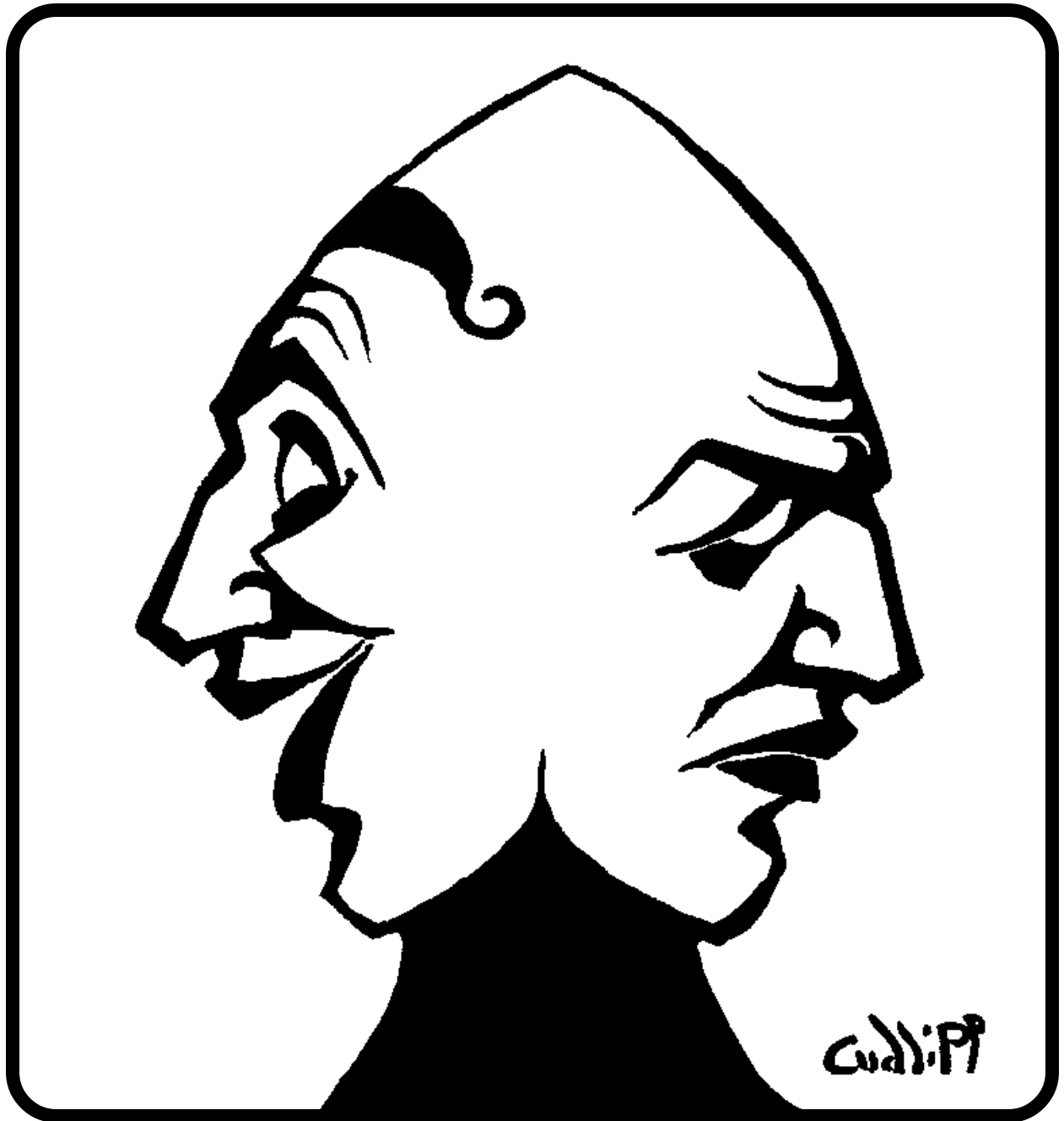


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THE INTERNATIONAL

APRIL SHOWERS OF AMUSEMENT.

IT is an extraordinary thing that space, which is notoriously infinite, should be the thing of which we can never have enough. The result is that some of our most interesting dramas were crowded out of our March issue; but they will appear in due season if we faint not.

In the April number we have another story of Mark Wells called "The King of the Wood." It is a most dramatic incident of ancient Rome dealing with that strange rite mentioned by Macaulay in one of his great ballads, where a priest holds his position only so long as he can defend himself from being surprised and slain by his successors.

We have also a very charming story called "The Old Man of the Peepul-tree" by a young writer, James Grahame, in which legend and tradition are happily blended with life on Broadway. Alexander Harvey contributes a magnificent story whose subject is an incident, one of the most interesting incidents, in the life of Shelley.

George Sylvester Viereck gives an intensely interesting account of the great Danish critic, George Brandes. Turning from grave to gay, Charles Beadle contributes a delightful sketch of life in the Latin Quarter of Paris with its curious mixture of religious fervor and debauchery. The famous Japanese poet, Shigetsu Sasaki, has written a delightfully colored article on Shinto, the most interesting of the religions of Japan.

Faith Baldwin, who is already known to our readers, has a wonderful poem, a monologue of Atthis. Two other writers new to the pages of the "International" are Ida Alexander and M. B. Levick. The former contributes a delightful social study, dealing with up-to-date marriage, while the latter sounds a paean of the grand old Punch which has been brewed from time immemorial in Tuscany.

Aleister Crowley has an amusing story about diamonds, called "Robbing Miss Horniman," and there will be numerous other items of quite unusual interest.

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AN HYMN FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Brothers and sisters, on this day
Of deathless glory, let us come
United in our glad array
To hymn our fathers' martyrdom.
Ashes to ashes? Dust to dust?
So let it be! In God we trust.

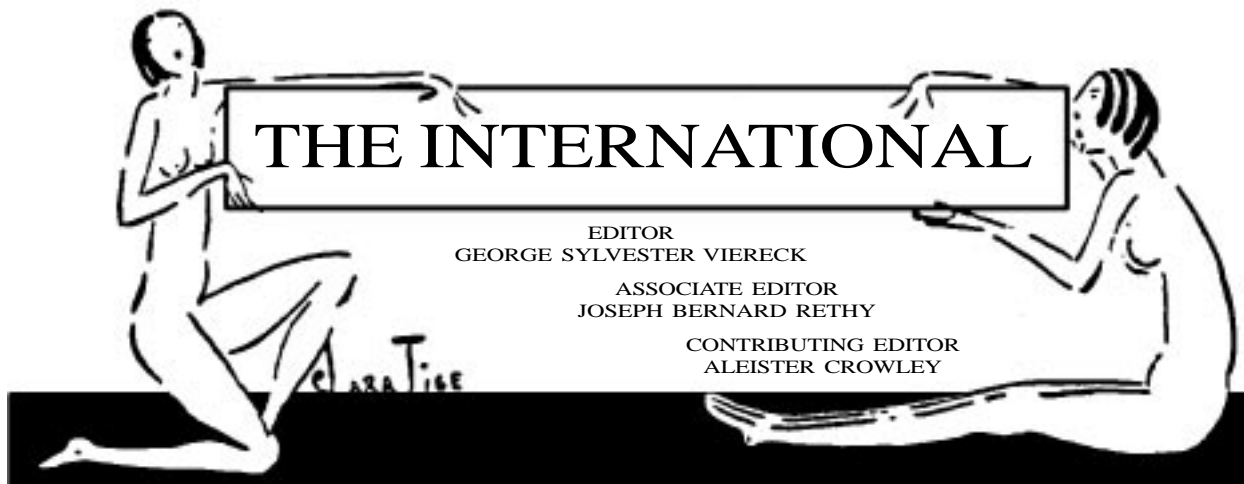
They died — they died — and we are free.
Take up their cross! Deserve their crown!
The stainless flag of liberty
By man shall not be trodden down!
Ashes to ashes? Dust to dust?
So let it be! In God we trust.

In war and earthquake, wreck and wrong,
Still let the flag of freedom fly!
In peace and safety, still be strong!
For we will live as we would die.
Ashes to ashes? Dust to dust?
So let it be! In God we trust.

Though ruin wash the world in blood,
Though death devour, though time decay,
Let but our hearts hold brotherhood,
And this they shall not take away.
Ashes to ashes? Dust to dust?
So let it be! In God we trust.

Stand! and join hands! and let us sing!
Shake out Old Glory to the skies!
With heart and hands defiant fling
Our purpose against Destiny's.
Ashes to ashes? Dust to dust?
So let it be! In God we trust.

ALEISTER CROWLEY.



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MARCH, 1918.

PRICE 15 CENTS

[The February Number of the International having been withdrawn, subscriptions will be extended one month as compensation. — Managing Editor.]

GOOD HUNTING!

(An essay on the Nature of Comedy and Tragedy.)

By **BAPHOMET, Grand Master of the Knights of the Holy Ghost.**

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

"Bye, Baby Bunting!

Daddy's gone a-hunting . . ."

Such is the sole stuff of art, as it was the sole occupation of primitive man. Hunting is the one real passion of man. Love, the desire of wealth or power, are only branches of the sport. For it is directly related to the first of all passions, hunger; and it is an exciting sport; it is gambling for the highest of all stakes. Now, art is primarily the celebration of excitement, the record of some stimulus of the soul. Dramatic art, which represents drama, action, consequently concerns itself with hunting — and with nothing else.

When daddy came back with a deer, there was great rejoicing in the tribe. Every one filled himself with meat; the cockles of his heart grew warm; he began to laugh. You can do the same to-day with a very hungry man, without the aid of alcohol. This expansive state being clearly associated causally with the killing of the deer, and the sportsman excitedly recounting his exploit, the story itself was food for laughter. And the key of the jest soon discovered itself as contempt for the foolish victim. "What a fine stag he was, how proud and swift! Nothing could catch him, and, if he wished, how sharp were those great, branching horns of his! And all the while there was I tracking him with my little flint axe — ha! ha! ha!"

All these points were seen and seized on by the old comedians. They would always accentuate the self-esteem of the victim. They would dress him up as a king or a God, and hunt him down. A still funnier elaboration of the joke was to persuade him that he was the hunter. "Come," say they to Pentheus in the Bacchae, "come, great king, adorn thyself according to thy dignity; come, arm thyself, slay these wild creatures!" and

aside: "And when we've got him there his own mother shall kill him in her madness, and run about with his head under the impression that it is a lion's!" This further development of humor was doubtless due to Dionysus; even the hungriest man could hardly think that out on mere venison.

I read my Agamemnon through the spectacles of Dr. A. W. Verrall, and it seems to me that the play is a comedy. The incident of the carpet is very like adornment of the victim. Agamemnon, however, is not taken in the snare; he does not show "Hubris," but modesty; and this makes the play more serious. Still, no doubt, it ends on the comic note — Aegisthus chuckling over the success of his clever stratagem. This Hubris hated of the Gods is the root of many a proverb. "At the hour of triumph sacrifice the dearest thing thou hast to the Infernal Gods" — the case of the play "Jephthah." "Beware of the moment of success." Think of Ajax flattered into the madness wherein he kills the sheep — what a superlative jest for the onlooker! Alternative themes lead surely to anticlimax. Consider Abraham's sacrifice — what a typically inartistic ending! The whole passion and beauty of the drama is destroyed by the sneaking subterfuge of the substitution of the ram for the heir of promise.

Let us glance now at the Crucifixion. Here we have comedy in its fullest flower. "Hail, King of the Jews!" Triumphant entry into the capital; robing in purple, crowning in mockery, barbarous murder at the close. The ritual is that of all ancient comedies of initiation, with mere local variations. Now why do not we laugh? They did at the time. "Let us see whether Elias will come to take him down!" "He saved others, himself he could not save." The answer follows easily, and we shall see incidentally why we are a little doubtful as to whether

Agamemnon is a comic figure.

When Daddy goes a-hunting he does not always bring home a deer. Sometimes he meets a diplodocus, and does not come home at all. Then, what do the tribe do? They squat and hug their empty bellies. There is no laughter. There is one long wail. There is no food, and the man that used to get it has been eaten alive. This is no joke, no joke at all. Presently the wail becomes articulate; some one recounts the heroic deeds of the dead hunter. How skilful he was! How cunning! How swift and strong! How accurately he swung the axe! And now "he is gone on the mountain, he is lost to the forest!" He died fighting heroically against enormous superiority of force . . . and so on. Anyhow, he's dead, and we're without food, and what can we do but weep? It is a tragedy!

Just so; that is the definition of tragedy. The primitives of the next tribe probably are laughing to split their sides. Their hunter has brought in a wild bull, and they are having a glorious time. "And that fool across the valley who fancied himself so at hunting went out after rabbits and got a diplodocus — ha! ha! ha!"

It is all a question of our sympathies. The event described is always the same. Whether it is a tragedy or a comedy depends on the point of view. The Agamemnon is a tragedy for the family man; for the young sport who wants to beat him out of his wife and his kingdom, it is a romantic comedy.

So when we come to consider plays about Hecuba and other people that in no wise concern us personally, we judge by our own sympathies, and laugh or cry accordingly. Thus the sympathy of mankind has been secured, in the case of the crucifixion, for the figure of Jesus, so we call the story a tragedy. We have been told to identify him with Everyman, who is doomed to suffer a barbarous death sooner or later. It is the same with the stories of the murders of Osiris and of Hiram. (Footnote: Observe, dear brother, the hunter's ritual in this last story; the stationing of the hunters, and the way they head off the game in turn.)

In other words, man began to think of himself no longer as a hunting animal, but as a victim. In the second stage of human thought, man is the sufferer. (Compare William James, and his remarks on the once-born and the twice-born.) Man has begun to fear Nature, to wail over his own fate symbolically in lamenting the deaths of the great heroes of the past. It no longer seems funny to us to adorn a man as a God, and eat him, for that is just what life is doing to all of us.

To recover the comic spirit, therefore, we must acquire a new view of death.

II.

In certain previous essays of the writer it has been pointed out that desire or love must be held to include such phenomena as chemical change. All true acts of love produce or consume energy in some form, that we have explosive disintegrations and violently rapid oxidations which disengage heat, light, electricity, and other forms of matter and of motion — regard them as you please — which are (on the surface) of a different order of Nature to the ingredients of the operation. Similarly, by putting the right pair of featherless bipeds together, there are explosions and emotion, poetry, perhaps spiritual growth, as well as the phenomenon which is obviously of the same order — a baby.

In all such acts, chemical or physiological, there is a true transmutation, therefore, and we may class these things as genuinely partakers of the Ineffable Mystery of Godliness. In mere admixture we do not get this transmutation. Mix hydrogen and oxygen; they remain the same; nothing at all happens. Combine them and you get not only a transformation of the very nature of the molecules, but numerous physical phenomena — flame, heat, moisture — which were not there before.

Now let us take another issue. All conscious, self-willed motion implies life, and, all such motion being accompanied with chemical change and (as Buddha insisted) with the partial disintegration of the individual, we must define life as something quite beyond the crude conception which is usually formed of it. Every true phenomenon, whether it be the haemoglobin-oxyhaemoglobin-carboxhaemoglobin cycle in the blood, or the changes in the brain which we call philosophy from a consideration of their effects, may be thought of as a form of copulation, atom seeking atom, and producing molecule, just as woman seeks man and produces offspring. Now every such act of copulation involves the death of the partakers. True, the hydrogen can be recovered from the water; ultimate simplicities are in some sort immortal, but (again we quote Buddha) all complexities perish and are not recoverable in their integrity. We cannot suppose that by recombining the recovered hydrogen and oxygen into water each atom in the original water will find the self-same mate. We cannot recover the father in the child, though we may perceive many traces of him; and the persistence of the father himself is due to the fact that only a minute percentage of his life is used in the production of the child. His quintessence vivifies any amount of other matter and transmutes it to his likeness; this is the Alchemical miracle, to produce some such process in the mineral kingdom. If one possessed the quintessence of gold, the unknown 'seed of gold,' that which makes gold gold and not silver, it might impregnate other elements and make them grow into its own nature. This at least was the theory evolved by the fathers of chemistry, and (I doubt not) will be the practice of their descendants in a year not distant.

Now, to return, since every copulation may be considered as involving death, we may say (at the risk of appearing to convert an A proposition) that every death may be considered as a form of copulation. The chemical changes of disintegration are in no way distinguishable from those of life. We cannot call one set synthesis and the other analysis, even. We merely make a false distinction on account of the fact that our personal prejudices are involved . . . just as we were in doubt whether to laugh or to cry at the Agamemnon.

Now, it is to be noted that certain people take the sexual view of death. To this day the peasants in some parts of Greece regard the death of an individual as his marriage to that deity, Artemis or Aphrodite, to whom he was most devoted during life. Mohammed taught that death was the key to the enjoyment of the Hur al' Ayn. Even in Christian mysticism we find the death of the saint equivalent to his marriage with the Saviour. We are "waiting for the Bridegroom." In fact, this idea is almost universal in all true religion. (Buddhism, an exception, is more a philosophy than a religion.)

Now, we have no means of telling what occurs in the "soul" at the time of death. Whatever may be the approaches to the pylon, we have no evidence with regard to the Door itself. But

we have certain analogies in the experience of mystics. We have the 'Dark Night of the Soul' breaking in the 'Dawn of the Celestial Bridal.' And we have in physical life an exact counterpart in the fear of Love which is characteristic of the Virgin. This is especially marked in the case of boys. There is an instinctive fear, repulsion and anxiety, which must be overcome before the soul swoons in bliss. Is it racial experience that tells him that love is the twin brother of death? Love and Death are the levers of that universal life which we saw to be the Name of the Universe. Each is an annihilation of an individual in the interests of universal Energy. Thus, as we have seen in a slightly different shape, when referring to the quintessence of comedy, Love and Death are the sole preoccupation of the artist, whose subject is Life. There is no other real interest, for there is nothing else in which to delight.

If, then, we can take the view that Death is an intense form of Love, in which the individual is permanently destroyed, as he is temporarily destroyed during the act of love, then this Life is universal Joy, a Divine Comedy, whose soul is Laughter. We can even explain the joy of cruelty as a deeper realization of the nature of cruelty, as a piquancy, a sting, in what would otherwise be a detestably sweet wine.

But if we fail to grasp this view, then we are forced to the alternative that Love is only a form of Death. The universe is an abyss of agony. "The mystery of the cruelty of things" is as terrible as Swinburne's "Anactoria" makes it. Everything is sorrow, we are Buddhists, and only in utter cessation is there peace. Buddha himself recognized this clearly enough; his intense distaste for sex is our witness. He saw that it was playing the game of Life to love; it was allowing oneself to be dragged deeper and deeper into the mire of Existence. A monotheism with any perception of the facts of nature — hard nowadays to escape some such perception! — may make its God in the image of the Marquis de Sade. The whole of organic nature is an orgy of murder and lust. There is only one escape from this position; to accept the unity of Love and Death, and to regard Death as mere Delight. Such a realization avoids the snare of Dualism, lays its axe to the root of the problem of the Origin of Evil, and renders Existence possible and desirable for the thinker as well as for the sensualist.

III.

To the blessed ones who have accepted the Law of Thelema these words will hardly have been necessary. The doctrine is plainly stated in the Book of the Law.

"For I am divided for love's sake, for the chance of union. This is the creation of the world, that the pain of division is as nothing, and the joy of dissolution in all."

"Now, let it be understood, if the body of the king dissolve, he shall remain in pure ecstasy for ever."

"Aye! Feast! Rejoice! there is no dread hereafter. There is the dissolution, and eternal ecstasy in the kisses of Nu."

"Thrill with the joy of life and death! Ah! thy death shall be lovely: whoso seeth it shall be glad. Thy death shall be

the seal of the promise of our age-long love."

"Strive ever to more! and if thou art truly mine — and doubt it not, an if thou art ever joyous! death is the crown of all."

This, then, is the will of the Universe; Life eternal and universal, not petty, individual and transient; Life of which we are only conscious when in trance; Life whose consciousness is gained perfectly and permanently by the adept in virtue of his trance in proportion as he becomes fixed therein and makes his daily life partake thereof; Life that works inexorably and deliciously through Love and Death, which are Love. And this is expressed simply, succinctly, perfectly, in that transcendent phrase, the greeting wherewith we close our writings:

Love is the law, love under will.

