndham Lewis.
 5. Reproductions of Drawings and Paintings by Dismorr, Etchells, Gaudier-Brzeska, Kramer, Roberts, Sanders, Wadsworth, Wyndham Lewis.
 6. Continuation of the Crowd-Master.
7. An Exhibition is at present being held at the Doré Galleries, Bond Street, of the Vorticiest Group. It will end about the second week in July.



Island of Laputa.

Sanders.

THE GOD OF SPORT AND BLOOD.

A fact not generally known in England, is that the Kaiser, long before he entered into war with Great Britain, had declared merciless war on Cubism and Expressionism. Museum directors, suspected of Cubist leanings, were removed from their posts. Exhibitions that gave shelter to Pablo Picasso or even Signac, were traitorous institutions.

I expect among his orders to his troops is one to "spare no Cubist prisoners, wounded or otherwise."—I am not implying that this should be a bond of sympathy between the British Nation and Cubists or Vorticists. I only mention it as an interesting fact.

This good Emperor smells the Divine, the Sober and Sheet-Iron puritanism underneath these art-manifestations, and he feels his trade would suffer. What would happen to me, he thinks, if all that chilly severity, and gay and icy violence, got the upper hand; Na! We'll nip that in the bud!

No one can say the Germans are not amusing in their sport. The English have their innocuous little sports; the German has his old war, of course. "It is not cricket," we will admit. They are inclined to gouge out people's eyes preparatory to bowling, to prevent them making a run. If they ever play Rugby football they will take knives into the scrum with them and hamstring and otherwise in its obscurity disable their opponents. They will use red pepper, and they will confuse the other side by surreptitiously slipping a second and even a third ball amongst the players. They will be very hard to beat until the team opposed to them are armed with Browning pistols and the goalkeeper is entrenched, with barbed wire and a maxim! The referee's task will be a most delicate one. He will hover over the field at a safe height in a captive-balloon, perhaps.

Most people have what is known as a sneaking admiration for this desperateness. In fact the conditions of the Primeval Jungle are only thoroughly unfavourable to one type of man—the best in any way of life. "Civilization" (which means most favourable conditions for him) is of his making, and it is by his efforts that it is maintained.

But civilisation, that fortress he has built to dream in, is not what he dreams about. (Law and righteousness are the strongest metal available, but are a useful metal: it is only in times like ours that they become material for art.) What he

dreams about is the Primeval Jungle, twelve colours and a thousand forms. The only thing that the average man has brought away from his primitive state is admiration of ferocity. The little photographic god whose yellow orb pours out light at the upper end of the Cinema Chapel—and as he gazes scenes of intense vulgarity and foolishness stream forth one after the other, as though they were his thoughts—this god is the civilized monkey's god. His worshippers sit in smoky silence beneath him. And really,—as I have often insisted—this modern Jungle is not without its beauty (what do you think of 21st Street, or the town of Elberfeld?) and has very little that is civilized about it. It is at present, too, replete with a quaint and very scientific ferocity.

Sport and blood are inseparable, or Sport without blood is anaemic. Sport and blood again are the rich manure all our vitality battens on.

All the fun of Mr. Bernard Shaw's plays, as an instance, although he wishes war away with a disgust not sham (as he considers with a little reason that his plays should definitely have taken its place) are based on sport and blood. All the thrills of humorous delight that make their ratiocination bearable for an audience, are due to the *Playing with Fire* and *Dancing on the Crater*, that that particular boisterous humour and sporting sense of his most certainly is. Mr. Shaw, to be consistent, should be as solemn as a judge. Only if he were bitter, like Swift, would his laughter not be a contradiction. He is too genial and his humour too school-boy-like for him to be able to disclaim ferocity. It is only the hyena in the intellectual world (such as his ecclesiastical countryman just mentioned) who can speak convincingly with disgust of Krupp.

The thinkers and Lords of the Earth, then, have fortified themselves in a structure of Law. The greatest praise the really wise Lord can bestow on the man in the street is that he is "actual," "of his time," "up-to-date." Men must be penned and herded into "Their Time," and prevented from dreaming, the prerogative of the Lord of the Earth. They must also be prevented from drifting back in the direction of their Jungle. And the best way to do this is to allow them to have a little contemporary Jungle of their own. Such a little up-to-date and iron Jungle is the great modern city. Its vulgarity is the sort of torture and flagellation that becomes the austere creator.

No wise aristocratic politician would ever encourage the people of his country to be conservative, in the sense of "old-fashioned" and over-sentimental about the things of the Past. The only real crime, on the contrary, would be to dream or harbour memories. To be active and unconscious, to live in the moment, would be the ideal set before the average man.

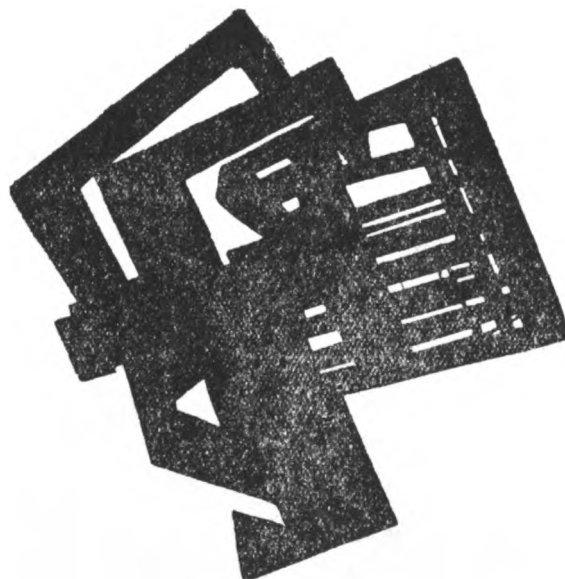
The directors of the German Empire have shown their vulgarity and democratization as clearly in their propaganda of ferocity, as in their management of medievalism and historic consciousness. They have broken with all other rulers, and introduced a new element into the modern world with their repudiation of tacit (much more than of explicit) regulations. From this supposedly "aristocratic" Junkerish country has come the intensest exhibition of democratic feeling imaginable.

This contempt of law, regulation and "humanity" is popularly supposed to be the outcome of the teachings of

the execrable "Neech," and to be a portion of aristocratic "haughtiness." Nietzsche was much too explicit a gentleman to be a very typical one. And his "aristocratism," so gushing and desperate athwart his innumerable prefaces, raises doubts in the mind of the most enthusiastic student: for he did not merely set himself up as the philosopher of it, but discovered simultaneously the great antiquity of his Slav lineage (although Prussia, we learn, swarms with "Neeches").

German statesmen and generals are too thoughtful. To become anxious is to become democratic. They have become infernally philosophic and democratic, their heads naturally being too weak to resist. There is only one sort of person who can be conscious and not degenerate. Germany's rulers do not belong to that august category.

Their wicked and low degeneration and identifying of themselves with the people will recoil on their own heads. No wonder they have an admiration for English cunning, as they describe moderate British good-sense.



CONSTANTINOPLE OUR STAR.

That Russia will get Constantinople should be the prayer of every good artist in Europe. And, more immediately, if the Turks succeeded in beating off the Allies' attack, it would be a personal calamity to those interested in Art.

A Russian Constantinople. I need only enumerate: 1—Slav Christianity mingling with young catholic converts from England round St. Sophia. 2—Probably the best Shakespeare Theatre in the world at this gate of the East. An entirely new type of Englishman, in the person of our poet, would be introduced to the amazed Oriental. 3—Real efforts in Sciences and Arts more intelligently encouraged than in Germany, and on an equal scale. 4—The traditional amenity and good manners of the Turk helping to make the Southern Russian Capital the most brilliant city poor suffering humanity has ever beheld, not excepting Paris and Vienna. 5—Not to mention (a) a week-end bungalow in Babylon. (b) Picnics on the Islands beneath the shadow of the Golden Horn (I hope this is sound geography) with emancipated lady-telegraphists. (c) A long white "Indépendants" exhibition on the shores of the Bosphorus. (d) Endless varieties of Cafés, Gaming-houses, Casinos and Cinemas.

We cannot hope that after the War England will change her skin so much that she will become a wise and kind protector of the Arts. Almost alone amongst the countries of Europe she has proved herself incapable of producing that small band of wealthy people, who are open to ideas, ahead of the musical-comedy and academics of their age, and prepared to spend a few hundred pounds a year less on petrol or social pyrotechnics, and buy pictures or organize the success of new music or newplays. Even in England a few such people exist. It is all the more credit to them, being so lonely. I imagine that the war may slightly modify for the better the lethargy, common and impermeably practical spirit that is the curse of this country, and which will always make it's Empire and world-successes so incomplete and open to criticism. If to the personal good-manners of Englishmen, their practical sense of life, order and comfort, their independence and the charm of their football and golf for foreign countries, they could add an organized intellectual life; if they could sub-

stitute for the maid-servant's or cabman's grin—the eternal foolish grin they turn on everything except what they are perfectly used to, a little organized effort to think and understand life in some other way than as business, monstrous "Neeches" of foreign nations would no longer be able to call them "The unphilosophic race." Any German claim to World-Dominion would be ludicrous. The modern Englishman is naturally better liked abroad than the modern German, apart from politics: in fact, the only pull the German has, and that is an enormous one, is his far greater respect for, and cultivation of "the things of the mind."

The Englishman seems to consider that a Grin (the famous English "sense of Humour") covers a multitude of sins,

The English "Sense of Humour" is the greatest enemy of England: far worse than poor Germany.

If the Englishman could only have sufficient moral-courage (not mind being laughed at, you know) to make use of his Grin, he would find life much more difficult!

But he would also be a much finer fellow.

His Grin (his sense of humour) is his chief vice: it is worse than whiskey.

The English sense of humour is a perpetual, soft, self-indulgent, (often maudlin) hysteria, that has weakened the brain of Britain more than any drug could.

Jokes should be taxed in England like Opium in China.

Oh! for the solemn foolishness of Prussian professor!
in place of the British Grin!

If English women could only have their teeth drawn out, which protrude so much like a death's head: if the sport and "fun" of the ordinary educated Englishman could be developed into Passion:—

But as we are not sure that it will be within any calculable time, let us keep our eyes fixed on Constantinople.

MR. SHAW'S EFFECT ON MY FRIEND.

Should you find some minute point on which, at the first blush, you imagine that England possesses a certain superiority over some foreign nation, you must, before breathing this conviction, consider all the imaginable arguments of the foreign gentleman who would be lesé by this comparison; you must steep yourself in the point of view of the opposite side, until your little innocent enthusiasm has flickered out and disappeared in the welter of your studies and ratiocinations. Should you omit to do all this, and say flatly "I think England is a bloody-sight better (Mr. Shaw here, you will perceive, is hoisted with his own petard) than Ireland or Germany in ——" and you proceed to explain the direction in which you espy a slight glimmering of advantage for this wretched place: should you omit to do all this you may get up against Mr. Bernard Shaw, that intensely unsentimental Irishman.

This was the patriotic and aggressive state of mind into which Mr. Shaw's "Common Sense" pamphlet put my friend the Englishman. This Englishman even confessed to me the little point he once had thought he possibly had put his finger on, that was (perhaps) typically English and in opposition to the typical character of a certain foreign (and **MOMENTARILY** hostile) Power.

He said (blushing) that he thought the Englishman's **COLDNESS** was rather fine, his professional attitude. I reassured him. I said that I was entirely of his opinion. So encouraged (although at first eyeing me rather doubtfully), he proceeded to divulge his secret chauvinistic rumination.

"People on the Continent," he said, "refer always to the coldness of the Englishman. I think we should hug this epithet and try to be worthy of it."

"Despite the risks I run of sinking in your esteem to zero point by this hot-headed utterance, I regard as a true picture the particular very cordial simplicity, detestation of fuss, averseness to swank and unfairness, which English people

have come to consider so much as one of the chief traits in their physiognomy that, should a portraitist omit these traits, they would say "Yes; but where is my ——" etc, as I have detailed above—did not natural modesty prevent them.

"Some gentlemen, of course" (and I was here left in no doubt as to what sinister figure he had in his mind) "are quite at liberty to ferret out all the fussy, sentimental, swanky, Prussian and one-eyed Englishmen they have ever met, and then delve into their (no doubt extensive) German visiting book" (I felt uncomfortable at this point) "for the names of models of generosity and respecters of freedom."

"The Puritanic self-sufficiency and lack of ostentation met with all through the clearest English and American traditions is more to our taste than other and opposite ways. Let us stick to our taste and our shyness, then, since taste and shyness are the most fundamental things we possess. We do not like to see a mock-oriental German manager tyrannising over a staff of servants; we invent ugly words like "bullying" or "cowardly" for what is regarded in many lands as the only sensible attitude in life. If a man is of "no consequence" and you are "somebody" the Prussian instinct is to go over to him and wipe your boots on him; this is apparently because you would not be giving your dirty feet a good time if you did not seize every opportunity of affording them this satisfaction. Or it is on the principle of kissing every pretty girl you can, since it would be foolish to miss any opportunity. There is in both these proceedings the same implied promiscuity. "How I should like to be able to beat, humiliate, order about, and then forgive, caress and patronize a hundred people—a thousand people!" is what you seem to hear many people, Prussian and others, saying to themselves. I think it is safe to say that Germany hears more hot prayers of this description by a long way than these islands."

"Do you think so" I said sharply. For I felt that he had been exceeding the bounds of the licence given an **IMPARTIAL** man in time of War.

W.L.

A SUPER-KRUPP—OR WAR'S END.

People are busy reading into this huge political event prognostics for the satisfaction of their dearest dreams.

The PEACE-MAN says: "Here at last is such a tremendous War that it will exterminate even War itself."

Another sort of man says: "One good thing about this War is that it will de-democratize France considerably. France has been unbearable lately."

Another says: "Here is the chance of their life for the ruling classes."

Or from another direction: "Social revolution is nearer because of this senseless conflict."

Among artists, the Futurist will naively reflect: "The energies awoken by all this, the harder conditions, etc., will make a public after the War a little more after my own heart."

Another sort of artist, again, thinking of his rapidly depreciating "shop," says triumphantly: "This War with all its mediaeval emotions" (for it gives him mediaeval emotions) "will result in a huge revival of Romanticism."

I happen, as an artist, to be placed about where Probability and Desire harmoniously meet and mingle. And it seems to me that, as far as art is concerned, things will be exactly the same after the War as before it. In the political field this War may hasten the pace in one direction or another. All art that matters is already so far ahead that it is beyond the sphere of these disturbances.

It is quite useless speculating on the Future, unless you want some particular Future. Then you obviously should speculate, and it is by speculations (of all sorts, unfortunately) that the Future is made. The Future, like the Truth, is composed of genial words.

Artists are often accused of invertebrate flexibility, in their "acceptance" of a time. But it is much more that they change less than other people. A good artist is more really "of his time" and therefore makes less fuss about his accidental surroundings. He has exactly the same attachment to his time (and reproaches those who don't show such an attachment) that he has to his family and his country. It is the same thing.

Well, then, I should be perfectly content that the Present Time should always remain, and things never change, since they are new to me, and I cannot see how the Port of Rotterdam can be bettered; and an A.B.C. shop is a joy for ever.

There are one or two points, despite this, that it may be useful to consider.

IS THIS THE WAR THAT WILL END WAR?

People will no doubt have to try again in 20 or 30 years if they REALLY like or need War or not. And so on until present conditions have passed into Limbo.

Perpetual War may well be our next civilization. I personally should much prefer that, as 18 months' disorganization every 40 years and 38½ years' complete peace, is too anarchic except for Art squabbles. In the middle ages a War was always going on somewhere, like the playing of perpetual football teams, conducted by trained arquebussers, etc. This permanent War of the Future would have a much more cynical and professional character.

Trade usually attracts the Corsicans of the Modern World. With the future for War so precarious as it has been lately, the tendencies of the Age against it, idleness or common virtues rather than ambitious brains, have gone into the career of Arms. Will it be worth any bright boy's while, after this War, to devote his attention exclusively to Strategies?

War has definitely and for good gone under the ground, up in the air, and is quickly submerging itself down to the bed of the ocean. In peace time, now, the frontiers will be a line of trenches and tunnels with miles of wire and steel mazes, and entanglements crackling with electricity, which no man will be able to pass. Everything will be done down below in future, or up above. Tubes will be run from the principal concentration camps inland.

French soldiers may emerge from a hole in the pavement in Unter den Linden on the declaration of War half-a-century hence, or England be invaded under the North Sea.

A sort of immense in-fighting has been established everywhere, with hosts of spies and endless national confusions

Super-Krupp is the best hope for the glorious future of War. Could Krupp only combine business ability with a Napoleonic competence in the field, the problem would be solved! We might eventually arrive at such a point of excellence that two-thirds of the population of the world could be exterminated with mathematical precision in a fortnight. War might be treated on the same basis as agriculture.

Have you ever considered what a state of delirious contentment hundreds of old military gentlemen, strategists and War-writers, must be in: A battle bigger than Gravelotte somewhere in Europe every week—sometimes two or three in a week! Oh! the unexampled richness of material to work in; the delightful problems of Napoleonic versus Moltkean strategy each day provides! I wonder that some of these red-faced old gentlemen do not burst with satisfaction—blow up like a well-placed bomb.

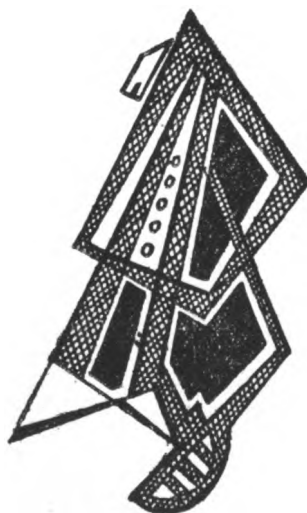
As to Desirability, nobody but Marinetti, the Kaiser, and professional soldiers WANT War. And from that little list the Kaiser might have to be extracted.

On the other hand, you cannot help feeling that the Men of Thought have interfered too much with other people's

business latterly. This immense sentimental interference is not even the province of Thought. Most men who are naturally articulate and therefore have something to say on this as every other subject, are not pre-eminently interested in military operations; and, on the other hand, they are sufficiently good-hearted and conscious of the endless private misery a modern War causes. All men cannot, and never will be, "philosophic men." So what are they going to be: Soldiers and politicians, a good many, I expect; and much happier and more amusing that way than in any kit the Men of Thought would invent for them.

Do not let us, like Christian missionaries, spoil the savages all round us.

There is a tragedy of decay and death at the end of all human lives. It is all a matter of adjustment of tragedy: a matter almost of Taste—where to place the Tragedy, like where to place a blackness in a picture. But this is perhaps rather consolation than anything else. And it would be no consolation for the people this War will have crushed with grief.



THE EUROPEAN WAR AND GREAT COMMUNITIES.

The Nations are at present vast sections of those men who speak the same language. The inhabitants of the German or Austrian Empires, or of Great Britain, are racially almost as mixed as those of the United States.

There are half a dozen principal languages, and the Political Entities representing them, in the West, and numerous subordinate communities. Every person who says YES, or every person who says JA, is involved in primitive death-struggle at a word posted on a window, when some alleged synthetic need of these huge organizations demands it.

It seems to me that if people did not like it, they would object violently to this wholesale disturbance. Also; that people will perpetually not be too fussy or nice as to what they are fighting about.

Whether as the member of a large or small community, men will have to fight to live, and scores of centuries of arguments of the "You began it!" "No I didn't." "You did!" order, have made them rather apathetic on the subject of Truth. They know that their side is right, that all sides are always right in all quarrels of persons or nations. The enemy is a rascal. They are as willing to fight for one immediate thing as another, under these circumstances; since, "life is the only thing that matters," and it is for life both sides fight, and therefore both are right. Then in any case they must. So that's the end of it.

But "ideals" must be there. We are poor beings who have to prod each other in the guts, and slaughter men as well as oxen, but must we sink to Indecency? Must the bloody and ravenous figure of life lie bare on the battlefield, without even a "Scrap of Paper," in form of Fig-leaf, to cover it?

The Germans were too intellectual and careless of the conveniences, when they dismissed Treaties as "scraps of paper." That is a very civilized and degenerate sin.

This War is raising many perplexities as to the future of these Empires. Their members have, in this instance, or the members of the two Central Aggressors, gladly flung themselves into War for the trump ideal of the Great Community; World Power, complete conquest. It is the only way out for them, caught in the toils. That is to strain back

to unity and clearness again by megalomania. With some shuffling of the cards the Germans might have brought off their coup—without Belgian interference, for example. But this Belgian interference is symbolical of the great difficulty underlying this trump card in the armoury of "ideal" and explanation, with which large Empires in these days go to war.

The Belgians and the French both, with valour equal to the Germans, took up arms from motives even more moving. They rose to defend their liberty to continue saying OUI, instead of JA, and to resist a complete commercial exploitation and endless interference. But this time they, in common with poor and small nations, like Serbia, were organized, very well armed, and Germany did not succeed in rushing them. In the future, it is to be supposed, the standard of preparedness will be still higher with those nations not dynastically or otherwise aggressive, or like Great Britain, already possessed of as much as she can manage, and asking nothing but to be left alone in enjoyment of it.

Germany is about as strong, in a military sense, as a modern nation can be. But, and the more for this, any considerable extending of territory by one nation is an exploded fancy. If any one nation become possessed of it, the others, uniformly trained and morally disciplined, more or less, will at least be strong enough, combined, to cure her of it, when it comes to the test.

World-Empire must be momentarily dropped, just as "ruling the waves" in spite of all neighbouring nations, must be abandoned in the near future, at least. To be the strongest and richest is possible, but the quality of uniqueness, politically, is not.

The deadlock of equal armaments, countless quantities of men, etc., makes the European War a failure. Defensively, only, it will prove a success, let us hope; that is, for the Allies. But European War—not War—will receive a definite set-back.

This blood-letting in mass, all at once, is so impressive and appalling. A steady dribble of blood, year by year, first in one corner and then in another, would not be noticed to the same extent, though at the end of a century it would have bled the respective areas as much.

So what is Europe going to do about the War question?—many people will be enquiring as soon as this present giant of a war is dead.

I feel that War won't go. It will be the large communities that make war so unmanageable, unreal and unsatisfactory, that will go. Or at least they will be modified for those ends. Everything will be arranged for the best convenience of War. Murder and destruction is man's fundamental occupation.

Women's function, the manufacturing of children (even more important than cartridges and khaki suits) is only important from this point of view, and they evidently realize this thoroughly. It takes the deft women we employ anything from twelve to sixteen years to fill and polish these little human cartridges, and they of course get fond of them in the process. However, all this is not our fault, and is absolutely necessary. We only begin decaying like goods kept too long, if we are not killed or otherwise disposed of. Is not this a proof of our function? Only latterly, our War Material has become so much more expensive to make, and takes so much longer,

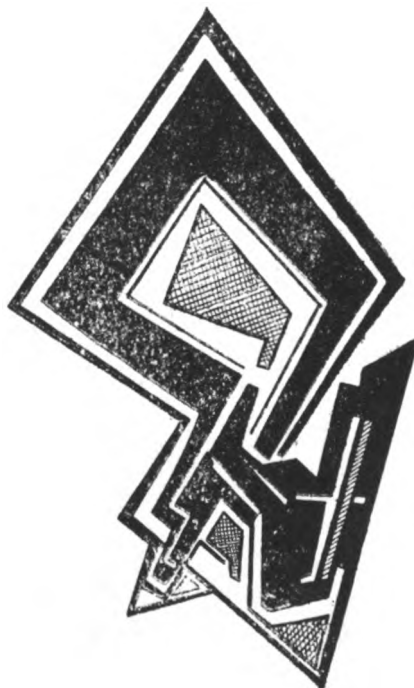
that we have to avoid causing a belief in peoples' minds that we are wasting it!

