

## The AMERICAN SPECTATOR A LITERARY NEWSPAPER

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Published by THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR, INC.  
CATHERINE McNELLS, President  
55 Fifth Avenue, New York City

The American Spectator is published on the twenty-fifth of each month and in the United States is mailed to subscribers free of charge. It is also mailed to subscribers in all the first class trans-Atlantic steamships, and in on file in all libraries in Europe and elsewhere. Unsolicited manuscripts, save those accompanied by fully stamped self-addressed envelope, will not be returned. All such manuscripts must be addressed to the Editors, not to individual contributors. The contents of this publication are protected by copyright and cannot be reprinted in whole or in condensed form without special permission. The price of single copies is 10 cents; annual subscription \$1.25; Canadian subscription \$1.75. Editorial and publishing offices, 55 Fifth Avenue, New York City. Entered as second class matter October 28, 1922, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March, 1879.

### EDITORIAL

THE class struggle à la Hollywood opens up a chapter in the history of proletarian literature which has not received the attention it deserves. It is now the fashion for Marxian literati to procure for themselves over-paid jobs as Hollywood hacks, and then to fulminate against the mere bourgeoisie, who are too deeply absorbed in the daily routine of making a living to write impassioned diatribes on behalf of Justice. At intervals these martyrs return to New York, where they induce innocent groups of idealists to put on the plays of social protest which they have elaborated during their leisure moments in Beverley Hills. When these productions are treated to the criticism which they deserve, the aggrieved authors appeal to all friends of the working classes to witness how scurvily they have been handled by the brutal capitalists of Eastern criticism.

Most of these writers never at any time showed more than a possibly faint trace of third-rate talent. After a few months of writing the boy-gets-the-girl stories for Hollywood, the last, final spark flickers and dies. All that remains is a vast and childish indignation which is mistaken for creative ability. Very often, one suspects, despite protestations of proletarian fervor, an eye is still cocked in the direction of the movie moguls, whom experience has shown to be more susceptible to pretentious sentimentality than Eastern critics and audiences. When the bait has been duly swallowed and paid for, the authors again trek West, and fill the *New Masses* and other such publications with their lamentations. It is a pleasant luxury to indulge one's proletarian emotions for \$1500 or \$2000 a week. Then one's heart really bleeds for the Scottsboro boys and the victims of bourgeois greed.

On reflection, however, one can see that there is a subtle alliance between movie literature and proletarian literature. Both are artistically false and intellectually disingenuous. Both portray a non-existent world, in which there are no shades, and where elementary half-truths are presented with the broadest strokes, in the certainty of thus reaching the meanest intelligence. What, essentially, is the difference between a movie or a novel devoted to Communist propaganda and a movie or novel devoted to the theory that the American boy not only gets the girl, but the cash as well? Hollywood glorifies the conception of life held by millions of American workers. Moscow glorifies the conception of life held by millions of Russian workers. Neither can afford to ignore the current *nores* or, above all, to defy them. A writer who caters to the current superstitions of either of these audiences must conform to the indignities of his job.

Our American Hollywood Marxists like to have it both ways. For cash money they maintain the constant appeal to cheap greed and snobbery; for idealism they compose literature intended to console the less fortunate of their class-conscious comrades. In either case, they would be more honestly employed laying bricks.

### PROLETARIAN LOGIC

WHEN a Nazi with hands dripping with the blood of workers begins to sentimentalize over Wagner, or an ex-Czarist officer who has hung and flogged peasants tells us that Dostoevsky shakes him to the very soul, one is perhaps justified in suspecting both Wagner and Dostoevsky.—Michael Gold in the *New Masses*.

So Wagner was a Nazi and Dostoevsky a Czarist.

"It is easy to understand the Gilbert and Sullivan cult. Having once sung the part of Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B., in their 'Pinafore,' and having hundreds of their verses in my mind, I can testify to the hypnotic spell these two magicians cast upon one. But let me protest, in as unamiable a spirit as is possible, against the Gilbert and Sullivan cultists. They are bourgeois culture-hounds who want to avoid all reality and strength in art."—Michael Gold in the *New Masses*.

So Michael Gold is a bourgeois culture-hound.