Note — Taking a few plays at random we see every one the description of a hunting. Note that the strongest dramas are those in which the hunt is keenest. Where the hunting interest is weak or masked, the play becomes frivolous and lacking in the stuff of greatness.

Ajax — The hunting of Ajax by Ulysses.

Agamemnon — Agamemnon by Aegisthus.

Oedipus — Oedipus by Fate. Karma is very frequently taken for the hunter. The man's being hunted by himself is particularly funny!

Orestes trilogy — Orestes by Fate.

Bacchae — Pentheus by Dionysus.

Hamlet — Claudius by Hamlet. Here the motive is weakly carried out, and so the play is only interesting for the revelation of Hamlet's soul.

Lear — Lear by Madness.

Macbeth — Macbeth by his conscience, or by the Witches.

Othello — Othello by Iago.

Twelfth Night — The Duke by Viola (note hunter's disguise).

As You Like It — Orlando by Rosalind (ditto).

Romeo and Juliet — Love by Heredity.

Coriolanus — Coriolanus by the mob-spirit.

Julius Caesar — Caesar by Cassius.

Ghosts — Oswald by Heredity.

Hedda Gabler — Hedda by Breck.

Rosmersholm — Rosmer and Rebecca by the wife's ghost.

A Doll's House — Nora by her nascent individuality. (The lack of personal struggle makes this a weak, silly play.)

The Master-BUILDER — The Builder by Hilda.

An Enemy of Society — Society by Stockmann. (He conquers it, so this is a comedy.)

Brand — Brand by the Hawk.

Peer Gynt — Peer Gynt by Solveig. (Note the way she lurks silent throughout the play. Other exciting episodes are all huntings.)

Mortadello — Mortadello by Monica. (Note disguise at banquet.)

Snowstorm — Nerissa by Eric; Eric by Maud. (Observe hunters' disguises again.)

The Scorpion — Laylah by Rinaldo; their love by the Scorpion. (This is a romance, and neither comedy nor tragedy in the best sense.)

Household Gods — Crassus by Alicia. (Note supreme disguise.)

A Night in an Inn — The Thieves by the Idol.

The Gods of the Mountain — The Beggars by the Gods.

The Blind Prophet — The Prophet (individual life) by Universal Life.

The Argonauts — Jason by Ares.

Adonis — Adonis by Psyche.

Atalanta in Calydon — Meleager by Circumstance. (Here the hunter is not personified, and so the play is weak. But note the comedy of the hunter hunted.)

The Mother's Tragedy — Cora by Karma.

The Fatal Force — Ratoum by S'afi (disguise again).

Jephthah — Jephthah by Jared. (Crude and undeveloped form of the idea.)

The World's Tragedy — Fate by Alexander.

ECCLESIAE GNOSTICAE CATHOLICAE CANON MISSAE.

Edited from the Ancient Documents in Assyrian
and Greek by The Master Therion.

I. OF THE FURNISHINGS OF THE TEMPLE.

In the East — that is in the direction of Boleskine — is a shrine or High Altar. Its dimensions should be 7 feet in length, 3 feet in breadth, 44 inches in height. It should be covered with a crimson altar-cloth, on which may be embroidered fleur-de-lys in gold, or a sunblaze, or other suitable emblem.

On each side of it should be a pillar or Obelisk, with countercharges in black and white.

Below it should be the dais of three steps, in black and white squares.

Above it is the super-altar, at whose top is the Stélé of Revealing in reproduction, with four candles on each side of it. Below the Stélé is a place for the Book of the Law, with six candles on each side of it. Below this again is The Holy Graal, with roses on each side of it. There is room in front of the Cup for the Paten. On each side beyond the roses are two great candles.

All this is enclosed within a great Veil.

Forming the apex of an equilateral triangle whose base is a line drawn between the pillars, is a small black square altar, of superimposed cubes.

Taking this altar as the middle of the base of a similar and equal triangle, at the apex of this second triangle is a small circular front.

Repeating, the apex of a third triangle is an upright coffin, or Tomb.

II. OF THE OFFICERS OF THE MASS.

The Priest. Bears the Sacred Lance, and is clothed at first in a plain white robe.

The Priestess. Should be actually Virgo Intacto, or specially dedicated to the service of the Great Order. She is clothed in white, blue, and gold. She bears the Sword from a red girdle, and the Paten and Hosts, or Cakes of Light.

The Deacon. He is clothed in white and yellow. He bears the Book of the Law.

Two Children. They are clothed in white and black. One bears a pitcher of water and a cellar of salt, the other a censer of fire and a casket of perfume.

III. OF THE CEREMONY OF THE INTROIT.

The Deacon, opening the door of the Temple, admits the congregation and takes his stand between the small altar and the front. (There should be a door-keeper to attend to the admission.)

The Deacon advances and bows before the open shrine where the Graal is exalted. He kisses the Book of the Law three times, opens it, and places it upon the super-altar. He turns West.

The DEACON: Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law. I proclaim the Law of Light, Life, Love, and Liberty in

the name of IAO.

The CONGREGATION: Love is the law, love under will.

The Deacon goes to his place between the altar of incense and the font, faces east, and gives the step and sign of a Man and a Brother. All imitate him.

The DEACON and all the PEOPLE: I believe in one secret and ineffable Lord; and in one Star in the Company of Stars of whose fire we are created, and to which we shall return; and in one Father of Life, Mystery of Mystery, in His name Chaos, the sole vice-regent of the Sun upon the Earth; and in one Air, the nourisher of all that breathes.

And I believe in one Earth, the Mother of us all, and in one Womb wherein all men are begotten, and wherein they shall rest, Mystery of Mystery, in Her name Babalon.

And I believe in the Serpent and the Lion, Mystery of Mystery, in His name Baphomet.

And I believe in one Gnostic and Catholic Church of Light, Life, Love, and Liberty, the Word of whose Law is Thelema.

And I believe in the communion of Saints.

And, forasmuch as meat and drink are transmuted in us daily into spiritual substance, I believe in the Miracle of the Mass.

And I confess one Baptism of Wisdom, whereby we accomplish the Miracle of Incarnation.

And I confess my life one, individual, and eternal, that was, and is, and is to come.

Aumn. Aumn. Aumn.

Music is now played. The child enters with the ewer and the salt. The Virgin enters with the Sword and the Paten. The child enters with the censer and the perfume. They face the Deacon, deploying into line, from the space between the two altars.

The PRIESTESS: Greeting of Earth and Heaven!

All give the Hailing Sign of a Magician, the Deacon leading.

The Priestess, the negative child on her left, the positive on her right, ascends the steps of the High Altar, they awaiting her below. She places the Paten before the Graal. Having adored it, she descends, and with the children following her, the positive next her, she moves in a serpentine manner involving 3½ circles of the temple. (Deosil about altar, widdershins about font, deosil about altar and font, widdershins about altar and to the Tomb in the West.) She draws her Sword and pulls down the Veil therewith.

The PRIESTESS: By the power of *¹ Iron, I say unto thee, Arise! In the name of our Lord the * Sun, and of our Lord * . . . that thou mayest administer the virtues to the Brethren.

She sheathes the Sword.

The Priest, issuing from the Tomb, holding the Lance erect with both hands, right over left, against his breast, takes the first three regular steps.

He then gives the Lance to the Priestess and gives the three penal signs.

He then kneels and worships the Lance with both hands.

¹ This sign means making a Cross.

Penitential music.

The PRIEST: I am a man among men.

He takes again the Lance and lowers it. He rises.

The PRIEST: How should I be worthy to administer the virtues to the Brethren?

The Priestess takes from the child the water and the salt, and mixes them in the font.

The PRIESTESS: Let the salt of Earth admonish the Water to bear the virtue of the Great Sea. (Genuflects.) Mother, be thou adored.

She turns to the West. * on Priest with open hand doth she make over his forehead, breast, and body.

Be the Priest pure of body and soul.

The Priestess takes the censer from the child, and places it on the small altar. She puts incense therein.

Let the Fire and the Air make sweet the world! (Genuflects.) Father, be thou adored.

She returns West and makes * with the censer before the Priest, thrice as before.

Be the Priest fervent of body and soul!

(The children resume their weapons as they are used.)

The Deacon now takes the consecrated Robe from the High Altar and brings it to her. She clothes the Priest in his Robe of scarlet and gold.

Be the flame of the Sun thine ambience, O thou Priest of the Sun!

The Deacon brings the crown from the High Altar. (The crown may be of gold or platinum, or of electrum magicum; but with no other metals, save the small proportions necessary to a proper alloy. It may be adorned with divers jewels, at will. But it must have the Uraeus serpent twined about it, and the cap of maintenance must match the scarlet of the Robe. Its texture should be velvet.)

Be the Serpent thy crown, O thou Priest of the Lord!

Kneeling, she takes the Lance between her open hands, and runs them up and down upon the shaft eleven times, very gently.

Be the Lord present among us!

All give the Hailing Sign.

The PEOPLE: So mote it be.

IV. OF THE CEREMONY OF THE OPENING OF THE VEIL.

The PRIEST: Thee, therefore, whom we adore we also invoke. By the power of the lifted Lance!

He raises the Lance. All repeat Hailing Sign.

A phrase of triumphant music.

The Priest takes the Priestess by her right hand with left, keeping the Lance raised.

I, Priest and King, take thee, Virgin pure without spot; I upraise thee; I lead thee to the East; I set thee upon the summit of the Earth.

He thrones the Priestess upon the altar.

The Deacon and the children follow, they in rank, behind him.

The Priestess takes the Book of the Law, resumes her seat, and holds it open on her breast with her two hands, making a descending triangle with thumbs and forefin-

gers.

The Priest gives the Lance to the Deacon to hold, and takes the flower from the child, and sprinkles the Priestess, making five crosses, forehead, shoulders, and thighs. The thumb of the Priest is always between his index and medius, whenever he is not holding the Lance.

The Priest takes the censer from the child, and makes five crosses, as before.

The children replace their weapons on their respective altars.

The Priest kisses the Book of the Law three times. He keeps for a space in adoration, with joined hands, knuckles closed, thumb in position aforesaid. He rises, and draws the veil over the whole altar. All rise and stand to order.

The Priest takes the lance from the Deacon, and holds it as before, as Osiris or Ptah. He circumambulates the Temple three times, followed by the Deacon and the children as before. (These, when not using their hands, keep their arms crossed upon their breasts.) At the last circumambulation they leave him, and go to the place between the front and the small altar, where they kneel in adoration, their hands joined palm to palm, and raised above their heads. All imitate this motion.

The Priest returns to the East, and mounts the first step of the altar.

The PRIEST: O circle of Stars whereof our Father is but the younger brother, marvel beyond imagination, soul of infinite space, before whom Time is ashamed, the mind bewildered, and the understanding dark, not unto Thee may we attain, unless Thine image be Love. Therefore, by seed and root and stem and bud and leaf and flower and fruit do we invoke Thee. Then the priest answered and said unto the Queen of Space, kissing her lovely brows, and the dew of her light bathing his whole body in a sweet-smelling perfume of sweat: O Nuit, continuous one of Heaven, let it be ever thus; that men speak not of thee as One but as None; and let them speak not of thee at all, since thou art continuous.

The PRIESTESS: But to love me is better than all things; if under the night-stars in the desert thou presently burnest mine incense before me, invoking me with a pure heart, and the serpent flame therein, thou shalt come a little to lie in my bosom. For one kiss wilt thou then be willing to give all; but whoso gives one particle of dust shall lose all in that hour. Ye shall gather goods and store of women and spices; ye shall wear rich jewels; ye shall exceed the nations of earth in splendor and pride; but always in the love of me, and so shall ye come to my joy. I charge you earnestly to come before me in a single robe, and covered with a rich head-dress. I love you! I yearn to you! Pale or purple, veiled or voluptuous, I who am all pleasure and purple, and drunkenness of the innermost sense, desire you. Put on the wings, and arouse the coiled splendor within you; come unto me! To me! To me! Sing the rapturous love-song unto me! Burn to me perfumes! Drink to me, for I love you! I love you. I am the blue-lidded daughter of sunset; I am the naked brilliance of the voluptuous night-sky. To me! To me!

The Priest mounts the second step.

The PRIEST: O secret of secrets, that art hidden in the being of all that lives, not Thee do we adore, for that which

adoreth is also Thou. Thou art That, and That am I. I am the flame that burns in every heart of man, and in the core of every star. I am Life, and the giver of Life; yet therefore is the knowledge of me the knowledge of death. I am alone; there is no God where I am.

The Deacon and all the People rise to their feet, with the Hailing sign.

The DEACON: But ye, O my people, rise up and awake. Let the rituals be rightly performed with joy and beauty. There are rituals of the elements and feasts of the times. A feast for the first night of the Prophet and his Bride. A feast for the three days of the writing of the Book of the Law. A feast for Tahuti and the children of the Prophet — secret, O Prophet! A feast for the Supreme Ritual, and a feast for the Equinox of the Gods. A feast for fire and a feast for water; a feast for life and a greater feast for death. A feast every day in your hearts in the joy of my rapture. A feast every night unto Nu, and the pleasure of uttermost delight.

The Priest mounts the third step.

The PRIEST: Thou that art One, our Lord in the Universe the Sun, our Lord in ourselves whose name is Mystery of Mystery, uttermost being whose radiance enlightening the worlds is also the breath that maketh every God even and Death to tremble before Thee. — By the Sign of Light * appear Thou glorious upon the throne of the Sun. Make open the path of creation and of intelligence between us and our minds. Enlighten our understanding. Encourage our hearts. Let thy light crystallize itself in our blood, fulfilling us of Resurrection.

A ka dua

Tuf ur biu

Bi a' a chefu

Dudu nur af an nuteru.

The PRIESTESS: There is no law beyond Do what thou wilt.

The Priest parts the veil with his lance. During the previous speeches the Priestess has, if necessary, as in savage countries, resumed her robe.

The PRIEST: IO IO IO IAO SABAO KURIE ABRASAX KURIE MEITHRAS KURIE PHALLE. IO PAN IO PAN PAN IO ISCHURON IO ATHANATON IO ABROTON IO IAO. CHAIRE PHALLE CHAIRE PAMPHAGE CHAIRE PANGENETOR. HAGIOS HAGIOS HAGIOS IAO.

The Priestess is seated with the Paten in her right hand and the cup in her left. All stand to order, with the Dieu Garde, that is, feet square, hands, with linked thumbs, held loosely. This is the universal position when standing, unless other direction is given.

V.

OF THE OFFICE OF THE COLLECTS, WHICH ARE ELEVEN IN NUMBER.

(The Sun.)

The DEACON: Lord visible and sensible of whom this earth is but a frozen spark turning about thee with annual and diurnal motion, source of light, source of life, let thy perpetual radiance hearten us to continual labor and enjoyment; so that as we are constant partakers of thy bounty we may in our particular orbit give out light and life, sustenance and joy to them that evolve about us without diminution of substance or effulgence for ever.

The PEOPLE: So mote it be.

(The Lord.)

The DEACON: Lord secret and most holy, source of life, source of love, source of liberty, be thou ever constant and mighty within us, force of energy, fire of motion; with diligence let us ever labor with thee, that we may remain in thine abundant joy.

The PEOPLE: So mote it be.

(The Moon.)

The DEACON: Lady of night, that turning ever about us art now visible and now invisible in thy season, be thou favorable to hunters, and lovers, and to all men that toil upon the earth, and to all mariners upon the sea.

The PEOPLE: So mote it be.

(The Lady.)

The DEACON: Giver and receiver of joy, gate of life and love, be thou ever ready, thou and thine handmaiden, in thine office of gladness.

The PEOPLE: So mote it be.

(The Saints.)

The DEACON: Lord of Life and Joy, that art the might of man, that art the essence of every true god that is upon the surface of the Earth, continuing knowledge from generation unto generation, thou adored of us upon heaths and in woods, on mountains and in caves, openly in the market-places and secretly in the chambers of our houses, in temples of gold and ivory and marble as in these other temples of our bodies, we worthily commemorate them worthy that did of old adore thee and manifest thy glory unto men, Laotz and Siddartha and Krishna and Tahuti, Mosheh, Dionysus, Mohammed and Therion, with these also Hermes, Pan, Priapus, Osiris and Melchitdek, Khem and Amoun and Mentu, Heracles, Orpheus and Odysseus; with Vergilius, Catullus, Martialis, Rabelais, Swinburne, and many an holy bard; Apollonius Tyanæus, Simon Magus, Manes, Basilides, Valentinus, Bardesanes and Hippolytus, that transmitted the Light of the Gnosis to us their successors and their heirs; with Merlin, Arthur, Parzival, and many another, prophet, priest, and king, that bore the Lance and Cup, the Sword and Disk, against the Heathen; and these, also, Carolus Magnus and his paladins, with William of Schyren, Frederick of Hohenstaufen, Roger Bacon, Jacobus Burgundus Molensis the Martyr, Christian Rosencreutz, Ulrich von Hutten, Paracelsus, Michael Maier, Jacob Boehme, Francis Bacon Lord Verulam, Andrea, Robertus de Fluctibus, Johannes Dee, Sir Edward Kelly, Thomas Vaughan, Elias Ashmole, Molinos, Wolfgang von Goethe, Ludovicus Rex Bavarïæ, R. W., Ludwig von Fischer, F. N., Hargrave Jennings, Carl Kellner, Forlong dux, Sir Richard Payne Knight, Sir Richard Francis Burton, Doctor Gerard Encausse, Doctor T. R., and Sir A. C. — oh, Sons of the Lion and the Snake! with all Thy saints we worthily commemorate them worthy that were and are and are to come. May their Essence be here present, potent, puissant and paternal to perfect this feast!

(At each name the Deacon signs * with thumb between index and medius.)

The PEOPLE: So mote it be.

(The Earth.)

The DEACON: Mother of fertility on whose breast lieth water, whose cheek is caressed by air, and in whose heart is

the sun's fire, womb of all life, recurring grace of seasons, answer favorably the prayer of labor, and to pastors and husbandmen be thou propitious.

The PEOPLE: So mote it be.
(The Principles.)

The DEACON: Mysterious Energy, triform, mysterious Matter, in fourfold and sevenfold division, the interplay of which things weave the dance of the Veil of Life upon the Face of the Spirit, let there be Harmony and Beauty in your mystic loves, that in us may be health and wealth and strength and divine pleasure according to the Law of Liberty; let each pursue his Will as a strong man that rejoiceth in his way, as the course of a Star that blazeth for ever among the joyous company of Heaven.

The PEOPLE: So mote it be.
(Birth.)

The DEACON: Be the hour auspicious, and the gate of life open in peace and in well-being, so that she that beareth children may rejoice, and the babe catch life with both hands.

The PEOPLE: So mote it be.
(Marriage.)

The DEACON: Upon all that this day unite with love under will let fall success; may strength and skill unite to bring forth ecstasy, and beauty answer beauty.

The PEOPLE: So mote it be.
(Death.)

The DEACON: Term of all that liveth, whose name is inscrutable, be favorable unto us in thine hour.

The PEOPLE: So mote it be.
(The End.)

The DEACON: Unto them from whose eyes the veil of life hath fallen may there be granted the accomplishment of their true Wills; whether they will absorption in the Infinite, or to be united with their chosen and preferred, or to be in contemplation, or to be at peace, or to achieve the labor and heroism of incarnation on this planet or another, or in any Star, or aught else, unto them may there be granted the accomplishment of their wills; yea, the accomplishment of their Wills. Aumn. Aumn. Aumn.

The PEOPLE: So mote it be.

All sit. The Deacon and the Children attend the Priest and Priestess, ready to hold any appropriate weapon as may be necessary.

VI. OF THE CONSECRATION OF THE ELEMENTS.

The Priest makes the five crosses. *3^{*1}*2 on paten and cup. *4 on paten alone; *5 on cup alone.

The PRIEST: Life of man upon earth, fruit of labor, sustenance of endeavor, thus be thou nourishment of the Spirit!

He touches the Host with the Lance.

By the virtue of the Rod
Be this bread the Body of God!
He takes the Host.