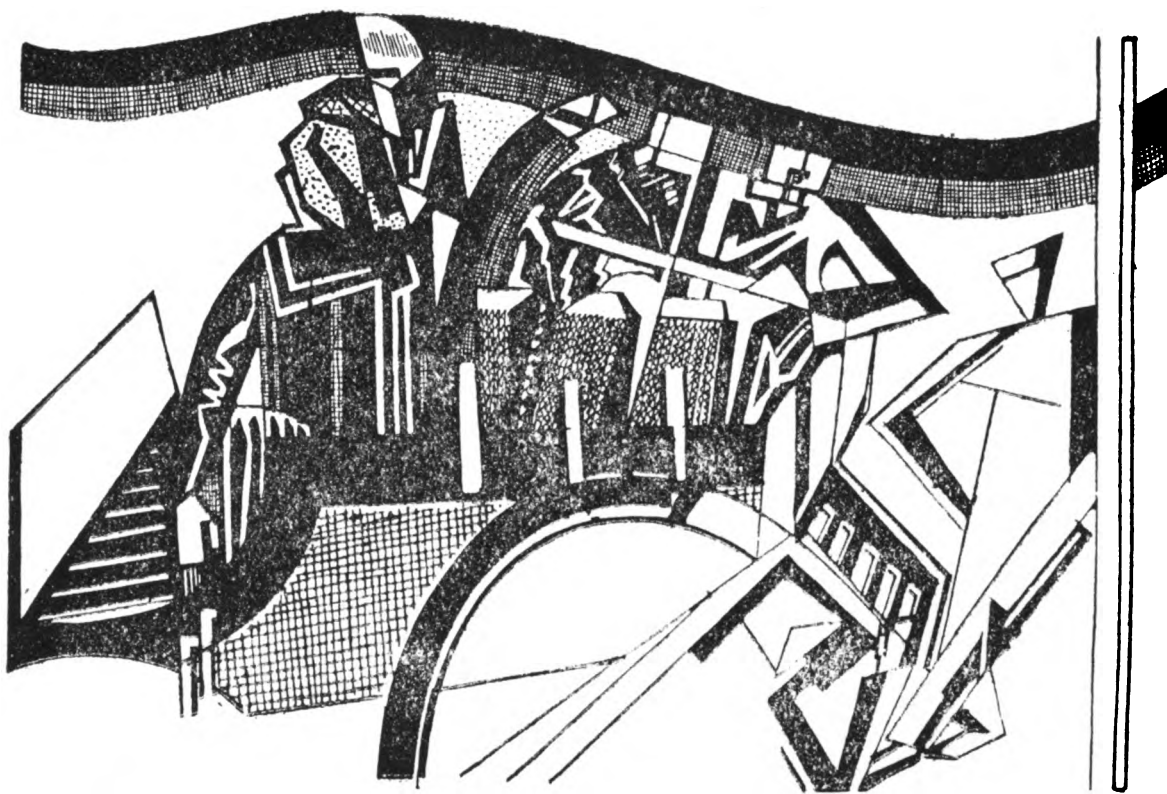
I overheard two ladies the other day conversing on this subject, and one, with an immense jaw, flabby cheeks, and otherwise very large, said: "It is such a waste of good human flesh!"

We must avoid giving our workers that sensation of waste. In the functioning of large communities certain things become too transparent. The scale does not by any means flatter the individual. The sensation of immensity of horror and waste, is too difficult to forget; although as a matter of fact numbers make no difference. This is obviously not the most significant war in history merely because it is the largest.

Again, it is even unconvincing to be a Field-Marshal. And it is impossible for any individual regiment, or individual soldier, to get the necessary isolation and quality of uniqueness for their deed of gallantry, if such occur. And the necessary machinery of hatred is rather impaired, and works weakly.

For the good of War, yes, of endless unabating murder and misery, then, I think the great communities will have to go.





Hyde Park.

Etchells.

GNOMIC VERSES.

When the roast smoked in the oven, belching out blackness,
I was bewildered and knew not what to do,
But when I was plunged in the contemplation
Of Li Po's beautiful verses,
This thought came upon me,—
When the roast smokes, pour water upon it.

OUR CONTEMPORARIES.

When the Tahitian princess
Heard that he had decided,
She rushed out into the sunlight and swarmed up a cocoanut palm tree,
But he returned to this island
And wrote 90 Petrarchan sonnets.

Foot-note. pour le lecteur français :

Il s'agit d'un jeune poète qui a suivi le culte de Gauguin jusqu' à Tahayti meme, Etant fort bel homme, quand la princesse bistre entendit qu'il voulait lui accorder ses faveurs elle a montré son allegresse a la manière dont nous venons de parler, Malhereusement ses poèmes sont remplis seulement de ses propres subjectivités, style Victorienne de la " Georgian Anthology,"

OUR RESPECTFUL HOMAGES TO M. LAURENT TAILHADE.

OM MANI PADME HUM

LET US ERECT A COLUMN, an epicene column,

To Monsieur Laurent Tailhade !

It is not fitting that we should praise him
In the modest forms of the Madrigale or the Aubade.
Let us stamp with our feet and clap hands
In praise of Monsieur Laurent Tailhade,
Whose " Poemes Aristophanesques " are
So-very-odd.

Let us erect a column and stamp with our feet
And dance a Zarabondilla and a Kordax,
Let us leap with ungainly leaps before a stage scene
By Leon Bakst.

Let us do this for the splendour of Tailhade.

Et Dominus tecum,
Tailhade.

ANCIENT WISDOM, rather cosmic.

So-Shu dreamed,
And having dreamed that he was a bird, a bee, and a butterfly,
He was uncertain why he should try to feel like anything else,
Hence his contentment.

ET FAIM SALLIR LE LOUP DES BOYS.

I cling to the spar,
Washed with the cold salt ice
I cling to the spar—
Insidious modern waves, civilization, civilized hidden snares.
Cowardly editors threaten : " If I dare " "
Say this or that, or speak my open mind,
Say that I hate may hates,
 Say that I love my friends,
Say I believe in Lewis, spit out the later Rodin,
Say that Epstein can carve in stone,
That Brzeska can use the chisel,
Or Wadsworth paint ;
 Then they will have my guts ;
They will cut down my wage, force me to sing their cant,
Uphold the press, and be before all a model of literary decorum.
 Merde !
Cowardly editors threaten,
Friends fall off at the pinch, the loveliest die.
That is the path of life, this is my forest.

ARTISTS AND THE WAR.

Some artists are of opinion that "painters should participate in these events" by representing scenes of fighting in Flanders and France. This does not seem to me incumbent even on representative painters. If out of the campaign in Flanders any material, like the spears in Uccello's Battle in the National Gallery, force themselves upon the artist's imagination, he will use it.

The huge German siege guns, for instance, are a stimulus to visions of power. In any event his spirit is bound to reflect these turmoils, even if only by sudden golden placidity.

The Public should not allow its men of art to die of starvation during the war, of course, (for men of action could not take their places). But as the English Public lets its artists starve in peace time, there is really nothing to be said. The war has not changed things in that respect.

Under these circumstances, artists probably should paint, fight, or make a living in some trade according to their inclination or means.

Still, with complete consciousness that such a thing could never happen, I will put it to some people that, could a few hundred pounds be divided up amongst those artists who in ordinary times find difficulty in selling their work, and now must be penniless, it would be a noble action. There are several men to whom the disbursing of such a sum as fifty pounds would not spell inconvenience—that is the phrase. For long afterwards they would feel the amazing and refreshing repercussions of this astounding and ridiculous action. They would only get three morning suits instead of five during the current year, they would—but I will break off. I feel already that by my naivety I have sunk in the eyes of my readers.

As an extenuation of the naivety of my remarks, I will add that I did not suggest that a supporter of the school of Mr. Wilson Steer, or Mr. Walter Sickert should be expected to support a young man who cubed. He will, on the contrary, pray, with far more conviction of hatred than mere racial difference could engender, or Ernst von Lissauer express—that the war will kill off every Cubist in Western Europe, or maim the movement and ruin its financial supporters. He will hope, even, that Paris may be invested by the Germans on the off-chance that the great stores of Cubist pictures known to exist there might be blown up and burnt to ashes. "May the mortality amongst Cubists, Carnivorists, Fauvists and Vorticists at the front be excessive. May those who survive have nothing but their feet left to paint with, and may those not at the front die of starvation." This very naturally will be the feeling of very many people.

But there remain several people whose life, or at least whose intelligence, is bound up with the latest movement in painting, and who understand the value of the courage and initiative that has impelled a small number of men without resources in money, to fling themselves into these studies. I have launched my pessimistic cockle-shell, and wave it a very mechanical adieu.

That the war will in any way change the currents of contemporary art, I do not believe: they are deeper than it. An earthquake might do so. Krupps is a poor substitute for seismic fire, as the Cinemas showed at the time of the Avezzano Earthquake.

The universality of the present war will limit its influence. The Germans only should be an exception to this rule, for they are alone, and its consequences will be more definite for them. It is their war in fact. The Allies are being, in a sense, only complaisant; too complaisant naturally.

When we consider the satisfactory and professional manner in which this war is being conducted by the Allies, we cannot believe that any deep psychological change is preparing for France, Russia or England. Victorious elation will be sobered by the fact that, in the case of each of the Allies the victory must go all round.

For Germany, even, defeat will hardly spell such changes as judged by another time than ours (even judged by 60 years ago) it should. The humiliation of defeat against such odds is only a matter of abnormal popular vanity. And the German populace is a very different personality to the German military literati or boastful and erapulous cosmopolitan, the waiter or sharper the Londoner judges Germany by. If pockets are empty for some time, Germany is used to poverty; and then it certainly becomes her better than riches. A few good artists may pop up again, when the popping of the sekt bottles dies down for a bit.

In the forming of large military forces to prosecute this war, every reactionary—political, aesthetic, journalistic—sees all sorts of rosy possibilities. You would think from some of his conversation, that the splendid war army of England were fighting to reinstate the tradition of Sir Frederick Leighton, to sweep away the fancy of the Russian ballets, or revive a faded Kipling-esque jingoism. But the war has not resurrected Mr. Kipling's muse but only made it creak rustily like a machine peevish at being disturbed; nor has it produced the faintest shadow of a new Kipling. There is only one thing that would have deeply changed England, and that would have been the loss of her Empire and complete defeat. And that evidently is not going to happen.

How this war will affect English art afterwards is chiefly, then, a question of how people's pockets will be affected. And on this question however expert an opinion you may obtain, you never get far away from a fairly universal optimism :— which if it is justified by events, will leave conditions for art very little modified.

In any case, as to painting, since Sir Edward Poynter will not be a radiant youth after the war ; Augustus John not find any new tribe of gypsies kicked up by the military upheavals, to refresh his brush : since in short the aesthetic human contents of the realm will be exactly the same, it is

merely a question of whether Mr. Wyndham Lewis, Mr. Brzeska, Mr. Wadsworth, Mr. Etchells, Mr. Roberts are going to recant and paint and sculpt on the mental level of Mr. Lavery or Mr. Herkomer, or to put it another way, whether such a terrific interest will be awakened in Mr. Lavery, Mr. Wilson Steer and Mr. Caton Woodville that attempts at a purifying of taste and renovation of formulas will obtain no hearing. As to the first point Mr. Wyndham Lewis's first action after the war will be to erect (with the aid of numerous accomplices) a statue of Van Gogh, and another to Pablo Picasso, in suitable London squares ; and these will be shortly followed by statues to more contemporary painters, it is hoped.

THE EXPLOITATION OF BLOOD.

There is a certain sort of blackguard that this time has produced—as an earthquake produces looters—who uses the blood of the Soldier for his own everyday domestic uses. He washes his very dirty linen in the Press with this sacred blood.

Scores of articles have been written in connection with Art—and I am sure that the same thing has been going on in Engineering, Button-making, the Church and Business generally to any extent—the purport of which, is that “ This great National Event ” will engulf and sweep away all that it is to the writer's business interest or inclination, should be swept away.

In an Earthquake or Revolution the burglar, who has long had his eye on a certain “ crib ” which, however, in several raids he had been unable to “ crack,” with a delighted chuckle seizes his opportunity, and pilfers at will. It is the same way with rapes and other misdemeanours.

I contend that certain critics or general journalists whose personal interests are involved on the side of lucrative and established forms of art, and who take this opportunity, as they imagine it, to attack the movement in Painting that threatens to discredit Pompiendom in this country, are an exact parallel to the Burglar in the earthquake, or what the French reporter would call a Ghoul. With many slimy and interested references to the “ Great National Event,” “ before-the-War-Era ” separated by “ Gulls ” from, presumably, the orgies of vulgarity and relapses into sentiment he hopes may await us after the war, he attempts to convince the Public that all this is ended. We are going to be purer in future and paint like Marcus Stone, Sir William Richmond, William Nicholson, the late Abbey or Dendy Sadier.

It is conceivable that the War may affect Art deeply, for it will have a deep effect on the mass of the people, and the best art is not priggishly cut off from those masses. But the reflection in Art of these changes will certainly not be in favour of any weak and sentimentalized reactive painting, and the results are not likely to please the pompiers-journalist or the pompiers-critic any more than the manifestations he already fumes, splutters and weeps about.

The soldiers in France or Belgium would be the last people to relish these transactions, or to have themselves held up as intellectual crusaders. They are fighting just as animals or savages have to fight and as men have to still. We all agree in admiring the qualities of energy and large-heartedness that that requires. But those soldiers would not suggest that their present activities should destroy the beauty of Bach's music, although it might the beauty of many a Bosche, a very different thing. If the authorities of some parochial concert-hall like to look a little askance at German music—well, that's either bestial foolishness, or a cowardliness a soldier would not admire, either. The art of to-day is a result of the life of to-day, of the appearance and vivacity of that life. Life after the War will be the same brilliant life as it was before the War—it's appearance certainly not modified backwards.

The colour of granite would still be the same if every man in the world lay dead, water would form the same eddies and patterns and the spring would break forth in the same way. They would not consider it at all reasonable to assert that their best aimed “ direct ” fire would alter the continuity of speculation that man had undertaken, and across which this war, like many other wars, has thrown its shadow, like an angry child's.

THE SIX HUNDRED, VERESTCHAGIN AND UCCELLO.

To the question "why has not the present war produced fine poems, etc.?" you would reply, "What fine poetry or literature did the Crimean War or the Franco-Prussian War produce?" Some clever stories by Guy de Maupassant, and Zola's "Débauché" was about the only good literature 1870 has to show for itself. Tennyson's "Cannon to the right of them, cannon to the left of them" is certainly not as good as Kipling's specialisations in military matters, which came out of an Imperialistic period of Peace. Tolstoy's account of the Siege of Sebastopol is the sort of book of notes any War or similar adventure may be responsible for, if an observant person happens to be among those taking part in it. The Napoleonic Wars were different. The work of Stendhal, for instance, is a psychological monument of that epic, in that part of it which is the outcome of the hard and vulgar energies of his time. But at present Germany is the only country that harks back sufficiently to put up any show of analogy to those energies; and she is honeycombed with disintegration into another and more contemporary state of mind, which is her worst enemy—not England, as her journalists proclaim.

I have heard people say "None of our great men have come up to scratch. Not one has said anything adequate about the War." Shaw, Wells, etc., have seemingly all failed to come up to what might be expected of the occasion. But when you consider that none of them like the War at all, though all are more or less agreed that England did right in fighting: that they are Socialists, and do not wish to encourage and perpetuate War by saying anything "wonderful" about it, or flattering its importance; this is not to be wondered at. There is one man in Europe who must be in the seventh heaven: that is Marinetti. From every direction come to him sound and rumours of conflict. He must be torn in mind, as to which point of the compass to rush to and drink up the booming and banging, lap up the blood! He must be a radiant figure now!

Marinetti's one and only (but very fervent and literal) disciple in this country, had seemingly not thought out, or carried to their logical conclusion, all his master's precepts. For I hear that, de retour du Front, this disciple's first action has been to write to the compact Milanese volcano that he no longer shares, that he REPUDIATES, all his (Marinetti's) utterances on the subject of War, to which he formerly sub-

scribed. Marinetti's solitary English disciple has discovered that War is not Magnifique, or that Marinetti's Guerre is not la Guerre.

Tant Mieux.

The dearth of "War Verse" or good war literature has another reason. The quality of uniqueness is absent from the present rambling and universal campaign. There are so many actions every day, necessarily of brilliant daring, that they become impersonal. Like the multitudes of drab and colourless uniforms—these in their turn covered with still more characterless mud—there is no room, in praising the soldiers, for anything but an abstract hymn. These battles are more like ant-fights than anything we have done in this way up to now. The Censor throws further obstacles in the way of Minor and Major Verse.

Of similar interest to the question of War-Poetry is that of War-Painting. To illuminate this point I will quote an article called Historic Battle Pictures, in the *Daily News* of February 2nd.

"One is already asking on the continent who will be the first to immortalize on canvas or in marble the tremendous realities of 1914-15—Every epoch has had its illustrious painters. Charlet drew the old soldiers of the "Grande Armée" and the bewhiskered grenadiers; after the First Empire came the artillery officer Pengully l'Haridon, Boissard de Bolsdenier, the friend of Delacroix and creator of the "Retraite de Russie" in the Rouen gallery; Eugène Lami, Hippolyte Bellangé, Meissonnier himself, Yvon, whose speciality was Zouaves, and Protals, the painter of the chasseurs à pied; and the names with which lovers of the priceless collection at Versailles are familiar.

"Defeat inspired the historical painters in the 'seventies. Victory will be the new theme. The famous "Les Volâ!" of Etienne Beaumetz adorns one of M. Millerand's rooms at the Ministry of War. It was Alphonse de Neuville who gave us most of the vivid details of the terrible year—the hand-to-hand encounters, the frenzied and bloody struggles of the dying, the calm portrayed on heroic countenances as death approaches, the flight and explosion of shrapnel. And after

him Edouard Detaille, whose "Défense de Champigny" is one of the greatest battle-pictures of any country or any age.

A NEW VERESTCHAGIN?

The campaign of last year and this! What masterpieces must be born!"

It is useful to quote this article because, in its tone, it reproduces the attitude of the Public to War-Art. It also gives an eloquent list of names.

No critic of let us say a leading Daily Paper would pretend that the "Meissonier himself" of this article, or "Yvon whose speciality was Zouaves," were very good painters; any more than to-day they would insist on the importance of Mr. Leader or Mr. Waterhouse. Edouard Détaillé, whose "Défense de Champigny is one of the greatest battle-pictures of any country or any age" is, in circles who discuss these matters with niceness and sympathy, considered, I believe, not so good as "Meissonier himself."

Shall we conclude from this that War-painting is in a category by itself, and distinctly inferior to several other kinds of painting? That is a vulgar modern absurdity: painting is divided up into categories, Portrait, Landscape, Genre, etc. Portrait being "more difficult" than Landscape, and

"Battle Pictures" coming in a little warlike class of their own, and admittedly not such Very High Art as representations of Nude Ladies.

Soldiers and War are as good as anything else. The Japanese did not discriminate very much between a Warrior and a Buttercup. The flowering and distending of an angry face and the beauty of the soldier's arms and clothes, was a similar spur to creation to the grimace of a flower. Uccello in his picture at the National Gallery formularized the spears and aggressive prancing of the fighting men of his time till every drop of reality is frozen out of them. It is the politest possible encounter. Velasquez painted the formality of a great treaty in a canvas full of soldiers. And so on.

There is no reason why very fine representative paintings of the present War should not be done. Van Gogh would have done one, had he been there. But Derain, the finest painter to my knowledge at the front, will not paint one. Severini, on the other hand, if his lungs are better, and if Expressionism has not too far denaturalized his earlier Futurist work, should do a fine picture of a battle.

Gaudier-Brzeska, the sculptor, whose Vortex from the trenches makes his sentiments on the subject of War and Art quite clear, is fighting for France, but probably will not do statues afterwards of either Bosche or Pion-Pion; to judge from his treatment of the Prussian rifle-butt.

MARINETTI'S OCCUPATION.

The War will take Marinetti's occupation of platform boomer away.

The War has exhausted interest for the moment in booming and banging. I am not indulging in a sensational prophecy of the disappearance of Marinetti. He is one of the most irrepressible figures of our time, he would take a great deal to discourage. Only he will have to abandon War-noise more or less definitely, and I feel this will be a great chagrin for him. If a human being was ever quite happy and in his element it was Marinetti imitating the guns of Adrianople at the Doré with occasional answering bangs on a big drum manipulated by his faithful English disciple, Mr. Nevinson,

behind the curtain in the passage. He will still be here with us. Only there will be a little something not quite the same about him. Those golden booming days between Lule Burgas and the Aisne will be over for ever. There is a Passèist Pathos about this thought. It has always been plain that as artists two or three of the Futurist Painters were of more importance than their poet-impresario. Balla and Severini would, under any circumstances, be two of the most amusing painters of our time. And regular military War was not their theme, as it was Marinetti's, but rather very intense and vertiginous Peace. The great Poets and flashing cities will still be there as before the War. But in a couple of years the War will be behind us.



The Engine.

Dismorr.



Design.

Dismorr.



Types of the Russian Army.

Kramer.

VORTEX GAUDIER-BRZESKA.

(Written from the Trenches).

NOTE.—The sculptor writes from the French trenches, having been in the firing line since early in the war.

In September he was one of a patrolling party of twelve, seven of his companions fell in the fight over a roadway.

In November he was nominated for sergeancy and has been since slightly wounded, but expects to return to the trenches.

He has been constantly employed in scouting and patrolling and in the construction of wire entanglements in close contact with the Boches.

I HAVE BEEN FIGHTING FOR TWO MONTHS and I can now gauge the intensity of Life.

HUMAN MASSES teem and move, are destroyed and crop up again.

HORSES are worn out in three weeks, die by the roadside.

DOGS wander, are destroyed, and others come along.

WITH ALL THE DESTRUCTION that works around us **NOTHING IS CHANGED, EVEN SUPERFICIALLY. LIFE IS THE SAME STRENGTH,** THE MOVING AGENT THAT PERMITS THE SMALL INDIVIDUAL TO ASSERT HIMSELF.

THE BURSTING SHELLS, the volleys, wire entanglements, projectors, motors, the chaos of battle **DO NOT ALTER IN THE LEAST,** the outlines of the hill we are besieging. A company of **PARTRIDGES** scuttle along before our very trench.

IT WOULD BE FOLLY TO SEEK ARTISTIC EMOTIONS AMID THESE LITTLE WORKS OF OURS.

THIS PALTRY MECHANISM, WHICH SERVES AS A PURGE TO OVER-NUMEROUS HUMANITY.

THIS WAR IS A GREAT REMEDY.

IN THE INDIVIDUAL IT KILLS ARROGANCE, SELF-ESTEEM, PRIDE.

IT TAKES AWAY FROM THE MASSES NUMBERS UPON NUMBERS OF UNIMPORTANT UNITS, WHOSE ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES BECOME NOXIOUS AS THE RECENT TRADE CRISES HAVE SHOWN US.

MY VIEWS ON SCULPTURE REMAIN ABSOLUTELY THE SAME,

IT IS THE VORTEX OF WILL, OF DECISION, THAT BEGINS.

I SHALL DERIVE MY EMOTIONS SOLELY FROM THE ARRANGEMENT OF SURFACES, I shall present my emotions by the ARRANGEMENT OF MY SURFACES, THE PLANES AND LINES BY WHICH THEY ARE DEFINED.

Just as this hill where the Germans are solidly entrenched, gives me a nasty feeling, solely because its gentle slopes are broken up by earth-works, which throw long shadows at sunset. Just so shall I get feeling, of whatsoever definition, from a statue ACCORDING TO ITS SLOPES, varied to infinity.

I have made an experiment. Two days ago I pinched from an enemy a mauser rifle. Its heavy unwieldy shape swamped me with a powerful IMAGE of brutality.

I was in doubt for a long time whether it pleased or displeased me.

I found that I did not like it.

I broke the butt off and with my knife I carved in it a design, through which I tried to express a gentler order of feeling, which I preferred.

BUT I WILL EMPHASIZE that MY DESIGN got its effect (just as the gun had) FROM A VERY SIMPLE COMPOSITION OF LINES AND PLANES.

GAUDIER-BRZESKA.

MORT POUR LA PATRIE.

Henri Gaudier-Brzeska: after months of fighting and two promotions for gallantry Henri Gaudier-Brzeska was killed in a charge at Neuville St. Vaast, on Juno 5th, 1915.



Snow Scene.

Shakespeare.

THE OLD HOUSES OF FLANDERS.

The old houses of Flanders,
They watch by the high cathedrals ;
They have eyes, mournful, tolerant and sardonic, for the ways of men,
In the high, white, tiled gables.
The rain and the night have settled down on Flanders ;
It is all wetness and darkness ; you can see nothing.
Then those old eyes, mournful, tolerant and sardonic,
Look at great, sudden, red lights,
Look upon the shades of the cathedral
And the golden rods of the illuminated rain,
For a second
And those old eyes,
Very old eyes that have watched the ways of men for generations,
Close for ever.
The high white shoulders of the gables
Slouch together for a consultation,
Slant drunkenly over in the lee of the flaming cathedrals.
They are no more, the old houses of Flanders.

FORD MADOX HUEFFER.

A REVIEW OF CONTEMPORARY ART

BY

WYNDHAM LEWIS.

NOTE.

VORTICISM is the only word that has been used in this country and nowhere else for a certain new impulse in art.

FUTURISM has its peculiar meaning, and even its country, Italy.

CUBISM means the naturalistic abstract school of painters in Paris, who came, through Picasso, out of Cézanne. The word, even, **CUBISM**, is a heavy, lugubrious word. The Cubist's paintings have a large tincture of the deadness (as well as the weightiness) of Cézanne; they are static and representative, not swarming, exploding or burgeoning with life, as is the ideal of the Futurists, or electric with a more mastered, vivid

vitality, which is the conception of their mission held by most of the Vorticists.