"The audience that adores them would resent the same wit if it were directed on a Communist path. This is all an unconscious process, perhaps, but the true class culture grows by such unconscious accretions. When we develop a Communist Gilbert and Sullivan, these people will hate it."—Michael Gold in the *New Masses*.

So the popularity of Bernard Shaw, that veteran Marxist, is due to his unceasing anti-Socialist propaganda on behalf of bourgeois ideals.

PROLETARIANS OF THE WORLD UNITE!  
YOU HAVE NOTHING BUT YOUR BRAINS TO LOSE!

### LAMENT FOR FALSTAFF

by BRANCH CABELL

WHEN you departed this life, Sir John—at your country place, in Norfolk in the November of 1459—none doubts that you died, as became a pre-eminently religious English gentleman, in the hope of a glorious resurrection. How very mercifully was hid from you the too speedy fulfillment of your aspirations! For you had looked to be revived by Dan Gabriel, his dreadful and holy trumpet: in no wild fever dream could it by any chance have occurred to you that a lewd heathen goddess, the Muse of Comedy, would prove your awakener—and to an apotheosis how incredible, how sordid, how cruel, how delightful!

If I become exclamatory, Sir, it is because no considerate person can regard the unfairness of your doom without giving a loose to some natural emotion. For eighty and more years you had lived with piety and intelligence and honor, with a clear conscience and your due of worldly success. You had been an admired soldier during at least thirty-five of these years. Throughout some two or three campaigns, indeed, you had commanded all the English expeditionary forces in the French wars, winning as generalissimo the great battle of the Herrings, in which you fought against the combined armies of Scotland and France; you had been governor of Maine and Anjou; you were a knight of the Garter; and toward the end of your life you had thrived notably as a retired capitalist, as an extensive landholder, as an open-handed philanthropist, and as a judicious patron of learning.

You had been yelped at, of course, by the envious, like any other prospering person; and a charge of military blunders you were once forced to repel—with entire success. The only failings more or less plausibly imputed to you appear to have been a certain rigor in your business dealings, as an unlenient creditor, and something of fanaticism in the practise of your religion. You inclined, in brief, to be a bit of a Puritan a good while before puritanism had been labelled. Such, then, was the honored and austere gentleman who died in the November of 1459; and whom that bad baggage, Thalia, saw fit to revive prematurely about a hundred and forty years later.

It skills not, Sir John, to repeat through what causes you were thrust up into a pillory originally meant for your colleague in arms, Lord Cobham. The point is that at this time, about 1599, a poet gave you new life upon earth, at a price which to a man of your known business principles, and of your painstaking respectability, might well have appeared exorbitant.

Since with your other virtues you combined a gentleman's share of scholarship (as befitted a co-founder of St. Mary Magdalen College) you will recall, no doubt, that of the great Greek captain Achilles it is recorded how, in Ades' dim realm, he declared to his former comrade, to wily Odysseus, that it was better to live in earth's sunlight as a slave than to be king over the shadowy nations of the dead. But I question if even this feebly whining Achilles (upon whose heroic nature death seems to have acted rather deleteriously) would have been content to live again as the Sir John Falstaff whom the last three centuries have known and—it is the bitter truth, Sir—have laughed at.

For the poet who revived you, Sir John, has left you not one shielding rag of gentility. He has set you a-stagger among us, an obscene gross belching tun-belly, out at the elbows, reeking of sack, gray with iniquity. Of the skilled and triumphant soldier this poet has made a faintheart; of the Puritan, a wench; of the magnate, a wastrel; and of the staid business man, a Dionysiac choregus of all riot, immortality's darling. He has made of you, in brief, a calumny so engaging to human fancy that by no chance will mankind ever give up this counterfeit Falstaff in order to accord you, Sir, the respect and the praise which, living, you earned amply.

Your case is outrageous; no man was ever libelled with more striking injustice; but your case is hopeless.

It is at all times the privilege of the artist to recreate history; provided only he has genius, he can elude punishment and compel belief; but I know of no instance in which this birthright has been abused more wantonly than when Shakespeare gave to the future his caricature of Sir John Falstaff. For Thackeray, or for Dumas, or for Maurice Hewlett—to cite but three pr- varicators among thousands—when they libelled severally the Old Chevalier, Catherine de Medici, or Mary Stuart, there was at least the excuse that the story they had in hand moved on the hinges of calumny. The events of their victims' lives and the nature of their victims' characters have been somewhat misrepresented, for utilitarian ends, for the plot's sake; and at worst, the sin is an affair of recoloring and of shifted emphases.