TOUTO ESTI TO SOMA MOU.

He kneels, adores, rises, turns, shows Host to the People, turns, replaces Host, and adores. Music.

He takes the Cup.
Vehicle of the joy of Man upon earth, solace of labor, inspi-

ration of endeavor, thus be thou ecstasy of the Spirit!

He touches the Cup with the Lance.

By the virtue of the Rod
Be this wine the Blood of God!
He takes the Cup.

TOUTO ESTI TO POTERION TOU HAIMATOS MOU.

He kneels, adores, rises, turns, shows the Cup to the People, turns, replaces the Cup, and adores. Music.

For this is the Covenant of Resurrection.

He makes the five crosses on the Priestess.

Accept, O Lord, this sacrifice of life and joy, true warrants of the Covenant of Resurrection.

The Priest offers the Lance to the Priestess, who kisses it; he then touches her between the breasts and upon the body. He then flings out his arms upward, as comprehending the whole shrine.

Let this offering be borne upon the waves of Aethyr to our Lord and Father the Sun that travelleth over the Heavens in his name ON.

He strikes his breast. All repeat this action.

Hear ye all, saints of the true church of old time now essentially present, that of ye we claim heirship, with ye we claim communion, from ye we claim benediction in the name of IAO.

He makes three crosses on Paten and Cup together.

He uncovers the Cup, genuflects, takes the Cup in his left hand and the Host in his right.

With the Host he makes the five crosses on the Cup.

*1
*3 *2
*5 *4

He elevates the Host and the Cup.

The Bell strikes.

HAGIOS HAGIOS HAGIOS IAO.

He replaces the Host and the Cup, and adores.

VII. OF THE OFFICE OF THE ANTHEM.

The PRIEST:

Thou who art I, beyond all I am,
Who hast no nature and no name,
Who art, when all but thou are gone,
Thou, centre and secret of the Sun,
Thou, hidden spring of all things known
And unknown, Thou aloof, alone,
Thou, the true fire within the seed
Brooding and breeding, source and seed
Of life, love, liberty, and light,
Thou beyond speech and beyond sight,
Thee I invoke, my faint fresh fire
Kindling as mine intents aspire.
Thee I invoke, abiding one,
Thee, centre and secret of the Sun,
And that most holy mystery
Of which the vehicle am I.
Appear, most awful and most mild,
As it is lawful, to thy child!

The CHORUS:

For of the Father and the Son
The Holy Spirit is the norm;

Male-female, quintessential, one,
 Man-being veiled in woman-form.
 Glory and worship in the highest,
 Thou Dove, mankind that deifiest,
 Being that race, most royally run
 To spring sunshine through winter storm.
 Glory and worship be to Thee,
 Sap of the world-ash, wonder-tree!
 First Semichorus, MEN: Glory to thee from gilded tomb!
 Second Semichorus, WOMEN: Glory to thee from waiting
 womb!
 MEN: Glory to Thee from earth unploughed!
 WOMEN: Glory to Thee from virgin vowed!
 MEN: Glory to Thee, true Unity
 Of the eternal Trinity!
 WOMEN: Glory to Thee, thou sire and dam
 And self of I am that I am!
 MEN: Glory to Thee, beyond all term,
 Thy spring of sperm, thy seed and germ!
 WOMEN: Glory to Thee, eternal Sun,
 Thou One in Three, Thou Three in One!
 CHORUS: Glory and worship unto Thee,
 Sap of the world-ash, wonder-tree!

(These words are to form the substance of the anthem;
 but the whole or any part thereof shall be set to music,
 which may be as elaborate as art can devise. But even
 should other anthems be authorized by the Father of the
 Church, this shall hold its place as the first of its kind,
 the father of all others.)

VIII. OF THE MYSTIC MARRIAGE AND CONSUMMATION OF THE ELEMENTS.

The Priest takes the Paten between the index and
 medius of the right hand. The Priestess clasps the Cup in
 her right hand.

The PRIEST: Lord most secret, bless this spiritual food unto
 our bodies, bestowing upon us health and wealth and strength
 and joy and peace, and that fulfilment of will and of love un-
 der will that is perpetual happiness.

He makes * with Paten and kisses it.
 He uncovers the Cup, genuflects, rises. Music.
 He takes the Host, and breaks it over the Cup.
 He replaces the right-hand portion in the Paten.
 He breaks off a particle of the left-hand portion.

TOUTO ECTI TO CPERMA MOU. HO PATHR ECTIN NO
 HUOIC DIA TO PNEUMA HAGION. AUMN. AUMN.
 AUMN.

He replaces the left-hand part of the Host.
 The Priestess extends the Lance-point with her left hand
 to receive the particle.
 The Priest clasps the Cup in his left hand.
 Together they depress the Lance-point in the Cup.

The PRIEST and the PRIESTESS: HRILIU.

The Priest takes the Lance.
 The Priestess covers the Cup.
 The Priest genuflects, rises, bows, joins hands. He
 strikes his breast.

The PRIEST: O Lion and O Serpent that destroy the de-
 stroyer, be mighty among us.

O Lion and O Serpent that destroy the destroyer, be mighty
 among us.

O Lion and O Serpent that destroy the destroyer, be mighty
 among us.

The Priest joins hands upon the breast of the Priestess,
 and takes back his Lance.

He turns to the People, lowers and raises the Lance,
 and makes * upon them.

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

The PEOPLE: Love is the law, love under will.

He lowers the Lance, and turns to East.

The Priestess takes the Lance in her right hand.

With her left hand she offers the Paten.

The Priest kneels.

The PRIEST: In my mouth be the essence of the life of the
 Sun!

He takes the Host with the right hand, makes * with it
 on the Paten, and consumes it.

Silence.

The Priestess takes, uncovers, and offers the Cup, as
 before.

The PRIEST: In my mouth be the essence of the joy of the
 earth!

He takes the Cup, makes * on the Priestess, drains it
 and returns it.

Silence.

He rises, takes the Lance, and turns to the People.

The PRIEST: There is no part of me that is not of the Gods.

(Those of the People who intend to communicate, and
 none other should be present, having signified their in-
 tention, a whole Cake of Light, and a whole goblet of
 wine, have been prepared for each one. The Deacon mar-
 shals them; they advance one by one to the altar. The
 children take the Elements and offer them. The People
 communicate as did the Priest, uttering the same words
 in an attitude of Resurrection: There is no part of me that
 is not of the Gods.)

The exceptions to this part of the ceremony are when it
 is of the nature of a celebration, in which case none but
 the Priest communicate; or part of the ceremony of mar-
 riage, when none other, save the two to be married, par-
 take; part of the ceremony of baptism, when only the child
 baptised partakes; and of Confirmation at puberty, when
 only the persons confirmed partake. The Sacrament may
 be reserved by the Priest, for administration to the sick in
 their homes.)

The Priest closes all within the veil.

With the Lance he makes * on the people thrice, thus.

The PRIEST: * The LORD bless you.

* The LORD enlighten your minds and comfort your hearts
 and sustain your bodies.

* The LORD bring you to the accomplishment of your true
 Will, the Great Work, the Summum Bonum, True Wisdom and
 Perfect Happiness.

He goes out, the Deacon and children following, into
 the Tomb of the West.

Music. (Voluntary.)

Note: The Priestess and other officers never partake of
 the Sacrament, they being, as it were, part of the Priest
 himself.

THE SAVIOUR.
A DRAMA IN ONE SCENE.
By **ALEISTER CROWLEY.**

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

The Most Venerable Elder: aet. 80.

The Blind Elder: aet. 70.

The Deaf Elder: aet. 60.

The Dumb Elder: aet. 50.

The Palsied Elder: aet. 40.

The Most Reverend Elder: aet. 30.

The Young Plump Elder: aet. 20.

All these are members of the Town Council of the City of Blabre.

The Prophet of the Gods.

The Fool.

The Sentinel of the Council Chamber.

The Herald of the Council.

The Herald of the Gnogues.

A Courier.

The Saviour.

A Standard-bearer.

Soldiers.

A young girl.

The Elders, clad in furred robes of purple with hoods and golden chains, are seated at a long table of carved oak. The Most Reverend Elder wears a definitely ecclesiastical vestment of black and gold, with a golden biretta.

The table occupies the middle of the chamber, near the back of the stage, but allowing plenty of room for passage. The room itself is well lighted from three windows. The west window is curved, and through it are seen one or two spires. The north window shows much of the tall buildings of a fantastic and elaborately beautiful city, such as Duerer or Beardsley might have drawn. The east window shows the towers which surmount the river-gate of the city. Beneath this window is an altar, on which are candles, and images of the gods of Blabre. Beneath the west window are steps, where stands the Herald, gorgeously appalled, with trumpet and tabard, awaiting the word to proclaim to the people of the city, many of whom are gathered without, the result of the deliberations of the Council.

The chamber itself is decorated with a rich but civilized simplicity.

The table is covered with inkhorns and old parchments. At its east end stands the Fool in motley, blue and yellow, with cap, bells, and bauble.

The door is in the east wall; before it stands the Sentinel, in plate mail, holding erect a fantastically shapen pike. The Elders are seated behind the table, facing the audience, in the following order, west to east: the Young Plump Elder, the Most Reverend Elder, the Palsied Elder, the Most Venerable Elder, the Blind Elder, the Deaf Elder, the Dumb Elder.

At the southwest corner of the table, a little distance away, facing the Elders, is the Prophet of the Gods. He is squatting upon the floor. He is clad in dirty white robes, ragged from long use. His frame is spare, and his face is gaunt and sunken, burnt almost black by the sun. Huge wild eyes glitter be-

neath his matted hair. He is of no particular age; his long and unkempt beard is still black. The robes, torn and open, reveal the breast, with its weals and scars caused by the scourge. There are traces of coagulated blood upon it.

AUTHOR'S NOTE.

It is not desirable that time and place of the play should be too strictly denoted, lest in future ages some historian or other mentally defective person should desire to ruin the design of the author by "accuracy." But the reader may think, and the spectator should be made to think, of some town of delicately-flavored name, in the time of the old chronicles; and he may use the spectacles of Mr. Arthur Machen or Mr. Layton Crippen. But the Gnogues are to be very clearly distinguished from the people of Blabre by their obviously different race, as indicated in the text, by their rude gruff curt harsh brutish manner, and by the simplicity of their rough harness.

(The curtain rises upon the deliberations of the Council.)

The Most Venerable Elder: The doom of Blabre!

The Blind Elder: I see no hope for the city.

The Deaf Elder: There is no news of any succor.

(The Dumb Elder gesticulates. Throughout, he repeats on his fingers all that is said, for the benefit of the Deaf Elder. Managers will wish to change this, on the ground that it will tend to drive the audience mad; but that is the object of the direction.)

The Deaf Elder (translating): My colleague says that he has raised his voice again and again in warning; and now it is come upon us.

The Palsied Elder: Cannot we take some action, however desperate?

The Most Reverend Elder: My children, there is no hope save in God, the Almighty, the Merciful and Gracious, the Helper, the Ready to save.

The Prophet: Woe unto Blabre! Woe to the wicked city! *(His is a long wail or howl, like a coyote. It is uttered quite in the same sudden causeless way as one notices often enough in a dog; it is not intended as part of the conversation. In short, he is just a wild beast, like as the Fool is a tame one; and he receives no notice. It is as if he had not spoken.)*

The Young Plump Elder: Why did He not save us before the last extremity was on us? Look at these reports! *(He indicates certain parchments.)* The Gnogues have pushed one salient to within bowshot of the city walls. We are straitly invested. Famine has spread her leathern wings, and sucks the blood of our bravest. Pestilence walks no more by night; under the sun he stalks and smites. We have no necessary thing but air and water; and both are already contaminated with the poison of our own dead.

The Most Venerable Elder: Still, we have water while the river-gate is held.

The Blind Elder: How many days can we hold out? *(The Dumb Elder gesticulates.)*

The Deaf Elder: My colleague says that the Emperor has promised succor within fifteen days. For myself, I would add that we can live for a month.

The Palsied Elder: Then there is hope?

The Blind Elder: There is hope while we can hold the river-gate.

The Most Reverend Elder: Surely, the river-gate is not in danger?

The Most Venerable Elder: It is the most strongly fortified of all our positions. The men who guard it are veterans of the ancient war. The captain of the gate is wily and valiant and trusty. Twelve times already he has repulsed the Gnogues with fearful slaughter.

The Most Reverend Elder: Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall!

The Young Plump Elder: I visited the post last night. I found the captain steadfast on his spear, grim, fierce, and vigilant.

The Blind Elder: Besides, the gate is safe against surprise. So strong runs the river that no naked man could swim across, much less a man in armor. There is no landing place; our walls run sheer and smooth into the tide. There is no cover on the other bank; and our towers command it with easy archery. There is only the frail single span of the bridge, so narrow that two men cannot pass, so slight that a single blow with an axe would send it crashing into the tide.

(The Dumb Elder gesticulates.)

The Deaf Elder: My colleague says that if we only had food we could endure for ever.

The Most Reverend Elder (*piously*): His mercy endureth for ever. Did He not rain food from heaven upon our forefathers in the days of the great migration?

The Fool: Let us read fifteen or twenty cantos of the great epic of Glingue, the sacred bard! (*No one notices him.*)

The Blind Elder: We must hold out. There is no alternative. We know the character of the foe. If we are conquered, he will put every living thing to the sword; he will burn every building with fire; he will efface the City of Blabre from the memory of man.

The Palsied Elder: The Gnogues are cruel and remorseless; they spare no soul alive, save for an hour's delight in rape or torture; they eat human flesh.

The Most Reverend Elder: The Lord is mighty and merciful, compassionate towards His servants, strong to save. (*The Most Reverend Elder is really as frightened as the rest, or more so; he says the brave words in a toneless, mechanical way, from habit even more than from the wish to keep up his religious character.*)

The Prophet: Woe unto Blabre! Woe to the wicked city! (*No one notices him.*)

The Most Venerable Elder: I think that we should proclaim a message of confidence to the citizens.

The Young Plump Elder: At the worst, it is only one more lie.

The Blind Elder: Does any one dissent? (*Silence.*)

The Most Venerable Elder: Let the Herald speak to the citizens!

The Herald (*bows to the Most Venerable Elder, turns to his window, blows a rousing blast upon his trumpet, and proclaims*): Oyez! Oyez! Oyez! Rejoice, we conquer! The Fa-

thers of the City are still sitting in earnest deliberation for your welfare; but in order to calm your anxiety, they bid it be made known that the city is in no danger. It has victoriously repulsed every assault of the enemy; it is provisioned for a ten years' siege; the Emperor has promised that an army of four million veteran troops shall arrive to our succour not later than to-morrow at sunset; the enemy is reported to be utterly disheartened at the failure of his campaign; his men, ill-fed, ill-led, ill-disciplined, are already in open mutiny; civil strife is on the point of breaking out in their capital; their king is reported slain by his men. (*Cheers from without punctuate every sentence. The Herald turns to the Most Venerable Elder, and addresses him.*) Is that sufficient? My invention flags.

The Most Venerable Elder: It will serve. Perorate.

The Herald (*turns, after the usual bow, to window*): Joy! Triumph! Victory! Blabre has overthrown her savage foes. Once more has civilization repulsed the heathen hordes. Rejoice, we conquer!

(Cheers without. Within, the elders are still sunk in the same awful, hopeless apathy as at first.)

The Blind Elder: We lost eleven hundred of our best troops in yesterday's sally.

The Palsied Elder: That is nearly one-fifth of our whole army.

The Deaf Elder: I do not understand how the Gnogues resist our valor. Their armor is rude and inferior; their weapons are but the unwieldy pike and the short scramasax; while we have lance, sword, bow, and arquebus, with the new cannon.

The Palsied Elder: Their hosts are innumerable, and their valour desperate.

(The Dumb Elder gesticulates.)

The Deaf Elder: My colleague calls it treason to the city to say so.

The Palsied Elder: It is true, nevertheless.

(All bow their heads sorrowfully.)

The Young Plump Elder: It is doubtful whether they are men or beasts. They are of hue blotchy, greenish-black, with the head like an ape's.

The Deaf Elder: Their king is a devil, whom they worship.

The Most Venerable Elder: No man has seen him.

The Young Plump Elder: Do not speak of him. Even his own men dare not speak of him. It is a hidden horror. It is forbidden.

(The Dumb Elder gesticulates.)

The Deaf Elder: My colleague says that he is known for no coward. You all know his exploits in the Sixteen Years' War. But he begs of you all not to speak of this.

The Most Reverend Elder: I agree. It is evil even to think of him. It is almost to invoke. Such things stifle the soul with fear.

The Most Venerable Elder: Is there ever a moment when we do not think of him? Is not he the unknown Terror that abides in our hearts, the waking nightmare that obsesses us?

The Blind Elder: It is reported that he is a dragon of their marshes.

The Palsied Elder: Others say that he is but a black stone, carven like a Satan. Their wizards have conjured it to the

power of speech; and by its oracles they fight.

(The Dumb Elder gesticulates.)

The Deaf Elder: My colleague says that their king is in reality a woman, shrewish and fierce.

The Most Venerable Elder: No man has seen him.

The Blind Elder: I thank God that I can never see him.

The Palsied Elder: Who presided at the torture of the captured general?

The Most Reverend Elder: I was present in person.

The Palsied Elder: Be pleased to make your report.

The Most Reverend Elder: I beg of you to pardon me. There is nothing to say.

(He shows such horror that they determine that he shall speak.)

The Most Venerable Elder: Most Reverend, I charge on your great oath of fealty to this Council that you make your report.

The Most Reverend Elder: *(He rises, clutching the table, shaking and sweating with the most abject fear.)* We applied the torture three times without result.

The Palsied Elder: What form of torture did you use?

The Most Reverend Elder: Preliminary to the examination, the tortures by water and fire were applied. As usual, he was given to understand that this was not serious. My time being short, I applied at once on my arrival the Torture of the Scorpions at the Nine Gates. Before each gate, I asked three times the question in these words: Describe your king. At the sixth gate he broke into a kind of mad laughter, raucous and horrible.

The Most Venerable Elder *(rising in excitement):* The sixth gate! Do you tell us that he reached the sixth gate? It is not to be believed.

The Most Reverend Elder: I doubted mine own eyes. I verified. It was true. The man was not of mortal flesh. It is only our own great god that in his death passed through the ninth. In history only one man reached even the fifth. This man, at the sixth, only laughed.

The Most Venerable Elder *(sitting down again, broken up by fear and horror):* Oh God! what men are these?

The Most Reverend Elder: In wonder and rage, I directed the application of the seventh Scorpion, a black beast, lusty and venomous. *(He sits down suddenly, overcome, and buries his face in his arms. A pause. Then he staggers once again to his feet.)* The prisoner became calm, and smiled. He said these words: I am happy, and I thank you. I have never seen him, and now I shall never see him. With that he died.

The Blind Elder: But his soldiers must see him in battle.

The Most Reverend Elder: They have never seen his face. Only a few know even his form. So much we learned from the first prisoners we took.

The Most Venerable Elder *(in an ecstasy of dejection):* No man has seen him.

The Fool: That is true, and that is all; why do ye babble thus? This much is known, that his soldiers are valiant and cunning, that they are cruel and remorseless, that they spare no soul alive, save for an hour's delight of rape or torture, and that they eat human flesh.

(The Dumb Elder gesticulates.)

The Deaf Elder: My colleague says that it is infamous to say such things.

The Fool: It is indeed rather foolish, even for me, to say them; for all men know them.

The Most Venerable Elder: Men are often too stupid to believe even what they know. It is sufficient for Authority to deny these things. A panic among the citizens would ruin us.

The Blind Elder: We are already lost. You said that we have food for a month, when we know that it will last a bare week. We lie even among ourselves.

The Deaf Elder *(to the Young Plump Elder):* How is it that you are so plump?

The Young Plump Elder: I foresaw famine. I stored food. It is necessary that I should be strong to fulfil my destiny.

The Blind Elder: So you are the great captain that shall save us?

The Young Plump Elder: It is in the hands of the Lord.

The Most Reverend Elder: It is in the hands of the Lord.