Because **VORTICISM** is a word first used here, that is no reason why it should be used rather than another, unless there are a group of painters who are so distinctive that they need a distinctive tag, and to whom this especial tag may aptly apply. I consider that there are. For the instruction of the small public interested in these matters, I will point out, to begin with, in the following notes, the way in which the English **VORTICISTS** differ from the French, German or Italian painters of kindred groups.

THE VORTEX, SPRING, 1915.

I.

The painters have cut away and cut away warily, till they have trapped some essential. European painting to-day is like the laboratory of an anatomist: things stand up stark and denuded everywhere as the result of endless visionary examination. But Life, more life than ever before, is the objective; some romancing of elixirs, as the rawest student will: and all professing some branch of energy.

When they say LIFE, they do at least mean something complete, that can only be meant by dissociating vitality from beef and social vivacity on the one hand, and good dinners and every day acts of propagation on the other.

Painting has been given back its imaginative horizons without renouncing the scientific work of the Impressionists or returning, beyond that, to a perpetual pastiching of old forms of art, which in a hundred ways we cannot assimilate.*

There have grown up three distinct groups of artists in Europe. The most important, in the sense that it contains the most important artist, and has influenced more men of talent than any other, is the Cubist group. Pablo Picasso, a Spaniard living in Paris, is chiefly responsible for this movement. Definitely inspired by this group, but, with their Italian energy and initiative, carried off to a quite different, more pugnacious and effervescent, point of the compass, is the Futurist group, having in Balla, Severini and Boccioni (given in order of merit, as I think) three important artists.

The third group is that formed by the EXPRESSIONIST movement, that is Kandinsky. We will consider these three groups critically; insisting on those aspects in which they do not finally satisfy the needs of modern painting that were responsible for their appearance.

II.

The IMPRESSIONISTS carried naturalism to its most photographic extreme, in theory. The ROMANTICS, their predecessors, would have no Jupiters and Ariadnes, and substituted Don Juan and Gretchen. The IMPRESSIONISTS, in their turn, hustled away all the Corsairs, Feudal rakes and Teutonic maidens, and installed their mistresses and landladies on the front of the stage. They had not, at first, much time to think of anything else, this heroic act occupying all their energies. In painting, the IMPRESSIONISTS wished in everything to be TRUTHFUL. It was the age of scientific truth. Colour out of the earth had to imitate the light. The pigment for its own sake and on its own merits as colour, was of no importance. It was only important

* The fundamental qualities are the same, naturally, in the great art of every time. The only thing an artist has to learn of the art of another time is that fundamental excellence. But if he is a fine artist he contains this fundamental force and excellence, and therefore has no need to potter about Museums, especially as life supplies the rest, and is short.

in so far as it could reproduce the blendings of the prism. Then like a German in London not concentrated, there was a sort of 5 mile limit beyond which a REALIST must not move. He must paint what is under his nose—"composition" or arrangement, that is, as understood by them—anything but scientific unmodified transcriptions an academicism. Roughly speaking, your washing-stand or sideboard must be painted, with due attention to complementaries, and in form it must be Nature's empiric proportions and exactly Nature's usually insignificant arrangements. If the line becomes unruly and independent, it must be suppressed. If the colour insidiously suggests that it would be happier near some other colour, it must be listened to ONLY if it belongs to a body that can, while still appearing "natural," be shifted nearer the objects dyed in the colour desired by its own tint. But this would be a physical feat, very often, requiring unexampled ingenuity, so things were usually left as they were, or hustled into careless "arrangement." Dégas by violent perspectives (the theatre seen from its poulailler) or Cézanne by distortion and "bad drawing," escaped from this aesthetic legislation. So this pedantry, with its scornful and snobbish verbotens, may be seen establishing its academies.

III.

This exposition may appear unnecessarily thorough. It is not, for the following reason: one of the most important features of the painting of the CUBISTS', and Picasso's practice, is a tenet they have taken over wholesale and unmodified from the IMPRESSIONISTS. Picasso through the whole of his "Cubist" period has always had for starting-point in his creations, however abstract, his studio-table with two apples and a mandoline, the portrait of a poet of his acquaintance, or what not. His starting-point is identical with that of Cézanne or Manet.

At the beginning of his "Cubist" period he was momentarily diverted into a Gauguinism à la Dérain. But after that the portraits of men with mandolines and apples and guitars succeeded each other with regularity.

But as regards this aspect of Picasso's later painting, it must always be remembered that he was first known as a painter of purely stylistic and scholarly pictures. They were El Greco or attenuated Daumier, and were "composed" with a corresponding logic and rhythm. So Picasso, at the outset of his Cubism, was in the same position as the Impressionists, and felt the need to react violently against the languors and conventions of his earlier period. There was, again, the practical influence of the French. As to the rest of his Cubist colleagues, they are mostly converted Impressionists, and inclined naturally to cube over their first effort, merely, instead of making any fresh start. Others, not formerly Impressionists, suffer from a form of conscience similar to his.

To describe CUBISM, then, it is useful to lead off with its least picturesque attribute, that of naturalism. As to content and the character of its force-arrangements, it is essentially

the same as Impressionism, largely dosed in many cases with a Michaelangelizing of the every-day figure or scene. (Metzinger's "Femme à la Tasse," etc.) For the great licence Cubism affords tempts the artist to slip back into facile and sententious formulas, and escape invention.

IV.

The other link of CUBISM with IMPRESSIONISM is the especially scientific character of its experiments. Matisse, with his decoration, preceded the Cubists in reaction against scientific naturalism. But CUBISM, as well, though in a sense nearer the Impressionists than Matisse, rejects the accentless, invertebrate order of Nature seen en petit. Any portion of Nature we can observe is an unorganized and microscopic jumble, too profuse and too distributed to be significant. If we could see with larger eyes we should no doubt be satisfied. But to make any of these minute individual areas, or individuals, too proudly compact or monumental, is probably an equal stupidity. Finite and god-like lines are not for us, but, rather, a powerful but remote suggestion of finality, or a momentary organization of a dark insect swarming, like the passing of a cloud's shadow or the path of a wind.

The moment the Plastic is impoverished for the Idea, we get out of direct contact with these intuitive waves of power, that only play on the rich surfaces where life is crowded and abundant.

We must constantly strive to ENRICH abstraction till it is almost plain life, or rather to get deeply enough immersed in material life to experience the shaping power amongst its vibrations, and to accentuate and perpetuate these.

So CUBISM pulled Nature about with her cubes, and organized on a natural posed model, rather than attempting to catch her every movement, and fix something fluent and secret. The word CUBISM at once, for me, conjures up a series of very solid, heavy and usually gloomy Natures Mortes,—several bitter and sententious apples (but VERY GOOD WEIGHT) a usually pyramidal composition of the various aspects of a Poet or a Man with a Mandoline, Egyptian in static solemnity, a woman nursing disconsolately a very heavy and thoughtful head, and several bare, obviously tremendously heavy objects crowded near her on a clumsy board,—a cup and saucer and probably apples.

I admire some of these paintings extremely. Only we must recognize that what produced these paintings was a marvellous enterprise and enthusiastic experimentation, and that if we are to show ourselves worthy of the lead given us by two or three great painters of the last fifteen years, we must not abate in our interrogation,

V.

The FUTURISTS, briefly, took over the plastic and real, rather than the scientific, parts of the practice of the Cubists. Only they rejected the POSED MODEL, imitative and static side of CUBISM, and substituted the hurly-burly and exuberance of actual life. They have not brought a force of invention and taste equal to the best of the Paris group to bear on their modification of the Cubist formulas. Their work is very much prejudiced by Marinetti's propaganda, which is always too tyrannically literary, and insists on certain points that are not essential to their painting and is in itself rather stupid. His "Automobilism" is simply an Impressionist pedantry. His War-ravings is the term of a local and limited pugnacity, romantic and rhetorical. He is a useful figure as a corrective of very genuine character. But the artist is NOT a useful figure, though he may be ornamental. In fact the moment he becomes USEFUL and active he ceases to be an artist. We most of us nowadays are forced to be much more useful than we ought to be. But our painting at least should be saved the odour of the communistic platform or the medicine chest.

None of the Futurists have got, or attempted, the grandness that CUBISM almost postulated. Their doctrine, even, of maximum fluidity and interpenetration precluded this. Again, they constituted themselves POPULAR ARTISTS. They are too observant, impressionist and scientific; they are too democratic and subjugated by indiscriminate objects, such as Marinetti's moustache. And they are too banally logical in their exclusions.

VI.

The EXPRESSIONISTS finally, and most particularly Kandinsky, are ethereal, lyrical and cloud-like,—their fluidity that of the Blavatskyish soul, whereas the Futurist's is that of 19th century science. Kandinsky is the only PURELY abstract painter in Europe. But he is so careful to be passive and medium-like, and is committed, by his theory, to avoid almost all powerful and definite forms, that he is, at the best, wandering and slack. You cannot make a form more than it is by the best intentions in the world. In many of his abstract canvasses there are lines and planes that form the figure of a man. But these accidents are often rather dull and insignificant regarded as pieces of representation. You cannot avoid the conclusion that he would have done better to ACKNOWLEDGE that he had (by accident) reproduced a form in Nature, and have taken more trouble with it FOR ITS OWN SAKE AS A FRANKLY REPRESENTATIVE ITEM. A dull scribble of a bonhomme is always that and nothing else.

In the first show the FUTURISTS held in London, in the same way, from their jumble of real and half-real objects, a perfectly intelligible head or part of a figure would stick up suddenly. And this head or part of a figure, where isolated and mak-

ing a picture by itself, you noticed was extremely conventional. It discredited the more abstract stuff around it, for those not capable of discriminating where abstractions are concerned.

VII.

In addition to these three principal tendencies, there are several individuals and newer groups who are quite distinctive. Picabia, in France, reducing things to empty but very clean and precise mathematical blocks, coldly and wittily tinted like a milliner's shop-front, stands apart from the rest.

This reducing of things to bare and arid, not grandiose, but rather small and efficient, blocks of matter is on a par with a tendency in the work of several excellent painters in England, following the general Continental movement. Only in their case it is sculptural groups of lay figures, rather than more supple and chic mannequins. The Human Figure is, in the first place, exclusively chosen for treatment. Secondly, this is reduced to a series of matches, four for the legs and arms, one thick one for the trunk, and a pair of grappling irons added for the hands. Six or Seven of these figures are then rhythmically built up into a centralized, easily organised, human pattern. However abstracted by dividing up into a mosaic, this bare and heroic statement is the starting point. The grandiose and sentimental traditionalism inculcated at the Slade School is largely responsible for this variety.

Less interesting than either Picabia or the English tendency I have described, is the Orphiste movement. Delaunay is the most conspicuous Orphiste. Matisse-like colour, rather symbolist forms, all on a large scale, make up these paintings.

These reviews of other and similar movements to the Vorticism appear disparaging. But in the first place this inspection was undertaken, as I made clear at the start, to show the ways in which we DIFFER, and the tendencies we would CORRECT, and not as an appreciation of the other various groups, which would be quite another matter. They are definitely a criticism, then, and not an appraisal.

In the several details suggested above in the course of these notes, Vorticism is opposed to the various groups of continental painting. I will recapitulate these points, and amplify them. In so doing I can best tabulate and explain the aims of Vorticism to-day.

A.

1. The Cubist, especially Picasso, founds his invention on the posed model, or the posed Nature-Morte, using these models almost to the extent of the Impressionist.

This practice Vorticism repudiates as an absurdity and sign of relaxed initiative.

2. HOWEVER MUSICAL OR VEGETARIAN A MAN MAY BE, HIS LIFE IS NOT SPENT EXCLUSIVELY AMONGST APPLES AND MANDOLINES. Therefore there is something to be explained when he foregoes, in his paintings, exclusively with these two objects.

3. We pretend that the explanation of this curious phenomenon is merely the system of still-life painting that prevailed amongst the imitators of nature of the last century, and that was re-adopted by Picasso in violent reaction against his El Greco Athletes, aesthetic Mumpers, and Maeterlinck-like Poor-Folk.

4. We assert that the extreme languor, sentimentalism and lack of vitality in Picasso's early stylistic work was a WEAKNESS, as definite a one as consumption or anaemia, and that therefore his reaction, and the character of this reaction, should be discounted as a healthy influence in modern painting, which it is not.

5. We further assert that the whole of the art based, from this angle, on Picasso's unique personality is suspect.

6. The placid empty planes of Picasso's later "natures-mortes" the bric-à-brac of bits of wall-paper, pieces of cloth, etc., tastefully arranged, wonderfully tastefully arranged, is a dead and unfruitful tendency.

7. These tours-de-force of taste, and DEAD ARRANGEMENTS BY THE TASTEFUL HAND WITHOUT, not instinctive organisations by the living will within, are too inactive and uninventive for our northern climates, and the same objections can be made to them as to Matisse DECORATION.

8. The most abject, anaemic, and amateurish manifestation of this Matisse "decorativeness," or Picasso deadness and bland arrangement, could no doubt be found (if that were necessary or served any useful purpose) in Mr. Fry's curtain and pincushion factory in Fitzroy Square.

9. The whole of the modern movement, then, is, we maintain, under a cloud.

10. That cloud is the exquisite and accomplished, but discouraged, sentimental and inactive, personality of Picasso.

11. We must disinculpate ourselves of Picasso at once.

B.

1. We applaud the vivacity and high-spirits of the Italian Futurists.

2. They have a merit similar to Strauss's Waltzes, or Rag-Time; the best modern Popular Art, that is.

3. Sometimes they sink below the Blue Danube, and My Home in Dixie. Sometimes (notably in Balla's paintings) they get into a higher line of invention, say that of Daumier.

4. The chief criticism that can be made as regards them is that that can be levelled at Kandinsky: that they are too much theorists and propagandists; and that to the great plastic qualities that the best cubist pictures possess they never attain.

5. Their teaching, which should be quite useful for the public, they allow also to be a tyrant to themselves.

6. They are too mechanically reactive and impressionistic, and just as they do not master and keep in their places their ideas, so they do not sufficiently dominate the contents of their pictures.

7. Futurism is too much the art of Prisoners.

8. Prison-art has often been very good, but the art of the Free Man is better.

9. The Present DOES influence the finest artist: there is no OUGHT about it, except for the bad artists, who should justify their existence by obedience.

10. Futurism and identification with the crowd, is a huge hypocrisy.

11. The Futurist is a hypocrite, who takes himself in first: and this is very bad for his otherwise excellent health.

12. To produce the best pictures or books that can be made, a man requires all the peace and continuity of work that can be obtained in this troubled world, and nothing short of this will serve. So he cannot at the same time be a big game hunter, a social light or political agitator. Byron owed three-fourths of his success to his life and personality. But life and personality fade out of work like fugitive colours in painting.

13. The effervescent, Active-Man, of the Futurist imagination would never be a first-rate artist.

14. Also, the lyrical shouts about the God-Automobile, etc., are a wrong tack, surely. THE AUTOMOBILE WOULD SMILE IF IT COULD. Such savage worship is on a par with Voodooism and Gauguin-Romance.

15. But there is no reason why an artist should not be active as an artist: every reason, rather, why he should.

16. Our point is that he CANNOT have to the full the excellent and efficient qualities we admire in the man of action unless he eschews action and sticks hard to thought.

17. The Futurist propaganda, in its pedantry, would tend to destroy initiative and development.

18. The leisure of an ancient Prince, the practical dignity required by an aristocratic function; a Guardsman stamping before he salutes his officer, the grace and strength of animals, are all things very seldom experienced to-day, but that it might be desirable to revive.

19. Should we not revive them at once?

20. In any case, the "the Monaco" of Severini, night-clubs, automobiles, etc., are for the rich. May not the Rich gradually become less savage, even in England, and may not amplitude, "Kultur," and ceremony be their lot and ambition to-morrow? Perhaps it would be well to make clear to them that the only condition of their remaining rich will be if they make this effort.

21. A democratic state of mind is cowardice or muddle-headedness. This is not to say that in certain periods "the people" are not far preferable, individually, to their masters.

22. The People are in the same position as the Automobile. They would smile sometimes, if they could!

23. But they cannot.

24. We go on calling them God.

C.

1. In dealing with Kandinsky's doctrine, and tabulating differences, you come to the most important feature of this new synthesis I propose.

2. I indicated in my notes some pages back the nature of my objection to the particular theoretic abstraction of Kandinsky.

3. In what is one painting representative and another non-representative?

4. If a man is not representing people, is he not representing clouds? If he is not representing clouds, is he not representing masses of bottles? If he is not representing masses of bottles is he not representing houses and masonry? Or is he not representing in his most seemingly abstract paintings, mixtures of these, or of something else? Always REPRESENTING, at all events.

5. Now, if he is representing masses of bottles in one "abstract" picture, and masonry in another, the masses-of-bottles picture would, by ordinary human standards, be less interesting or important than the picture made up of masonry, because houses are more interesting, or rather dignified, things, for most folk, than bottles.

6. But, from the plastic and not-human point of view this deciding factor as to interest would not hold.

7. And it is no doubt wholesome, so long as the "too great humanity" of humanity lasts, for critics to insist on this detached, not-human factor, and judge works of art according to it.

8. But this again is a human and reactive reason, and for an artist who has passed the test of seriousness in weeding sentiment out of his work, and has left it hard, clean and plastic, this consideration, proper, perhaps, to the critic, need be no part of his programme.

9. For the integrity of this movement, it is necessary to face all the objections of those who would hustle us off the severe platform where we have taken our stand.

10. But we must not provide reasonings for the compromisers and exploiters that any serious movement produces. On this dangerous ground we cannot be too precise.

11. Before proceeding, I would consider one point especially.

12. Kandinsky, docile to the intuitive fluctuations of his soul, and anxious to render his hand and mind elastic and receptive, follows this unreal entity into its cloud-world, out of the material and solid universe.

13. He allows the Bach-like will that resides in each good artist to be made war on by the slovenly and wandering Spirit.

14. He allows the rigid chambers of his Brain to become a mystic house haunted by an automatic and puerile Spook, that leaves a delicate trail like a snail.

15. It is just as useless to employ this sort of Dead, as it is to have too many dealings with the Illustrious Professional Dead, known as Old Masters.

16. The Blavatskyish soul is another Spook which needs laying, if it gets a vogue, just as Michael Angelo does. (Michael Angelo is probably the worst spook in Europe, and haunts English art without respite.)

17. I return to the question of representation.

18. If it is impossible, then, to avoid representation in one form or another:

19. If, as objects, the objects in your most abstract picture always have their twins in the material world:—they are always either a mass of bottles, clouds, or the square shapes of some masonry, for instance:—

20. Is it, under these circumstances, a fault or a weakness if your shapes and objects correspond with a poetry or a sentiment, that in itself is not plastic, but sentimental?

21. I would draw your attention to two things in this connection.

22. Picasso, in his *L'HOMME A LA CLARINETTE* (1912)—there are more striking examples, but I have not the titles—is giving you the portrait of a man.

23. But the character of the forms (that is the now famous Cubist formula) is that of masonry; plastically, to all intents and purposes this is a house: the colour, as well, helping to this effect.

24. The supple, soft and vital elements, which distinguish animals and men, and which in the essential rendering of a man or an animal would have to be fully given, if not insisted on, are here transformed into the stolid masonry of a common building.

25. The whole Cubist formula, in fact, in its pure state, is a plastic formula for stone or for brick-built houses.

26. It may be objected that all the grandest and most majestic art in the world, however (Egyptian, Central African, American) has rather divested man of his vital plastic qualities and changed him into a more durable, imposing and in every way harder machine; and that is true.

27. This dehumanizing has corresponded happily with the unhuman character, the plastic, architectural quality, of art itself.

28. A rigidity and simplification to a more tense and angular entity (as in the case of Mantegna) has not prejudiced their high place, or the admiration due to, several great artists.

29. It is natural for us to represent a man as we would wish him to be; artists have always represented men as more beautiful, more symmetrically muscular, with more commanding countenances than they usually, in nature, possess.

30. And in our time it is natural that an artist should wish to endow his "bonhomme" when he makes one in the grip of an heroic emotion, with something of the fatality, grandeur and efficiency of a machine.

31. When you watch an electric crane, swinging up with extraordinary grace and ease a huge weight, your instinct to admire this power is, subconsciously, a selfish one. It is a pity that there are not men so strong that they can lift a house up, and fling it across a river.

32. In any heroic, that is, energetic representations of men to-day, this reflection of the immense power of machines will be reflected.

33. But, in the first place, Picasso's structures are not **ENERGETIC** ones, in the sense that they are very static dwelling houses. A machine is in a greater or less degree, a living thing. It's lines and masses imply force and action, whereas those of a dwelling do not.

34. This deadness in Picasso, is partly due to the naturalistic method, of "cubing" on a posed model, which I have referred to before, instead of taking the life of the man or animal inside your work, and building with this life fluid, as it were.

35. We may say, this being so, that in Picasso's portrait the forms are those of masonry, and, properly, should only be used for such. They are inappropriate in the construction of a man, where, however rigid the form may be, there should be at least the suggestions of life and displacement that you get in a machine. If the method of work or temperament of the artist went towards vitality rather than a calculated deadness, this would not be the case.

36. A second point to underline is the disparity between the spectator's and the artist's capacity for impersonal vision, which must play a part in these considerations.

37. A Vorticiest, lately, painted a picture in which a crowd of squarish shapes, at once suggesting windows, occurred. A sympathiser with the movement asked him, horror-struck, "are not those windows?" "Why not?" the Vorticiest replied. "A window is for you actually **A WINDOW**: for me it is a space, bounded by a square or oblong frame, by four bands or four lines, merely."

38. The artist, in certain cases, is less scandalized at the comprehensible than is the Public.

39. And the fine artist could "represent" where the bad artist should be forced to "abstract."

40. I am not quite sure, sometimes, whether it should not be the Royal Academy where the severity of the abstract reigns, and whether we should not be conspicuous for our "Life" and "Poetry"—always within the limits of plastic propriety. Life should be the prerogative of the alive.

41. To paint a recognisable human being should be the rarest privilege, bestowed as a sort of "Freedom of Art."

D.

1. The human and sentimental side of things, then, is so important that it is only a question of how much, if at all, this cripples or perverts the inhuman plastic nature of painting.

If this could be decided we should know where we were. For my part I would put the maximum amount of poetry into painting that the plastic vessel would stand without softening and deteriorating: the poetry, that is to say, that is inherent in matter.

2. There is an immense amount of poetry, and also of plastic qualities as fine as Rembrandt's, in Vincent Van Gogh. But they remain side by side, and are not assimilated perfectly to each other.

3. On the other hand, Kandinsky's spiritual values and musical analogies seem to be undesirable, even if feasible: just as, although believing in the existence of the supernatural, you may regard it as redundant and nothing to do with life. The art of painting, further, is for a living man, and the art most attached to life.

4. My soul has gone to live in my eyes, and like a bold young lady it lolls in those sunny windows. Colours and forms can therefore have no **DIRECT** effect on it. That, I consider, is why I am a painter, and not anything else so much as that.

5. The eyes are animals, and bask in an absurd contentment everywhere.

6. They will never forget that red is the colour of blood, though it may besides that have a special property of exasperation.

7. They have a great deal of the coldness of the cat, its supposed falsity and certain passion.

8. But they like heat and the colour yellow, because it warms them: the chemicals in the atmosphere that are good for the gloss of their fur move them deeply; and the "soul" sentimentalizes them just so much as it may without causing their hair to drop out.

9. This being so, the moonlight and moon-rack of ultra-pure art or anything else too pure "*se serait trompé de guichet*" if it sought to move me.

10. But I have no reason to believe that any attempt of this sort has been made.

11. So much for my confession. I do not believe that this is only a matter of temperament. I consider that I have been describing the painter's temperament.

12. When I say poetry, too, I mean the warm and steaming poetry of the earth, of Van Gogh's rich and hypnotic sunsets, Rembrandt's specialized, and golden crowds, or Balzac's brutal imagination. The painter's especial gift is a much more exquisite, and aristocratic affair than this female bed of raw emotionality. The two together, if they can only be reconciled, produce the best genius.

E.

1. Having gone over these points, it will be easier to see what our position is towards this question of representation and non-representation.

2. If everything is representation, in one sense, even in the most "abstract" paintings, the representation of a Vorticist and of an Impressionist are in different planets.

3. What I mean, first of all, by this unavoidable representative element, is not that any possible natural scene or person is definitely co-ordinated, but that the content, in detail, must be that of the material universe: that close swarming forms approach pebbles, or corn or leaves or the objects in some shop window somewhere in the world: that ample, bland forms are intrinsically either those of clouds, or spaces of masonry, or of sand deserts.

4. Secondly, the general character of the organizing lines and masses of the picture inevitably betray it into some category or other of an organized terrestrial scene or human grouping: especially as the logic and mathematics at the bottom of both are the same.