But you, Sir John, have been endowed with all the vices you shunned; stripped of the many virtues which you practised faithfully throughout eighty and some years; and thrust into miry actions with which you had no more to do than had Aretino or King Arthur. As a member of the Protestant Episcopal Church, I cannot doubt that the soul of William Shakespeare is eternally damned for his parody of a devout Christian gentleman; and I doubt not, either, that upon holidays and the major saints' days you are permitted to peep in at his torments.

It is your full due.

Yet, as a writer, I am conscious of some little sneaking complacency. Heaven made the flesh and blood Falstaff of the very best human material, turning out an exceptionally fine specimen of divine craftsmanship. By-and-by (through what exact causes we shall not ever know) a mere writer, the approved captain of my clan, made us another Falstaff after his own notions, a lewd and thorough-going and high-spirited libel, a gay trucidation of truth. And promptly the romance drove the reality out of the field of human beliefs.

I educe a quaint moral which—to your somewhat puritanic ears, Sir John—it seems wiser not to express explicitly.

I educe also, Sir John, that your virtues have gone unrewarded, and that for once the memory of the just is not blessed.

And I educe, in taking leave of you, that the innate depravity of man's nature is well attested by the fact that before your undeserved obloquy we stand charmed, and applaud the outrage delightedly. For Heaven made you good and great and successful; but art has made you amusing.

### AS ONE CRITIC TO ANOTHER

by GEORGE JEAN NATHAN

I

IT is the mark of the very young critic to regard praise as a symptom of weakness.

II

The tolerance that often comes to a critic in his later years is simply the result of a beated consciousness of the complete and utter unimportance of nine-tenths of the persons and performances i.e. is brought to criticize. Its synonym is indifference.

III

The quality of a critic is best to be appraised by the quality of his enemies. To analyze his worth it is only necessary to analyze the worth of those who detest him.

IV

To demand a consistent and invariable dignity of criticism is ridiculous. There is a place for dignity and a place for low roughhouse. What is more absurd than a dignified and austere approach to rubbish?

V

The cocksure critic may sometimes be an ass, but at least he is always more readable than the perhaps sounder critic given to hesitations, doubts, and qualifications. It may be too bad, but it is, alas, true.

VI

A smooth, vigorous and stimulating style may contrive to give a second-rate critic the convincing aspect of a fir t-rater.

VII

Critics are fond of defending themselves against the allegation that their verdicts are sometimes colored by their immediate mood, state of health, etc. They assert that their judgments are not affected by such things and that their minds remain clear, calm and equitable even when their wives or best girls have just been run over by street-cars, their children been bitten by cimamom bears at the zoo, their banks have closed, and they themselves are the victims of dreadful bellyaches. But they lie, and they know it. There doubtless never lived a critic whose opinions were not at one time or another influenced by the way he felt at the moment he was passing judgment.

VIII

It is a favorite professional belief that the more broadly informed and educated the critic, the better a critic he will be. This is largely bosh. It avails the critic of literature, drama, painting or music nothing at all to be a ranking scholar in astronomy, geology, calculus, Egyptology, or any one or all of a score of such extrinsic subjects. If he knows thoroughly his own trade, that is enough—and he will be a good enough critic to suit anyone. There is no more reason to demand that he be richly equipped in a lot of other directions than there is to demand that a good pianist be a Bachelor of Science, or a master plumber a Phi Beta Kappa.

IX

We frequently hear it said that a critic should never indulge in personalities; that such indulgence is beneath the high art of criticism and woefully cheapens it. Here, also, we engage a pretty nosegay of nonsense. The practitioner of an art is often as properly the subject of criticism and comment as the art he practises. To keep personalities out of criticism of musical performances or dramatic performances, for example, is to insist that the critic not leave his study and confine his remarks to the music script or the printed play. Criticism of painting may be rid of personalities and so, to a lesser extent, may criticism of certain forms of literature. But, in general, criticism that sedulously avoids personalities is like a novel whose characters are sketched merely in the flat.