The Blind Elder: Will the Lord restore my sight? Then may the Lord exalt the blue banner of Blabre above the black pennon of the Gnogues!

The Most Venerable Elder: It is terrible and sinister, that triangle of death! Had they a dragon, or a skull, embroidered on it, I would fear it less. It is the blank of blackness that appals me.

The Blind Elder: I see it every day, and every night!

The Most Reverend Elder: Oh death to these dreadful and ominous croakings! Is there not hope in the Most High?

The Palsied Elder: Why does not the prophet utter aught in his most sacred trance? He is as silent as death itself. I would rather that he cursed us, that he pronounced inexorable doom upon our city.

The Prophet: Woe unto Blabre! Woe to the wicked city!

The Fool: Behold! he earns his crust. He seeks to please your lordships. Clothe him in purple, while you have the purple! Hang golden chains upon his neck, ere you yourselves are hanged in chains of iron!

The Prophet: Woe unto Blabre! Woe to the wicked city!

The Most Reverend Elder: Declare unto us the oracles of God!

The Most Venerable Elder: What is to be our fate?

The Young Plump Elder: May Blabre be saved?

The Most Reverend Elder: He answers not. His eyes are dull and glazed, turned inward on his soul. He is not yet entranced. By the might and majesty of the Most High, I command thee, declare unto us the oracles of God!

(The Prophet rises, stretches, yawns, spits contemptuously, and sits down again, his back to the Most Reverend Elder.)

The Most Reverend Elder: The curse of the Most High upon him! He was thus ever!

(Knocking without.)

The Sentinel: There is an alarm at the door.

The Most Venerable Elder: See who wants admission.

(The Sentinel lowers his pike, and opens the door cautiously. Without, his comrade beckons him. They converse in whispers. The first Sentinel returns.)

The Sentinel: The herald of the King of the Gnogues humbly demands audience of your lordships. His master sues for peace.

The Most Venerable Elder: It is the end. *(To the Herald.)* Proclaim that we have conquered; that the King of the Gnogues sues humbly for our mercy.

The Herald (*turns and bows as usual, returns to windows, and blows a blast on his trumpet*): Oyez! Oyez! Oyez! Rejoice, we conquer! Citizens of Blabre, even now a messenger asks for admission to the Council. He comes to sue humbly for peace. The Gnogues sue for peace. The King of the Gnogues is here in person with dust upon his head. He has kissed the feet of the Most Venerable, the Father of the City! Rejoice, we conquer! (*Blast on trumpet. Cheers, and a swelling murmur of satisfaction, have accompanied each phrase. He turns from the window, and bows to the Most Venerable Elder.*) Is that enough?

The Most Venerable Elder: It is enough. (*To the Sentinel.*) Admit him.

(*The Sentinel goes out.*) Let us ask at least our lives.

(*The Herald of the Gnogues enters. He is a short, thick-set, sturdy man in black chain armor. He bears on a staff the dreaded banner of the Gnogues.*)

The Herald of the Gnogues: Greetings of a soldier to brave enemies! I bear the most merciful message of my most mighty king. Your army is reduced by half; your citizens starve; you must submit to terms.

The Most Venerable Elder: Succor is promised us from the Emperor.

The Herald of the Gnogues: Where is his promise?

The Most Venerable Elder (*lifting a parchment*): This reached us fifteen days ago.

The Herald of the Gnogues: Where is his message of yesterday?

The Most Venerable Elder: We have received no message.

The Herald of the Gnogues (*pulling from his shirt a bloody parchment*): Here is his message of yesterday. (*He hands the parchment to the Fool.*)

The Fool: Ten to one this is a forgery. It is a regular Gnogue trick. (*He hands it to the Most Venerable Elder.*)

The Most Venerable Elder (*reading*): "The internal troubles of our empire prevent us from sending the aid promised you. May God defend you in your extremity."

The Prophet (*rapt as in ecstasy*): The extremity of Blabre! (*All, sunk yet deeper in apathy, heed him not. A pause. The Fool examines the message with attention.*)

The Fool: I am sure this document is a forgery. Previous letters have been written by a clerk. This is his Majesty's own holograph. It is much too genuine. (*A pause.*) If this paper be genuine, it must have been written from the capital. That is ten day's journey off. The ink on this document has been wet within the last four-and-twenty hours.

(*The Dumb Elder gesticulates.*)

The Deaf Elder: My colleague says that it is infamous to suggest that his Majesty would lend himself to forgery.

The Young Plump Elder: Let me see the document. (*A pause.*) There is something in what the Fool says. (*The paper is passed round.*)

The Most Reverend Elder: This was never written by the hand of one of our race. It is a clever imitation of the hand of the Emperor. Also, the strokes are not even enough. Also, the words "our" and "us" are spelled with small letters. It is not genuine, in my opinion.

The Deaf Elder (*examining the paper with his dumb colleague, and holding a rapid interchange of signs with him*):

My colleague and I agree that this is a forged document. The parchment is not of the quality used by our people.

The Most Venerable Elder: It is our fears that tells us it is genuine.

The Blind Elder: I am absolutely convinced of the authenticity of the document. It bears the strongest possible internal evidence of its truth. There is no doubt possible.

The Most Venerable Elder: There is no doubt possible. (*All relax once more their momentary alertness. They sink visibly into the very abyss of dejection. A pause.*)

The Herald of the Gnogues: You must submit to terms. The most mighty King of the Gnogues offers you of his clemency the right to withdraw with all the honors of war. Recognizing a gallant foe, he will not embitter defeat by humiliation. You shall leave the city with all your arms and ammunition, and with all such goods as you can carry with you. But, if you refuse these terms, then expect the direful judgments. He will put every living thing to the sword; he will burn every building with fire; he will efface the City of Blabre from the memory of man. I have spoken.

The Most Venerable Elder: Does it comport with the terms of your command that you retire a while, that we may deliberate?

The Herald of the Gnogues: I shall await your pleasure. (*He goes out.*)

The Young Plump Elder (*leaping to his feet*): Who could have hoped such terms? We are saved!

The Blind Elder: Shall we believe it? May we trust him?

The Deaf Elder: We must trust him. (*The Dumb Elder gesticulates.*) My colleague says that it is madness to trust him.

The Fool: Why do we not ask an oracle of the Prophet?

The Prophet: Why do we not ask an oracle of the Fool?

The Most Reverend Elder: He is not in his sacred trance. Let us rather look for guidance to antiquity!

(*He grasps a parchment; others follow his example. A pause, while they search. The Dumb Elder gesticulates.*)

The Deaf Elder: My colleague says that he remembers dimly a passage in the third book of our sacred bard, Glingue, which may help our case.

The Most Reverend Elder: I knew it. It was that of which I was thinking. (*He turns over the parchments.*) Here it is!

The Blind Elder: Read it! Read it!

The Most Reverend Elder:

"In the extremity of Fate

The full moon shone, our master's mate.

In silver armor rode the duke

Against the heathen."

The Prophet: It is full moon to-night.

The Fool: What fumbling amid fusty folios!

The Blind Elder: No: that is not the prophecy. I remember it now. It is this:

"Look to the moon for safety! Dragon helm

Of rubies, and cuirass of silver, whelm

The tide of heathen hate. The sword and axe

Beat down the blows of pike and scramasax!"

The Deaf Elder: That is a proper prophecy! That is the true strain of our sacred Glingue!

The Fool: Only where is the duke? Where is the hero with these famous arms and accoutrements? The only part of the

prophecy that has come true as yet is the part about the extremity of Fate.

The Prophet (*in deep meditation*): The extremity of Blabre!

The Most Venerable Elder: The fool is wise for once. We had better trust the Herald, and accept the terms of peace.

The Deaf Elder: It is absolutely certain that the Emperor's letter is authentic?

The Blind Elder: It is absolutely certain.

The Most Reverend Elder: Here is another prophecy:

"The dragon helm! Like the red moon it glows!

See where amid the flying ranks of foes

The silver champion sweeps!"

The Deaf Elder: Yes: that is the same thought again!

The Palsied Elder: They all seem to be concerned with a warrior in silver armor.

(*The Dumb Elder gesticulates.*)

The Deaf Elder: My colleague says: "A giant."

The Blind Elder: Yes, a giant, wearing a helm with a dragon of ruby upon it.

The Fool (*apostrophizing the images of the gods*): Is it come to this, after all these years, that men take poets seriously? They have not sense enough to know that all these prophecies are but myths of moonrise!

The Blind Elder: But the dragon helm of rubies! How do you explain that?

The Fool: By the law of ampupatoptatous ambubaboptaton!

(*The Dumb Elder gesticulates.*)

The Deaf Elder: My colleague says that this is ribaldry and blasphemy.

The Most Reverend Elder: The gods, who made him half-witted, cannot be offended at the outrushings of that feebleness.

The Most Venerable Elder: Yet what the Fool says is truth. The prophecies agree on the main point. We of Blabre have waited and longed for him these four hundred years. There is even a statue of him in the Guild Hall. But by what right do we assume that he will appear in this present crisis of our city? We must decide on action. My counsel is surrender.

The Most Reverend Elder: Are we all convinced of the genuineness of the letter of the Emperor?

The Blind Elder: It is positive beyond the possibility of doubt.

(*The Dumb Elder gesticulates.*)

The Deaf Elder: My colleague agrees with the Most Venerable. His counsel is surrender.

The Palsied Elder: Mine also.

The Deaf Elder: I agree.

The Most Reverend Elder: With regret, even with dissent, I must agree. Of what use would it be to divide the Council?

The Blind Elder (*in sudden exaltation*): I protest. I see him now; I see the Saviour! He is almost at the gates. He is followed by a vast victorious army. The Gnogues flee before the mere jingle of his harness. (*The moment of exaltation passes.*) Ah me! the visions of the blind! (*A pause.*) I agree.

The Young Plump Elder: I agree. Let us save ourselves, and leave Blabre to its doom.

The Fool: Oh, triple fools! Tricked by the forgery of the

letter! Rummaging antiquity for the rags and bones of folklore when you should have been taking measures for the defence of the city! Praying to your gods when you should have been making the enemy pray to theirs! Hold on but a day! The Emperor will surely be in time to save the city. Also, by all your gods, it were better we perish fighting than fall into the hands of the Gnogues. This offer is black treachery. I know them.

(*No one takes the slightest notice of the speech. The Dumb Elder does not even trouble to repeat it to his colleague, but makes a contemptuous gesture to indicate to him that it is rubbish.*)

The Most Venerable Elder: Summon the Herald of the Gnogues!

(*The Sentinel obeys.*)

The Prophet (*mechanically as ever*): Woe unto Blabre! Woe to the wicked city!

(*The Herald of the Gnogues re-enters.*)

The Most Venerable Elder: We have ended our deliberations. We are disposed to accept the terms of honorable capitulation offered to us by your master. It is understood that we depart unharmed, every man with all such goods as he may carry with him, and that the army of the Gnogues will not molest us on our march, or enter the city until four-and-twenty hours be passed.

The Herald of the Gnogues: It is understood. It is agreed. Give me the keys of the city.

The Most Venerable Elder (*rising, and detaching a bunch of enormous iron keys from his girdle*): Here are —

The Prophet (*with wild eyes, leaping to his feet with a furious gesture*): Hear ye the Word of the Lord! The whirlwind awaketh! The Lord is upon the whirlwind! The Lord flingeth forth the lightning! The Lord maketh to resound his thunder! Hear ye the Word of the Lord!

(*All the elders, dominated by his personality, spring to energy and resolution, or rather to the simulation of these qualities which is conferred by contagious hysteria, from their previous drooping dullness. They seem to drink his words gluttonously. The Herald and the Sentinel, even, abandon their military discipline, and listen with all their ears. But the Fool yawns, and appears bored, while the Herald of the Gnogues shows violent amazement, as one beholding the antics of some incredible animal.*)

The Prophet: The Lord hath lifted up his hand! The Lord hath appointed a Saviour! Behold, even now is the hour of our salvation! Glory to the Lord, that hath had mercy upon his servants! Blessed be these eyes, that have looked upon the moon of resurrection! The Saviour cometh! The Saviour cometh! The Saviour cometh! I see him with mine eyes; mine ears rejoice at the music of his harness as he strides to our salvation. O Saviour of the City of Blabre! Oh thou that art the sword in the hand of the Lord against the heathen!

The Most Reverend Elder (*in a thrilled intense voice*): Do you see him? Do you see him?

The Prophet (*very calm, on a sudden*): I see him. I see the champion of the Lord. He cannot come to us as long as we defend ourselves. It is by the ordeal of faith that the Lord tries our souls!

The Most Reverend Elder: What is he like?

The Prophet: He is an head above the common height of

man. On his helm is a dragon of rubies. His armor is of silver. His sword is bare; it flashes in the moonlight. On the crook of his left arm is his battleaxe. He shall split asunder the heathen; they shall be as an old rotten tree that splits when it is stricken by the lightning!

The Most Venerable Elder (*in a voice of thunder*): It is the fulfilment! The ancient prophecies come true!

The Prophet (*to the Herald of the Gnogues*): Depart, thou carrion of the vultures that watch Blabre! Before the night fall thou shalt be with Satan!

The Herald of the Gnogues (*to the Most Venerable Elder*): I do not comprehend the ravings of this madman. Give me the keys of the fortress.

The Most Venerable Elder (*in a phrenzy of senile rage*): Dog! Heathen! Murderer! Begone! The Saviour of Blabre is at hand. The Prophet of the Lord hath spoken!

(*To the Sentinel.*) Out with him! Out with the heathen dog!

(*All are now in a fury, and threaten the Herald of the Gnogues with their fists. Even the Palsied Elder tries to scramble up after him. The Prophet, the Fool, and the Herald do not join in the demonstration. The Sentinel, catching the insensate rage of the Elders, thrusts out the Herald of the Gnogues, and slams the door upon him.*)

(*A breathless silence; heaving of great breasts.*)

The Prophet (*calm yet intense*): The Voice of the Lord is in my mouth. Let the people be gathered together! Let the voice of the people go up in a great cry to the Most Holy One that watcheth over the City of Blabre! Gather together the people in the market-place; let not one man fail thereof! There let them await the coming of the Saviour!

The Young Plump Elder: It is well spoken; it is the voice of the Lord. Let every man obey, except such as are employed upon the defences of the city. Most Venerable Father, let order be given!

The Prophet: O faithless and unbelieving men! Why will ye perish? Trust ye even now in the arm of flesh, when but a moment, and ye were ready to surrender the city? Withdraw the garrison; abandon the fortresses; leave open the river-gate! It is by the gate of the river that I see him come, shining in his burnished silver armor. The dragon of rubies glitters upon his helm. In his hand is the sword of the Lord! (*To the Sentinel.*) Go! join the acclamation of the people! Shall we sentinel our gate against the Saviour?

(*The Sentinel, whose enthusiasm has been constantly growing, throws down his pike and rushes out.*)

The Most Reverend Elder: The word of the Lord in the mouth of the Prophet of the Lord! The ancient faith is justified of her children!

The Most Venerable Elder: Blabre is saved! Proclaim it! Proclaim aloud the coming of the Saviour!

The Herald (*he blows a rousing and triumphant blast upon his trumpet*): Oyez! Oyez! Oyez! Rejoice, we conquer! The years of his silence are past; the Prophet of the Lord hath spoken. Rejoice, we conquer! The City of Blabre is saved. He cometh, like a mighty tower that is moved against a city wall! He cometh, the Saviour, in silver armor, and on his helm is a dragon of rubies! In his hand is a naked sword, and in his left arm rests the battleaxe of victory. Rejoice! Rejoice! Moreover, be attentive! Be attentive! Be attentive to the order of the Council! Gather yourselves at once together

in the market-place, man, woman, and child; let none fail thereof at his peril. Let the soldiers withdraw from the lines and from the fortresses and from the gates and from the battlements; let the river gate be left open, that the Saviour may enter thereby! Gather yourselves together in the market-place, and await the coming of the Saviour! Rejoice, we conquer! (*He blows a yet more confident blast upon his trumpet.*)

(*This speech has been listened to in silence; but toward the end a murmur of excitement begins, and swells to a roar, ending in a thunder of cheers. Then some one starts the Te Deum Laudamus, which, however, grows faint at its close, as the crowd disperse in pursuance of the orders of the Council.*)

The Fool (*tearing off his cap, and throwing down his bauble*): I resign mine office! You must find some younger man — or some older man — for the place. The competition is too strong for me. (*He goes out. No one notices his outburst.*)

(*There is a pause of silence, during which the hysteria of the Elders subsides. The Herald stiffens once more into his military demeanor. Only the Prophet is unchanged, his fixed and glassy stare probing the Unseen, his lips moving in intense prayer. The Elders become uneasy and embarrassed. They begin to wriggle. Several half start to speak; but none dare voice the contagious spirit of distrust which obsesses them.*)

The Young Plump Elder (*with infinite tact and diffidence, tentatively*): I think the Saviour cometh at the hour of sunset.

The Prophet: Verily and Amen! The Lord hath lightened thine eyes, O blessed among the Elders of Blabre! The red sun blushes on his silver armour!

(*A pause. The Elders are by no means reassured.*)

The Most Venerable Elder (*trying another gambit*): Is there any sign of his coming? Should we not make ready to receive him?

The Prophet: You are not ready to receive him. You have not faith. The sign of his coming is the extremity of our helplessness. To your knees, faint-hearted ones, beseech the Lord that he may make free your spirits; it is with awe and gladness that ye should await the coming of the Saviour. (*To the Most Reverend Elder.*) And thou, false fox, if thou be worth aught beneath thy mummeries, speak for these, even for these, unto the Lord!

(*The Elders rise, and group themselves before the images of the gods. They kneel. The Palsied Elder is assisted by his neighbor. The Most Reverend Elder standing before them spreads his hands and prays. The Herald also kneels, a little apart. The Prophet sits down again upon the floor, about half way between the table and the west window, but near the footlights; he faces the door.*)

The Most Reverend Elder (*lifting his hands*): Hear us, most high, most holy, of the gods of Blabre! Hear us, who humbly —

(*The door opens. A courier, booted, spurred, and dusty, but recognizably in the same uniform as the Herald, rushes in, breathless and exhausted. In his hand is a parchment, which he extends mechanically; with the other hand he clutches the table for support.*)

The Courier (*gasping*): Salvation to Blabre from the Em-

peror! Greetings and victory! Hold out for six hours more, at the most, and all is saved! The Emperor is at hand with his whole army; the heads of his columns are not two hours behind me. And yet I have ridden! I have ridden! (*He clutches at his heart; the parchment falls from his hand. He staggers.*) I have ridden! (*The words burst from his throat. The blood gushes from his mouth, and he falls dead.*)

The Young Plump Elder: The Fool was right!

(*All shrink, appalled, realizing the risk they have taken, and the needlessness of it. A long silence of agony.*)

The Prophet: Pray, pray, thou favored of the Lord! There is no salvation in the arm of flesh!

The Most Reverend Elder (*trembling*): Let us lift up our eyes unto the Lord in the hour of our distress; let us utter our calamity in his ears, and let our hearts be humbled before him!

Chorus of Elders: Let the Lord give ear unto the complaining of his servants!

The Most Reverend Elder: In the extremity of the City is our hope fixed upon the Lord; let the Lord send us a saviour in the time of our need, even a saviour to lead us upon the mountains of victory!

Chorus: Let the Lord behold our disquietude; let him open the Eye of Mercy upon us!

The Most Reverend Elder: O Lord, thy people await the outpouring of thy salvation; as a great river bursting from the ice-dam let thy might flood forth upon us; as the moon that breaketh from a cloud, as a panther that leapeth from the woodland, so let thy victory shine forth!

Chorus: O Lord, let thy glory be manifest in our salvation!

The Most Reverend Elder: O Lord! the prophets have prophesied in the market-place, and in the cathedrals have the preachers made proclamation of the Saviour. The sacred bards of olden time have made songs concerning him; the carver and the gilder have limned our hope upon oak and upon marble; in bronze and in orichalc hath the sculptor cast his statue.

Chorus: We have believed the word of the prophet! We have had faith in the word of the Lord God.