5. If you are enthusiastically for "pure form" and Kandinsky you will resist this line of reasoning; if for the Goupil Salon or the Chenil Art Gallery you will assent with a smile of indecent triumph, soon to be chastened. We will assume consent, however, to the last line of argument.

6. In that case, why not approximate your work entirely to the appearance of surrounding Nature; landscape, houses and men?

7. Should you have a marked fundamental attachment to the shapes of bottles, and live in a land where there are only gourds (I live in a land where there are only "gourds," in the slang sense) then realism is unnatural—if you are quite sure your love of bottles is not a romantic exoticism, but inborn and cold conceit. But these aberrations are infrequent.

8. The first reason for not imitating Nature is that you cannot convey the emotion you receive at the contact of Nature by imitating her, but only by becoming her. To sit down and copy a person or a scene with scientific exactitude is an absurd and gloomy waste of time. It would imply the most abject depths of intellectual vacuity were it not for the fact that certain compensations of professional amusement and little questions of workmanship make it into a monotonous and soothing game.

9. The essence of an object is beyond and often in contradiction to, its simple truth: and literal rendering in the fundamental matter of arrangement and logic will never hit the emotion intended by unintelligent imitation.

10. Not once in ten thousand times will it correspond.

11. It is always the POSSIBILITIES in the object, the IMAGINATION, as we say, in the spectator, that matters. Nature itself is of no importance.

12. The sense of objects, even, is a sense of the SIGNIFICANCE of the object, and not its avoirdupois and scientifically ascertainable shapes and perspectives.

13. If the material world were not empirical and matter simply for science, but were organized as in the imagination, we should live as though we were dreaming. Art's business is to show how, then, life would be: but not as Flaubert, for instance, writes, to be a repose and "d'agir à la façon de la Nature," in giving sleep as well as dream.

15. The Imagination, not to be a ghost, but to have the vividness and warmth of life, and the atmosphere of a dream, uses, where best inspired, the pigment and material of nature.

16. For instance, because you live amongst houses, a "town-dweller," that is no reason why you should not specialize in soft forms, reminiscent of the lines of hills and trees, except that familiarity with objects gives you a psychological mastery akin to the practised mastery of the workman's hand.

17. But there is, on the other hand, no reason why you should not use this neighbouring material, that of endless masonry and mechanical shapes, if you enjoy it: and, as a practical reason, most of the best artists have exploited the plastic suggestions found in life around them.

18. If you do not use shapes and colours characteristic of your environment, you will only use some others characteristic more or less of somebody else's environment, and certainly no better. And if you wish to escape from this, or from any environment at all, you soar into the clouds, merely. That will only, in its turn, result in your painting what the dick-birds would if they painted. Perhaps airmen might even conceivably share this tendency with the lark.

19. Imitation, and inherently unselective registering of impressions, is an absurdity. It will never give you even the feeling of the weight of the object, and certainly not the meaning of the object or scene, which is its spiritual weight.

20. But, to put against this, attempt to avoid all representative element is an equal absurdity. As much of the material poetry of Nature as the plastic vessel will stand should be included. But nowadays, when Nature finds itself expressed so universally in specialized mechanical counterparts, and cities have modified our emotions, the plastic vessel, paradoxically, is more fragile. The less human it becomes, the more delicate, from this point of view.

21. There is no necessity to make a sycophantish hullabuloo about this state of affairs, or burn candles in front of your telephone apparatus or motor car. It is even preferable to have the greatest contempt for these useful contrivances, which are no better and no worse than men.

22. Da Vinci recommends you to watch and be observant of the grains and markings of wood, the patterns found in Nature everywhere.

23. The patterned grains of stones, marble, etc., the fibres of wood, have a rightness and inevitability that is similar to the rightness with which objects arrange themselves in life.

24. Have your breakfast in the ordinary way, and, as the result of your hunger and unconsciousness, on getting up you will find an air of inevitability about the way the various objects, plates, coffee-pot, etc., lie upon the table, that it would be very difficult to get consciously. It would be still more difficult to convince yourself that the deliberate arrangement was natural.

25. IN THE SAME WAY THAT SAVAGES, ANIMALS AND CHILDREN HAVE A "RIGHTNESS," SO HAVE OBJECTS CO-ORDINATED BY UNCONSCIOUS LIFE AND USEFUL ACTIONS.

26. Use is always primitive.

27. This quality of ACCIDENTAL RIGHTNESS, is one of the principal elements in a good picture.

28. The finest artists,—and this is what Art means—are those men who are so trained and sensitized that they have a perpetually renewed power of DOING WHAT NATURE DOES, only doing it with all the beauty of accident, without the certain futility that accident implies.

29. Beauty of workmanship in painting and sculpture is the appearance of Accident, in the sense of Nature's work, or rather of Growth, the best paintings being in the same category as flowers, insects and animals. And as Nature, with its glosses, tinting and logical structures, is as efficient as any machine and more wonderful; hand-made, as recommendation, means done by Nature.

30. Imperfect hands (most artists') produce what might be termed machine-made; as men were the first machines, just as insects were the first artists.

31. The best creation, further, is only the most highly developed selection and criticism.

32. It is well to study the patterns on a surface of marble. But the important thing is to be able to make patterns like them without the necessity of direct mechanical stimulus.

33. You must be able to organize the cups, saucers and people, or their abstract plastic equivalent, as naturally as Nature, only with the added personal logic of Art, that gives the grouping significance.

34. What is known as "Decorative Art" is rightly despised by both the laborious and unenterprising imitators of Nature on the one hand, and the brilliant inventors and equals of Nature on the other.

35. The "Decorative" artist (as examples, the sort of spirit that animates the Jugend, Rhythm, Mr. Roger Fry's little belated Morris movement) is he who substitutes a banal and obvious human logic for the co-ordination and architectures that the infinite forces of Nature bring about.

36. These exterior "arrangers," not living their work, have not even the reflected life that the photographer can claim.

37. The only people who have nothing to do with Nature and who as artists are most definitely inept and in the same box as the Romantic,—who is half-way between the Vegetable and the God—are these between-men, with that most odious product of man, modern DECORATION.

F.

1. To conclude :—The Whole of art to-day can undoubtedly be modified in the direction of a greater imaginative freedom of work, and with renewed conception of aesthetics in sympathy with our time.

2. But I think a great deal of effort will automatically flow back into more natural forms from the barriers of the Abstract.

3. There have been so far in European painting Portrait, Landscape, Genre, Still-life.

4. Whatever happens, there is a new section that has already justified its existence, which is bound to influence, and mingle with the others, as they do with each other; that is, for want of a better word, the Abstract.

5. This extremely moderate claim and view of our endeavour does not however, suggest that it would be "equally good" to paint Brangwyns, Nicholsons or Poynters.

6. The least and most vulgar Japanese print or Island-carving is a masterpiece compared to a Brangwyn, a Nicholson, or a Poynter.

7. The whole standard of art in our commercial, cheap, musical-comedy civilization is of the basest and most vitiated kind.

8. Practically nothing can be done, no Public formed, until these false and filthy standards are destroyed, and the place sanified.

9. The methods of Science, prevalent all through life, will gradually accomplish this. We, however, would hasten it.

10. What I said about only THE GOOD ARTISTS being allowed to "represent," or do recognizable things, was not a jibe.

11. Actually, if Tube Posters, Magazine Covers, Advertisement and Commercial Art generally, were ABSTRACT, in the sense that our paintings at present are, they would be far less harmful to the EYE, and thence to the minds, of the Public.

12. There should be a Bill passed in Parliament at once FORBIDDING ANY IMAGE OR RECOGNIZABLE SHAPE TO BE STUCK UP IN ANY PUBLIC PLACE; or as advertisement or what-not, to be used in any way publicly.

13. Only after passing a most severe and esoteric Board and getting a CERTIFICATE, should a man be allowed to represent in his work Human Beings, Animals, or Trees.

14. Mr. Brangwyn, Mr. Nicholson and Sir Edward Poynter would not pass this Board: driven into the Vortex, there would be nothing left of them but a few Brangwynesque bubbles on the surface of the Abstract.

WYNDHAM LEWIS.

(Some further sections will be added to this Essay in the next number of the Magazine)



PRELUDES.

I.

The winter evening settles down
With smell of steaks in passage ways.
Six o'clock.
The burnt out ends of smoky days.
And now a gusty shower wraps
The grimy scraps
Of withered leaves about your feet
And newspapers from vacant lots ;
The showers beat
On broken blinds and chimney-pots,
And at the corner of the street
A lonely cab-horse steams and stamps.
And then the lighting of the lamps !

II.

The morning comes to consciousness
Of faint stale smells of beer
From the sawdust-trampled street
With all its muddy feet that press
To early coffee-stands.
With the other masquerades
That time resumes,
One thinks of all the hands
That are raising dingy shades
In a thousand furnished rooms.

III.

You tossed a blanket from the bed,
You lay upon your back, and waited ;
You dozed, and watched the night revealing
The thousand sordid images
Of which your soul was constituted ;
They flickered against the ceiling.
And when the world came back
And the light crept up between the shutters,
And you heard the sparrows in the gutters,
You had such a vision of the street
As the street hardly understands ;
Sitting along the bed's edge, where
You curled the papers from your hair,
Or clasped the yellow soles of feet
In the palms of both soiled hands.

IV.

His soul stretched tight across the skies
That fade behind a city block,
Or trampled by insistent feet
At four and five and six o'clock ;
And short square fingers stuffing pipes
And evening newspapers, and eyes
Assured of certain certainties,
The conscience of a blackened street
Impatient to assume the world.
I am moved by fancies that are curled
Around these images, and cling :
The notion of some infinitely gentle,
Infinitely suffering thing.
Wipe your hand across your mouth, and laugh ;
The worlds revolve like ancient women
Gathering fuel in vacant lots.



POEMS

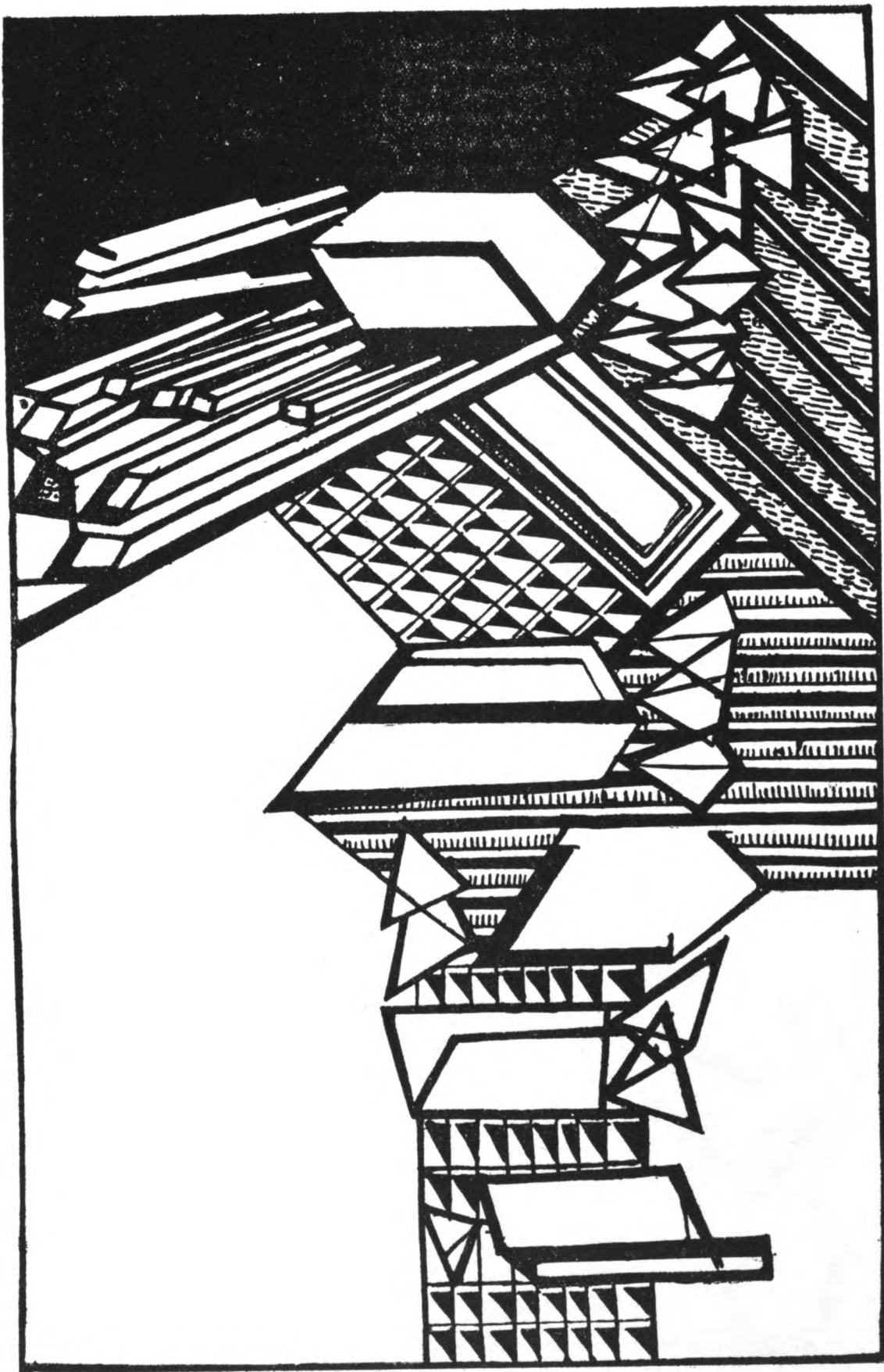
BY

T. S. ELIOT.

RHAPSODY OF A WINDY NIGHT.

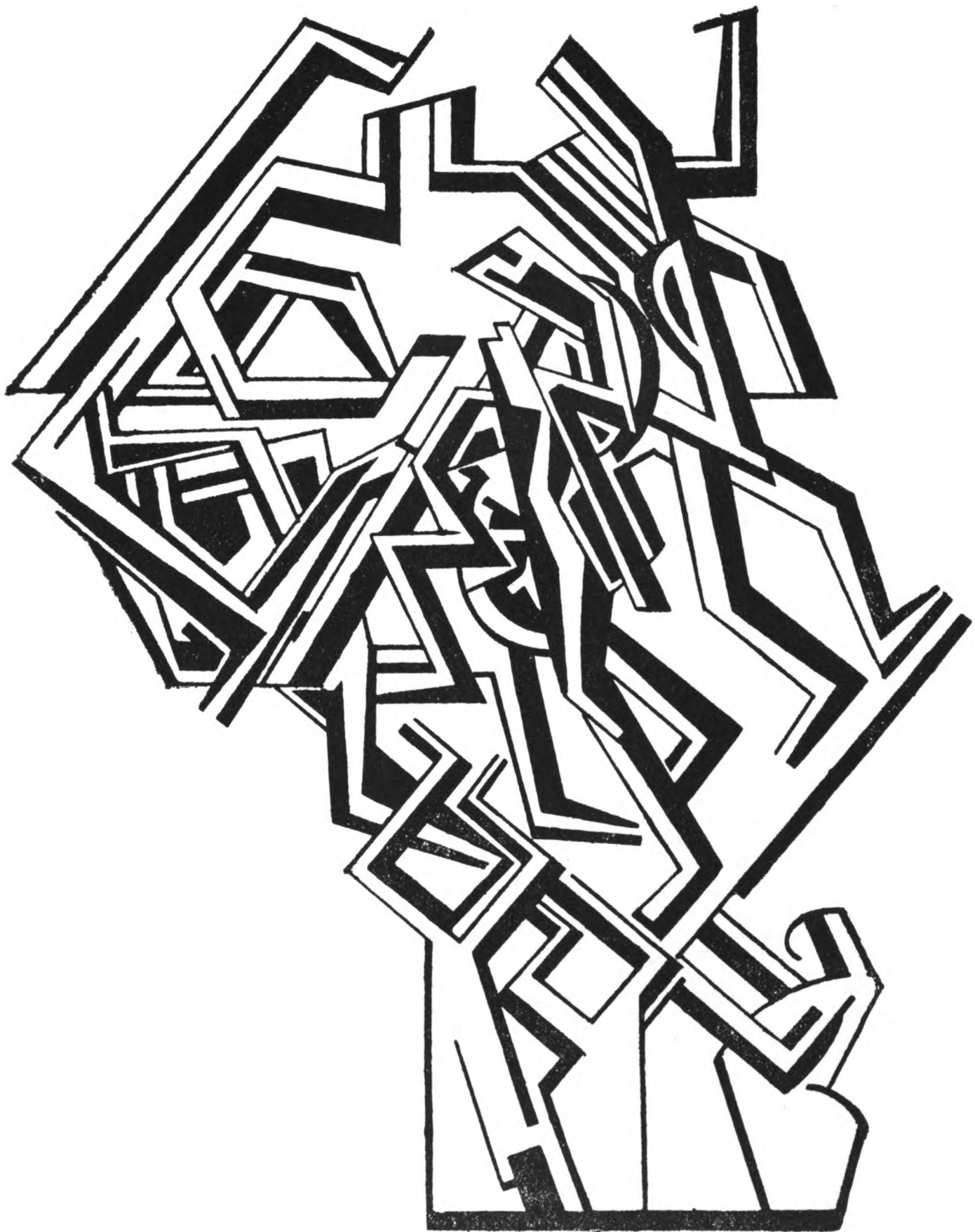
Twelve o'clock,
Along the reaches of the street
Held in a lunar synthesis,
Whispering lunar incantations
Dissolve the floors of the memory
And all its clear relations,
Its divisions and precisions,
Every street lamp that I pass
Beats like a fatalistic drum,
And through the spaces of the dark
Midnight shakes the memory
As a madman shakes a dead geranium.
Half past one,
The street lamp sputtered,
The street lamp muttered,
The street lamp said, " Regard that woman
" Who hesitates toward you in the light of the door
" Which opens on her like a grin.
" You see the border of her dress
" Is torn and stained with sand,
" And you see the corner of her eye
" Twists like a crooked pin."
The memory throws up high and dry
A crowd of twisted things ;
A twisted branch upon the beach
Eaten smooth, and polished
As if the world gave up
The secret of its skeleton,
Stiff and white.
A broken spring in a factory yard
Rust that clings to the form that the strength has left
Hard and curled and ready to snap.
Half past two,

The street lamp said,
 " Remark the cat which flattens itself in the gutter,
 " Slips out its tongue
 " And devours a morsel of rancid butter."
 So the hand of a child, automatic,
 Slipped out and pocketed a toy that was running along the quai.
 I could see nothing behind that child's eye.
 I have seen eyes in the street
 Trying to peer through lighted shutters,
 And a crab one afternoon in a pool,
 An old crab with barnacles on his back,
 Gripped the end of a stick which I held him.
 Half past three,
 The lamp sputtered,
 The lamp muttered in the dark.
 The lamp hummed :
 " Regard the moon,
 " La lune ne garde aucune rancune,
 " She winks a feeble eye,
 " She smiles into corners.
 " She smoothes the hair of the grass.
 " The moon has lost her memory.
 " A washed-out smallpox cracks her face,
 " Her hand twists a paper rose,
 " That smells of dust and old cologne.
 " She is alone
 " With all the old nocturnal smells
 " That cross and cross across her brain.
 " The reminiscence comes
 " Of sunless dry geraniums
 " And dust in crevices,
 " Smells of chestnuts in the street,
 " And female smells in shuttered rooms,
 " And cigarettes in corridors
 " And cocktail smells in bars."
 The lamp said,
 " Four o'clock,
 " Here is the number on the door.
 " Memory !
 " You have the key,
 " The little lamp spreads a ring on the stair,
 " Mount.
 " The bed is open ; the toothbrush hangs on the wall,
 Put your shoes at the door, sleep, prepare for life.
 The last twist of the knife.



Eitelhella.

Progression.



Combat.

Roberts.



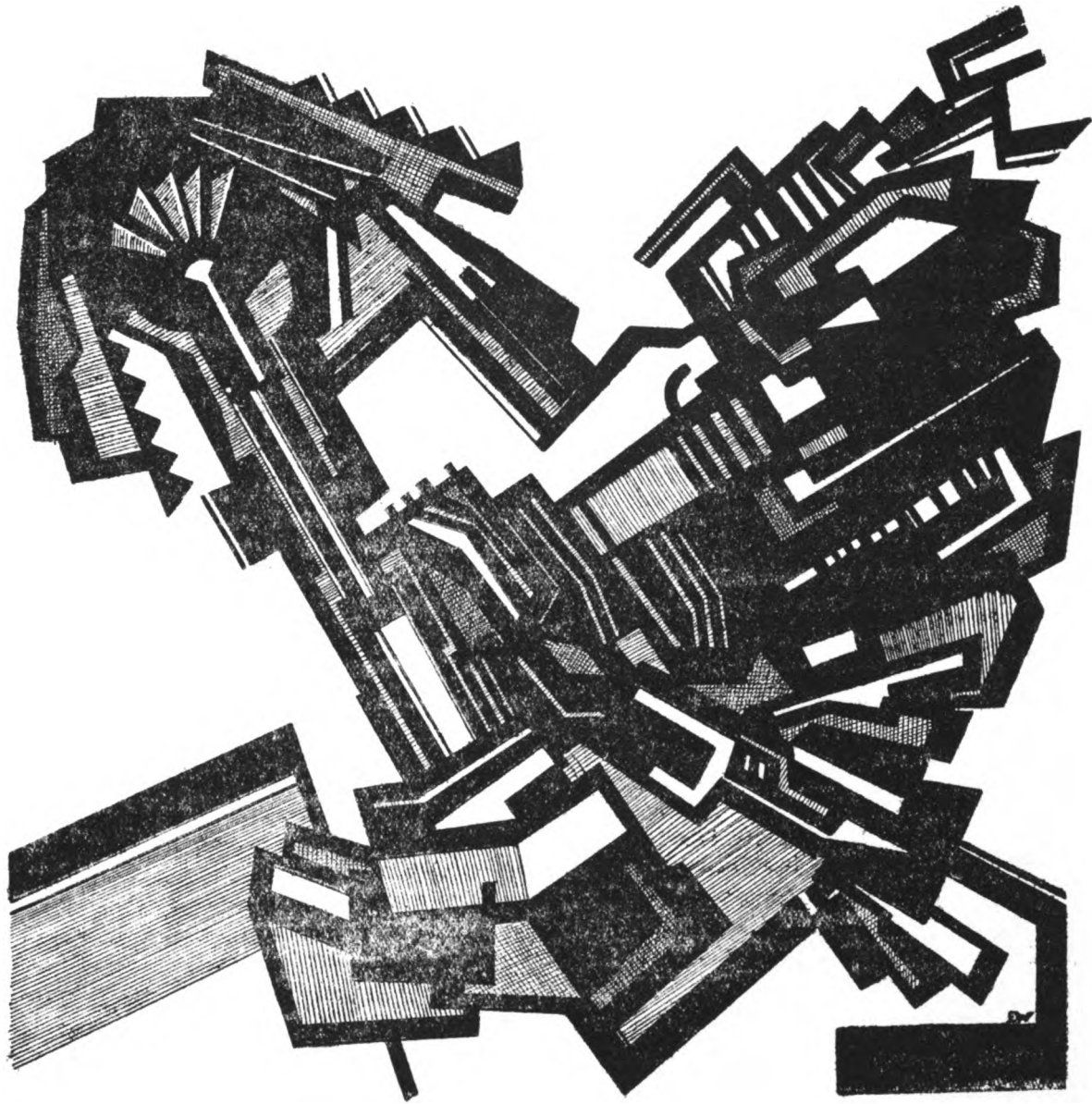
Atlantic City.

Sanders.