X

The word *katharsis* has been responsible for more lovely bunk in criticism than any five hundred or thousand other words all rolled together.

### THE LINE-UP

by SHERWOOD ANDERSON

THIS curious performance takes place twice a week. It is good theatre. We went into a big hall and there were already some two thousand men assembled. I saw no women, and there were no women prisoners in the New York police line-up that morning. Perhaps the women had been quite innocent during the half week, and perhaps they do not do it to women.

The walls of the long hall were painted a warm gray, and we sat in a mass at the back, in a dim light. The policemen were in civilian clothes. The Police Commissioner, once a General, wears the red button of France. He made me think of Frank Crownshield. There was the same masculine gentleness. The New York Commissioner of Police has style.

The police, in their civilian clothes, looked like any crowd of rather well-set-up citizens. They were surprisingly young and good-looking. I wonder if all this stuff about the brutality of the police is also romance. I have always been afraid of the police. There may be a criminal sleeping in every man.

So we were assembled at the back of the hall, a solid mass of humanity. The Commissioner came in with two or three guests and they sat apart. I heard him introduce one of the men to another as "Governor." "I'll bet he's the Governor of New Hampshire," I thought. I don't know why I thought that. There was a man who sat alone, in a high pulpit-like place. He was silent. A reading-lamp shone down on the white pages of a book and he wrote in the book.

At the end of the room there was a sheer wall, also painted a warm gray, such a wall as would be good to hang paintings against, and a narrow bridge led across it. The prisoners walked across the bridge. A man stood silently there. He made a signal, and one of the prisoners stopped. He was under a strong light, the only strong light in the room.

Two thousand police, looking intently at you, try to fix your face in their memory. The light was so arranged that the face of the prisoner seemed to jump out at you. At his back there was a white board with figures on it. It marked the prisoner's exact height. It was just such a board as they put up along the banks of rivers to mark the stages of the river in flood.

Intense silence in the room. A voice spoke. This was the best theatre of all. The voice seemed to come out of the sky, as though God spoke to the prisoner. There were no men walking across the bridge for minor offenses. All were felons.

Voice: "John Harley . . . arrested at Fourteenth and Broadway, by Officers Grady and Hines . . . taken in the act of attempting to pick a woman's pocket. What about it, John?"

Each prisoner took it in his own way. There were Negro men and white men, pocket-pickers, stealers of automobiles, killers, thugs, highjackers, racketeers. There is this odd thing you find out about the world of crime. The man who steals an automobile, gets caught and sent to prison, comes out and steals another automobile. He doesn't begin to pick pockets or hold men up. He steals automobiles. The man who has killed a woman kills another, the dip keeps on dipping, the racketeer racketeering. It's discouraging. There are certain of my own traits I would like to change. As you watch the line-up you are inclined to throw up your hands.

"What about it, John?" The man in the darkness, some place up above, asked his questions in a clear voice. The voice was not unkindly. It did not attempt to bully. It was almost friendly.

"What about it, John?" John's eyes move nervously about. From where he is standing, his face flooded by the strong light, he can see none of us. It is as though he stood in some space between worlds. He decides to plead. "I have a wife and children. I needed money, had to have it."

"Have you ever been arrested before, John?"

John wets his lips with his tongue. After all, this is cruel. There is a queer sort of impersonal cruelty.

"Yes. I was arrested twice before." He hesitates. "Well, maybe three times." There is a period of silence and then the voice reads off John's record . . . arrested eleven times . . . eight convictions . . . served time in Sing Sing, in the Ohio State Penitentiary. John was a veteran. He is man of fifty. A silent man, down below, makes a signal and John walks away.

Into darkness, no doubt to another long period of darkness in some prison. He will be an old man when he comes out again.

Others come, blacks and whites, defiant ones, some who attempt to be slick, some who squirm, some who arouse pity in you, others who arouse fear. There were two young men the likes of whom I had never seen before. There was something in them altogether depraved and fearless. In your heart you knew that if you wanted someone killed these two would do it at a reasonable price. One of them, the slicker, more glib one, did the talking for them both. They let him talk.