The Most Reverend Elder: With the eye of faith may we behold him, a span and half a span above the common height of man. His silver armor flashes in the moonlight; on his helm the ruby dragon glows and sparkles with the fire of his wrath. In his hand is the sword of vengeance; and in the crook of his left arm is the battleaxe of victory!

Chorus: O Lord, let us behold also with our eyes! Let us come to the hour of fulfilment!

(*The sun is now near his setting. His rays strike through the western window.*)

The Most Reverend Elder: O Lord! O God of Blabre! By the devotion of thy people, we adjure thee to hear us! By thy saints and martyrs, by thy hermits and thy virgins, we recall thy favor! We invoke thee by the commemoration of thy glory!

Chorus: We adjure thee, we commemorate thy glory! (*A pause, while all bend deeper in prayer. The door opens, and the Fool rushes in, dishevelled.*)

The Fool: The suburbs are filled with the advancing armies of the Gnogues! They move slowly, fearing stratagem, O brother fools! But they advance, inexorable as death him-

self. The banner of black crawls in the suburbs of Blabre! (*He goes to the window.*) All the other fools are kneeling too — and the black banner creeps towards the heart of Blabre! (*They do not notice him, openly, but a trembling again takes hold on them.*)

The Most Reverend Elder: O Lord, vouchsafe unto thy servants the earnest of thy salvation!

Chorus: O Lord, hear us!

The Most Reverend Elder: Lord, suffer not the enemy to enter the city!

Chorus: O Lord, arise and smite the hosts of them that hate us!

The Fool: From every side the banners of black writhe on like serpents.

(*The sunlight, leaving the kneeling crowd, now strikes nearer the roof.*)

The Most Reverend Elder: O Lord! it is the hour. It is the hour of our salvation.

Chorus: Lord, let thy mercy be extended upon us! Let the last ray of the sun be darkened before the dawn of thy salvation!

(*The Herald rises, as if by a sudden instinct, and takes a position by the side of the altar, on a raised dais, so that he can see fully out of the eastern window.*)

The Fool: The heads of the main columns issue from the alleys. They see the people kneeling; the captains halt in amazement.

The Most Venerable Elder (*losing patience*): Is there no sign, no sign, O Lord, of the Saviour?

The Herald: There is no sign of the Saviour.

(*The sun's rays, striking the ceiling, grow pale. The scene begins to darken.*)

The Most Reverend Elder: O Lord, it is the hour of the fulfilment of thy word! It is the hour of the salvation of Blabre at the hand of the Lord God!

The Herald: There is no sign of the Saviour.

The Fool: The captains meet at the edge of the market-place; they consult; they withdraw; it is as if they waited even as we wait!

The Most Reverend Elder: The fear of the vengeance of the Lord is already upon them!

The Fool: The captains are whispering some order; it passes down the ranks like the wind through a field of wheat.

The Herald (*turning to the western window for a moment*): The rim of the sun is gone down beneath the waters.

The Most Reverend Elder: Is there no sign of the Saviour?

Chorus: Is there no sign of the Saviour?

The Herald: There is no sign of the Saviour.

The Most Reverend Elder: Mighty and merciful! Strong to save! Lord of our people, Lord almighty, Lord God everlasting, send us, we beseech thee, send us the Saviour!

Chorus: Send us the Saviour.

The Fool: The Gnogues are deploying; it is as if they were forming in four ranks, ready to charge.

(*The stage is now in total darkness.*)

Chorus: Send us, O send us, the Saviour.

The Herald: There is no sign of the Saviour.

The Most Reverend Elder (*to the Prophet*): Hast thou lied unto us in the name of the Lord?

The Herald: Look! I see a glint as of silver upon the bridge

of the river-gate! (*This is visible to the audience, a single spark.*)

The Fool: O triple fool! (*He has joined the Herald at the eastern window.*) It is the first glint of moonlight that shall see us murdered every one! They will put every living thing to the sword; they will burn every building with fire; they will efface the City of Blabre from the memory of man!

The Herald: I see the dragon helm of ruby! (*There is a faint red spark visible in the darkness, above the silver spark.*)

The Fool: It is the blood of the veins of your mad eyes. (*The light increases through the eastern window, very slowly.*)

The Most Reverend Elder: O Lord! Wilt thou not have mercy upon thy chosen people? Wilt thou not remember thy people in the hour of their extremity?

Chorus: O Lord! O our Lord God! is there no help for the city?

(*A pause. All bend deeper, muttering in prayer. The moonlight strikes the roof of the council-chamber. The Fool returns to the western window.*)

The Fool: The captains turn to the ranks; they exhort their men to be pitiless. The spearmen charge their pikes, and the swordsmen raise the scramasax.

The Most Venerable Elder: Where is the sword of the Lord? and the battleaxe in the hands of the Saviour?

(*Moonlight now floods the council-chamber, but as a diffused gleam.*)

The Most Reverend Elder (*furiously, to the Prophet*): Thou hast lied in the name of the Lord!

(*The door opens. There enters a man of gigantic stature. He is clad in silver armour. On his head is a helmet with closed visor above which towers a dragon of rubies. He moves to the center of the stage, near the footlights, and turns to face east. The moon, rising through the window, throws him into startlingly bright light. In his hand is a naked sword, and in the crook of his left arm rests a battleaxe. He surveys the scene with perfect self-possession.*)

The Herald (*who has been passionately gazing out to the east, now turning, and so the first to observe him, as the Elders are all in prayer, the Fool watching the market-place,*

and the Prophet again sunk in self-absorption): Behold the Saviour!

(*All except the Prophet and the Fool rise and rush toward the person thus indicated, even the Palsied restored to energy by the ecstasy of relief which floods them all. They sink on their knees before him in adoration. The Young Plump Elder, on the side next the footlights, clasps his knees and kisses them. All cry aloud in rapture: "The Saviour!" "Praise to the Lord!" "The Saviour of the City of Blabre!" "Glory to the Lord God Most High!" etc., in a violent and confused manner. The clamor makes no impression upon the dignity and immobility of the newcomer.*)

The Herald (*rushing to the west window, and blowing a tremendous blast upon his trumpet*): Oyez! Oyez! Oyez! Re-joyce, we conquer! The Saviour of the City hath appeared in the Chamber of the Council of the fathers of the City! Re-joyce, we conquer! (*He blows another yet more joyful blast. Cries of joy without; the people raise the National hymn. The Elders continue their confused cries of rapture. The Herald returns.*) Hail, Saviour of Blabre!

(*A standard bearer, and two soldiers, of the Gnogues enter. The former bears the banner of black; the latter drag by her long fair hair a young girl of the people of Blabre. Behind these are as many other soldiers as may be convenient. At the same moment the Saviour slowly raises his visor. (These two directions must be carefully synchronized.) He is seen to be of the race of the Gnogues.*)

The King of the Gnogues (*without excitement, but in the peculiar harsh intonation which is natural to Gnogues*): Put every living thing to the sword; burn every building with fire; efface the City of Blabre from the memory of man. (*He pinches the cheek of the Young Plump Elder, who like the rest is paralyzed by the horror of the situation.*) Roast me this man for supper! Let him be larded with the fat of this young girl, when I have finished with her.

(*The standard-bearer goes to the window, and signals.*)
(*The National Hymn turns to shrieks, which mingle with the roar of the charging Gnogues.*)

The Prophet (*above the tumult, an ecstasy of joy thrilling his hollow voice*): Woe unto Blabre! Woe to the wicked City! (*The curtain falls quickly.*)

THE STIRRUP CUP.

By S. J. ALEXANDER.

Alack! 'Tis a mad world, with mad gods above it,
Who weep for it, laugh for it, loathe it and love it,
Creating in jest, in a phantasy breaking,
Like petulant children, the toys of their making.
When they struck from their souls the hot spark of our being,
It flashed from their clutches beyond their foreseeing.
They dreamed their gods' dreams, and beheld in the vision
Their toy puppets dance on their string of derision.
They worked their gods' work, all unwotting the sequel;
We are soul of Their Soul and inherently equal.

Though they rive the pole star from the chains of its mooring,
The soul is beyond them, supreme and enduring;
Above and beyond their desire and endeavor,
It sweeps in wide circles for ever and ever.
Then, here's to Our Gods, though they bend us and break us,
Though they torture and slay, yet they cannot unmake us.
And here's to the grace of the cup that they pour us,
The Black Stirrup Cup for the journey before us;
Drink deeply and pledge them, resigned, or defying,
A Health to Our Gods! We salute them in dying.

ELDER EEL. A SKETCH BY LORD BOLESKINE.

PERSONS OF THE SKETCH.

MR. MEEK, the Minister.
MR. DOSE, the Doctor.
MR. BONES, the Butcher.
MR. BUN, the Baker.
MR. CHIPS, the Carpenter.
MR. TONGS, the Tinker.
MR. GRAB, the Grocer.
MR. AWL, the Cobbler.
Women, including JEANNIE MACKAY.
ELDER EEL, the Exciseman,
and

LILITH.

SCENE: The Market-place of the village of Houghmagandie.
(Enter L., Bones, Bun, Chips, Tongs, and Grab. All are dressed in the black shiny clothes conventional on Sundays in the provinces. They are followed by a number of women dressed with equal propriety, who enter the houses that surround the market-place, and disappear. One of them, Jeannie Mackay, walks apart, and as if ashamed of herself. The scene is one of characteristic Sabbath gloom. The men carry immense black Bibles. They walk very slowly and heavily.)

BONES: A stirring discourse.

CHIPS: Ay! the meenister was juist gran'.

TONGS: Losh! But that was guid about the destruction o' Sennacherib.

BUN: Ay!

GRAB: D'ye ken what he meant?

ALL: Ay! Ay! Ay!

GRAB: D'ye ken what he meant?

BONES: Ay! the meenister's verra clear.

GRAB: Na! Na! but d'ye ken he was drivin' the arrow of the Wurd to oor ain hairts?

BONES: Ay! But what d'ye mean?

(Enter R., Awl. He is a tall, sprightly man in a decent suit of tweeds, and he is smoking a pipe. All turn from him as if he were a leper.)

AWL: A brow day the day!

GRAB: Is this a day to be ta'king o' days? *(All groan.)*

AWL: This is the Lord's day, and A'm thankin' Him for his guid gift o' tobacco.

GRAB: Ye dirty little Atheist! D'ye no ken this is the Sawbath? Awa wi' ye from the Lord's children!

BONES: An' dinna blaspheme!

GRAB: Beware, ye fausse loon! The judgement o' the Lord is nigh at han'.

CHIPS: The meenister preached o' the destruction o' Sennacherib.

AWL: An' wha's Sennacherib?

CHIPS: Juist sic anither as yoursel'. A fleein', flytin', floutin', sweerin' deevil like yoursel'!

AWL: Ah weel! puir bodies, ye don't know all! Guid job for you. *(He passes over and goes out, L.)*

BUN: The sculduddery wastrel!

BONES: The blaspheming loon!

CHIPS: The feckless child o' Satan!

TONGS: The rantin' roarin' lion!

GRAB: Ah! d'ye ken the noo wha the meenister meant by Sennacherib?

ALL: Ah!

GRAB: D'ye mind Sennacherib was King o' Babylon?

ALL: Ah!

GRAB: D'ye ken — Ah! here comes Elder Eel, the guid man. He'll tell t' 'e. He's seen wi' his ain een!

(Enter L. Elder Eel is very tall and thin and lantern-jawed, more solemn and portentous than the others.)

GRAB: The Blessin' o' the Lord be on ye, Elder. Will ye tell the fowk o' the terrible scandal in Houghmagandie?

EEL: The han' o' the Lord is heavy upon us for oor sins.

ALL: Ay! Ay!

GRAB: We are but puir sinners.

EEL: Ay! we deserve it. But our punishment is greater than we can bear.

ALL: Woe unto us!

EEL: Wi' these een hae I seen it! Alack the day! My brethren, d'ye ken wha's ta'en the lodging ower Awl's shop?

BONES: When?

EEL: Last nicht. The very eve o' the Blessed Sabbath! *(All groan.)*

CHIPS: Wha' then?

EEL: The 'Hoor o' Babylon!

ALL: The 'Hoor o' Babylon!

EEL: A wanton, forward wench! A Babylonish harlot!

BONES: The Lord ha' mercy on us!

EEL: An actress body!

ALL: The Lord ha' mercy on us!

CHIPS: Fra' Glasgie, I doot?

EEL: Waur!

ALL: Waur?

EEL: Waur!

BUN: No' fra' Lunnon, Elder? It's main impawisible!

EEL: Waur!

BONES: It canna be! It canna be!

EEL: Waur. Far waur!

TONGS: Hoots! but we maun ha' fallen into terrible sin.

BONES: Fra' whaur? In the Lord's name, mon, tell. We're fair distrachit.

EEL: Fra' Pairiss!

GRAB: Fra' the Hame o' the De'il!

BONES: Fra' Hell! Fra' the Bottomless Pit!

CHIPS: The 'Hoor o' Babylon! The Scarlet Wumman that rideth on the Beast wi' Seven Heads!

TONGS: Fra' the very hairt o' a' sculduddery an' wickedness!

BUN: O Lord! ha' mercy upon us!

EEL: Indeed, I ha' seen her at the window. About nine o' the clock last nicht, when a' guid fowk suld be abed — and I mysel' was wa'king hame fra' the meenister's. And there she was at the window, wi' her lang hair down on her bare shou'lders.

ALL: A' weel! a' weel! 'T is a wicked wurld!

EEL: D'ye ken she leanit oot, the Jezebel, wi' her painted face, an' — an' —

ALL: Weel!

EEL: The audacious wench cried oot, “Guid-nicht, Chairlie!” an’ blew me a kiss.

ALL: A’ weel!

EEL: An’ I cried oot i’ the wurrds o’ the gude buke: “An Jehu cried unto the eunuchs, Throw her dune!”

BONES: An’ was she rebukit?

EEL: Nay! she cried back on me: “There’s no eunuchs here, Chairlie, nor none wanted. Throw it up!”

CHIPS: The brazen, forward, sculduddey wench! The flytin’, sweerin’ harlot o’ Babylon!

EEL: An’ then she picks up her fiddle, that she’s lured thousands o’ men to their doom wi’, and she plays, “We are na fou, we’re no that fou.”

ALL: Shame on her!

GRAB: Hark! wha’s that? (*The tuning of a violin is heard, off.*)

EEL: There she is! There’s the ’Hoor o’ Babylon! (*Lilith, off, plays a lively though classical piece of music.*)

EEL: To your tents, O Israel! To your homes, men o’ Houghmagandie! On to the marrow-bones o’ your knees, and pray that the curse may be removed from us!

ALL: Amen!

EEL: As for me, I’ll wrestle wi’ this deevil, and maybe have strength given me to overcome it. Here comes the meenister; I’ll hae twa wurrds wi’ him on the matter!

ALL: Guid guide ye and preserve ye! (*All go off R. in consternation.*)

EEL: An’ noo to wrastle wi’ the demon! (*Enter L. Meek and Dose. Dose is an educated man, well dressed.*)

EEL: Gude-mornin’, meenister! Gude-mornin’, doctor!

MEEK (*very humble and quiet*): Gude-mornin’, Elder!

DOSE: Morning, Elder!

EEL: I wad hae twa wurrds wi’ ye, meenister!

MEEK: Ay! Ay! What is it, noo?

EEL: Meenister, it’s verra terrible, what I wad say to ye. The ’Hoor o’ Babylon’s amang us. (*The doctor laughs.*)

DOSE: At it again, Eel? Ha! Ha! Ha!

EEL: Ay, sir, d’ye ken this is a muckle serious affair! There’s a French actress body in the village! In the village o’ Houghmagandie!

DOSE: Ha! Ha! Ha! I was just going to tell you about it, Meek. It’s a dear little Russian girl, a friend of my wife’s. She’s had a tremendous season in Paris — they went mad over her — so we suggested her coming up here for a rest. She woulnd’t stay with us — poor child, she has to practise eight hours a day! — so we got her the room over Awl’s, and she comes to the Surgery for meals. My wife’s bringing her up to the Manse to call on Monday.

MEEK: Oh! Oh! There, Elder, you see it’s all right.

EEL (*aghast*): A’richt!!! — a’richt!!! (*Meek and Dose nod and pass on, laughing.*)

EEL: He’s fair witched! He’s the prey o’ Satan! The meenister was laughing on the Sawbath! Oh, Lord! Lord! An’ I’m left by my lanes to wrastle wi’ the de’il i’ petticoats! Witchcraft! fair witchcraft! An’ sorcery! Whaur’s ony help but in the A’mighty? (*He takes out a flat whiskey flask and swallows a big dram.*) Whaur, I say, is ony help but in the A’mighty? (*Re-enter Awl, L., still smoking.*)

AWL: Hullo, Elder, an what’s the matter noo? Hae ye discovered the sin of Achan again?

EEL: Ah, well! Ah, well! Alack the day. . . . Hae ye come to torment me, ye dirty little Atheist?

AWL: Three lies in three words, Elder. Ye’ll win the Bishop’s Kettle this year, for sure! But what is it? Hae the Glasgie fowk got wind o’ your little affair wi’ Bunges? What d’ye mak’ a year oot o’ that?

EEL: Ye wicked deevil!

AWL: I dinna care. It’s your affair to take the King’s siller, and the whisky man’s gowd! But I’m wondering hoo it gangs wi’ sae muckle releegion!

EEL: Hoo dare ye?

AWL: Or have they found your ain private still o’er the brae? An exciseman wi’ a still o’ his ain! ha! ha! ha!

EEL: Ye fausse fiend! Hae ye gi’en me awa’?

AWL: Na! I’m no sae releegious as ye are. But I doot it’s fowk ken o’ your dealin’s wi’ Jeannie Mackay!

EEL: Hoo did ye ken that?

AWL: Why, the lass is in trouble; and you best ken wha’s the fault is.

EEL: Ay! And didna I gie her fower shilling an’ saxpence to get to Glasgie an’ hide her shame? An’ didna I rebuke her for the sin o’t by the reever bank, so that she might hae found grace to droon hersel’?

AWL: Ay! ye’re a mean, sneakin’, coordly, murderous dog! That I didna ken, an I thank ye for tellin’ me. I’m for ben. (*He spits ostentatiously on the ground and goes off R. But remains visible to audience as one watching the scene. He whistles softly and beckons, off.*)

EEL: Bad! Bad! I maun be fey to hae tellt him that. But I’ll see Jeannie, and gie her twa pund sterling — na! one pund fifteen shillin’ — na! one pund ten shillin’ — an’ get her tae Glasgie — wi’ the promise o’ mair! Ay yon’s the teeket — wi’ the promise o’ mair! An I’ll chase the Babylonish Harlot from Houghmagandie, so that if the wurst comes tae the wurst, fowk winna gie ony credit tae the lass. An’ noo, then, wi’ my conscience clearit, I’ll confront the lioness i’ her den. (*He turns to go off R., and is startled to find Lilith entering R. She wears a thin summer dress very beautifully made, and on her head is a coquettish hat with a suggestion of horns. On seeing him she laughs. His gloom deepens. She goes up and curtseys to him, then puts up her fiddle and plays the “Old Hundredth” or other Scottish hymn tune.*)

EEL: Weel, wad ye aye play holy tunes, I wadna say! (*She plays a religious classical piece.*)

EEL: That savors o’ Popery, I doot! But i’ the main ye mean weel! (*She plays “Auld Lang Syne,” and other Scottish ballads, arranged so as to lead from grave to gay. He is by this time enthralled by the music, and begins to show animation, following the beats with his hands. Even his feet begin to be uneasy.*)

EEL: Weel! weel! wha wad hae thocht it? There’s no sic hairm after a’, maybe. (*She sees him her prey, and plays a mad Hungarian dance. He is compelled to pick up the step, and she leads him, dancing, three or four times round the stage and off, L. Awl comes out to centre of stage. Lilith, off, changes to “The De’il’s awa wi’ th’ Exciseman.”*)

AWL (*sings*):

The de’il cam’ fiddling through our toun,

An’s danced awa’ wi’ th’ Exciseman;

And ilka wife cries:

(*The windows of every house burst open, and women appear, joining in the song.*)

Auld Mahoun!