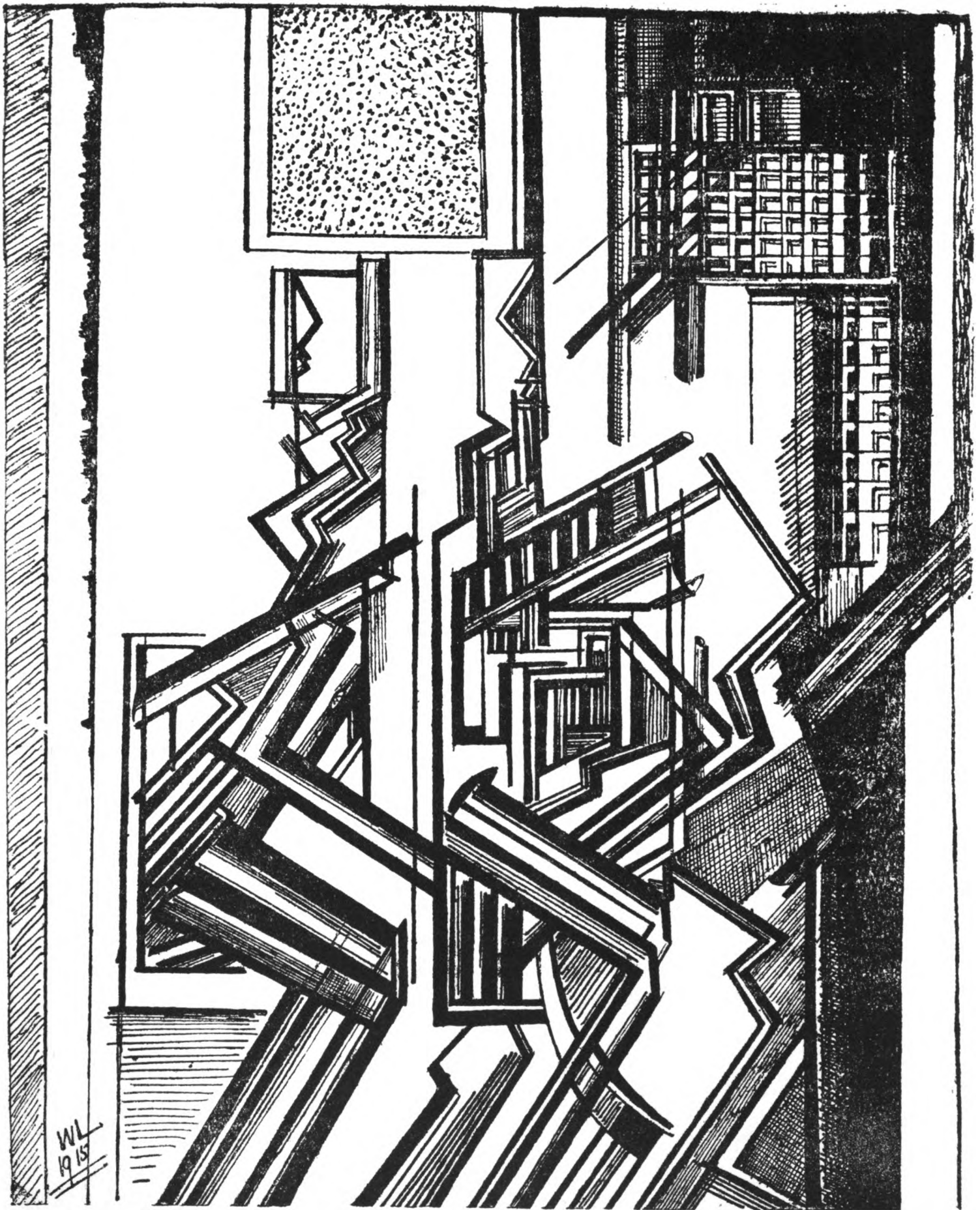
Rotterdam.

Wadsworth.



War-Engine.

Wadsworth.



Design for "Red Duet."

Wyndham Lewis.

MONOLOGUE.

My niche in nonentity still grins—
I lay knees, elbows pinioned, my sleep mutterings blunted against a wall.
Pushing my hard head through the hole of birth
I squeezed out with intact body.
I ache all over, but acrobatic, I undertake the feat of existence.
Details of equipment delight me.
I admire my arrogant spiked tresses, the disposition of my perpetually
foreshortened limbs,
Also the new machinery that wields the chains of muscles fitted beneath
my close coat of skin.
On a pivot of contentment my balanced body moves slowly.
Inquisitiveness, a butterfly, escapes.
It spins with drunken invitation. I poke my fingers into the middles of
big succulent flowers.
My fingers are fortunately tipped with horn.
Tentacles of my senses, subtle and far-reaching, drop spoils into the vast
sack of my greed.
Stretched ears projecting from my brain are gongs struck by vigorous
and brutal fists of air.
Into scooped nets of nostrils glide slippery and salt scents, I swallow
slowly with gasps.
In pursuit of shapes my eyes dilate and bulge. Finest instruments of
touch they refuse to blink their pressure of objects.
They dismember live anatomies innocently.
They run around the polished rims of rivers.
With risk they press against the cut edges of rocks and pricking pinnacles.
Pampered appetites and curiosities become blood-drops, their hot
mouths yell war.
Sick opponents dodging behind silence, echo alone shrills an equivalent
threat.
Obsessions rear their heads. I hammer their faces into discs.
Striped malignities spring upon me, and tattoo with incisions of wild claws.
Sped with whips of hurt, I hurry towards ultimate success.
I stoop to lick the bright cups of pain and drop out of activity.
I lie a slack bag of skin. My nose hangs over the abyss of exhaustion,
my loosened tongue laps sleep as from a bowl of milk.

JESSIE DISMORR.

LONDON NOTES.

IN PARK LANE.

Long necked feminine structures support almost without grimacing the elegant discomfort of restricted elbows.

HYDE PARK.

Commonplace, titanic figures with a splendid motion stride across the parched plateau of grass, little London houses only a foot high huddle at their heels.

Under trees all the morning women sit sewing and knitting, their monotonous occupation accompanying the agreeable muddle of their thoughts.

In the Row. Vitality civilized to a needles-point; highly-bred men and horses pass swiftly in useless delightful motion; women walk enamoured of their own accomplished movements.

BRITISH MUSEUM.

Gigantic cubes of iron rock are set in a parallelogram of orange sand.

Ranks of black columns of immense weight and immobility are threaded by a stream of angular volatile shapes. Their trunks shrink quickly in retreat towards the cavernous roof.

Innumerable pigeons fret the stone steps with delicate restlessness.

EGYPTIAN GALLERY.

In a rectangular channel of space light drops in oblique layers upon rows of polished cubes sustaining gods and fragments.

Monstrous human heads without backs protrude lips satisfied with the taste of pride.

Seductive goddesses, cat-faced and maiden-breasted sit eternally stroking smooth knees.

READING-ROOM.

This colossal globe of achievement presses upon two-hundred cosmopolitan foreheads, respectfully inclined.

PICCADILLY.

The embankment of brick and stone is fancifully devised and stuck with flowers and flags.

Towers of scaffolding draw their criss-cross pattern of bars upon the sky, a monstrous tartan.

Delicate fingers of cranes describe beneficent motions in space.

Glazed cases contain curious human specimens.

Nature with a brush of green pigment paints rural landscape up to the edge of the frame.

Pseudo-romantic hollows and hillocks are peopled by reality prostrate and hostile.

FLEET STREET.

Precious slips of houses, packed like books on a shelf, are littered all over with signs and letters.

A dark, agitated stream struggles turbulently along the channel bottom; clouds race overhead.

Curiously exciting are so many perspective lines, withdrawing, converging; they indicate evidently something of importance beyond the limits of sight.

JUNE NIGHT.

Rodengo calls for me at my little dark villa. I am waiting with happiness and amiability tucked up in my bosom like two darling lap-dogs. Should I never return to the place, they are safe. I am not good at finding my way back anywhere.

For Rodengo I have an ardent admiration. His pink cheeks, black beard, and look half of mannequin and half of audacious and revengeful Corsican amuse me. Ah, Rodengo! you are too conspicuous for day-light; but on a night of opera, this night of profound mutterings and meaningless summer lightning you are an indispensable adjunct of the scenery.

No 43 bus; its advertisements all lit from within, floats towards us like a luminous balloon. We cling to it and climb to the top. Towards the red glare of the illuminated city we race through interminable suburbs. These are the bare wings and corridors that give on to the stage. Swiftmess at least is exquisite. But it makes me too emotional. Amazing, these gymnastic agitations of the heart! Your blindness, my friend Rodengo, is your most intelligent attribute.

The Park, to our left, glimmers through strips of iron. Its lawns of antique satin are brocaded with elaborate parterres, whose dyes are faded beyond recognition. Dark as onyx with rims of silver are the little pools that suck in the dew. The tea-kiosk of whitened stucco is as remote as a temple shuttered up against the night. My desires loiter about the silent spaces.

We stop for passengers at Regent's Corner. Here crowds swarm under green electric globes. Now we stop every moment, the little red staircase is besieged. The bus is really too top-heavy. It must look like a great nodding bouquet, made up of absurd flowers and moths and birds with sharp beaks. I want to escape; but Rodengo is lazy and will not stop warbling his infuriating lovesongs. Ribbons of silver fire start into the air, and twist themselves into enormous bows with fringes of tiny dropping stars. Everybody stands up and screams. These people are curious, but not very interesting; they lack reticence. Ah, but the woman in the purple pelisse is too beautiful! I refuse to look at her when she stares round.

It is hot for a night in June. "Che, che, la donna." Rodengo, you have a magnificent tenor voice, but you bore me. Your crime is that I can no longer distinguish you from the rest of the world.

Surely I have had enough of romantics! their temperature is always above 98½, and the accelerated pulse throbs in their touch. Cool normality and classicalism tempt me, and spacious streets of pale houses. At the next arret I leave you my friends, I leave you Rodengo with the rose in your ear I escape from the unmannerly throbbing vehicle.

I take refuge in mews and by-ways. They lead to the big squares of the better neighbourhoods. Creeping through them I become temporarily disgraced, an outcast, a shadow that clings to walls. At least here I breathe my own breath. A decrescendo of sound pursues me, and a falling spangle.

Now out of reach of squalor and glitter, I wander in the precincts of stately urban houses. Moonlight carves them in purity. The presence of these great and rectangular personalities is a medicine. They are the children of colossal restraint, they are the last word of prose. (Poetics, your day is over!) In admiring them I have put myself on the side of all the severities. I seek the profoundest teachings of the inanimate. I feel the emotion of related shapes. Oh, discipline of ordered pilasters and porticoes! My volatility rests upon you as a swimmer hangs upon a rock.

Now the pool of silence reaches unplumbable depths. My dropping footsteps create widening circles of alarm. After all, I do not know why I should be here, I am a strayed Bohemian, a villa-resident, a native of conditions, half-sordid, half-fantastic. I am the style of a feuilleton cherishing a hopeless passion for Latin prose. This is an interlude of high love-making. I must get back to the life of the thoroughfares to which I belong.

Rodengo, you have long disappeared; but I think of your charm without regret. I have lost my taste for your period. The homeward-going busses are now thronged. Should I see you, I shall acknowledge you with affection. But I am not returning that way.

PROMENADE.

With other delicate and malicious children, a horde bright-eyed with bodies easily tired, I follow Curiosity, the reticent and maidenly governess of our adoration.

I am surprised to observe, in a converging thoroughfare, Hunger the vulgar usher, whipping up his tribe of schoolboys, who, questing hither and thither on robust limbs, fill the air with loud and innocent cries.

The suspicion suddenly quickens within me that there is an understanding. It is possible that we are being led by different ways into the same prohibited and doubtful neighbourhood.

PAYMENT.

Now that money is passing between us, for that which has no equivalent in coin, I will give you a shilling for your peculiar smile, and sixpence for the silken sweep of your dress ; and for your presence, the strange thing that I can neither grasp nor elude, I will give you another shilling.

MATILDA.

Strange that a beauty so dangerously near perfection should choose life without happenings and hedged in completely

By habits and hand-labours

Set in an ordered and commonplace rightness.

It is certain that she has no sense of play at all,

Coveting neither delight nor risk, nor the uses of her supreme gift :

So that within a homespun sobriety

The dread thing passes unperceived by most comers,

And chiefly secure from self-recognition

By strait bonds of chastity and duties ardently cherished.



THE ART OF THE GREAT RACE.

All times equally have witnessed what appeared to be a certain snobbish energy of Nature. Like a suburban Matron, men think they catch her plagiarising their fashionable selves. They laugh faintly with a distracted vagueness, or they tug at their moustaches, and slowly shake their bottoms and trill their feet, according to the period. But Oscar Wilde publicly denounced her. In following the social syntheses masters of fiction throw up in their works, flesh and blood appears to have transformed itself, and become a tributary, blood-relation, and even twin of the shadow.

So Wilde eventually accused Nature point blank of plagiarism. "Nature imitates Art, not Art Nature." Let us take up this old aesthetic quip, and set ourselves the light holiday task of blasting it indolently away.

First, however, it is advisable to become fixed on one point. Artists do not, "en tant qu'artistes," influence breathing humanity plastically. Bach moulded the respirations of his art and modified its organs; but the behaviour or appearance of the young Viennese was moulded by other and less precise hands. It is the human and literary side of plastic genius that affects contemporaries in this palpable way. In ideas, it is the reform element, and not the deep element (that is monotonous) which all of a sudden flings up a host of new characters. Goethe, with a book, set free the welt-schmerzen of the Suicidal Teuton. The razors flashed all over the Teuton world. The pistol-smoke went up from every village. He had pressed a nerve of a definite type of Teutonic man, and made a small desperate race suddenly active.

Bach stepped with the blank anonymity of Destiny. He squabbled with Monsieur un tel, got a job with some acumen in spite of somebody's efforts. But he did not turn Humanity into any new and equally futile way. No grocer talked more or less of his soul, or of his German soul, because of this master.

Painting, with its persistently representative element, has always had in the modern world more ethical effect. The artist has the same moral influence as the dressmaker. A bird-like hat in process of time produces a bird. Painting to-day, in renouncing more and more the picturesque and representative element, escapes also the embarrassments of its former influence, and the dangers of more and more plastic compromise.

To begin with, then, a Fabian young man, a John young lady (a painting young lady or a patronizing young lady), Oscar Wilde's now degenerate leavings, are not things that originally came from a pure fount of art.

What shall we say comes from a pure fount of art?

Nothing, according to our notion, for the purest art is not tyrannic but is continuous, and Tourgenief's "Six Unknown" always existed and always will exist.

Tourgenief, when asked whom he wrote for, said "for the Six Unknown." Tourgenief himself was merely one of them. He wore more lightly than any of his countrymen the overpowering psychic accoutrements that are the Russian spirited National Costume. He was an independent and permanent being.

Shakespeare, again, was a mighty mirror, and his contemporaries mirrors. His figures accumulated by a natural process, and for no reason. They dragged all sorts of burdens of power with them. They were immense outcasts, silhouetted at last in the sunshine of his plays. He whistled Music Hall airs as he worked. Shakespeare was one of the Six Unknown, though well enough known to the world. He was one of the easily numbered race who were the first and only certainly future men, who are unknown to each other. His effect on morals and appearances was as non-existent as Bach's.

Montaigne, Shakespeare's master, gives, in his books, a useless melancholy. Art is not active; it cuts away and isolates. It takes men as it finds them, a particular material, and works at it. It gets the best out of it, and it is the best that it isolates. The worst is still there too, to keep the man in touch with the World, and freer because of the separation. Perfect art insists on this duality, and develops it. It is for this reason and in this way, that the best art is always the nearest to its time, as surely as it is the most independent of it. It does not condescend to lead. But often, an artist, simply because he takes hold of his time impassively, impartially, without fuss, appears to be a confirmed protester; since that actuality seems eccentric to those who wander and halt.

Another question, transpiring naturally from this first one, is whether the possession of this immediate popular influence is as surely the sign of the inferior artist as an eminence and unchallengeable power like Shakespeare's, combined with that large uncanny effacement, is the mark of the finest artist? That question can be best answered at the end of this essay.

Before the Aesthetic blarney with Nature, lending itself to mock diagnosis, could be used, it was necessary to establish the value of this influence to which Wilde referred.

As to Nature's unoriginality then, how long would it take Nature, in the form of her human children, to make a replica

in flesh of the artist's work? She would have to begin imposing her will on the subject chosen very young. But in the case of the alleged imitation of Rossetti's type of woman by Nature, Rossetti in his young days was not known to Nature at large. It is at the moment of the artist's fame that these imitations suddenly appear. They appear at once on all hands like mushrooms. And if a painter of this human and political description be unknown one day and celebrated the next, these simulacra in flesh of his painted figures will appear as though by magic.

All goes to prove the pre-existence of these types, and that the artist only calls together and congregates from the abysses of common life, a hitherto scattered race, in exalting one of its most characteristic types into a literary or artistic canon, and giving it the authority of his special genius. Miss Siddall languished behind the counter in the Haberdasher's in Leicester Square long before the young Italian could have influenced her, or Nature have got to work on her with plagiaristic ardour. The "long necks" that Oscar Wilde speaks of, witnessed to the ideal tendency of their owners' minds centuries before Rossetti repeated them in his pictures.

I see every day in a certain A.B.C. Shop at least three girls who belong to a new and unknown race. They would furnish an artist looking for an origin with the model of a new mankind. And it would be as individual and apparently strange as that genre of Englishwoman that attracted Rossetti.

The John type of woman, our honoured and fair contemporary, more or less, poured burning oil on the heads of plumed assailants from the brand-new walls of 14th Century castles. She was a wild camp follower in the rear of Pictish armies. And the Beardsley woman was a cause of scandal to our remotest forefathers. These genres have always existed. On the promotion of their type to a position of certain consideration in art circles, and gradually in wider spheres of life itself, they all emerge from their holes, and walk proudly for a decade—or several, according to the vitality of their protector—in the public eye. We have still amongst us many survivals of a gentler fashion.

If you are not one of the Six, corresponding in the things here written about to the Six Hundred golden beings of the West which the Statue of Liberty sheds its rays on; if you are of an as yet uncharted race, you will some day perhaps have the opportunity of testing for yourself the validity of these assertions. Imagine yourself going out one morning, and by the hesitating yet flattering glances of your fellow citizens, and various other signs and portents, you gradually become aware that your day has come. Some artist, you at once see, perhaps with shrinking, is busily employed in making your type of beauty prevail. Or you believe yourself, with your "chapeau melon" and your large, but insignificant library, beyond the reach of the Creator. But the Wet Nurses of Dickens' time thought the same. The Suburbs never dreamt of being conscripted by any Gissings or Wellses that the old

Earth could make. They are now most drab but famous armies. If numbers were the decisive factor, they would certainly rout any host brought against them, except those gathered by a Religion.

The race that some of these political aesthetic creators call into life, overruns a city or a continent, a veritable invasion come out of the ground; risen in our midst, with the ferocious aspect of the mailed and bedizened bodyguard of some barbaric conqueror. Others come to us beneath the Aegis of some perfumed chief, with mincing steps and languid masterfulness. The former one may sometimes see refining itself amongst the gentle influences of the town, though preserving its barbarous costume and nomenclature; the latter learning a certain roughness from the manners of newer invaders. That debile and sinister race of diabolic dandies and erotically bloated diabesses and their attendant abortions, of Yellow Book fame, that tyrannised over the London mind for several years, has withdrawn from the capital, not to the delicate savagery from which it was supposed to come, but certainly to a savage clime. In Germany some years ago I observed in youthful state many figures of the Beardsley stock, as vigorous and vampire-like as when the ink was still undried on Smithers' catalogues.

When a man portrays and gives powerful literary expression to a certain type in a nation and milieu, he attracts to him that element in the race that he symbolises. These movements are occasionally accompanied with an enthusiasm that resembles a national awakening or revival—but in such instances, of a race within the Race. In the case of a great writer, when it is usually a moral type that is celebrated, the commotion is often considerable. But when it is the personal appearance that is in question, the peace may be definitely disturbed. Every nation is composed of several or many very distinct types or groups, and each needs expression just as each nation does.

Each of these psychic groups has, like the classes, a psychology.

They are independent of class, too. When those freemasonries are awoken, they exist without reference to their poet. Some creators, in fact, find themselves in the position of the Old Woman Who lived in a Shoe. This progeny may turn out to be a race of cannibals and proceed to eat their poet.

There is in every nation an inherently exotic element. But this "foreign" element is usually the most energetic part, and that side on which the race is destined to expand and renew itself. The English have never been so insular and "English" as at the present moment. When a people first comes in touch with neighbouring races, its obstinate characteristics become momentarily more pronounced than ever. A man travelling abroad for the first time becomes conscious of his walk, his colour, his prejudices. These peculiarities under

the stress of this consciousness become accentuated. So it is with a people. In an age of ripe culture the different elements or races in a people become harmonized. It is then that the universal artists peacefully flourish. The universal artist, in fact, is in the exactest sense national. He gathers into one all the types of humanity at large that each country contains. We cannot have a universal poet when we cannot have a national one.

At present, in our Press-poisoned Imperialistic masses of men, called nations, where all art and manners jostle hopelessly, with insane waste of vitality and health and ignoble impossibility of conviction, the types are more than ever sharply defined.

You see, in a person's flat, the taste of Paris during the First Empire, and in another person's flat next door, a scheme of decoration neo-Pharaohesque; across the street a dwelling is decorated on the lines of an Elizabethan home. This is currently known as "individualism." Hardly anywhere is there a sign of an "actual" and contemporary state of mind or consciousness. There is not even an elementary climate and temperamental rightness in current popular Art. All this is because the "present" is not ripe. There are no "Futurists" at all (only a few Milanese automobilists). But there are some Primitives of a Future equilibrium. And Primitives are usually the most interesting artists. It is for that reason that I have praised in this paper the vulgarity and confusion of our Time. When all these vast communities have disintegrated; when economic conditions have adjusted themselves, and standards based on the necessities of the genius of the soil and the scope of life, have been fixed, there will be a period of balance again. But when the balance comes, the conditions are too favourable. This Russian winter of inanity and indifference, produces a consciousness that evaporates in the Southern brilliance of good conditions. The only person who objects to uniformity and order—One art, One life—is the man who knows that under these conditions his "individuality" would not survive. Every real individuality and excellence would welcome conditions where there would inevitably be a hierarchy of power and vitality. The Best would then be Free. Under no other conditions is any Freedom at all possible.

When the races within the race are asserting themselves, then, the Great Race is usually rotten or in bondage. And then perpetual local and picturesque bursts are phenomena of a period of transition. Often considerable poets are found at the head of these revolutions. But their art is hardly ever Great Art, which is the art of the Great Race, or an art foreshadowing it. The art of the Great Race is always an abstract and universal art, for it is the result of a welding of elements and a synthesis of life.

In this connection, it is curious to remember that Rossetti, the famous Chief that Oscar was thinking of in his paradox,

was an Italian. This shows the disruption and unreality at the root of this consciousness more vividly than anything else. Rossetti, the foreigner, found in England that intensely English type of feminine beauty, the "Rossetti woman," and painted her with all the passion of the exotic sense. Yet he was supposed to have invented her, and Nature to have begun turning such out by the thousand!

One man living in a cave alone can be a universal poet. In fact solitude is art's atmosphere, and its heaven is the Individual's. The abstract artist is the most individual, just as genius is only sanity. Only it is the Individual, and not our contemporary "Individualist," whose individualism consists in saying Booh! when you say Bah! Everyone should be impelled to say Booh! only or Bah! only. And it would then depend only on the intensity of expression, the strength of his lungs, or the delicacy of his ear, that would enable one man's Booh! to be more compelling than another's (Competition is necessary for isolation).

The actual National Poet is a folk poet, and the politically souled Artist found at the head of local revivals or awakenings is also a sort of Folk Poet. This is his intellectual secret.

Folk Art, along with Music Hall Songs, and authors of Pagliaccis, Viennese Waltzes, etc., is very seducing and certainly the next best thing to Bach. (The officially "serious" artists of any time, who practise "le grand Art," come well below "My Home in Dixie.") Thus "folk-artists" form the section of art that is attached to life, and are of the same order and importance as the decorations on vases or carpets, ornaments, and things of use. They are the ornament and current commentary of every day life, the dance of the Festa, the madrigal and war-song.

This is the only exactly and narrowly National Art. All Nationality is a congealing and conventionalizing, a necessary and delightful rest for the many. It is Home, definitely, with its compromises and domestic genii.

The Great National Poet, like Shakespeare, is not national at all. The Germans speak of "our Shakespeare," and play him and understand him far better than we do. But Shakespeare is not more German than English. Supposing English people became more used to using their intelligence and grew to care more for art, they would not possess Shakespeare any more for that. They would play him and read him as much as the Germans, and there would be a "National Theatre." But a truer name for this would be "Universal Theatre." Only in a universal theatre could Shakespeare be adequately staged. No country can be possessive about a man like that, although Will may have been a gentle Englishman.

A VISION OF MUD.