"We were just going along the street."

"Where did you get the gun?"

"I saw it lying in the gutter. I picked it up."

"It was still smoking, wasn't it, Ed?"

"Yes. It was in the gutter. We were just walking past. I picked it up." That pair also off into the darkness.

They kept coming and going. It was as though some terrible realistic painter was hanging pictures on the warm gray wall, under the light. "Here you are. This is a sample of what you can be, you humans! Take a good look!"

You get all sorts of notions in your head; remember books you have read about crime and criminals. You come out of the place, walk along the street. There is a sudden realization of something, of crime always going on, there, behind the walls of that building, in the next street, in the bright sunlight, in the darkness at night.

As I was coming out of the building I spoke to one of the sub-commissioners of police. He was in civilian clothes, a shrewd but kindly-looking man. All of the police, assembled for the line-up that morning, had got, as I had, a jump of the heart at the sight of the two young killers. Their appearance under the light, under the voice, had been the high spot of the morning police drama. "There should be a lethal chamber, shouldn't there?" I said to the sub-commissioner of police and he looked at me. I thought with wise eyes. "Yes. But who would say who was to go into it?" he said. I thought his eyes were a bit too shrewd as he looked at me. "Sure. Sure," I said, hurrying away.

The Pulitzer Prize

## BIBLE BOLONEY

by LEWIS HERMAN

EVERY so often church periodicals and Sunday-school pamphleteers emblazon their front pages with streamer headlines, such as: *THE BIBLE STILL LEADS!* Newspaper book pages which have a fairly representative group of religious readers run a separate box in their columns for that same marvelous bit of information. And each article enunciates the beautiful sentiment that "everywhere in this world a Bible is being sold every second of every day of the year." From all of which we are expected to believe that there is still an enormous demand for the Word of God.

What does it matter that figures show that the annual church membership is rapidly falling off? What does it matter if the alarming signs of religious disintegration rumble ominously, so long as there is consolation in the fact that the Bible is the world's best seller?

The *Literary Digest* of April 30th, 1933, published some statistics furnished by the American Bible Society. In 1929, in the United States, 14,000,000 copies of the Scriptures were distributed. In the entire world, it said further, the total was 35,500,000 copies. Yet, on the next page of the same issue of the magazine, there was an article entitled "Should The Sunday-Schools Go?"

Commenting on this article in the *Digest*, the *Christian Century* asked: "Who is buying the Bibles? Why are they buying them? What do they do with them after they are bought? Does the buying of a Bible indicate a vital interest in its contents?" The article might also have asked: "How many of the Bibles were sold at cost price? How many were sold below cost? How many were given away free of charge?" Of course, such questions are not raised in the monthly reports of the American Bible Society. Instead, there is listed only the lump sum received from the sale of its Bibles. The Society states that it "issued" about 37 million copies of the Scriptures in English since 1875. When it includes the Bible among the best-sellers, it implies that 37 million copies of the Scriptures were sold. Yet it almost invariably refers to its activities as "distributing," "issuing," or "bringing the word of God."

The Gideon Society in America is not naïve enough to insist that its Bibles are sold. It frankly states its purpose in its charter, when it was first known as the Christian Commercial Travellers' Association. That was to place a copy of the Bible in every hotel room in America. Its reports of 1928 show that it had distributed, free of charge, more than one million copies of the Good Book. And it is still distributing. An English society, organized for the same purpose twenty-five years before its American cousin, must have distributed almost twice as many.

In 1896 American Bible Society collectors, as it quaintly labels its drummers, had distributed 400,000 volumes of the Scriptures in China, "at less than the cost of manufacture." How much less the report neglected to mention. In twenty-two years, they had distributed 16,562,875 copies in China, in fourteen dialects, some of which were translated by a converted Jew, and that included among others the Wenli, Swabi, Fuchow and Sam Kiong dialects. If the report of the English Bible Society be true, the British collectors cited a price of sixty-two cents per Bible from the heathen Chinese. How many of the sixteen million American Bibles were actually paid for by the converts themselves? Would a Chinese coolie, who averages two cents a day for his labor in the rice swamps, be willing to part with twenty-five days' pay for a copy of the Holy Scriptures? Rumor has it that he uses the paper of the Bible leaves to make his ceremonial firecrackers. Would he be willing to forego a year's supply of rice so that he could read the divine words, many of which had been plagiarized from his own prophets? Although the Britishers claim to have received sixty-two cents for their Bibles, the Americans are strangely silent on that subject. Instead, they often advise their collectors, in rule number 3 in their "Rules and Regulations of Distribution" that "... as a rule, even among the heathen, the Scriptures should be sold at some price, although that may be less than the cost. . . ."