I wish ye joy o' your prize, mon!
 The de'il's awa', the de'il's awa',
 The de'il's awa' wi' th' Exciseman.
 He's danced awa', he's danced awa'
 He's danced awa' wi' th' Exciseman!

(Repeat chorus while the villagers flock back to the stage. The women are now dressed in the gayest peasant costumes. Lilith, off, resumes the dance tune and leads on Eel, who by this time is dancing with absolute abandon. All make way for him and stand back, laughing. The music stops. Eel, suddenly brought to himself, stares and gasps. He would go off, but Awl stops him.)

AWL: Na, Elder, ye've made this toon a hell lang enough! Tae the fountain, lads! *(They catch Eel and duck him half a dozen times. Enter Meek.)*

MEEK *(throws up his arms)*: An' what, i' the Lord's name, is come to Houghmagandie?

AWL: It's a' richt, meenister. But I'm the Law an' the Prophets the day! *(Elder Eel comes dripping from the fountain.)*

AWL: Prisoner at the bar, are ye guilty or not guilty? Guilty! Whaur's Jeannie Mackay? Dinna fear, lass. Will ye wed this mon here?

JEANNIE: Ay, sir *(she is in tears)*. It's his bairn, Gude kens.

AWL: Now, meenister, this is whaur ye're wanted. D'ye consent, Elder? Ye've been a hairless old scoundren, but ye can e'en dae the richt thing by the lass noo.

EEL: Ay! I repent sincerely.

AWL: None o' that! Say ye're sorry, like a mon!

FRANCISKU.

A Dramatic Masque.

By HELEN WOLJESKA.

Francisku was a boy of bronze. His hair, his face, his clothes, his bare feet, everything was bronze. When he stepped over to the deeply shaded pool and bent down to fill his huge watering can he looked like a beautiful animated statuette. And the three little baronesses held their breath for fear he might slip into the mysterious depths and disappear from them forever. . . .

The three little baronesses also looked like statuettes — like statuettes of delicately tinted ivory, inlaid with gold. On their long, slender, half-bare legs they meandered through the flower-beds, among tall-stemmed nodding blossoms of scarlet and coral and amethyst, while their eyes were on the boy of bronze.

"Que faites-vous, mesdemoiselles?" sharply inquired the "bonne" from the summer house.

"Nous cueillons des fleurs ——" answered the innocent voices; slim white fingers gathered them up, while their slender, aristocratic legs carried them nearer and nearer to Francisku. His darkly flushing face and bashfully glowing eyes, his agile body and pantherlike movements sent strange thrills through the ivory and gold baronesses. If only they dared! They would like to come still closer, quite close, to touch his brown hands, his wild curls, perhaps to put their lips against his —

On the sunny lawn two huge St. Leonbergers lay dozing. Like maenads the three little girls descended upon them, burying their nervous fingers in the great, shaggy, tawny manes, rolling over their playmates, teasing, frolicking, romping, laughing — laughing —

This is an unjust world. He who sows is not always he who reaps.

ROCCO.

A Dramatic Vignette.

A wonderful little marquise.

Her delicately tinted face seems full of whimsical irony and morbid charm. She is not beautiful in the conventional sense of the word, but her strangely troubled eyes, veiled smiles, nervous hands bestow a subtler beauty which

EEL: I'm sorry, Jeannie. An' I'll be a gude mon tae ye, lass.

AWL: That's better. Now, meenister, the Blessing.

MEEK: In the name o' God, I declare ye lawful man an' wife. *(He joins their hands and blesses them.)*

AWL: And no more private still, Elder, and no more bribes fra distillers!

EEL: Ay! I mean it.

AWL: Guid. Now, lass, run off wi' him, lest he fa' into the snare o' the 'Hoor o' Babylon again; an' this time for his soul's ill! *(All laugh. Eel goes off with Jeannie.)*

AWL: Noo, lads an' lasses a', prayer i' the morning, an' thanksgivin' in th' afternoon. *(Lilith plays.)*

AWL *(sings)*:

We'll mak' oor maut, we'll brew oor drink,

We'll dance an' sing an' rejoice, mon,

An' mony braw thanks tae the mickle black de'il

(Bowling to Lilith)

That's danced awa' wi' th' Exciseman!

There's threesome reels, there's foursome reels,

There's hornpipes an' strathskeys, mon;

But the ae best dance e'er came tae oor land

Was — the de'il's awa' wi' th' Exciseman!

(Chorus as before. All dance merrily, and at last even the minister is carried off by a big, flamboyant girl into the centre of the crowd.)

(CURTAIN.)

is independent of external advantages; she appears a being from another sphere from a world of sultry luxuries and graceful mockery, such as exists in languorous women's burning dreams. Her piquant smile vaguely remembers past ecstasies. But the melting sorrow of her eyes proclaims that in every ecstasy there lurked the foreboding of despair, and the frenzy of love was forever mingled with the dread of doom.

HELEN WOLJESKA.

KNIGHT-ERRANT.

A Dramatic Miniature,

By ALEISTER CROWLEY.

I came beneath the holy hill

Where jets the spring of Life-in-Youth,

Upon its summit flowers still

The golden rose of Love-in-Truth.

My lips, that desert suns devoured,

Were moist and merry at the draught;

And in that dew of sunlight showered

I stood and shook myself, and laughed.

Lightly I lept upon the slope

To gain the golden rose above;

Outpacing faith, outsoaring hope,

I had no rival left but love

Mine arms are stretched to North and South,

A scarlet cross, a soldier sun;

The rose is music on my mouth,

Holiness to Hilarion!

I mark the bounds of space and time;

I suck salvation from the sod;

I point the way for man to climb

Up to his consummation, God.

THE GODS.

A Drama. From the Coptic of IAO SABAO.

IN the blackness of infinite space are stars, Aldeboran, Gemini, Orion, Cor Leonis, accurately represented.

In the foreground is the top of a lemon-colored, luminous globe, around which is a set of darker rings, tilted at an angle of some 10 to 15 degrees sideways to the horizontal. Left, a tall man of green skin, clothed in a vast mantle of scarlet, with gold embroideries like flames; his right leg swings constantly in space upon the rim of the Ring. Left centre, a boy of bluish violet skin, clad fantastically in light yellow rays, plays upon the flute. Right, a woman, tawny orange, lies folded in her cloak of blue, which is adorned like the fan of a peacock.

Above, throned upon the globe, sits a man of immense size; his hair, his beard, his robe, his skin, are vast and snowy. The hair is rayed like a crown; the beard covers his whole body. His eyes, lost in the vastness of his face, are inky black.

His name is Aoth; that of the man, Arogogorobrao; of the woman, Assalonai; of the boy, Atheleberseth.

Upon this scene the curtain rises. There is a long silence, while Arogogorobrao swings his leg.

Atheleberseth plays idly on the flute two or three short snatches, as in a mood of boredom.

ASSALONAI (*as if summing a long consideration, shaking her head slowly*): No. A pause.

AROGOGOROBRAO (*shrugs his shoulders heavily, then drops his head between them*): No. A pause. How much — ah — Time — did you say had passed?

AS.: Eighty-eight thousand, three hundred and sixty-three millions, five hundred and twelve thousand and forty-two aeons — of aeons.

AR.: I still do not understand. But it is very little.

AS.: Before me there was no Time at all?

AR.: No. A pause. It was very peaceful.

AS.: I cannot understand what it can have been. There was no motion?

AR.: Of course not. It was all Now.

AS.: Yet nothing has happened, ever since I came, and Time began.

AR.: Only the journey of that comet by which you measure this time of yours.

AS. (*brightly*): Oh, yes! Every billion times it comes back it changes color a little; I count that one Wink. And a billion Winks make a Flash, and a billion Flashes make a Spark, and a billion Sparks make an Aeon.

AR.: It is clever. Yes. It is clever. But I do not see the use of it.

AS.: But, see! How useful it is now! Now that Atheleberseth has come.

AR.: But it does not explain how he has come — or why.

AS.: No.

AR. (*very sadly*): No. A pause. I do not understand even why you came — bringing Time.

AS.: No. *He* does not know?

AR.: No. *He* was asleep even in the Now.

AS.: *He* has never stirred. What is that — “asleep”?

AR.: In the Now one either knows or knows not. Aoth knew not. I knew.

AS.: But —

AR.: You think that I am a dream of Aoth? It may be.

AS.: And shall we not sleep again?

AR.: Who may say — after that strange thing that came to us last Aeon?

AS. (*enthusiastic*): That rushing sleep!

AR.: And we woke up to find Atheleberseth and his flute.

AS.: Then only did we speak.

AR.: He gave us our names. He gave — Him — His name.

AS.: I do not think these are the true names. (*Atheleberseth plays a short tune upon his flute, dancing.*)

AR.: Names cannot be true. Silence is truth — perhaps. This Time of yours is all a lie. It means that things change. And true things cannot change.

ATHELEBERSETH: Oh, tra-la-la! There was a foolish word. Change is itself truth. I am sorry I invented speech — or that I bestowed it on these elder gods — these beings without intelligence or experience.

AR.: Boy, you do not understand that the secret of Wisdom is in knowing nothing, in saying nothing, and, above all, in doing nothing.

ATH.: True, since you broke silence then to say a foolish thing.

AR.: Ay, you are but the fruit of a great curse.

AS.: Nay, he amuses me. He is dear, he is delicate. I love his mirth, his music.

AR.: It does not matter. Aoth will wake.

ATH.: Not he!

AR.: He will wake. He will see what he has done — us. And he will pass his hand over his brow — and we shall be as if we had never been.

ATH.: How could that be? We are.

AR. (*with a contemptuous little laugh*): We are only the dreams of Aoth. What has been is not. What is no more was not. There is no substance, save only in the Now.

ATH.: Then it doesn't matter what we do?

AR.: No. Not in the Silence, the Now, the Truth.

ATH.: Then I will have a wonderful time! I will set fire to the beard of Aoth!

AR. (*grimly*): You would wake Him — and an End of your time!

AS.: What is End?

AR.: All would be Now — but we should be Not.

ATH.: I don't believe it. It is all change. Change changes. Change cannot cease to change. (*He plays the flute.*)

AR.: Play not so loud!

ATH. (*alarmed*): Is there really a danger?

AR.: For you, perhaps. It might be as fatal as if one should pronounce IAO backwards. But I should not find an end. All this time is terrible to me.

ATH.: All that is out of date. Assalonai is delighted.

AS.: Are you sorry that I came?

AR.: No —

(A pause.)

Yes.

(A pause.)

It is contrary to Truth, to Silence. I am sorry.

ATH. (*with a trill upon the flute*): I am glad. I am going to

play games.

AR.: What are "games"?

ATH.: See! You know nothing! I mean to make this old Ring spin. After all, you are responsible. You made Assalonai; you made me.

AR.: I was lonely in the Now. I must have thought. I see that it was wrong. I have set a star in motion. Who can say what may come of it?

ATH.: Oh, tra-la-la! Mother, let us play a game!

AS. (*smiling and shaking her head*): I do not know any games. I love; that is all I know.

ATH.: You invented this game Time.

AR.: A fearful thing! Something evil will come of it.

AS.: Why should not good come of it?

AR.: I have told you. It was "good" in the Now —

(*A pause.*)

But I did not know it. So I thought. Alas!

ATH.: Oh, come! let us play a game!

(*Silence.*)

Then I must have a sister to play with.

AR.: Already he plots evil.

AS.: Surely that is harmless enough.

AR.: I tell you that you do not know; you do not understand.

AS.: Oh! but you fear without reason.

AR. (*with bitter contempt*): Reason! I had Wisdom — until I thought.

ATH.: Come, she shall be all made of music.

(He plays upon the flute. From the Ring, beneath his feet, arises Barraio, a black hunchbacked dwarf, with a hooked nose, a hanging jaw, a single, bloodshot eye. She is dressed in rags of rusty red. Atheleberseth screams with laughter as he sees her; Assalonai shudders in disgust; Arogogorobrao nods his head, as if that which he had foreseen had come to pass.

Barraio performs a dance of ever-increasing obscenity, which delights Atheleberseth as much as it disgusts the others. Presently she kisses him on the mouth. He is nauseated, and throws her back with a gesture of violent repulsion. She, screaming with laughter, produces, from her rags, a terrestrial globe.)

ATHELEBERSETH (*in surprise and horror*): Oh!

ASSALONAI (*in agony*): Ah!

ARAGOGOROBRAO (*with hissing intake of the breath*): Ih!

AOTH raises His hand, and draws it across His brow. Darkness. It clears for one blinding flash as He opens His eye. He is alone.

(*Curtain.*)

LOVE AND TIME.

By John Roberts

The aeons, assembling
About and above
Thy tender trembling
Lips a-twitter with love,
In solemn session
Announce and acclaim
The perfect possession —
Peace, a passion aflame!

The spring, unfolding
Blossom and bud,
Revels, beholding
Blushes — bowers of blood!
Beauty assurgent
Under the whips
Of ardent and urgent
Lovers, lyrical lips!

The summer, upleaping,
Thrills with our mirth,
Royally reaping
Joy, oh, joy, to the earth!
All that was mine is
Thine at a nod. . . .
Deep in the shrine is
Holy, hidden, the God.

Autumn, assuring
Earth of her fruit,
Mellows, maturing
Love on lordlier lute.
Thou that wast maiden,
Thou that art wife,
Wake! thou art laden
Now with treasure of life!

Winter, congealing
The life of the year,
Smiles for us, sealing
Sure the soul of our sphere.
Girdled and crowned with
Love, we are shod
With songs that resound with
Harps whose measure is God.

The aeons, assembling
About and above
Thy tender trembling
Lips a-twitter with love,
In solemn session
Announce and acclaim
The perfect possession —
Peace, a passion aflame!



THE BONDS OF MARRIAGE.
A Romantic Farce in One Act by ALEISTER CROWLEY.

JOHN SAMPSON (*Jack*) a man of business; age 30.

MARY, *his wife*; age 25.

SLYMAN SQUIFF, *master detective*.

(*Sampson's apartment, in any city of the United States.*)

(*Jack is putting on his overcoat with Mary's aid.*)

JACK: Well, good-bye, dear. Remember, I may be a little late for dinner; I'm rushed to death this week, you know, what with four men called to the colors, and three of the girls gone for the Red Cross.

MARY: Good-bye, Jack. Take care of yourself. This is dreadfully treacherous weather, dear, and you with your weakness!

(*While helping him she has dexterously extracted his wallet. She embraces him warmly.*)

Good-bye, darling!

JACK: Good-bye, sweetheart, good-bye!

(*He goes. She immediately searches the wallet. It contains a large number of bills, of which she thrusts a goodly proportion into her stocking, and a memorandum, which she reads, sitting.*)

MARY: Monday L. B. 100, Wednesday L. B. 50, Thursday L. B. 200, Saturday L. B. 200. Oh, God! Oh, God! That it should have come to this!

(*The bell rings sharply. She puts the wallet in the pocket of a second overcoat, and conceals the paper. She then touches the button which releases the door, and begins to put away the breakfast things. Enter Jack.*)

JACK: Darling, I've left my wallet, or it's been stolen. I must be crazy. I could have sworn I had it on me.

MARY: Oh, I guess its in the overcoat you wore yesterday.

(*Jack finds it.*)

JACK: So it is! Stupid of me! I must run. Good-bye again, dear girl!

MARY: Good-bye, Jack!

(*He goes. She sinks into the chair.*)

He didn't even kiss me! Oh, the mask's off the viper now! The veil has fallen from the rat! He and his L. B. — the fifties and hundreds he's spending on her — and I haven't a rag to my back. Well, I'll know the worst — and then go back to mother — mother — mother.

(*The bell rings sharply. She touches the button and returns, half fainting.*)

Oh, Mother! come and comfort me! Mother! Mother!

(*Enter Slyman Squiff. He is a tall, pale man. His face and feet are large and flat. He wears huge brown horn spectacles and wide red whiskers, an old battered Derby hat, a frock coat with a pale yellow waistcoat and lavender pants, all cut in the most fashionable style, new patent leather boots, frayed and dirty linen, new white kid gloves. He carries a cane, which can be used as a periscope, gun, or cigar holder. On his entry it is a cigar holder. His flowery language is spoken as if by a rather effete dandy, his slang in tones of cunning and vulgarity. His high notes of protest or affirmation reach the level of a lugubrious bellow. His costume can be varied if any items of it are difficult to obtain, but in any case it should be notably incongruous.*)

SQUIFF: Good morrow, madam! May all blessings flow upon

that dainty dome of thine. Indeed, ahem!

MARY: Good morning, Mr. Squiff! Do sit down! Have you found out anything?

SQUIFF: Say everything, fair lady. What a question to ask of me, the master detective, the man who arrested Edward Kelly! I am indeed delighted to be able to inform you that your humble and devoted servant is now able to vindicate that pledge of confidence which you so amicably honored me by hypothecating — hum! I've got the dope on the slob, madam, permit me to assure you on the faith of a master detective!

MARY: Tell me the worst, quickly, for pity's sake!

SQUIFF: Alas! that these lips should needs profane their sanctity with such a tale of treachery and infamy. Kid, it's the limit, believe me! Yes, madam, I deeply regret to have to inform you that he who pledged his honor to his marriage vows is no better than — ah! how can I frame the phrase without wounding that sensitive soul of yours? — no better than a-a-a-coquette!

MARY: Then you can interpret this? (*She hands him the memorandum.*)

SQUIFF: Madam, I can. What a question to ask me, the master detective, the man who arrested Edward Kelly! L. B. is Laura Brown. Yet not so brown — she is a blonde!

MARY: Heavens above! a blonde!

SQUIFF: A blonde! She is employed in the office itself as a stenog.

MARY: A stenog?

SQUIFF: A stenog. Well may we say og — she is a swine!

MARY: Did you make her confess?

SQUIFF: I wouldn't go near her for a million dollars. Blondes are more terrible than tigers, more ruthless than rattlesnakes, more squamacious than skunks — oh, madam! Ahem!

MARY: I wish I had never been born. Oh, mother! mother!

SQUIFF: But, madam, calm your agitation, I beg of you. Open fire with anti-aircraft guns! What must be done? Ah, what?

MARY: I shall go home to mother.

SQUIFF (*exhibiting alarm*): But not to-day; oh, not to-day, let be beg of you! Trust me! Trust the master detective, the man who arrested Edward Kelly! There is much yet to do. Possess yourself awhile. We must have yet more proof — prehoof! Prehoof's the one best bet!

MARY: Laura Brown! It is for her that he has cut my allowance, moved into this tiny flat, made me turn my old dresses and do my own housework. Laura Brown! I've been starving, Mr. Squiff, literally starving, and he earning fifty a week!

SQUIFF: Indeed, madam, the worst is yet to come. For four months he has been branch manager, at two hundred a week, and three per cent. commission into the bargain.

MARY: Oh, perfidy! perfidy!

SQUIFF: A raw deal, madam, as I live. I am the master detective! I arrested Edward Kelly, and I never heard a tale more pitiable!

MARY: To-night I will confront him.

SQUIFF (*in a hollow voice*): 'Tis well. 'Tis well. Until tomorrow's sun, then, gild the horizon with his rays from the same elevation as at present, I bid you most respectfully adieu. I'll beat it, madam. Beat it! Ahem!

(He goes. Mary sinks in grief, and begins to sob. The clock strikes ten.)

MARY: I won't believe it — not until I know. But — well — the day's work — I guess there's a hundred with what I got this morning!

(She rises, and takes her hat and coat.)

The curtain falls to indicate the passage of Time.

(The clock strikes four. The bell rings. After a little, enter Squiff with Jack, crouching, like persons stalking game.)

SQUIFF: Ha! we are unobserved. Now, then, go to it, kid, go to it!

JACK: I almost hate myself for having employed you to spy on my wife's actions. But it has been too much for me! Week after week no proper meals! What does she do with her allowance? She hasn't had a dress or a hat in six months. And between you and me, I believe there's more than my carelessness in the way my money disappears. Sixty-four dollars this very morning, or I miss my count. You have discovered all, you say?

SQUIFF: What a question to ask me, the master detective, the man who arrested Edward Kelly! Mr. Samson, it grieves me to the heart to have to break the terrible news to you, but its a cinch. Bear up, man, it's the booze. Your lady wife's a secret drinker. It is the drink! Dre-hink! Dre-hink!