There is mud all round
This is favourable to the eclosion of mighty life : thank God for small mercies !
How is it that if you struggle you sink ?
I lie quite still : hands are spreading mud everywhere : they plaster it on what
should be a body.
They fill my mouth with it. I am sick. They shovel it all back again.
My eyes are full of it ; nose and ears, too.
I wish I could feel or hear. I should not mind what it was.
My hand gropes out restlessly through the heat. By it's curious movements
it keeps my body afloat.
It is grateful when it feels the sudden resistance of an iron bar.
This bar is rectangular. It's edges are rather sharp.
I twist my hand round the bar so that the edge saws gently at my wrist,
I am glad of the slight pain. It is like a secret.
Now things get through : an antediluvian sound comes through the Deluge of Mud
It is something by way of an olive branch.
It seems to be a recruiting band,
The drums thud and the fife pipe on tip-toe.
They are trying to pierce and dart through the thick envelope of the drum's beating
They want to tear jagged holes in the cloud.
I try to open my eyes a little.
A crowd of india-rubber-like shapes swarm through the narrow chinks.
They swell and shrink, merge into one another like an ashen kaleidoscope !
My eyes are shut down again.
A giant cloud like a black bladder with holes in it hovers overhead.
Out of the holes stream incessant eataracts of the same black mud that I am lying
in. There is a little red in the mud.
One of these mud-shafts is just above me.
It is pouring into me so that my body swells and grows heavier every minute.
There is no sign of sinking.
It floats like a dingy feather on stagnation.
Where does this taste of honey come from ?
This mud has curious properties.
It makes you dream. It is like poisoned arrows.
(Such mud, naturally, is medicinal : that is why they have set up this vulgar
"Hydro" here.
It is a health-resort.)
I have just discovered with what I think is disgust, that there are hundreds of other
bodies bobbing about against me.

**They also tap me underneath.
Every now and then one of these fellow-monstrosities bumps softly against me.
I should like to kill it.
The black has a deeper tinge of red in it.
Perhaps some of them do kill one another.
But I am too proud and too lazy :
So I turn over and think of my ancestors.
Rain falls in the grave distance
You laugh thickly with delight at this sound.
There are wet young flowers away to the West.
You smell weak moss, brown earth.
The wind blows gently.**





WL
1912

Design for Programme Cover—Kermesse.

Wyndham Lewis.

THE LONDON GROUP

1915 (MARCH).

I will confine myself principally to a consideration of the pictures in the Vorticeist or Cubist section. The two principal sections of this group are in many ways contradictory in aim. If you arrange to exhibit together, you also tacitly agree not to insist on these contradictions, but only on the points of agreement or on nothing at all.

Mr. Wadsworth, Mr. Roberts, Mr. Nevinson, or Mr. Adeney, are the painters I can speak about directly, without any general qualifications.

Mr. Edward Wadsworth's **BLACKPOOL** appears to me one of the finest paintings he has done. It's striped ascending blocks are the elements of a seaside scene, condensed into the simplest form possible for the retaining of it's vivacity. It's theme is that of five variegated cliffs. The striped awnings of Cafés and shops, the stripes of bathing tents, the stripes of bathing-machines, of toy trumpets, of dresses, are marshalled into a dense essence of the scene. The harsh jarring and sunny yellows, yellow-greens and reds are especially well used, with the series of commercial blues.

One quality this painting has which I will draw especial attention to. Much more than any work exhibited in the last year or so by any English painter of Cubist or Futurist tendencies it has the quality of **LIFE**: much more indeed, than Mr. Wadsworth's own picture next to it. In most of the best and most contemporary work, even, in England, there is a great deal of the deadness and heaviness of wooden or of stone objects, rather than of flashing and eager flesh, or shining metal, and heavy traces everywhere of the too-thorough grounding in "Old Master" art, which has characterized the last decade in this country. Several of the Italian Futurists have this quality of **LIFE** eminently: though their merit, very often, consists in this and nothing else. Hardly any of the Paris Cubists have, although it is true they don't desire to have it. To synthesize this quality of **LIFE** with the significance or spiritual weight that is the mark of all the greatest art, should be, from one angle, the work of the Vorticeists.

My own paintings require no description; the note on Vorticeism gives their direction.

Mr. William Roberts has a very brilliant drawing (done some time ago, I think) called "Dancers." Infinitely laboured

like a 15th Century engraving in appearance, worked out with astonishing dexterity and scholarship, it displays a power that only the few best people possess in any decade. Michael Angelo is unfortunately the guest of honour at this Lord's Supper. But Buonarotti is my *Bete-Noir*.

Mr. Roberts' painting "Boatmen" is very different from the drawing. It is a very powerful, definitely centralized structure, based on a simple human group. All the limbs and heads, as well, have become, however, a conglomeration of cold and vivid springs bent together into one organized bunch. The line of colour exploited is the cold, effective, between-colours of modern Advertising art. The beauty of many of the Tube-posters—at least when seen together, and when organized by a curious mind—is a late discovery. The wide scale of colour and certain juxtapositions, in "Boatmen," however, suggests flowers, as well. It is the most successful painting Mr. Roberts has so far produced, I think.

As to Mr. Nevinson's work, an artist can only receive fair treatment at the hands of one completely in sympathy with him. So it would not be fair for me to take Mr. Nevinson's paintings for criticism, side by side with Wadsworth's, for instance. Nevertheless, I can say that his "Marching Soldiers" have a hurried and harassed melancholy and chilliness that is well seen. Also at the Alpine Club, Mr. Nevinson's Searchlights, the best picture there, is perhaps too, the best he has painted.

Mr. Jacob Kramer shows us a new planet risen on our horizon: (he inaptly calls it the Earth, which it is not.) It is still rather molten, and all sorts of objects and schools are in it's melting-pot. It has fine passages of colour, and many possibilities as a future luminary. Several yellows and reds alone, and some of it's more homogenous inhabitants, would make a fine painting. I have seen another thing of his that confirms me in this belief.

Mr. Adeney, in pallid and solidified landscapes, brings us back to the "Fauves." He is not very like a wild beast, however. His gentle logic plays round the heaviness of Cézanne like summer-lightning. These pale green meditations in form have great personal charm.

Mr. Jacob Epstein's "Rock drill" is one of the best things he has done. The nerve-like figure perched on the machinery, with its straining to one purpose, is a vivid illustration of the greatest function of life. I feel the combination of the white figure and the rock-drill is rather unfortunate and ghost-like. But its lack of logic has an effectiveness of its own. I feel that a logical co-ordination was not intended. It should be taken rather as a monumental, bustling, and very personal whim. Had Mr. Epstein in his marble group, Mother and Child, not made a Eugène Carrière in stone of the Mother, but treated that head, too, with the plastic solidity of the baby's head, I should have considered it among his best things. As it is, "for the Baby's sake," it is very fine.

Gaudier-Brzeska is not very well represented. He is busy elsewhere, and of the two statues here, one is two or three years old, I should think. As an archaism it has considerable beauty. The other little one in red stone has a great deal of the plastic character we associate with his work. It is admirably condensed, and heavily sinuous. There is a suave, thick, quite PERSONAL character about his best work. It is this, that makes his sculpture what we would principally turn to in England to show the new forces and future of this art. His beautiful drawing from the trenches of a bursting shell is not only a fine design, but a curiosity. It is surely a pretty satisfactory answer to those who would kill us with Prussian bullets: who say, in short, that Germany, in attacking Europe, has killed spiritually all the Cubists, Vorticists and Futurists in the world. Here is one, a great artist, who makes drawings of those shells as they come towards him, and which, thank God, have not killed him or changed him yet.

I have now run through all the people I can more or less unconditionally admire. Among the Camden Town Group, I admire many qualities in Mr. Gilman's and Mr. Ginner's paintings. I still hope to find myself on common ground with these two painters one of these days. Given the limitations of their system of work, as I consider it, they yet stand out so notably among their co-sectionists, that I am optimistic as to this virtue soon changing their kind too.

I have noticed that the art-critics praise rather indiscriminately among the Camden Town Artists. Sometimes Mr. This and Miss That is picked out: sometimes Mr. That and Miss the other. I don't think they are altogether to be blamed. It must be rather difficult for converted reporters, who enjoy a good dinner far more than a good picture, and whose only reason, indeed, for lingering among pictures at all is because of their subtle connection (when written about) with good dinners, to discriminate between one genre painter of a numerous school and another. That Vorticists and Cubists should, like Chinaman "look all the same," is equally natural. So, curiously enough, the members of both sections of this group have a strange family resemblance, among co-sectionists, for the critic.

There seems to be a certain confusion in the minds of some of my friends on the Camden side of London as to the meaning of REALIST. They seem to read into REALIST the attributes of the word NATURALIST: for on various occasions they have called themselves NEO-REALISTS. By REALIST they evidently mean a man who scientifically registers the objects met in his every day life. But NATURALIST is the word for this particular gentleman. Reality is not the result of scientific registration, but rather NATURE. Mr. Wadsworth, in his painting of BLACK-POOL is purely "realistic." That is the REALITY, the essential truth, of a noisy, garish sea-side. A painting of Black-pool by a Camden Town Artist would be a corner of the beach much as seen by the Camera. This would be only a symbol or trophy of the scene, with the crudity of Time added to the spatial poorness of the Camera.

An early Futurist painting (the developed-Impressionism of the Sackville Galleries, that is) would get nearer to REALITY inasmuch as imitation is rejected by them, and they rebel against the static "Moment of Time," and launch into what they term simultaneous vision. But the natural culmination of "simultaneity" is the reformed and imaginatively co-ordinated impression that is seen in a Vorticist picture. In Vorticism the direct and hot impressions of life are mated with Abstraction, or the combinations of the Will.

The critiques in the daily Press of this particular Exhibition have been much the same as usual. Two of them, however, may be answered. One of these, Mr. Nevinson deals with elsewhere in this paper, in an open letter. There remains the "Times" notice on "Junkerism in Art."

Many people tell me that to call you a "Prussian" at the present juncture is done with intent to harm, to cast a cloud over the movement, if possible, and moreover that it is actionable. But I do not mind being called a Prussian in the least. I am glad I am not one, however, and it may be worth while to show how, aesthetically, I am not one either. This critic relates the paintings by Mr. Wadsworth, Mr. Roberts and myself to Prussian Junkerism: he also says, "Should the Junker happily take to painting, instead of disturbing the peace of Europe, he would paint pictures very similar to those of Mr. Wadsworth, Mr. Roberts, and Mr. Wyndham Lewis."

This last statement is a careless one: for the Junker, obviously, if he painted, would do florid and disreputable canvasses of nymphs and dryads, or very sentimental "portraits of the Junker's mother." But as to the more general statement, it crystallizes, topically, a usual error as to our aims. Because these paintings are rather strange at first sight, they are regarded as ferocious and unfriendly. They are neither, although they have no pretence to an excessive gentleness or especial love for the general public. We are not cannibals. Our rigid head-dresses and disciplined movements,

which cause misgivings in the unservant as to our intentions, are aesthetic phenomena: our goddess is Beauty, like any Royal Academician's though we have different ideas as to how she should be depicted or carved: and we eat beefsteaks, or what we can get (except human beings) like most people—As to goose-steps, (the critic compares "rigidity" to "goose-step") as an antidote to the slop of Cambridge Post Aestheticism (Post-Impressionism is an insult to Manet and Cézanne) or the Gypsy Botticellis of Mill Street, may not

such "rigidity" be welcomed? This rigidity, in the normal process of Nature, will flower like other things. THIS simple and massive trunk or stem may be watched. But we are not Hindu magicians to make our Mango tree grow in half an hour. It is too commonly suggested that rigidity cannot flower without "renouncing" itself or may not in itself be beautiful. At the worst all the finest beauty is dependent on it for life.

W.L.

MODERN CARICATURE AND IMPRESSIONISM.

The ineffectiveness of caricature, especially the English variety, is the direct result of Impressionism. The naturalistic method, with its atmospheric slop and verisimilitude, makes a drab academy study of the best notion. Punch is a national disgrace, from the point of view of drawing. No great comic paper of France, Germany, Italy or Russia could contain anything so spiritless and silly as, without a single exception, the drawings in any number of Punch are. If you compare the political cartoons of the war printed side by side, where a Punch cartoon turns up, it's rustic and laborious mirth, combined with the vilest and dullest standard of drawing appeal you. And England is famous for its comic spirit throughout the world! On the other hand, scattered up and down papers like the London Mail, Westminster Gazette, Sketch, London Opinion, are excellently telling drawings on current events. "The German leaving Klou-Chou," his "place in the Sun" having got too hot for him, is a good example. Why does not some enterprising Newspaper Proprietor gather all this scattered talent and wit together, and start an important Comic paper to supercede Punch? It would be certain to pay. It is such an obviously sound enterprise that it is difficult to see why it has not been done up till now.

To reform Punch would be impossible. It would be like an attempt to resculpt the Albert Memorial. There is no harm whatever in Punch, any more than in any other Victorian institutions. But that it should represent England to-day is an absurdity.

Whether it is an abstract figure of Britannia, or of a Sportsman, or a Territorial, the method employed by the degenerate Punch cartoonist of to-day is always the same. A model must be sought, dressed and stuck up, and carefully copied in the required attitude. That being within a radius of five miles of the cartoonist's studio who, draped with a

Leighton photographer's robe, looks the most like Britannia, must appear as our most authoritative conception of that august abstraction.

We are not attacking the method of working from Nature. If that is done without any literary objective, and only from interest in the object AS AN OBJECT, the result can be such as is found in Van Gogh, Manet or Cézanne. This at least is respectable and inoffensive, and by accident or through the natural resource of genius, can become completely satisfying.

England has produced in the matter of imaginative drawing in the last generation, one very important figure, who has had a very great influence especially on the drawings in the best Comic papers abroad. All the most gifted Press draughtsmen in Germany would admit that the influence of Aubrey Beardsley has been greater than that of any other European artist during the last 15 years. But except for ridiculously unintelligent and literal imitations, his effect on England has been very slight.

It has been entirely the LITERARY side of his genius, which was the least important and which contained all his contemporary "decadent" paraphernalia, that has been most seized on by English draughtsmen.

Beardsley's several versions of John Bull would be a good model to set against the endless tiresomeness and art school neutrality of some Albion or Lord Kitchener by Bernard Partridge.

Or compare even John Tenniel's "Dropping the Pilot" with the latest dense attempt to revive the success of that admirable old cartoon.

W.L.

HISTORY OF THE LARGEST INDEPENDENT SOCIETY IN ENGLAND.

Most of us are agreed to see that the Allied Artists after the war proceed as usual. As an alternative promiscuous exhibition, and one especially where very large canvasses can legitimately be sent, it is of great use to many painters. At each exhibition fresh contingents of more or less lively young gentlemen and ladies come into it. Mr. Frank Rutter's admirable initiative in starting it several years ago should be carried on and maintained by the now formidable society that has grown out of it.

But, in the nature of things, as the society has grown and so many new and very divergent elements are at present included in it, the machinery for organizing its exhibitions of 2 or 3 years ago is rather out of date, and does not answer to the new and considerable interests involved.

When the Society was founded, painting in this country was at a very different point of development to what it is to-day. The centres of energy have shifted. This will be easily seen, and incidentally another purpose served by a brief review of the successive rejuvenations of painting in England. Fifteen or sixteen years ago **THE** revolutionary society, the scandal of the day, was the New English Art Club. It was the home of a rather prettified and anglicised Impressionism. Mr. Wilson Steer appeared an outrageous fellow to the critic of the day, in his Prussian-blue pastiches of John Constable. Mr. Walter Sickert was a horrifying personage in illustrations of "low life," with its cheap washing-stands and immodest artist's models squatting blankly and listlessly on beds.

It is difficult to understand, at this distance, the offence that these admirable gentlemen (and often quite good painters) could have caused. But then Whistler's very grave, beautiful and decorous painting of the Thames at night aroused fury when it was painted.

However, the earlier New English was about to receive a blow, in the shape of an eruption of new life. The day of that decade was done. A peculiar enthusiastic and school-boy like individual of the name of Tonks told his students at the Slade School to go to the British Museum and copy Michael Angelo and Andrea. They all did. In their youthful conclaves they all became figures of the Renaissance: they read Vasari; they used immense quantities of red Italian chalk in pastiching the Italian masters of the Cinque Cento.

One of them performed scholastic prodigies. This was Augustus John. He carried academic drawing farther than it had ever been carried in England, not excepting Alfred Stevens. But he did not, like Stevens, confine his attentions to the Sixtine. He tried his hand at the whole of European art, from Giotto to Watteau and Constantin Guys. Rodin and Dégas marked the limit of his scholastic appetite, I think.

I consider John, in the matter of his good gifts, and much of his accomplishment, a great artist. He is one of the most imaginative men I have met, and the one who suggested the greatest personal horizons.

But despite his incomparable power, he had not very great control of his moyens, and his genius seemed to prematurely exhaust him. He was aesthetically over-indulgent in his fury of scholastic precocity, and his Will was never equal to its mate. (There is no reference to Mr. Rothenstein here.) At present he is sometimes strangely indistinguishable from Mr. Nicholson, or an artist called, I think, Pride.

However it was John who inaugurated an era of imaginative art in England, and buried the mock naturalists and pseudo-impressionists of the New English Art Club under the ocean of genial eclecticism he bi-yearly belched forth. It was his Rembrandtesque drawings of stumpy brown people, followed by his tribes after tribes of archaic and romantic Gitanos and Gitanas that made him the legitimate successor to Beardsley and Wilde, and, in exploiting the inveterate exoticism of the educated Englishman and Englishwoman, stamped himself, barbaric chevelure and all, on what might be termed the Augustan decade. Oscar Wilde, even, had prepared the ground for him; the same charming and aesthetic stock that the Irish dilettante attracted were at hand for the reaction, and like all delicate and charming gentlemen and ladies, they were thrilled to the bone with the doctrine of "wild life" and "savage nature."

About this time, just after John's first great success, Walter Sickert founded his Saturday afternoon gatherings in Fitzroy St., which eventually led to the "Camden Town Group."

Now new forces were stirring in Paris, which site Mr. Sickert had vacated, and his idea no doubt was to retreat fighting to England, and gather and intrench in these slow-moving

effices an impressionist legion of his own: to withdraw amongst the Island fogs, which rather suited his special vision. A much more real and lively person than his New English colleagues, whom he temporarily deserted and criticized with great freedom, for a few years he controlled the most sensible and serious body of painters in England. As a local reaction back to impressionist "Nature just as she is" they were a healthy little dyke against the pseudo-gypsy hordes John had launched against the town. They also helped to complete the destruction of the every day more effete New English Art Club cronies.

And it was about this time that the Allied Artists' was founded (9 or 10 years ago).

Since then a great deal has happened. The gypsy hordes become more and more languid and John is an institution like Madame Tussaud's, never, I hope, to be pulled down. He quite deserves this classic eminence and habitual security.

The "Camden Town" element has served its purpose, and although intact and not at all deteriorated, it is as a section of the London Group that it survives. It contains, in my opinion, two excellent painters, Spencer Gore being dead, and Sickert in retirement. To contain two people who can be called "excellent painters" is very considerable praise. I claim no solitary and unique importance for the Vorticist or Cubist painters. I do not see the contradiction that the Public appears to feel in a painting of Wadsworth's being hung in the same exhibition as a painting by Mr. Gilman. As to their respective merits, that is a complicated and delicate matter, it is not necessary for the moment to go into. With Mr. Steer's pretty young ladies on couches or Mr. Nicholson's grey and "tasteful" vulgarities, I have a definite quarrel. I resent Mr. John's stage-gypsies emptying their properties over his severe and often splendid painter's gift. But with the two or three best of my Camden Town colleagues, I have no particular mental feud, though not agreeing with them. And if they would only allow me to alter their pictures a little, and would undergo a brief course of training prescribed by me, I would even **AGREE** with them.

Eight years ago, when there was really nothing in England but the Camden Town Group in the way of an organized body of modern and uncompromising painters, it was right and proper that they should take hold of the management of the Allied Artists' Association, and Mr. Frank Rutter was fortunate in disposing of their services. But to-day, although this section of painters should certainly be represented, there is no longer any excuse for their almost exclusively controlling the management of the Society. It is a very large Society, and the newest additions to it are by no means the least alive. It is growing, that is, not only in size, but quality. Therefore, it could now do with a more representative artists' committee, each vital unit of tendency being adequately represented.

But it is not only the fact of the unnecessarily complete

representation of Camden Town talent on the Committee to which I object. The Committee was originally elected on too friendly and closed-door a basis, the members who are not definitely Camden Town artists being, like Mr. and Mrs. Sund, not representative of any general interest or of any newer tendencies. The whole organization of the Society should be overhauled, and a completely new Committee elected.

To my thinking, Mr. Gilman and Mr. Ginner are by far the most important painters belonging to the Camden Town section. And that section would be admirably and adequately represented by them. Mr. Epstein or Mr. Brzeska could be intrusted with the sculpture. The pompiers should have a couple of representatives, and most certainly the Vorticist and Futurist sections should be looked after by at least two people.

I am firmly convinced that this Society will never come into its own, and have its full weight, until it is **HUNG IN SECTIONS**. Imagine the Indépendants in Paris, for example, **NOT** hung in sections. It is only due to certain obstructionists who are shy at being herded with their fellows, or see a personal advantage in being scattered about, that this has not already happened. I do not happen to have discussed this point with Mr. Rutter, but I am sure he would not be averse to this arrangement—of a show hung in sections of the different groups.

This is, in any case, a matter of individual opinion if not of individual interest. But what is certain is that until the Committee is completely re-organized the question of these reforms can never be usefully raised.

I may add to this article a note on the question of promiscuous voting by head. Must we stick to the system by which the dog with the biggest litter, though not necessarily the biggest dog, gets its way? The best is notoriously unprolific. And it is a fact, that in any open society like the Allied Artists (as indeed in any society of a considerable size at all) the disgusting and rabbit-like fecundity of the Bad overwhelms the exclusive quality of the Good. Were the Pompiers to begin voting, even Mr. Sickert's numerous female progeny would be outnumbered by 10 to 1. Yet Mr. Sickert is better than a Pompiere, though inferior to a Vorticist.

But very few King-Pompiers are numbered in this society. And that section is more or less listless.

For the health and possibility for future growth of the Allied Artists, they would do well to keep their "advanced" members. And as Vorticists and Cubists are temperate propagators, their interests should not be measured by their numbers, as their utility to the State is not that of so many men-at-arms, but as individuals. They should be recognized as a necessarily self-governing community, and given privileges equal at least to the privileges of numbers. **W.L.**

LIFE HAS NO TASTE.

The best artist is an imperfect artist.

The **PERFECT** artist, in the sense of "artist" par excellence, and nothing else, is the dilettante or taster.

"Pure art, in the same way, is dilettante art: it cannot be anything else.

It is, in fact, rather the same thing to admire **EVERYTHING** in Nature around you—match-boxes, print dresses, ginger-beer bottles, lamp-posts, as to admire every aesthetic manifestation—examples of all schools of art.

Taste is dead emotion, or mentally—treated and preserved emotion. Taste is also a stronghold against barbarism of soul.

You should be emotional about everything, rather than sensitive.

You should be human about **EVERYTHING**: inhuman about only a few things.

Taste should become deeper and exclusive: definitely a **STRONGHOLD**—a point and not a line.

AMERICAN ART.

American art, when it comes, will be Mongol, inhuman, optimistic, and very much on the precious side, as opposed to European pathos and solidity.

In this connection you have only to consider the characteristics of the best art so far produced north of Mexico and south of the Pole.

Red-Indian

Edg. Allen Poe (series of sincere and solemn bluffs. Heinous lyrics, monotonously absorbed in the technique of romantic emotion).

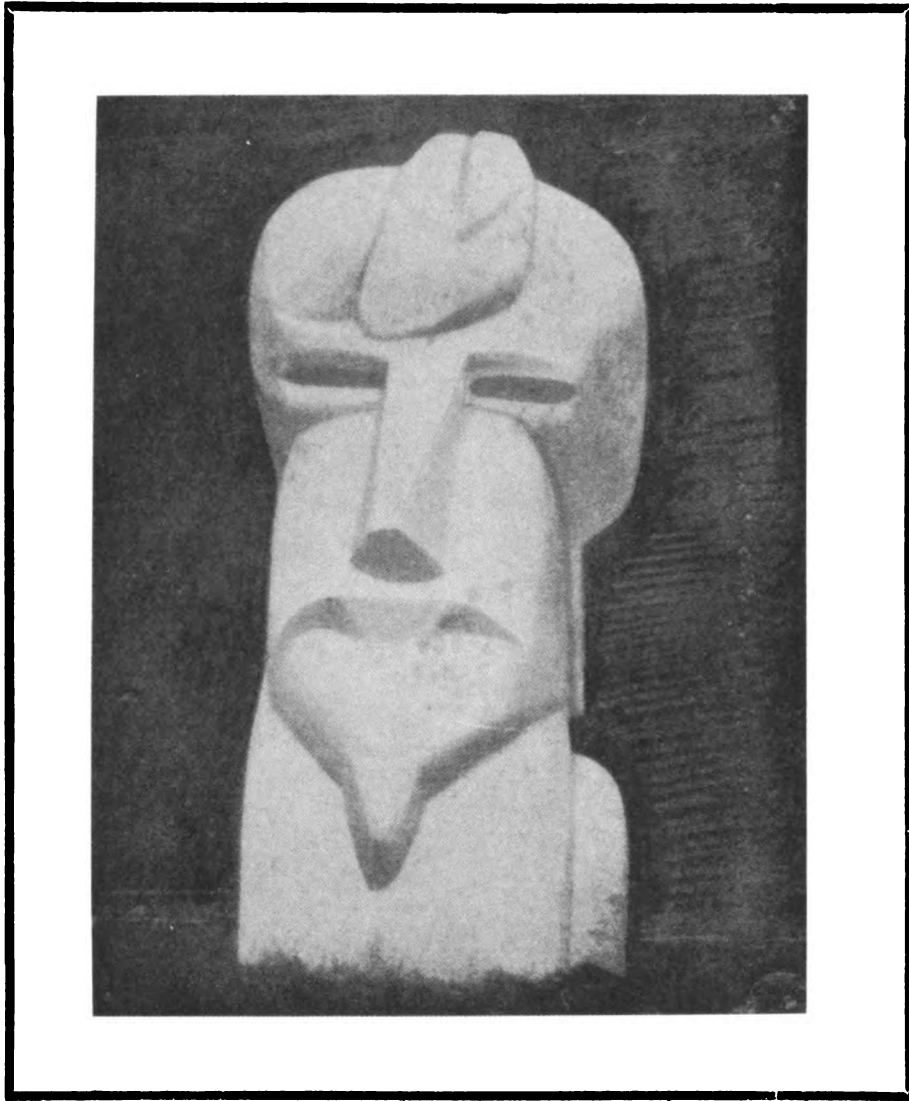
Whistler (Nocturnes, lithographs, etc.)