There is nothing in this rule that compels the collector to receive payment for his wares. The "as a rule" gives him enough leeway to get around payment, as does the word "should." The phrase, "even among the heathen," indicates what the attitude of the collectors should be in America. In the American Bible Agents' Guide the collectors are advised:

"... these Bibles should be introduced to every house, as many being sold as possible, and given away as necessary. . . ."  
"... a good supply of Bibles and Testaments for gratis distribution ought always to be on hand. . . ."

In 1931, the American Bible Society reported that it had spent \$334,342 while it had collected only \$317,456 in sales. Where was the money obtained to cover the enormous deficits incurred in "selling" the Bible? The Society's reports answer this question. Appeals are made to the dying faithful to will their estates to the Bible Society. Churches are given quotas to fill. Individuals are importuned for donations. Old ladies run bazaars. Investments are made in stocks and bonds, and even in mortgages, where money is sometimes sucked out by the customary foreclosure methods.

Suppose there were to be organized a great company of public spirited citizens who had banded together in order to distribute at cost, less than cost or even gratis, the books concerning the life of that redoubtable American hero, Frank Merriwell. Millions of dollars had been collected for this purpose. Thousands of men and women would consecrate their lives to the holy cause . . . at a comfortable salary, of course. Hundreds of translators would be set to work transcribing the golden words of the master into 164 different languages and dialects. Thousands of trained high-pressure salesmen would be sent out to every corner of the globe with prospectuses, specimen plates and binding-samples, and with the instruction that they were to sell their books either at cost, below cost, or even for nothing. In no time "The Legion of Frank Merriwell" would be publishing the statement: "Frank Merriwell Leads the World!" The heathen in Africa and China and Tennessee would rear temples to his benign name and make genuflections to their new God.

And the *Literary Digest* would be able to report:  
"FRANK MERRIWELL SELLS MORE THAN 999,000,000 COPIES!"

Now that Rabbis Stephen S. Wise and Louis I. Newman have preached on whether the "House of Rothschild" movie is an asset or a liability to the Jews, the Editors of *The American Spectator* eagerly await a sermon from Bishop Manning inquiring whether the "She Done Him Wrong" movie is an asset or a liability to the Christians.

## DRUG BOLONEY

by JOSEPH FULLING FISHMAN

For Ten Years Inspector of Prisons for the United States Government

THE narcotic addict is not a criminal. To the half-baked "penologists," "criminologists," and other "experts" who have for years flooded the magazines, the stage, the screen, and the radio with learned and voluble discourses to the contrary, to say nothing of the general public which swallows such pap, this statement is heresy, akin to saying that the sun does not rise, or that fish do not swim; but the fact remains, and I repeat that the narcotic addict is not a criminal.

It is almost unnecessary to recreate the popular picture of this much-maligned butt of official alibis for the prevalence of crime, so thoroughly has it been engraved on the country's consciousness. He is almost invariably portrayed as a sneaking, sniveling, yellow-hearted little weakling, too cowardly to think of committing the colossal crimes he is supposed to commit unless he first nerves himself with a shot of dope. Finally, after perpetrating the most fiendish atrocities, the drug quickly gets him, and shattered and emaciated he finally crumbles into dissolution.

It is an engaging and terrifying picture, almost pleasantly terrifying to adults in the same way as little children are pleasantly terrified by the chills made to run up and down their spines while listening to ghost stories. But like the ghost stories, alas, the picture so drawn is simply not true. Not only is it not a photographic likeness; it is no likeness at all. The real facts are readily available to anyone who wants to obtain them, but like so many facts in other fields they are allowed to remain obscured and unwanted.