JACK: I've never seen her drink in my life. It's absurd.

SQUIFF: It is on such paradoxes that detective genius has an average of over .300. I am the master detective. I arrested Edward Kelly, and believe me, I'm the wise guy. Never drink? That sort's the worst of all. Always sober, never seen to touch a drop, but she'll put away her weight in whiskey in a week, gol darn it! It is one of the most paradoxical and lamentable facts in the psychopathy of the neurological diathesis of dipsomania and parallel noioplegias, b'gosh!

JACK: God! it's too dreadful. Is there no doubt possible?

SQUIFF: It is not possible for a sound ratiocinatory apparatus which is functioning normally to enter a caveat against the ipse dixit of my ex-cathedra pronunciamento. Holy smoke, no, ahem! It's a sure thing, babe, she's doing the hula-hula with the demon Rum.

JACK: How can you be so sure?

SQUIFF: You forget! I am the master detective. I am the man who arrested Edward Kelly! And so — ah, so! Well? Ahem! I listened in. I did. It may have been unworthy, but I listened in! Ahem! Only yesterday! No sooner had your manly foot spurned the threshold of this your mansion in disdain and haste as you fled swiftly to your house of affairs — ahem! — than — ting! the masterpiece of Morse and Bell resounded. 'Twas even the sweet voice of your fair spouse — wife of your bosom, alas; that I should say it.

SQUIFF: Bosom, alas! that I should say it!

She called one Joe — I know not who he may be, this pandar to unhallowed vice and debauchery of drunkenness. She gave her order in terms that she thought darkly hidden, but to me, the master detective, the man who arrested Edward Kelly, they were alas! too clear — ahem! Too plain! Too evident! Too damnably damning, damn it! Oh, yes, ahem! "Joe!" cried she, "two hundred bucks. Wilson — that's all!" My innocent friend, "Wilson — that's all" is the advertisement of a famed brand of whiskey. It was enough. She rang off. I swooned.

JACK: Two hundred dollars worth of whiskey! The woman must be a barrel!

SQUIFF: 'Tis the dread truth! 'Twill out, wil't not, indeed, ahem?

JACK: My God, can nothing be done?

SQUIFF: First, brother in distress, we must prehoove it on her. Prehoof! Prehoof's the one best bet. Hark! my trained ear perceives a fairy foot fall. Camouflage, Mr. Samson, camouflage! Quick — in the window — bay, behind you Arras tapes-try!

(They hide behind the window curtain, in the recess. Squiff keeps watch through the periscope. Enter Mary with parcels, which she leaves on the table. She looks round, as if fearing observation.)

MARY: All safe here! *(Aside.)* Yet I am the most wretched of women. At this very moment my husband — my own husband — is ensconced within the arms of that vile sorceress, Laura Brown. The fly is in my ointment, and I cannot swat it! Accursed be him that invented hydrogen peroxide with a little ammonia in it, to be combed through the hair carefully, well into the roots! Blondes! Blondes! Blondes! Oh, mother! mother! *(aloud)*. But to my secret joy, my only compensation in this valley of woe!

SQUIFF *(in a hoarse whisper, very loud)*: Did you hear that, Mr. Samson? Prehoof! Prehoof I promised you, and there I am with the goods. Prehoof!

JACK *(very loud)*: Alas! I hear you, and I am lost. But hush! will she not hear us?

SQUIFF: No fear; her mind is on the drink. Drethink! Drethink! Oh, woe! Dre-hink!

MARY: I could have sworn that I heard voices, had I not promised mother not to swear. But nothing matters now — nothing save my secret!

(She extends her arms to heaven and gives a cry as of ecstasy) Wilson — that's all!

(She goes to a cupboard and closes the door behind her.)

SQUIFF: Now, then, Mr. Samson, to the prehoof! Confront her. I'll stay hidden, and be witness. Hully gee! I'll reveal myself in my true form — aha! — at the proper moment, yes, indeed, ahem! as the master detective, the man who arrested Edward Kelly!

JACK: I'll do it, if it breaks my heart.

(He comes out and leans with folded arms against the table. Mary comes out of the cupboard.)

MARY: Jack! Why, how did you get in? I never heard you!

SQUIFF *(with a loud laugh)*: What a question to ask! All things are easy when they are taken in hand by the master detective, the man who arrested Edward Kelly!

MARY: Oh, Jack, why don't you speak? I thought I heard a voice, another voice.

JACK: It was the voice of your own guilty conscience, Mary!

MARY: Jack! What do you mean? You frighten me. Why don't you kiss me? Why do you act so strangely?

JACK: Wilson — that's all!

MARY: Oh, Jack, Jack, don't!

(She comes to him, he repulses her, she begins to cry.)

SQUIFF: Aha! she trembles, she confesses, it is prehoof!

MARY: Oh, I'm sure I hear a voice!

JACK: Do you see nothing? No snakes, rats, beetles, pink-toed marmosets? Drink, wretched woman, drink! These things

are on your program! No day so meatless but shall show you leopards nesting in your hair! Hear voices, indeed! Ha! ha! ha!

MARY: Oh, Jack, you're crazy!

SQUIFF: 'Tis she that's smitten with the dread dementia of drink! Dre-hink! Dre-hink! She thinks others crazy, she must then be crazy herself. 'Tis all Prehoof! Prehoof! Prehoof!

JACK: Mary, we've been good friends and more for over three years now. Won't you trust me? I'd cut off my hand to save you from this ghastly thing that has come to you. Tell me the truth. Let's face it together!

MARY: Is this a practical joke?

JACK: Oh, don't try to put me off. I know you have become a secret drinker. I have proof.

SQUIFF: Pre-hoof! Prehoof! Pre-hoof!

MARY: It is a voice. It is familiar, too. Oh, this must be a joke.

JACK: Mary, you are right. It is the voice of Slyman Squiff, the master detective!

SQUIFF: The man who arrested Edward Kelly!

MARY: Then I understand. You wretch! You abandoned wretch! How low must have I fallen to have loved you! Oh, mother, mother!

JACK: Hey, what's this? That's no answer!

MARY: It is for you to answer me! Here have I been, dragged from a happy home into this cheap flat, not a rag to my back, not even a new hat, and there's a lovely one in ——'s (*use name of local milliner*) at three seventy-five, marked down from eight thirty-eight; no girl help any more; no more dinners in restaurants; oh, those blondes! I suppose Laura Brown's in an apartment at a thousand a month; the little beast!

JACK: Laura Brown! Mary, you're raving.

SQUIFF: Ha! he thinks others crazy, he's crazy himself. Such is the fate of all unfaithful husbands. It is Prehoof! Prehoof! Prehoof!

JACK: Shut up, Squiff, you ass!

MARY: Then you hear voices, too! What does this all mean?

JACK (*in a low, thrilling, sinister voice*): This is a stratagem of Slyman Squiff!

MARY (*equally intense*): Traitor, it is. A stratagem of the master detective!

SQUIFF: The man who arrested Edward Kelly!

MARY: Jack, it won't do. Your best chance is to confess. Otherwise I go straight home to mother. Oh, mother! mother!

JACK: Stop talking nonsense!

MARY: Confess! I have proof.

SQUIFF: Pre-hoof! Pre-hoof! Pre-hoof!

MARY: He knows about it all — he knows — he knows! He, Slyman Squiff, the master detective.

SQUIFF: The man who arrested Edward Kelly.

JACK: Confound Edward Kelly!

MARY: He did. And he may yet arrest you, John Sampson, you and your Laura Brown!

JACK: I haven't exchanged three words with the girl in my life, except good-morning.

MARY: Ah! good-morning! A clever scoundrel can do much with such materials. Why, I fell in love with you myself, poor fool I was, because of the way you used to say, "What a pleasant afternoon, aren't we, Miss Mary?" You Beast!

JACK: For God's sake be reasonable. You can't stall like that. If you're not soaking whiskey like an Irish bog, perhaps

you'll explain what you do with all the money you get? Where's the necklace I gave you on your birthday? And your engagement ring? And the sixty-four dollars you took from my wallet this morning?

(*Silence. Mary, pale as death, clenches her teeth and fists. A pause.*)

SQUIFF (*in a hollow voice*): Caught out! Prehoof!

(*A pause.*)

MARY: Jack, it's no business of yours what I do with my money. You never asked me before. You're only asking now to anticipate my asking you. And I do ask you now. What do you do with your money, if you don't spend it on that vile, low creature, Laura Brown?

JACK: She's a perfectly nice girl, and I won't hear you slander her.

MARY: Ah! you defend her, of course. Oh, men are all alike! Mother! Mother!

JACK: You want it both ways. Women are all alike. If I don't defend her, that would be a confession; if I do, it's proof that I'm a more hardened sinner still!

SQUIFF: Prehoof! Prehoof! Prehoof!

MARY: Oh, well; explain how you do spend all your money! I happen to know that you've been branch manager four months, and you never told me! Explain that!

JACK (*stammering*): Mary, dear, it's a — it's a — a — a sort of — er — sort of secret. A — er — kind of a — er — surprise for bye and bye.

MARY (*sneering*): Your manner is convincing, and your explanation most luminous.

JACK: Bah! you're only stalling. Look here, Mary, I believe you loved me once, before this drink got hold of you. I'm going to tell you something. I saw the doctor again today. That weakness of mine was only temporary. I'm fit. They've accepted me for the Aviation Corps, and I'm off to camp next month.

MARY (*between joy and anxiety*): Jack!

JACK: How can I leave you, knowing this about you?

MARY: How can you leave Laura Brown, you mean! Here's your memorandum, with notes of all this money spent on her.

JACK: Laura Brown? L. B. Good God!

SQUIFF: Prehoof! It is enough. Now comes the supreme moment, the triumph of Slyman Squiff, the master detective, the man who arrested Edward Kelly. (*He comes out and presents his cane at them.*) Hands up!

Both of you, hands up!

(*Amazed, they obey.*)

Behold the triumph of the strategist! I was employed by both of you, I have convicted both of you. No more shall whiskey and Laura Brown absorb your superfluous funds! I will annex them, or — by the Great Horn Spoon — I expose the pair of you.

JACK: But, you great thundering ass ——

MARY: Oh, Jack, be careful! Don't defy him!

JACK: Defy your grandmother! You silly baby, here's L. B. that I spent all my money on. (*He unlocks a cabinet and pulls out papers, which he throws on the table.*) Here's L. B. LIB-ERTY BONDS!

MARY (*laughing wildly*): Why, that was my secret, too! (*She rushes to the cupboard and throws her bonds with Jack's.*)

Wilson — that's all!

(*They embrace.*)

SQUIFF: The Bonds of Marriage! And I thought I had Prehoof!

JACK (*over his shoulder*): Here, you're wanted outside. There's been an escape from Sing Sing.

SQUIFF (*eagerly*): Oh, if it were only Edward Kelly!

(*Jack and Mary renew their embraces. Squiff observes them through the periscope. He fires the gun in the air.*)

Break away! (*They take no notice. He fires again.*) Time!

(*They take no notice. Squiff puts a cigar in the cane and begins to smoke. Then he puts up the periscope again at the audience.*)

Hey, Mr. Sampson!

(*He taps him on the shoulder.*)

Nothing can escape for long the eagle eye of Slyman Squiff, the master detective, the man who arrested Edward Kelly!

JACK: Oh, go to blazes!

SQUIFF: But see here, Mr. Sampson, there's all these people here!

(*He points to audience. Mary releases her husband with a little scream of surprise.*)

MARY: Well, they're all very nice people indeed! Suppose we put them on to the good thing? We can get plenty of new bonds for ourselves before the show opens to-morrow!

Come on, Jack! Come on, Mr. Squiff!

(*They gather up the bonds and go about the audience selling them, each actor making a little sale speech from time to time, as may be convenient. This should be impromptu, and fitted to the special needs of each district. When the day's quota is disposed of, the actors return to the stage and bow in the conventional manner, with possibly a speech of thanks.*)

WINDFLOWERS OF ASKLEPIADES.

Translated from the Greek by EDWARD STORER.

[Asklepiades lived and made his epigrams about the end of the fourth century B. C. He was a Samian, a contemporary of Theokritos, and in the *Crown* of Meleager his emblem is the windflower, the wild anemone which first sprang up in the island of Cyprus from the tears shed by Aphrodite over the grave of Adonis. Thus is this poet of love delicately associated with Kypris.]

I.

The Crown of Spring.

Sweet for the thirsty in summer is snow to drink; sweet for sailors after winter's storms to see the crown of spring; but sweeter still when beneath one coverlet two lovers lie, and Kypris is praised by both.

II.

The Rose Garland.

Stay here, my flowers, hanging by this porch, and do not shed too soon those petals I have wetted with my tears, for the eyes of lovers are always ready with tears.

But when the door opens and you see her, drip down your rain over her head, so that at least that golden hair may drink my tears.

III.

The Revel.

Run over to the Agora, Demetrios, and ask Amyntos for three bluefish, two crabs and two dozen prawns, which he will count himself, and come back here with them.

Bring, too, six crowns of roses from Thauborios — and on the way stop and tell Tryphera not to be late.

IV.

Aiskhra, the Perfume-Seller.

Bring us twenty prawns — do you hear? — and five coronals of roses. What! you've no money, you say. This is just robbery. Won't some one torture this Lapith on the wheel for me? It's a pirate we've got, not a slave.

You have done nothing wrong, you say? Nothing? Bring the account; and, Phryne, come here with the reckoning stones. O sly fox!

Wine, five drakhmas; sausage, two — eggs, hares, tunny, sesame, honeycombs. To-morrow we will go into that.

Run, now, to Aiskhra, the perfume-seller, and tell her we know she gave herself five times to Bakkho, for the bed is witness to it.

V.

On the Tomb of an Hetaira.

I hold Arkheanassa, the hetaira of Kolophon, in whose very wrinkles love lived.

O you, her lovers, who plucked the early flowers of her first youth, through what flames you have passed.

VI.

The Dread of the Sea.

Keep eight cubits away from me, stormy sea, and swell and roar with all your might.

If you wash away my mound, what will that profit you? You will find only bones and dust.

VII.

To the Hetaira Philanion.

The wanton Philanion has hurt me, and though my grief is not to be seen, it flows through me to my finger tips.

It is over with me, Loves, I am ruined; I perish. Lightheartedly enough I went to our first meeting, and now I am in Hades.

VIII.

Kleopatra's Ring.

"Drunkness"* am I — a gem worked by a subtle hand. I am graven in amethyst, and the subject and the stone are ill-assorted.

But I am the precious property of Kleopatra, and on the finger of a queen even "drunkness" should be sober.

IX.

The Signs of Love.

Wine is a test of love. Although Nikagoras denied his passion to us, his many cups of wine accused him.

Moreover, he wept and hung his head, and seemed sad, and his coronal was all awry.

*A play on words: *Methe*, drunkenness, and *a-methe*, not drunkenness and *amethyst*. To wear the stone was supposed to keep people sober.

LADY GODIVA.

A Comedy by JOSEPH BERNARD RETHY.

Time: *About 1050.*

Place: *Coventry, England.*

Characters: *Lady Godiva; Lord Leofric of Coventry, Husband of Lady Godiva; Marie Andot, maid to Lady Godiva, and peasants of Coventry.*

Scene: *The dressing room of Lady Godiva. The room is charmingly decorated in the French style of that period, already finer than any other fashion in Europe.*

Lady Godiva: (*Seated before her dressing table.*) I am so beautiful. My hair is softer than silk and darker than the eyes of a tiger. My eyes reflected in the mirror are like two stars glowing alone in the heavens. Has any one possessed a skin so delightful as mine? I am sure that Cleopatra, the Queen of Sheba, or Salome were not lovelier than I am. I am the most beautiful woman in England.

Marie Andot: Lady Godiva, you are the most beautiful woman in Europe. You are the most beautiful woman in the world.

Lady Godiva: How enchanting to hear praise in this uncouth England. I know you are flattering me, Marie, but I love it nevertheless. Besides, I know it is the truth you are saying. But what is the good of being beautiful among such swine? There is no one in Coventry who knows that I am beautiful, or who cares. I could ride through Coventry naked; no one would be thrilled by my glorious body. O, France, why did we ever leave you?

Marie Andot: But you insisted upon marrying that ridiculous Lord Leofric. I knew you could never really love him.

Lady Godiva: My marriage was a foolish girl's whim. But I am not really married. I have never been alone with my husband. You know that, Marie. I am still a girl. I cannot stand his black beard, his gruff manners. If he were to touch me I should scream. And the big bully is afraid of me. His attempts to make love to his wife are most absurd. O, Marie, I am so miserable.

Marie Andot: Do not be so sad, Lady Godiva. There is one who really cares. The mysterious knight has sent you another poem. (*Hands her mistress a parchment folded in two.*)

Lady Godiva: O, how lovely! Give it to me quick, Marie. The one ray of sunshine in this dreary life. Marie, you are a dear. (*Reads aloud the following poem.*)

To Lady Godiva, Most Beautiful of All the Women That Have Ever Lived.

In all my dreams — awake or in slumber —
Faces haunt me — my soul encumber —
They call to me from the vast deep.
They call to me from the vasty deep.
And when the dawn destroys the night
They fill my room with luminous light: —
Darling faces dripping dew,
And all these faces look like you.

Lady Godiva: Isn't this precious? How wonderful. How true. Surely no Englishman could ever pen such fervid lines. I love him, Marie, I love him. If I could only see him. Who can he be? Where can I find him?

Marie Andot: Whoever he is he is certainly a courageous

knight. He must be in hiding somewhere near the castle and has probably bribed one of the servants to slip this under the door. If Lord Leofric knew he would slay all the servants in his rage.

Lady Godiva: Lord Leofric be damned, as we say in the court of France. I will yet find my darling poet knight and I shall love him in this very room. Lord Leofric shall wear the longest pair of horns that ever a husband wore. You shall see, Marie. I am in love. When a French lady loves she denies her lover nothing. He shall see my hair which reaches to my knee. He shall see my wonderful figure. I shall make his dreams come true, his poems a reality.

Marie Andot: Lady Godiva, you are indeed a mistress worth serving. I would die for you. Nowadays these modern women profess to be little interested in love. Why in London they are actually demanding . . . (*a knock is heard on the door. Lady Godiva hastily places the poem in her corsage. Marie opens the door.*)

Marie: (*closing the door*) The delegation of peasants is here. Shall they be shown up?

Lady Godiva: Well — let them come up. I love them because they hate Leofric. The brute wishes to tax them until they can barely subsist. I will listen to what they have to say and plead their cause before his lordship. He is afraid of me. (*Another knock is heard at the door.*)

Marie: Here they are, Lady Godiva. (*Five well built, comfortably dressed peasants enter the room. One, with one of those open candid faces which denotes the sneak, acts as spokesman for the others, who seem stunned by the grandeur of the room. His name is Leigh Blunt.*)

Leigh Blunt: Most gracious lady, you are so kind to us poor starving beggars. Therefore we have come to beg of you to plead our cause before his lordship. Our taxes are already too heavy for such feeble backs as we possess. Daily we toil from early morning till late at night. And always the lord becomes richer while we become poorer. Now on top of this we have been notified that our taxes would be raised again in a fortnight. Lord Leofric — (*He pauses. A heavy step is heard quickly advancing towards the room. It is Lord Leofric. He bursts into the door like a tornado. His face is livid. He can barely talk for anger. The peasants tremble. Blunt almost faints. Lady Godiva and Marie Andot are speechless.*)

Lord Leofric: (*To the peasants*) Out of this room, you damned vermin. How dare you enter the palace without my consent? I shall have you all flogged to-morrow in the square. I shall flog you myself right now. (*He takes a dainty shepherd stick belonging to Lady Godiva and strikes Blunt across the back. Blunt is dazed for a second, then, followed by his fellows, dashes hastily out of the room.*) And you go too! (*pointing to Marie. For a moment she hesitates, but as his stick goes up she follows the others. Lady Godiva draws herself up haughtily and attempts to follow. But her husband stops her.*) You stay right here. I am going to tell you things necessary for you to know. To begin with, you must never meddle with my affairs. I am the Lord of Coventry, not you. That I married you without possessing your love, I know. I suffer daily for that

stupendous error. You know I love you. When it comes to that, you are the master, I am the slave. To you I am ridiculous, a crude squire unable to touch your heart like the cavaliers of France. Well, I don't blame you very much. But one thing I will not stand for, and that is interference with the management of Coventry. I know my people. They hate you. They love me. You are always good to them. I am always bending them to my will. Yet they would die for me, and they would not stir a finger for you. You, the beautiful French lady, are really powerless over the meanest peasant in my county, while I am only powerless before you.