Henry James Ghost psychology of New England old maid: stately maze of imperturbable analogies.

Walt Whitman Bland and easy braggart of a very cosmic self. He lies, salmon-coloured and serene, whittling a stick in a very eerie dawn, oceanic emotion handy at his elbow.

Ezra Pound Demon pantechneon driver, busy with removal of old world into new quarters. In his steel net of impeccable technique he has lately caught Li Po. Energy of a discriminating Element.





Head of Eza Pound.

Gaudier-Brzeska.

CHRONICLES.

I.

Lest the future age looking back upon our era should be misled, or should conceive of it as a time wholly cultivated and delightful, we think it well to record occasional incidents illustrative of contemporary custom, following, in so far as is convenient, the manner of John Boccaccio. Let it then stand written that in the year of grace, 1914, there was in the parish of Kensington a priest or vicar, portly, perhaps over fed, indifferent to the comfort of others, and well paid for official advertisement and maintenance of the cult of the Gallilean . . . that is to say of the contemporary form of that cult.

And whereas the Gallilean was, according to record, a pleasant, well-spoken, intelligent vagabond, this person, as is common with most of this sect was in most sorts the reverse . . . their hymns and music being in the last stages of decadence.

The said vicar either caused to be rung or at least permitted the ringing of great bells, untuneful, ill-managed, to the great disturbance of those living near to the church. He himself lived on the summit of the hill at some distance and was little disturbed by the clatter.

The poor who lived in the stone court-yard beneath the belfry suffered great annoyance, especially when their women lay sick. Protest, was however, of no avail. The ecclesiastic had the right to incommode them. The entire neighbourhood reeked with the intolerable jangle. The mediaeval annoyance of stench might well be compared to it. We record this detail of contemporary life, because obscure things of this sort are wont carelessly to be passed over by our writers of fiction, and because we endeavour in all ways to leave a true account of our time.

We point out that these bells serve no purpose, no one pretends that they advance the cult of the Gallilean, no one, pretends that a musical chime of bells would be less efficient. They serve as an example of atavism. Once such bells were of use for alarm, or told the hour to a scattered peasantry, or announced a service to a village without other chronometers, now they persist in thickly populated portions of our city, without use, without other effect than that of showing the ecclesiastical pleasure in aimless annoyance of others.

The three circumjacent temples of Bacchus debased and the one shrine of Aphrodite popularis, lying within the radius of this belfry cause less discord and less bad temper among the district's inhabitants,

The intellectual status of this Gallilean cult in our time may be well judged when we consider that you would scarcely find any member of the clergy who would not heartily approve of this biweekly annoyance of the citizens. For in this place at least the ringers must enforce their consummate incompetence by pretending to practice their discords, which are, very likely, worse than any untrained hand could accomplish.

II.

ON THE RAGE OR PEEVISHNESS WHICH GREETED THE FIRST NUMBER OF BLAST.

The first number of **BLAST** which came to many as cooling water, as a pleasant light, was greeted with such a mincing jibber by the banderlog that one is fain examine the phenomenon. The jibber was for the most part inarticulate, but certain phrases are translatable into English. We note thereby certain symptoms of minds bordering on the human. First that the sterile, having with pain acquired one ready made set of ideas from deceased creators of ideas, are above all else enraged at being told that the creation of ideas did not stop at the date of their birth; that they were, by their advent into this life, unable to produce a state of static awe and stolidity. The common or homo canis snarls violently at the thought of there being ideas which he doesn't know. He dies a death of lingering horror at the thought that even after he has learned even the newest set of made ideas, there will still be more ideas, that the horrid things will grow, will go on growing in spite of him.

BLAST does not attempt to reconcile the homo canis with himself. Of course the homo canis will follow us. It is the nature of the homo canis to follow. They growl but they follow. They have even followed thing in black surtouts with their collars buttoned behind.

OYEZ. OYEZ. OYEZ.

Throughout the length and breadth of England and through three continents **BLAST** has been **REVEILED** by all save the intelligent.

WHY ?

Because **BLAST** alone has dared to show modernity its face in an honest glass.

While all other periodicals were whispering **PEACE** in one tone or another; while they were all saying "hush" (for one "interest" or another), "**BLAST**" alone dared

to present the actual discords of modern "civilization," **DISCORDS** now only too apparent in the open conflict between teutonic atavism and unsatisfactory Democracy.

It has been averred by the homo canis that Blast is run to make money and to attract attention. Does one print a paper half a yard square, in steam-callope pink in order to make it coy and invisible? Will Blast help to dispel the opinion of the homo canis, of the luminaries of the British bar (wet or dry), of the L.C.C. etc., that one makes one's art to please them?

Will the homo canis as a communal unit, gathered together in his aggregate, endure being deprived of his accustomed flattery, by Blast?

Does anything but the need of food drive the artist into contact with the homo canis?

Would he not retire to his estates if he had 'em? Would he not do his work quietly and leave the human brotherhood to bemuck the exchanges, and to profit by his productions, after death had removed him from this scene of slimy indignity?

The melancholy young man, the aesthetic young man, the romantic young man, past types; fabians, past; simple livers past. The present: a generation which ceases to flatter.

Thank god for our atrabillious companions.

And the homo canis?

Will go out munching our ideas. Whining.

Vaguely one sees that the homo canis is divisible into types. There is the snarling type and the smirking. There was the one who "was unable to laugh" at the first number of Blast. The entrails of some people are not strong enough to permit them the passion of hatred.

III.

LAWRENCE BINYON.

We regret that we cannot entitle this article "Homage to Mr. Lawrence Binyon," for Mr. Binyon has not sufficiently rebelled. Manifestly he is not one of the ignorant. He is far from being one of the outer world, but in reading his work we constantly feel the influence upon him of his reading of the worst English poets. We find him in a disgusting attitude of respect toward predecessors whose intellect is vastly inferior to his own. This is loathsome. Mr. Binyon has thought he has plunged into the knowledge of the East and extended

the borders of occidental knowledge, and yet his mind constantly harks back to some folly of nineteenth century Europe. We can see him as it were constantly restraining his inventiveness, constantly trying to conform to an orthodox view against which his thought and emotions rebel, constantly trying to justify Chinese intelligence by dragging it a little nearer to some Western precedent. Ah well! Mr. Binyon has, indubitably, his moments. Very few men do have any moments whatever, and for the benefit of such readers as have not sufficiently respected Mr. Binyon for his, it would be well to set forth a few of them. They are found in his "Flight of the Dragon," a book otherwise unpleasantly marred by his recurrent respect for inferior, very inferior people.

P. 17. Every statue, every picture, is a series of ordered relations, controlled, as the body is controlled in the dance, by the will to express a single idea.

P. 18. In a bad painting the units of form, mass, colour, are robbed of their potential energy, isolated, because brought into no organic relation.

P. 19. Art is not an adjunct to existence, a reproduction of the actual.

P. 21. **FOR INDEED IT IS NOT ESSENTIAL THAT THE SUBJECT-MATTER SHOULD REPRESENT OR BE LIKE ANYTHING IN NATURE; ONLY IT MUST BE ALIVE WITH A RHYTHMIC VITALITY OF ITS OWN.**

On P. Fourteen he quotes with approbation a Chinese author as follows:—As a man's language is an unerring index to his nature, so the actual strokes of his brush in writing or painting betray him and announce either the freedom and nobility of his soul or its meanness and limitation.

P. 21. You may say that the waves of Korin's famous screen are not like real waves: but they move, they have force and volume.

P. 90. It would be vain to deny that certain kinds and tones of colour have real correspondence with emotional states of mind.

P. 91 Chemists had not multiplied colours for the painter but he knew how to prepare those he had,

P. 94. Our thoughts about decoration are too much dominated, I think, by the conception of pattern as a sort of mosaic, each element in the pattern being repeated, a form without life of its own, something inert and bounded by itself. We get a mechanical succession which aims at rhythm, but does not attain rhythmic vitality.

E.P.



Drawing.

Roberts.



On the way to the Trenches.

Hevinson.

WYNDHAM LEWIS VORTEX No. 1.

ART VORTEX.

BE THYSELF.

You must talk with two tongues, if you do not wish to cause confusion.

You must also learn, like a Circassian horseman, to change tongues in mid-career without falling to Earth.

You must give the impression of two persuaders, standing each on a different hip—left hip, right hip—with four eyes vacillating concentrically at different angles upon the object chosen for subjugation.

There is nothing so impressive as the number TWO.

You must be a duet in everything.

For, the Individual, the single object, and the isolated, is, you will admit, an absurdity.

Why try and give the impression of a consistent and indivisible personality?

You can establish yourself either as a Machine of two similar fraternal surfaces overlapping.

Or, more sentimentally, you may postulate the relation of object and its shadow for your two selves.

There is Yourself: and there is the Exterior World, that fat mass you browse on.

You knead it into an amorphous imitation of yourself inside yourself.

Sometimes you speak through its huskier mouth, sometimes through yours.

Do not confuse yourself with it, or weaken the esoteric lines of fine original being.

Do not marry it, either, to a maiden.

Any machine then you like: but become mechanical by fundamental dual repetition.

For the sake of your good looks you must become a machine.

Hurry up and get into this harmonious and sane duality.

The thought of the old Body-and-Soul, Male-and-Female, Eternal Duet of Existence, can perhaps be of help to you, if you hesitate still to invent yourself properly.

No clear out lines, except on condition of being dual and prolonged.

You must catch the clearness and logic in the midst of contradictions: not settle down and snooze on an acquired, easily possessed and mastered, satisfying shape.

We artists do not provide wives for you.

You have too many as it is.

BLAST

Brangwyn, Etcetera

Orpen, Etcetera

Mestrovic, Etcetera

W. L. George

Mrs. E. A. Rhodes

Bevan, and his dry rot

Pennyfeather

Birth-Control

The Roman Empire

Lyons' shops

(without exception)

Mr. Hiccupstein

Mr. Stermberg

Mr. Backbeitfeld

The Architect of the

Regent Palace Hôtel

Oh! BLAST COLONEL MAUDE

BLESS

Koyetzu

Rotatzu

Korin

Bottomley

A. G. Hales

Basil Hallam

Bombardier Wells

War Babies

Selfridge

Mrs. MacGaskill

Mr. MacGaskill

**The scaffolding around
the Albert Memorial**

The War Loan

All A.B.C. Tea-shops

(without exception)

MAX { **Norton**
Burgomaster
Linder

Warneford

The Poet's Bride (June 28th)

THE CROWD MASTER.

1914.

LONDON, JULY.

THE CROWD.

Men drift in thrilling masses past the Admiralty, cold night tide. Their throng creeps round corners, breaks faintly here and there up against a railing barring from possible sights. Local ebullience and thickening: some madman disturbing their depths with baffling and recondite noise.

THE POLICE with distant icy contempt herd London. They shift it in lumps here and there, touching and shaping with heavy delicate professional fingers. Their attitude is as though these universal crowds wanted some new vague Suffrage.

Is this opposition correct? dramatic Suffragette analogy. (For these crowds are willing to be "Furies" in the humorous male way.)

Some tiny grain of suffrage will perhaps be thrown to the millions in the street, or taken away.

THE POLICE however are contemptuous, cold and disagreeable.

THE NEWSPAPERS already smell carrion. They allow themselves almost BLAST type already.

Prussia was invented for Newspaper proprietors. Her theatrical instinct has saved the Crowd from breaking up for twenty years.

Bang! Bang!
Ultimatum to you!
Ultimatum to you!
ULTIMATUM!
From an Evening Paper: July—

"The outlook has become more grave during the afternoon. Germany's attitude causes considerable uneasiness. She seems to be throwing obstacles in the way.—The German ambassador in Vienna has telegraphed to his government, etc."

Germany, the sinister brigand and naughty egotist of latter-day Europe, and of her own romantic fancy, "mauvais voisin" for the little French bourgeois-reservist, remains silent and ominously unhelpful in her armoured cave.

Do the Idiots really mean——?

THE CROWD.

THE CROWD is the first mobilisation of a country. THE CROWD now is formed in London. It is established with all its vague profound organs au grand complet.

It serpentine every night, in thick well-nourished coils, all over the town, in tropic degustation of news and "stimung."

THE INDIVIDUAL and THE CROWD: PEACE and WAR.

Man's solitude and Peace; Man's Community and Row.

The Bachelor and the Husband-Crowd. The Married Man is the Symbol of the Crowd: his function is to set one going. At the altar he embraces Death.

We all shed our small skin periodically or are apt to sometime, and are purged in big being: an empty throb.

Men resist death with horror when their time comes.

Death is, however, only a form of Crowd. It is a similar surrender. For most men believe in some such survival, children an active and definite one.

Again, the Crowd in Life spells death too, very often. The Crowd is an immense anaesthetic towards death. Duty flings the selfish will into this relaxed vortex.

A fine dust of extinction, a grain or two for each man, is scattered in any crowd like these black London war-crowds. Their pace is so mournful. Wars begin with this huge indefinite interment in the cities.

For days now wherever you are you hear a sound like a very harsh perpetual voice of a shell. If you put W before it, it always makes WAR!

It is the Crowd cheering everywhere. Even weeks afterwards, when the Crowd has served its hour and dissolved, those living in the town itself will seem to hear this noise.

THOMAS BLENNER.

BLENNER was in Scotland at this time. He is a man of 33, retired 1st Lieutenant Indian Army with a little money. He writes a little, abusively as regards the Army. Leg in splints, getting better, from a fall from a horse. He motored over with his friends to the nearest town. The others went to play golf, he went into the town alone to get the morning papers.

The "Northern Dispatch" poster was the first he saw, violet on white ground, large letters:

MORPETH OLYMPIAD RECORD CROWD

Wonderful Crowds, gathering at Olympiads! What is the War to you? It is you that make both the Wars and Olympiads. When War knocks at the door, why should you hurry? You are busy with an Olympiad! So for a day War must wait. Amazing English Crowds!

This crude violet lettering distillation of 1905 to 1915:
Suffragism. H. G. Wells. Morpeth Olympiads.

He bought a London Edition of the "Daily Mail."

GERMANY DECLARES WAR ON RUSSIA.

With the words came a dark rush of hot humanity in his mind. An immense human gesture swept its shadow across him like a smoky cloud. "Germany Declares War on Russia," seemed a roar of guns. He saw active Mephistophelian specks in Chancelleries. He saw a rush of papers, a frowning race. "C'est," thought Blenner, with innate military exultation. The ground seemed swaying a little. He limped away from the paper-shop, gulping this big morsel down with delighted stony dignity.

The party at the golf links took his "News," "Mails," and "Mirrors," as the run home commenced, with careful leisureliness and avoidance of pretence of indifference. Each manifested his gladness at the bad news in his own restrained way.

Atmosphere of respectable restraint of a house where there is a Burying. A party of croque-morts mixed with Curates on their way to the Front, and deputation of amateur diplomatists to God Almighty.

The closing of the Stock Exchange, announced, suggested a host of fascinating and blood-curdling changes in life. What would happen as to the Banks? Food supplies had better be laid in. What of invasion?

The excitement and novelty of life foreshadowed, pleased each. Personal cares mitigated it. But even this mitigation was an additional pleasure. The satisfaction showed itself in various disguises. The next few days was a gay Carnival of Fear, psychologically.

The Morpeth Olympiad poster was secured, and stuck up in the hall next day. It appeared to the household an adequate expression of the great Nation to which they belonged.

Then all the London Newspapers began to be bought up in Edinburgh, and none ever got as far as their countryside.

Blenner felt the need of the great Crowd. Here he got imperfect Crowd. They had become Crowd in the house, the general shadow of that other Personality of men steeped them in ease.

But the numbers being so slight, it was like a straining and dissatisfaction in Blenner, the pale edge of the mass he knew now would be forming, finding once more the immense common nature of its being.

THE JOURNEY TO ENGLAND.

He left Scotland by the night train, on the second day of the English Mobilisation order. He had to wait for half an hour at Geddes station for the midnight train from Edinburgh. Two English youths in khaki with rifles were on the platform.

Several men arrived in a large car. One was very tall and rather fat. He stood talking to the station master for some minutes, who was evidently telling him of the precautions taken in the neighbourhood, and bits of private news a station master might be supposed to know.

Blenner with thick aggressive beard, absurdly bright blue eyes, watched the new arrivals with dislike. He stood, in his dress and appearance nautical and priestly at the same time, in guard over his portmanteau. The wide open eyes and delicacy of skin between them and beard, gave a certain disagreeable softness to his face.

Blenner was a very moral character. His soul easily fell into a condition of hard, selfish protest.

He watched the large puppy schoolboy merriment of the group of new arrivals. Officers packing off southwards a little late?

His sensations and reflections, collected into thoughts, would be: "Stupid fat snob! Too poor a chemistry to produce anything else."

The German officer is reported to have achieved the killing of privates who omitted to salute him. I prefer the Prussian. He does at least read Clausewitz when he is not making love, and realizes the philosophy of his machine-made moustaches.

He is capable of doggerel easily.

The perpetual sight of the amplest impermeability, like a blank factory wall, and absence of anything but food and sport, cannot help but make Englishmen of my sort a little mad and very restless.

To live in a country where there is no chance, not the faintest, of ever meeting that nature so common in Russia, which Dostoevsky describes in *Crotala*!—Over the counter of the pawnshop, faced with great distress, the girl's face is illuminated by the possibilities and weight of the allusion in the words, "I am the spirit which wills the evil and does the good," dropped by the pawnbroker. All this loneliness, like the Russian winter, makes the individual a little over-visionary, and apt to talk to himself, as Multum says! The English Public is our Steppes—as he says.

Stupidity is unhygienic, too. A stagnant and impoverished mind requires legislation.

Arrogant and crafty sheep! A la lanterne!

Talk about conscription being a good thing for the physical condition of the youth of the country! Much more urgent call to exercise their other faculties. But happily the masses are not in such need of it as those dolts! Hard conditions keep the souls of the poor, if not their minds, in training."

Such sullen fulminations were always provoked by such presences. And yet he spent a large part of his time limping about circles where such people congregated. The joy of protest was deeply ingrained in him, and he instinctively sought opportunities of feeding it. His beard was his naivest emblem of superiority.

The train came melodramatically into the station, and his third class carriage delivered him from sulkiness.

He found sailors sprawled about in most compartments.

Mobilisation was everywhere. The train was quite full.

Ten people, chiefly women, slept upright against each other in a carriage, revealing peculiar idiosyncrasies and modes of sleep. They all appeared to have their eyes shut to examine drunkenly some absurd fact within: or a little uncomfortably dead and mechanically protesting.

Sentries on the bridges at Newcastle-on-Tyne. Stacks of rifles on the railway platform. More "mobilisation scenes."

The ten sleeping people, travelling through England on this important and dramatic night, inevitably in the mind were connected with mobilisation. Sleep had struck them down at the start. These ten upright uncomfortable and indifferent figures looked as though they were mobilised every week or so. It was very disagreeable, but they were quite used to it.

Newcastle woke them up, but they shook it off easily: they returned to churlish slumbers.

A squat figure in a stiff short coat got in, and made an eleventh beside Blenner, or rather, by a tentative operation against his left thigh, began a gradually sinking movement towards the supposed position of the seat.

He was an unpleasant, although momentarily apologetic character: and as he said he was answering the mobilisation call, he must have been something to do with the Navy's food.

"I'm not travelling for pleasure," he said aggressively, later.

"No, I'm called up.

What are we going for?" he asked, misunderstanding a question, "Why, to take the place of other men, as soon as they're shot down!" The trenchant hissing of his "soon as they're shot down" was full of resentment.

"The Kayser ought to be bloody well shot," he considered. "He's bin gettin ready for this for twenty years. Now he's going to have what he wants."

"A-ah! he's bin spendin' his private fortune on it!"

He was a man about 48, like a Prussian, but even harder, and less imaginative. Must be connected with provisions, for some reason or other.

Sea-grocer? The white apron of the German delicatessen shops fitted him, evidently.

Cold resentment; near his pension, perhaps.

The warmth of the lady next to Blenner appeared to him, eventually, excessive. Her leg was fat, restless and hot. Then he noticed a thick wheeze and a shawl. Other indications showed him that he was very closely pressed against a sick woman. The heat was fever no doubt.

Minutes of stolid hesitation, suspended life, ratiocination on the part of Blenner.

He thought of falling off to sleep himself. He did not feel inclined to blend his slumbers with hers, or choose her as sardine sleep partner.

He rose at last, rather ashamed, went into corridor, and got in between some sleeping sailors in the next compartment. Here the light was uncovered, and the men camped out, less permanently packed.

One sailor opposite Blenner was awake, filling his pipe, and talking to a navvy. They were not talking about the war, but the mining industry.

The sailor was a Scotchman from near Glasgow, as black as a Levantine. His features were aquiline and baggy in the symmetrical southern way.

Eyes heavy, brown, blank, and formed with clearness of little billiard balls, lids like metal slides. One black eyebrow was fixed up with wakeful sagacity. His eyes were polite; his being civilized, active and competent.

Blenner talked to him when the navvy left the train.

He was a naval reservist who had been down to Chatham for the Test Mobilisation a few days before. No sooner back, and congratulating himself on no more disturbance for some time to come, than the real Mobilisation order comes.

"The wife brings the letter in on Sunday morning. I just tuk it and put it down by the side o' the bed!" all in the voice of Harry Lauder, with a nodding of head, humorous raising of eyebrows, the r's rolling and sounding like perpetual chuckles. Many pauses, caused partly by obstruction of these facetious R's.

"Then I turrened over and had another couple of hours! I didn't need to open it! I'd been expecting it." Obstruction filled with ghosts of R's: raised eyebrow and fixed eye.

In the sailor's conversation there was no sign of realization on his part that the journey he was setting out on was a dangerous journey. There was a steady note of humorous disgust at finding himself once more being bundled about England by fate.

York platforms were comparatively empty.

A naval reservist got into the compartment. A half a dozen people saw him off. His mother, a burly good natured woman, kept swaying from one foot to the other. A contemptuous grin curled her close mouth, and with her staring tragic eyes she kept turning and looking at him, then back down the platform. Two girls, his sisters probably, stood crying behind his mother, one wiping her face with a very small handkerchief, and an old man remained close under the window, deprecatory, distressed and absent minded. It was a foretaste of other scenes for Blenner.

But the empty York platform, at 2 in the morning, and this English family, without the wild possessive hugging of the French at the stations, sending off the reservist, affected him more. It hardly seemed worth while sending off ONE. What could he do? The mother's sarcastic grin and fixed eyes, and her big body with one shoulder hunched up, almost a grace, like a child's trick, as her eyes wandered, were not easily forgotten. He prayed that that woman would get back her reservist son safe and well.

Two young men of twenty or so had got in. Their smooth canaille faces, American clothes, and general rag-time slop of manner, and air of extraordinary solidarity, like members of a music-hall troupe, was too familiar a type to be pleasant. This nastiest scum of our cities blocked up the window, talking to a third come to see them off.

Blenner did not want to make the sailor uncomfortable by a scene made in his interest, or his boot would have found it's way under the skirts of the American jackets at the window.

The train went off, the new reservist took his place next to the Scotchman, and the youths stood in the corridor outside until the neighbouring station was reached, when they got out.

The York reservist (something about his short stiff collar and berri-like hat helping) was a like a Breton conscript sailor. He had tobacco coloured, rather soft and staring eyes, a moustache and much developed Adam's apple and jaw muscles. He filled and lighted his pipe with deliberate rather self-conscious movements. He turned to the Scotchman: "Are you going to Portsmouth?"