The New York County Penitentiary on Welfare Island, that same institution which has been in the press so much of late because of a ridiculous "raid," which was nothing more nor less than a routine search publicized, gets more drug addicts every year than any six or more of the big state prisons in the country combined. More drug addicts go there each year than to the prisons at Sing Sing, Auburn, Dannemora, Joliet, Jefferson City, Missouri, Stillwater, Minnesota, and San Quentin, California, put together. So it was quite easy to make a study of the group of approximately twelve hundred addicts—twelve to thirteen per cent of the entire population annually sentenced to the Welfare Island institution. This study revealed (and the figures are available to anyone who wants them) that not one addict out of this entire twelve hundred had been convicted for other than the most trivial offense. There was not even a third-rate criminal among all of them. The records showed that they had been convicted of vagrancy, failure to support wive, or some trivial form of disorderly conduct, and a search going back for years proved that those among them who had served previous prison terms had been convicted of exactly the same kind of trivial offenses.

Anyone who really knows narcotic addicts realizes why this is and must be so. The average addict of the type who finally finds his way into the jails—and there are thousands of a different type on the outside who never get into a penal institution—is a lazy, shiftless, incompetent, emotionally unstable individual who drifts through life along the line of least resistance, and whose one and only concern with the business of living is to see that he is supplied with narcotics. With few exceptions he hasn't the courage, the stamina, the spirit or the adventure to steal even in a small way, while he is simply incapable of the mental effort, resourcefulness and courage required for really big crimes. It is true that occasionally, very occasionally, he will commit small thefts when, for some reason, it is impossible for him to beg or borrow enough money to keep himself supplied with drugs. These are exceptional cases, but they are the one and the only relationship which exists between narcotic addiction and crime, despite the voluminous publicity to the contrary.

It is again a general public belief, also thoroughly inculcated by assiduous propaganda, that narcotic addiction shortens life and wrecks health. The facts justify no such conclusion. Of the twelve hundred addicts on Welfare Island, it was found that by far the greater majority had been using narcotics steadily for five years or more. Considerably more than fifty per cent had used them for ten years or more; twenty-five to thirty per cent for fifteen years or more; a large number for twenty years or more; and a not inconsiderable percentage for twenty-five, thirty, thirty-five, and even forty years. Yet these men, after being "taken off" the drug and living the routine life of the prison for two or more months—they're usually sent to the institution for one hundred days—go out at the end of their terms in a state of health approximating that of non-addicts who have lived the same kind of dissipated and unrestrained lives on the outside.

The facts concerning the length of time they had used narcotics were based on the records of the institution and the statements of the older guards who had seen these addicts come and go over a long period of years. They were not based on the uncorroborated statements of the addicts themselves, as drug addicts are notorious liars.

Then again, despite the sympathy the sentimental lavish on them, drug addicts of the jail type do not consider themselves "slaves" to a habit, and are not at all desirous of being cured. As a matter of fact, not one out of a hundred ever is permanently cured, and the only advantage in taking them off the drug temporarily, while they are in prison, is that it assists materially in the maintenance of the institution's discipline, as addicts who have not been "taken off," in their constant efforts to smuggle drugs, and in their unhappy, peevish, and irritating temperaments, are the worst nuisance with which a penal institution can possibly be afflicted. Even those who go before a magistrate and ask to be sent to jail so that they can get a "cure"—there are three or four hundred every year in New York City—do not go because they actually want to be cured, but simply because they have been taking increasing doses of the drug and have reached the stage where they are no longer financially able to support the habit. So they have themselves committed, get "taken off," and then go out happy because they are now able to get the same kick out of an eighth or a quarter of a grain as they were previously getting from the five, ten, fifteen, or even twenty, thirty or forty grains a day, which they were taking at the time they asked to be committed. Then the process starts all over again. It is commonplace for prison officials to hear addicts who have taken five or six different kinds of "cures" in various penal institutions discussing which one they liked best; that is, which one was the easiest.

In short, the popular ideas about narcotic addicts are just as correct as the student's definition of a crab as "a red fish which swims backwards," an excellent definition except that a crab isn't red, isn't a fish, and doesn't swim backwards.

## PARTY IN PARIS

by CURTIS H. REIDER

I SAID to Hemingway, "Let's go downtown," and he said "Alright, let's go downtown." So we went downtown.