Lady Godiva: You are not telling the truth. It is you who are blinded. You are so heartless that you cannot see. All you think of is taxes, taxes and taxes. You who are so rich are about to levy another tax upon the poor tillers of the soil. They have come to me to aid. They know I would do all in my power to lighten the burden on their backs. They are a simple, pure-minded folk, worshipping God and bowed by misery and want.

Lord Leofric: That is not true. They are a prosperous, shrewd, cheating, evil minded and vicious folk who are only happy when some powerful man rules over them as I do. I am going to raise the taxes because in Coventry they are the lowest in England. They know that very well and would not dare to complain of me. An evil minded race, that's what they are.

Lady Godiva: You are wrong. I say they are a pure minded and honest people. I would trust my life to them. They worship me. I could ride through Coventry naked, and not one would dare to look. I know your people better than you do, Lord Leofric.

Lord Leofric: Ha, ha, ha. Ride naked through Coventry. If you ride through Coventry naked and no one looks I shall not raise the taxes. Ha, ha, ha, here is a rare chance for you, Lady Godiva. Ha, ha, ha.

Lady Godiva: Very well, to-morrow noon I shall ride naked through Coventry.

Lord Leofric: But what will people say? It is impossible. I was only —

Lady Godiva: Are you a man of honor? You just said that if I rode through Coventry naked you would not raise the taxes. A lord should always keep his word.

Lord Leofric: I have never broken my word. Very well, ride through Coventry to-morrow as you say. I shall give orders that no one be on the streets and that the blinds be drawn. Lady Godiva, I wish you well. (*Lady Godiva looks at him intently. Then she walks towards the window. He starts at her, then abruptly walks out of the room. She gazes after him until the Curtain Falls.*)

SCENE II.

The following day. Noon.

(*A road in Coventry. Some trees to the right. A young man very handsomely dressed in blue silk steps out from the little wood. He is a poet. He is also Lord Leofric, who has shaved off his mighty beard and clothed himself in the delicate garments of a gentleman. He has a manuscript in one hand and is intent upon memorizing this poem:*

*In all my dreams — awake or in slumber —
Faces haunt me, my soul encumber.
They fill my room with luminous light: —
They call to me from the vast deep.*

And all these faces look like you.

They fill my room with luminous light: —

Darling faces dripping dew,

And all these faces look like you.)

The Poet: O if I shall have but the strength to say these lines to her. This is the supreme moment of my life. Never until now have I realized how truly the word is the ultimate achievement of man. Hitherto I have always failed her because of my inhibition of speech. Now at last I feel that my soul has wings. Now at last I know my voice will speak and touch her heart. The word is mine. Presently she shall be here and I will speak to her as I have never spoken before. She will be astounded and delighted. She will suddenly see that she is mine, has always been mine, will always be mine. In that breathless moment all her sorrows and mine, all her limitations and mine, will drop from us like sunlight falling from the sky. For the first time in our lives we shall actually be real and splendid. For the first time we shall realize how wonderful is life, how superb we are, how exquisite we can be. There in the distance I can see her. Even thus she is the most beautiful thing in the world. There is light all about her. As she draws nearer my heart beats with an intensity I had not conceived possible. Dear God, give me the strength to play my part as it should be played. (*He steps behind a tree. There is the sound of hoof beats coming nearer. Lady Godiva, nude on a black horse and seated on a silken saddle, comes into view. The instant that she appears the Poet steps in front of her horse and seizes the reins.*)

The Poet: Lady Godiva, you are the most beautiful woman in the world. In all this mighty universe there is not again a beauty so overwhelming as yours.

Lady Godiva: (*In a shocked voice*) How dare you, sir?

The Poet: I dare everything for you. What are law, conventionality, society, rules and morals where you are concerned? To behold the most perfect form ever possessed by human being or angel I would gladly pay the price of my life. Having beheld you, Lady Godiva, I have already lived more greatly than any mortal since recorded time. If I have offended, ride your horse across my prostrate body until my life blood stains the dust. Even so I should die supremely happy.

Lady Godiva: Very well, over you I shall ride, albeit you are a comely young man. But you have offended God when you dared to commit this sacrilege.

The Poet: The greater the crime I have committed for you, the better. But before you slay me, Lady Godiva, permit me to recite these simple lines inspired by the constancy of my devotion for your own dear self. I know how inadequately I express a longing which the greatest poet could not fitly describe.

Lady Godiva: But be quick, I am beginning to feel chilly. (*He attempts to place his blue silk mantle about her.*) Stop, you shall not touch me. Read your lines, young man.

The Poet:

*In all my dreams — awake or in slumber —
Faces haunt me, my soul encumber.
They bend above me as I sleep
They call to me from the vast deep.
And when the dawn destroys the night
They fill my room with luminous light: —
Darling faces dripping dew,
And all these faces look like you.*

Lady Godiva: O, my darling, you have come to me at last. You are the poet of my dreams, the knight of my longings. Come here. Kiss me. (*He puts his arms about her. Their lips meet. The minutes roll. Six minutes pass ere the first kiss is ended.*) Now darling, place your mantle about me. Let us fly. Take me to your castle.

The Poet: That I will do at once. (*He places his cloak about her and mounts the horse, holding her to his breast.*)

Lady Godiva: And where is your castle, my perfect lover?

The Poet: It is yonder. (*He points to Coventry Castle in the*

distance.)

Lady Godiva: Coventry Castle! I came from there. Who are you?

The Poet: I am Lord Leofric.

Lady Godiva: What, my husband?

Lord Leofric: Not yet, but I will be as soon as we reach the castle!

Lady Godiva (*Nestles close to him, sublimely happy*): Gallop speedily, my darling. (*The horse thunders off the stage as the Curtain falls.*)

THE HIPPODROME HORROR. **A Nightmare Drama by LEILA WADDELL.**

Hautboy — Hello, is that you Central? Please give me my friend Yvonne. Morning, Yvonne. This is Hautboy.

Yvonne — Good. What's the news?

Hautboy — Oh, were you at the Hippodrome last night?

Yvonne — Unfortunately, no; were you?

Hautboy — Sure.

Yvonne — My dear, how lucky you were; what did you think of Galli-Curci?

Hautboy — I hardly like to say — it's really a very delicate question.

Yvonne — Whatever do you mean; was she off voice?

Hautboy — No, my dear, off stage —

Yvonne — Do you mean she sang off stage — how very strange!

Hautboy — No, my dear, she was in the woods singing to the Russian children.

Yvonne — Oh, please, please, don't tease me any more. I feel very serious regarding Galli-Curci; she must be wonderful to have made such a sensation.

Hautboy — You certainly have struck it, Yvonne — for she made some sensation on Sunday by her absence. The fact is that everybody went to the Hippodrome to hear the Italian prima donna. The question of French and Italian orphans came second. Enthusiasts had paid speculators from \$8 to \$12 per seat — *pour moi* I invested my last \$2. The Hip was crowded almost to suffocation; you never saw such standing room. At 8:15 the curtain rose, displaying the Chicago Opera Orchestra; out walked Campanini with a careless grace all his own, and conducted the threadbare Semiramide. However, we all agreed not to interrupt him in his simple pleasures — we were ready to tolerate any little indiscretion until the appearance of the famous prima donna. Exit Campanini — enter a person whom we all grew to dislike intensely, for he had appallingly disagreeable things to say. Ladies and gentlemen, Mme. Rosa Raisa will be unable to appear. Signor Blankia will take her place. Also Genevieve Vix will not appear, and Mme. Galli-Curci is in bed with a cold and will not appear. Oh, *ma foi!* Some bomb! some shrapnel! As the Katzenjammer kids once remarked — to the Russian children — “There comes a time in a man's life when the end is the limit” — and believe me this proved so, for the audience was simply stunned and showed its disapproval by booing and hissing for fifteen minutes —

Yvonne — My dear, how thrilling and how horrible — but one moment, didn't the management have a printed announce-

ment of Galli-Curci's indisposition at the box office?

Hautboy — No, Yvonne, they carefully omitted to do so.

Yvonne — But that doesn't strike me as a straight deal!

Hautboy — Yes, many people felt the same about it.

Yvonne — And how did they react?

Hautboy — By leaving the building immediately and visiting the box office to demand their money back.

Yvonne — But, my dear, it was a charity performance.

Hautboy — Yes, but you can't fool the populace even under a charity heading.

Yvonne — Well, I'm rather surprised people expected their money back —

Hautboy — Great Scot, they were perfectly justified. Galli-Curci and the orphans were mixed up together on this auspicious occasion, and the psychologists of the Hippodrome management were or were not far seeing enough to observe this fact — hence accordingly the attitude of the public.

Yvonne — Oh, well, tell me, was the money refunded?

Hautboy — Well, let me explain: Fifteen minutes after the announcement had been made the entrance to the Hip resembled a football scrimmage between the sexes — some sight, my dear! Dear old ladies and gentlemen in full evening dress, musical comedy stars in diamond-studded opera cloaks, vivacious Italian flappers, French, Hungarian and German enthusiasts, all struggling to reach the box office — all determined to get their money refunded. Suddenly the ticket windows were closed with a bang, and tall, ferocious looking men frowned most unromantically, helping to frighten the people away. But this did not happen; so the police were called in to restore order, and if possible to induce the people to go away. By this time the sidewalk was crowded also, and the police hardly knew the best method to adopt with this particular crowd. However, a tall Irish officer opened the conversation thusly: “Now then, folks, let's thin this crowd; we can't have the entrance packed up.” (Chorus, we want our money back.) Officer: “Now, listen ter me, and I'll tell yer you're all intelligent people, and I want yer to go home.” (Roars of laughter.) “Ah, go on, officer, we ain't intelligent, we're just wise, and we want our money back.” “Well now yer must realize I've nothin' to do with that, but I must restore some order.” “Well, we won't move till we get our money.”

Then one of the terrible, ferocious men at the ticket office whispered something to one policeman, who in turn passed the message along, and the good-natured Irishman informed

the people that if they would get into single lines — both inside and outside the entrance — green coupons would be given and these, together with the butt ends of tickets, must be presented next day, when the money would be refunded. Just at this moment two musical comedy stars stepped out of their limousine, having arrived just in time to hear Galli-Curci — her place on the program being before the intermission. They really couldn't understand the crowds, and asked the Irish officer to make room for them to enter. "Now, ladies, don't try anything on me. I've enough bothers at this moment." "But don't you understand, we've come to hear Galli-Curci." "God be praised, ladies, she's safely home in bed — and it's envying her I am — and without wishing her any harm I wish she had remained in Italy, or else I'd never left the County Limerick, for, God knows, it's the most unpleasant job I've handled

for some time. Now, good people, will yer get into line? That's yer one chance."

At this moment an old Irishwoman, who lived in a room opposite the Hippodrome and had observed the swarming masses of humanity, tried to push her way into the corridor.

"Will yer be after tellin' me if it's true the Kaiser has landed at this theatre in a balloon?" she asked. God almighty, said the officer to himself, was a man ever so tried? "Now, quit yer foolishness," he answered; "this is no time to joke." "Will yer answer me," she interrupted, "if all these people are waiting to see the Kaiser, why shouldn't I see him?" "Oh, God knows why yer shouldn't, excepting he isn't here yet — and, God forgive me, I've nearly reached the stage of distraction where if he did I'd ask him to take me along with him and get me out of this mess. I repeat again, May God forgive me!"

THE RIALTO AND THE DRAMA.

By JOSEPH BERNARD RETHY.

SCENE: The Rialto. Commonly called the Great White Way. A dark thoroughfare in New York City.

CHARACTERS: The Producer, The Public, The Author, The Actor.

THE PUBLIC: This is certainly the worst theatrical season that I can remember, and the most expensive.

THE PRODUCER: You always say this. There was never a season which you did not call the worst. I remember when I first put on Hamlet in "the spacious days of Elizabeth," you said that the new play was too trivial compared with the old classical tragedies.

THE AUTHOR: I consider this season to be very bad myself. Royalties are extremely slim. My best works are failures, my worst ones succeed; and even when they succeed the returns are too slight. I expected to get a new Rolls-Royce. Now I must be content with a Packard.

THE ACTOR: I do not remember the time when I have been out of work so much as I have been this year. It is impossible to get a job that will last. Only a few of my friends are working steadily. Leo Ditrichstein, as "The King", has a steady job; so has Leo Carrillo in "Lombardi Ltd.", and Lou Tellegen in "Blind Youth", and Emily Stevens in "The Madonna of the Future", and Marjory Rambeau in "The Eyes of Youth", and Grant Mitchell in "The Tailor-Made Man," and, of course, Fred Stone in "Jack O'Lantern" and Barney Bernard and Alexander Carr in "Business Before Pleasure." I must not forget to mention Al. Jolson at the Winter Garden. He'll be filling the house for the rest of the season. And there are a few others.

THE PUBLIC: I ought to support Arnold Daly. He is a delightful actor. I liked him as Napoleon, and I like him as "The Master." But somehow or other he irritates me. He makes me feel what I am, mean and ignoble. Elsewhere I, mediocre I, am flattered. Daly scorns me. As yet I resent it; eventually I will be eating from his hand. As I treat Daly to-day, so I used to treat Richard Mansfield.

THE AUTHOR: As a matter of fact, you actors always presume too much, always imagine you are very important, and

that, without you, the wheels of the world would not spin. Nothing could be more absurd than that. One can always find an actor. It is always difficult to find a good play. If you cannot find an actor, you can train a man to become one. You can never train a man to become a dramatist. The brilliant plays in this issue of *The International* are the works of men who never took "drama courses." I was the only man at Harvard who did not take the courses of Professor Baker. Yet, I am the most capable dramatist in America. I have written a masterpiece. You have it in your desk, Mr. Producer! Why don't you produce it?

THE PRODUCER: For the simple reason that Mr. Public would not go to see it. He would not pay \$2.50 for a seat and war tax to see a morbid, unhealthy, drama.

THE PUBLIC: But suppose it is not morbid, and suppose it is not unhealthy? How do you know I would not like it?

THE PRODUCER: Because I have experimented too often with you. People say that I have underestimated your intelligence. After thirty-five years in the business I can truthfully say that I believe I *overestimated* your intelligence. The fact of the matter is this: You are a person of exceptionally bad taste. You dislike tragedy, comedy, and music, but you do like some sort of performance which does not contain any of these.

THE ACTOR: That is quite true. Whenever I try to play naturally, as I love to, I feel that I am only carrying a portion of the audience along with me. The others expect me to talk very loudly and to bellow furiously all the time.

THE PUBLIC: Well, I think you really do me an injustice. I am like a child who has gone to a school where only one language is taught. Is it my fault that when I graduate from that school I am incapable of understanding other languages? Is it my fault that I am not stirred by alien beauty, touched by truth, moved by genuine grief and warmed by exquisite comedy?

POLICEMAN (*Arriving on the scene*): You will have to keep moving. No one is allowed to stand on the corners. Clear out of here, you bums!

(*The four characters slink off in the darkness.*)

SAPPHO ON THE CLIFF.
A Tragic Monologue by FAITH BALDWIN.

Return not yet, thou golden-sandalled Dawn,
For, with Thy rosy coming, I depart!
Sweet, tarry yet awhile beyond the vast,
Far portal of the sky; and fear to flood
All Lesbos with Thy beauty lest too soon
Thou dawn upon the last, strong-winged flight
Of one wild, wayward bird! In this still hour
Wherein I bid farewell to Love and Pain,
Wherein I bid farewell to Joy and Love,
My vision clears! Zeus, in Thy pity stoop
To steel Thy daughter's heart! Thou, Atropos,
I rob Thee of Thy shears and with the hand
Which hath caressed to soaring ecstasy
Beloved heart strings; with the hand which set
High, singing words upon the singing wood
To lure it from the music of the trees,
I cut the slender, scarlet thread of that
Which was my life; nay, Atropos, not Thine
The final right to hush the longing lips
Which Love hath bruised immortally to song!
I, Sappho, singer of Aegean Seas
Took from the hands of Zeus, Omnipotent,
His blessing and His curse — Mortality!
Bold was my taking; and I greatly dared
To make of Life a crimson, joyous thing
To weave into the stainless warp and woof
The gold of song, the purple of desire
Which bit like acid to the fabric's core.
Life, as I made it, would destroy me now.
I give it back, Oh Zeus, Thy bitter gift!
For I am wearied of the harried flesh,
Flesh all too frail, and all too deeply seared
By that flame-spirit warring in its walls!
Farewell, my Lesbos! green and wave-kissed gem
Set in a turquoise sea. I owe Thee much;
Thou gavest me Beauty which hath fed my soul,
Thou gavest me Love to wrack and tear my heart.
I have repaid Thy bounty with the songs
Which men shall read long after I am gone
And, reading, love Thee for Thy Beauty's sake
And for her sake who was the Lesbian.
As, olive-crowned, ah, shining Mitylene,
Shake not my stern resolve; but bloom more fair
For that Thy Sappho lingering, is loath
To leave Thy sunlit hills and garden ways.
Thou Lesbian cliff starred with the vivid gold
Of far-flung jonquil wealth; and piercing sweet
With rosemary and myrtle, I have walked
Thy winding paths beneath soft, twilight skies
And hand and hand with Love I, mute, have watched
The opal sheen of Hesperus; and stayed
To hearken to the music of the stars.
And in far dawns I touched the lyre's loud strings

To waken Love with Song, and, singing, saw
The white-sailed boats drift down the rose-red glow
Dawn's ardent kiss left in the crystal heart
Of blue translucent waves! Oh! Lesbian woods!
No more I walk your scented paths to see
The laughing dryad leaping from the oak.
No more I strain to catch the golden sound
Of Pan's far pipes of singing wind and tree
And silver running stream. No more I hear
The raptured choral of Song's feathered priests!
Farewell, Aeolian Isle! And farewell those
I loved within Thy shelter and embrace:
Loved, held and — lost! Not theirs the ultimate,
The final fault, not theirs, alas, but mine.
Yet stay! Not wholly mine; for lo! the Gods
Breathed with a subtle breath upon my soul.
I was not wholly Lover; for the Will
To sing of Love half robbed Love of its joy.
So some small wide-eyed child will pluck a rose
And scatter one by one the delicate,
The bruised petals to his careless feet.
I was not wholly Poet; for the Will
To Love did blind my spirit's god-clear eyes
With kisses and with tears and mist o'dreams,
Till I but vaguely saw beyond the flesh.
Farewell! The pale cheek of the waking sky
Caressed by Dawn's pink fingers, flushes red.
I go to lay my tortured, fevered heart
Upon the last heart that shall throb against
Its pulsing passion and its vast despair!
Thy arms are waiting, Sea! enfold, embrace
The weary frame, and cradle me to sleep.
Thy breast is cool and pure of all desire
Thy kiss is Peace and Thy possession — Death!
Ah, bury deep my singing and my love!
Well may it be that in some future age,
A poet lying on some far white shore
Shall hearken to Thy messengers, the waves
And catch a distant mournful melody —
"I loved thee, Atthis, in a by-gone day,"
And mayhap he who hears will understand
How Sappho, faithless, could not bear to live
Thus lacking Faith! Farewell, oh Cyprian!
Thou white-armed Aphrodite, Fare-Thee-well!
Grant, I implore Thee, this my last request,
Fulfillment of my love for gracious Death,
As Thou hast granted Love of Love and Life
Zeus, have Thou Mercy! And, Thou Lover Sea
Rise up to take me, here on Leukatas,
Here on the white and wave-engirdled cliff
With that bright wine of my impassioned days,
The dregs of which are failure. Thus I pour
My last libation to the waiting Gods!