"Chatham", said the Scot, in flat deep solemnity, taking his pipe out of his mouth, and leaning a little towards him.

The York reservist began grumbling about the upset, the conventional thing to do.

Both the Scotchman and he came from the Pits. The Yorkshireman began telling of new German machinery they had got in lately. It only worked well under certain conditions. The other also had seen that German Machinery used, no more satisfactorily, further North. For a long time they talked about the pits.

These Crowd-proof sailors were the first break in the continuity of the Crowd-spirit that Blenner had met since war began blowing up seriously. In the same way his patriotism had been suspended by his professional life in the army.

His travelling companions had been Crowd so long that the effect was getting rather thin. They were probably different when they found themselves on the decks before the enemy. They would be Crowd there, only a steadier and harder one than most. Nerves was not conceivable with them. Blenner was immensely pleased to find himself amongst them. Here were fellows to whom he could point to back up his chauvinistic enthusiasm for the country, and not doubt their shining and showing handsomely beside any men alive.

The Scotchman was a Syrian gem of craft and balance. The Yorkshire pitman was a handsome and intelligent man of the people, such as you chiefly associate with France.

The former referred to the real new Crowd in his measured way, without respect :

" They were standing there till midnight, so thick I had to go round by way of Tyne street. You should have seen them. I just look at the notices for reservists stuck up, and sez to myself, " that's done it ! "

A very heavily built fair fresh young man in the corner woke up, rubbed his eyes with the back of his hands, like a schoolboy, and grinned.

Very large, empty, regular features, long pointed nose, rather lecherously twisted at nostrils, and mouth of cupid's bow pattern. His hair was going on top, due to drink to judge from signs. At the silly grin with which he met everyone's eyes the hair retreated on his head. He stared a great deal ahead of him, eye fixed, and sort of painful expression like the straining of a perpetual natural function. He sprang up frequently, dashed himself into the woodwork of the door, rebounded, charged again, but straighter, and disappeared. He too was a pit hand, but brought no illuminating information to the common talk. He appeared to have the perpetual preoccupation of which that pained mouth-curling was the outward sign, into which he quickly sank, after a few outbursts of laughter and a little chat.

A small wizened fellow, who had been sleeping, curled up with his head on his service sack, woke up.

He too was a miner. Cross-examined a little by the first Scotsman, he gave an account of himself, and asked various questions. They told him his jersey wouldn't pass muster. Two stripes ornamented the sleeve. Chatham he was bound for.

Blenner began to think of all naval reservists as miners. The Scot however, began talking of a postman who had been seen off at Ivanhoe or somewhere by the entire staff of the Post Office.

" I couldn't hardly get out of the carriage for them ! " he said, " I went down the platform to get a drink. When I came back I didn't have to look for my carriage. The bloomin post office officials filled the platform in front of it. "

The Yorkshireman felt it advisable here to put in a plea for discrimination.

" Yes, when your family comes to see you off, well—Your family— "

" Yes, but you should have seen them bloomin' post office officials, " remarked the Scotsman.

" Bloomin' Post Office Officials, " he rolled out with sardonic jerkiness, overriding his neighbour's half apology, and dexterously avoiding sentimental embarrassments.

They none of them doubted that mobilisation meant war.

The " Kayser had made the war, of course, to them, and " he'd get it this time right enough, " more than he bargained

KING'S CROSS was reached.

LONDON.

Something like a century old print, the perpetual morning of " coaching days, " fresh and conventional, struck Blenner, in the appearance of the platform. Soldiers and sailors, many porters, all very busy.

A big German with scarred pig-face came down from the gates looking for his luggage with a very acid concentration behind his glasses.

He was another sort of reservist.

The journey had not done Blenner's leg much good. He hobbled away with his portmanteau, and was forced for the next few days to restrict his movements, take many taxis, counting the yards.

War came heavily on with a resolution no one had ever credited it with. The unbelievable was going to happen.

The Crowd was still blind, with a first puppy-like intensity.

Great National events are always preparing, the Crowd is in its habitual childish sleep. It rises to meet the crash half awake and struggling, with voluptuous and violent movements.

Every acquaintance Blenner met was a new person. The only possibility of renewal for the individual is into this temporary Death and Resurrection of the Crowd.

Blenner was not too critical a man to penetrate their disguises or ferret out their Ego. He was glad to see so little of it for once.

Delightful masquerade of everyone. The certainty of feeling alike with everyone else was a great relief for over-paradoxical nerves—with every one except Multum, who was as Crowd-proof as a Scotch reservist. You could be less than ever certain that you were feeling like him. But he was a professional Crowd-officer.

The war was like a great New Fashion.

Multum was a man of Fashion.

Blenner saw him for a minute before Crosse & Blackwell's that day.

He had a rather mysterious air; something up his sleeve, apparently.

Whenever the Crowd raised its head he had this faintly bantering mysterious air.

He appeared the only conscious atom of the Crowd. A special privilege with him: to be of the Crowd and individually conscious. He was the King of the Future. He seemed to be saying:

"Ah, so you've decided to join us! that is a very naive proceeding!"

Should you openly answer "Yes. But why are you in that galère?" Multum would have replied:

"Because I was born there."

"I think England will be at war soon?" Multum said when they met.

"It looks like it." Blenner's eyes shone as though with sentimental bloodthirstiness. Multum was used to the deceptive lighting of his friend's orbs, and would have acquitted him of the foolishness implied. He did not know what irrelevant fluid was at fault. He would not have known, too, what their sudden brightness meant. All his knowledge of Blenner was negative. He knew what he probably was not feeling.

Multum looked at the pavement: he was smiling very slightly. He remained silent and like a dog on leash—that bright shaft from the eyes—waiting to be released. This glow-worm, this distillation of a mountain-spring of a friend!

"Will you be joining your old regiment? How is your leg? Come and see me sometime!"

He still stood in the attitude of shame and reverie.

Blenner took a taxi down to his solicitor's in Pall Mall, and then, on coming out, as his leg was hurting, went back to his rooms. They were in Great James Street, at the top of the house.

He opened the latest editions of the Pall Mall Gazette and Star. His childishly shining eyes sucked up Garvin and the latest news from the Chancelleries.

"The Mobilisation was complete at twelve o'clock to-day."

AUSTRIA FINDS SERBIAN REPLY UNSATISFACTORY.

Some minds somewhere already made up. War being made on Europe with the funny mediocre-aggressiveness newspaper readers had learnt to expect from a certain quarter.

The Crowd surged into him from these sheets of inconceivable news. Tons of it a minute gushed out and flooded the streets with excitement. You seemed to swim in it outside.

An anomalous respect for these dull and unsympathetic Germans whose role it was to set things going developed in Blenner. It wasn't really very "malin" to be aggressive, unless you were going to be successful. How about their being successful? But their bluff was so moderately successful that it seemed idiotic to ACT. But perhaps they could conquer the world.

Blenner hunted for professional military news: appointments, changes.

"When will my cursed leg be better?" When would he be able to go to the War Office? Should he cut his beard before going to the War Office? He examined himself in the glass. He had a martial face, he decided. The beard made it less martial, if anything, and softer, he saw. His eyes were the part of him that he reserved especially for his moderate claim to **GOOD LOOKS**. As he left the glass his last glance was for them.

Whether his eyes suggested Multum to him or not (they, instinctive beasts, recognizing their effect on that young man and putting their owner in mind of him) Blenner remembered his meeting in the Charing Cross Road.

It was in the Charing Cross Road that he bought Multum's books. The Bomb shop, small altruistic Book-Bazaar, stacked Multum. Strindberg's *Eternal Feminine*, indefatigably Vampire,—so splendidly constructed when a play—accumulated on the edge of the pavement in volumes clothed like the Prussian army, a monument to Mr. Samuel's industry.

On leaving His Majesty's forces, after a concussion, and become definitely, to his family's distress, a crank and very liberal, he began reading sociological books and wandering about London. On passing the Bomb shop he was attracted by a poster advertising a new book:

THE CROWD MASTER.

By BROWN BRYAN MULTUM.

THE CROWD MASTER. What might that mean? His bright astonished eyes fixed on the words, drinking up a certain strength from them.

An opposition of and welding of the two heaviest words that stand for the multitude on the one hand, the Ego on the other.

That should be something!

Did it really mean Master of the Crowd in the sense of a possessive domination by an individual? It meant something else, it seemed evident.

Mooney and adrift since his leap out of discipline and life cut and dried, he gazed at it in now habitual neurasthenic hesitation. It was no "mysterious instinct" that came to the assistance of his will, but the necessity of brutal and enthusiastic actions like the buying of a book in his inactive life, to keep him from capitulation to Fate.

Buying a book with him was like some men's going to the doctor: those who are cured by the passing of the professional hall door. There was nothing really the matter with Blenner. The moment he had got the book, the expense was justified. He seldom read it. Then he chafed at the fee.

This book, he found, was by an American. Patronage at once and listlessness. His emancipation did not go so far as the taking of Americans seriously. To take an American seriously is the sign, in an Englishman, of the most refined and exclusive wisdom. Blenner was as yet only a raw regimental officer, at the beginning of his education; only thirty-two.

He found in it, to begin with, an ingenious tirade against hair. To him it appeared to contain the barbarous "ge" and raw pedantry of that abominable and peculiar race.

He had lately been adopting a rather artistic get-up. He had superbly drifted into it through dirt, the natural romantic reaction from the military state. The anti-hair campaign, then, touched him in a, just then, delicate spot.

This American book spoke of the 'soft conservatism' of England as the really barbarous things, "the anarchy and confusion of Past-Living." It opposed to the English tory, a sort of Red Indian machine, with a soul like Walt Whitman, but none of the hirsute mistakes of that personage, and invention instead of sensibility.

"Its instinct is to invent. Everything else is absorbed in that. It is in the making and creates (either in small or great) as naturally as the Englishman stylizes. Pure invention is rawness. It desires change because it is in the making and lives on the hither side of itself, and wants to go on living there in the sun.

Sun only comes from ahead.

It invents when it desires, and moves away.

It lives on the wing. Gemuthlichkeit and the Yule log depress it, and send a bloody sunset warmth into its bones. It sees caverns of savages. It sees old ships struggling with whales. These nightmares are Reality.

It is the highest dreamer, for it imagines successful life, and flies from the deep reality of failure and tragedy that men have chanted up till now.

It exploits the ancient strength of resignation and despair to build up a Temple of Gaiety."

Blenner was scandalized at this. There was, quite seriously, an impropriety in an American speaking in this strain. An American was—well, we all know what an American is. Whereas an Englishman has him under his eye the whole way along, hasn't he? It was like a white corpuscle under the microscope, suddenly beginning to praise itself, drawing invidious comparisons between itself and the observant student.

"I am a pawn in the world. Although I am so small, I send powerful armies against men, and speak for speak, am often the better being. I snap my fingers at your friendly corpuscles. It will serve you nothing to squint at me through that tube. If I catch you some day I will trouble you."

"Although I am so large" this new America, all through the book, seemed to be saying, "I am not to be despised. The material element has outstripped the spiritual: oh yes, of course. But because you see a thing coming backwards on, don't form an opinion until you see it turn round.

I am so huge and have no Past. I am like all your Pasts and the Present dumped into one age together. Just so; what is the matter with you is the matter with me, only mere so. But I shall absorb my elements because I am all living, whereas you are 80 per cent. dead.

Yah! Booh! I can only put my tongue out now. But I shall have an artistic snaky visiting card some day.

I am the vilest thing on Earth. Amen."

Blenner then was mildly scandalized at all this. But at the same time he smiled idly, for there was every justification for indulgence. He would have admitted the truth of many of the criticisms about England coming from anyone by an American. He replied to the book with sense:

"I congratulate you on your faith in the United States. Only has America any single thing to show of interest to Me? Is it not universally admitted by Americans that an artist cannot live there? Do you not put trousers on piano-legs? Does not your cant, optimism and impermeability constitute a greater deviation from human kind in the bad directions, than anything that has occurred since the beginning of the human race?"

He saw no fair reason for an effort to overcome this final catechism.

Untidy habits had taken hold of him. His hair had degraded him on chin and neck in a month to the level of a Stone-age super or a Crab-tree genius. From his first glancing at this book of Multum's dated his beard. The book was disappointing, it was of no consequence and therefore it was not humiliating to be affected by it capriciously. Only it pressed him into a full beard, in his "customary" spirit of protest. His was one of those full beards that are as orderly as a shave. It was sleek matt chocolate colour, formed like a Roman Emperor's sculpted chevelure.

From the beginning most ill-disposed to Multum, the moment he met him, without noticing the transition, he became attached. Multum was extremely simple and pretended nothing more than a stranger could, or rather should, understand. He was rather inclined to underestimate what people could understand. Had his personality aggressively reversed Blenner's verdict, the transition would have been noticed and resisted.

He appeared, and something so completely different to preconceived notions, and at the same time so easy and unjarring, was there, that there was no need to refer to the book.

Blenner, taster and scenter, lazy, (attached Brittanically to very personal things, mental sweetmeats, sensations and sentimentousness, as Multum would have said) had never really read Multum's book. He turned to it, and (without noticing the change, too) found it "stimulating."

He had met Multum in a railway carriage on the way back from Dover. The American poet had therefore been able to affect him directly before the name was known. In the first place Multum had no accent. It was only a sort of flatness and roughness, and a guttural impediment in the throat, like a difficulty in swallowing. This difficulty was accompanied by a feline contracting of the eyes in almost a squint. There was something very graceful in his throaty roughness and slowness of speech.

He was tall. He had some coarse, tow-coloured, hair. In a clean-shaven, square, smallish face, rather ill-tempered, sallow, reflective, his eyes appeared to shut down like teeth.

Blenner took him for some romantic character from a Welsh glen of Borrow's Wild Wales, American origin gradually dawning on him.

Multum for his part felt himself an object of fascination to the bright pair of eyes in front of him, and almost laughed when they prevailed upon their owner to address him.

"You don't mind my speaking to you. I'm sure I've seen you in Paris somewhere very often."

"What part of Paris would that be?"—Multum grinned a little, looking older in contraction of face.

"Montparnasse?" Blenner suggested.

"That's quite likely. I am often there."

They sat amleably grinning at each other, each with his little joke, without saying anything.

Multum, as though the joke were ended, took up his paper, and with a last rather severe dart of the eye at Blenner, began reading. Blenner, still smiling, looked out of the window. There the landscapes were sliding, like a White City by-show worked by a strong dynamo. Sometimes things licked out of view with stolec violence near the windows.

These Surrey countryside lived in public, deprived of every atom of privacy. The country is a garden or workshop. Milk, eggs and a little flour were produced publicly and without the enthusiasm of solitude and disconnection with the Euston Road. Not walled off from the trains, it loses its specific character which is the privacy of space. The scale was depressing as well, but the garden city sort of house everywhere relieved things with brutal and poignant reminders of H. G. Wells, and stolid matinée queus.

When Multum put his paper down sometime afterwards, the eyes were still drawn in his direction. They began grinning again. Multum's grin was indulgent, a faint ghost of American complacency.

"I was just thinking" said Blenner, after saying something aimless about the country, "of two statements Stendhal puts forward together with reference to this landscape. He says that when genius comes to these shores it loses seventy per cent. of its value, and that the country between Folkestone and London is "le plus attendrissant du monde."

"A Frenchman is more easily 'attendri' than we are in the first place," Multum suggested, "and is 'attendri' by different things. Northerners are affected by orange groves and white mountains, and energy. Stendhal, hailing from the South, would look at these moist and pale fields as though they were pretty and anaemic children. Of course they were not desentimentalised then to the same extent, either. As to the genius part of his saying, art and so forth, evidently has seventy per cent. more difficulties on these shores. This sometimes stimulates, sometimes destroys. Again, Stendhal was no judge of genius. He was a judge of men, not of geniuses."

A little uncertain, and not to betray some ignorance, Blenner let the subject drop. When they arrived at Victoria, getting out of the train together, Multum put down his bag and produced a card

BROWN BRYAN MULTUM.

2, Bristol Avenue, Regent's Park.

Blenner looked at it not understanding for a moment.

MULTUM. He had been talking to Multum. This was much more heroic now that he knew the person. Blenner the soldier had been rather afraid of and obsequiously respectful towards Lions.

"Here is where I live," Multum said. Taking up his bag he hurried off, beckoning to a taxi.

Blenner ran after him and said:

"Mr. Multum?—You wrote the Crowd-Master—"

"Yes!" Multum produced a tooth pick, and stood with one foot on the step of the taxi.

"I got it the other day. I enjoyed reading it very much," Blenner smiled coaxingly and untruthfully as he said this.

"I'm glad you like it." They stopped a moment grinning. "Goodbye!" The "bye" was rather long and flat, like a sarcasm.

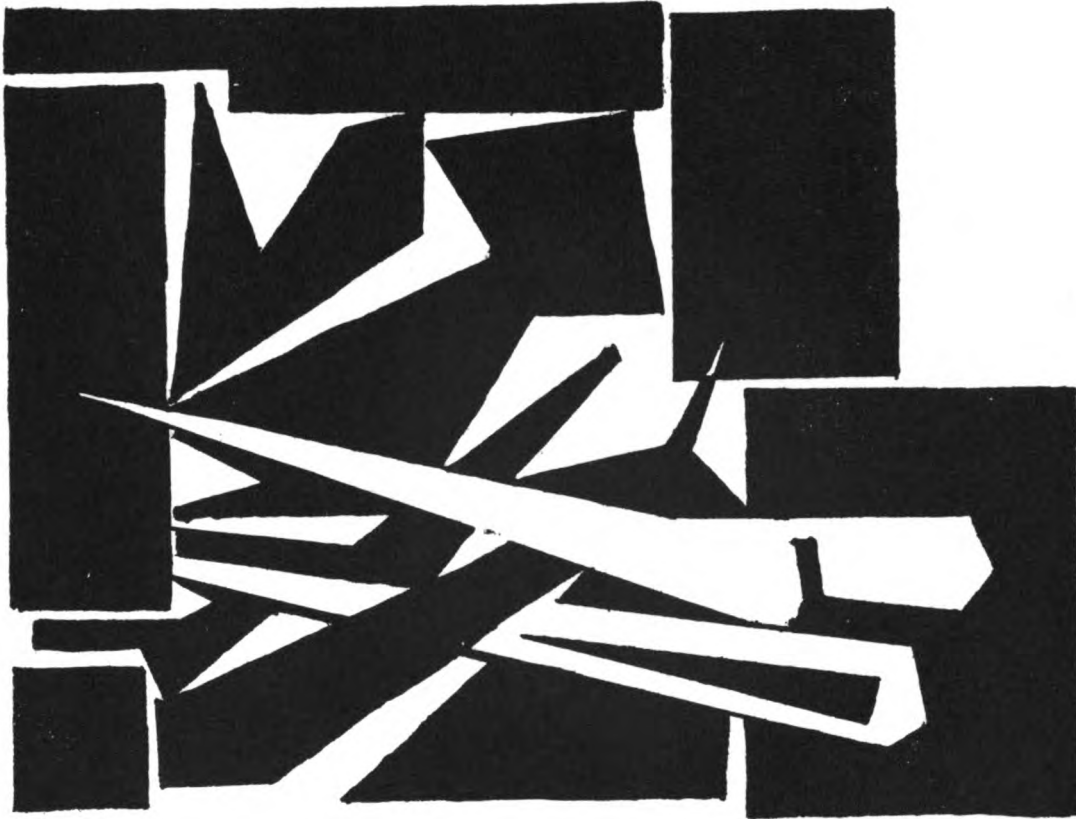
Blenner nearly dashed into the tall fat young man of the Geddé station platform as he turned away. He felt guilty; ashamed of his precipitation, and, for the first time in his life, vexed at the brightness of his eyes.

He had seen a good deal of Multum since then, and took a sensual pleasure in sacrificing his antagonisms at each meeting (they died very dreamily and not hard) to his brilliant friend. He occasionally would show coquettishly, with a movement like the handling of a skirt, a little dissentient strain in his soul. His eye's brightness would become bland and mischievous, his beard's aggressiveness partake of a caress.

PRELUDES.

Blenner was forced now to give his leg a rest, as the journey and the amount of hobbling about he had done, threatened to lay him up definitely again if he were not careful. He went to bed at five in the afternoon, but through the evening sent the caretaker's wife out for papers every hour or so up to ten o'clock.

[Further parts will be printed in the next number of "Mast."]



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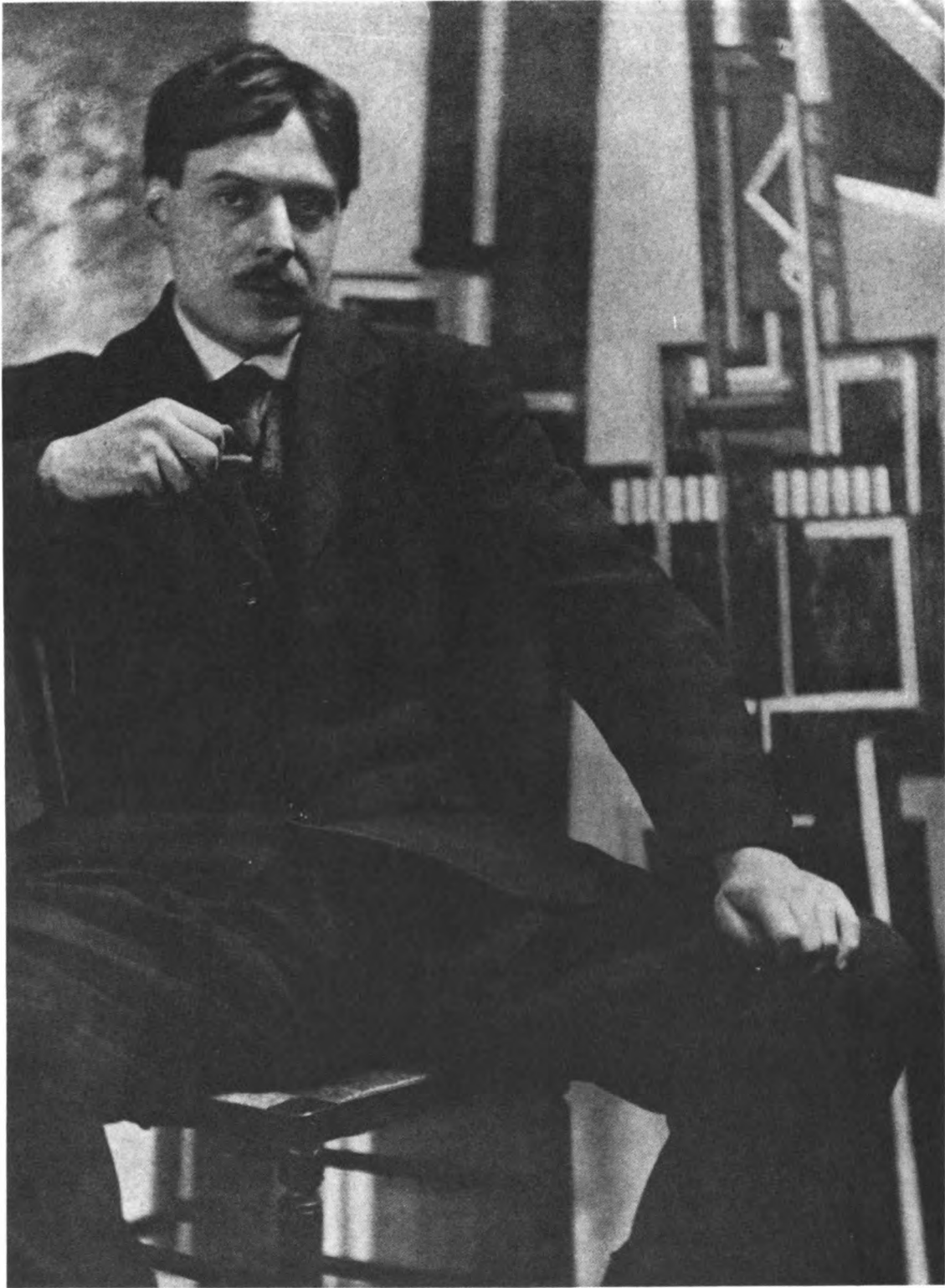
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WYNDHAM LEWIS (1882–1957) was a novelist, painter, essayist, poet, critic, polemicist and one of the truly dynamic forces in literature and art in the twentieth century. He was the founder of Vorticism, the only original movement in twentieth century English painting. The author of *Tarr* (1918), *The Lion and the Fox* (1927), *Time and Western Man* (1927), *The Apes of God* (1930), *The Revenge for Love* (1937), and *Self-Condemed* (1954), Lewis was ranked highly by his important contemporaries: “the most fascinating personality of our time . . . the most distinguished living novelist” (T. S. Eliot), “the only English writer who can be compared to Dostoievski” (Ezra Pound).