We stopped in at the drugstore and the soda-slinger put the graham-cracker bowl under the counter.

"What's the big idea?" I said.

"You're punks," he said.

"Who's punks?" I said.

"You're punks," he said.

"I'll have a chocolate soda," Ernie said.

"Give me a hot fudge," I said.

"Oh fudge!" the slinger said.

"Shut up, funny guy," I said.

"You're punks," he said.

"Alright, we're punks," I said.

"So what?" Ernie said.

Then we went out in the street and started walking and met two bats and a fairy.

"Oh hello," the fairy said.

"Greetings, Nancy!" Ernie said.

"Let's get the hell out of here," I said.

"Let's go up to Gertrude Stein's," Hemingway said.

"O.K., Ernie," I said.

So we went up to Stein's place and went in and sat down.

Picasso was there reading the funny papers and Alice P. Toklas was housebreaking the dog.

"Where's Gerty?" Hemingway said.

"She's working," Pablo said.

"She'll be in a minute," Alice said.

"That's good," I said.

Then I turned and saw Gerty. She was coming through the door. Slowly coming through the doorway slowly Gertrude Stein slowly came moving slowly through the doorway slowly coming slowly.

"Hello," she said.

"Hello," Ernie said.

"Hello," I said.

"Sit down down," she said.

I sat down. Ernie sat down. We all sat down.

"James Joyce is coming," she said.

"That's great," I said.

Then Gerty got to walking back and forth. Forthly back pacing Stein backly forth and moving back and forth Stein pacing. Pablo guffawed like hell at the Katzenjammer Kids.

Alice did something to the dog. He was an Airedale.

"And also Comrade Cummings is coming," Gertrude said.

"That's great," I said.

"That's great," Ernie said.

"When's he coming?" I said.

"Soon coming Cummings is," Stein said.

"That's great," I said.

Then we heard someone coming up the stairs.

"That's Jimjam," Alice said.

"Who?" I said.

"Jimjam Joyce," she said.

"That's great," I said.

Just then James came in with Stuart Gilbert, without knocking. He stubbed his toe on the door-sill.

"Hooglerongs of rummeltang," he swore.

"You hurt yourself?" I said.

"Heeronsung the zoolnrunng!" he said.

"Sit down," Gerty said.

"I'll get the arnica," Alice said.

"No, I'll get the arnica," Hemingway said.

"No, I'll get the arnica," Pablo said.

"There isn't any arnica," Gertrude said.

"Heerzoy the zoombrung," Joyce groaned.

"He said he wants a cup of tea," Stuart Gilbert said.

"Tea!" I said.

"Sure," Picasso said.

"Eence meence mynee mo," Joyce said.

"He said he thinks he'll make it coffee instead," Stuart said.

"Coffee," Alice said.

Gertrude went out into the kitchen fast through the fastly moving fastness of her fastness.

And then—

ZUDDENLY—

door (all I's on) openingly moving (into what) into the nonhouse of stein.

AND

oN tHe sIll

standingly staring ((in his left claw (unshutshut) forget-

ments)) swaying reclinly swaying

StAnDs;;;@//??

comrade cum(ce)ming.

Toward Comrade Me (on Uncouch) bearily turning red-

rinned I's.

single word:

"SO!"

"Hi!" I said.

"Tweedleboom the rumdum," Joyce said.

"Hello, I said," Ernie said.

pinkshaded nonface glows

(& — one (1) BuRp!!!

and unlips (winerreddened) openingly slowly (fangs glare)

& says:::

"howeverywun?"

"I'm fine," I said.

"Hoomelclang," Joyce said.

"Swell," Ernie said.

"Well, I got to go now," I said.

"Don't go," Gerty said.

"I got to go," I said.

"Why?" she said.

"Got to see Eugène Jolas," I said.

"Can't," Gilbert said.

"Why not?" I said.

"He and Sweegy Weegy are off on a rozenweit studying the botany of Saturn's rings."

"I see," I said.

I went away.

I went down to François' joint on the Rue de la Paix.

"Je veux un magazine," I said.

"Quel magazine?" François said.

"The Saturday Evening Post," I said.

And then I went home.

"Christ!" I said.

## BATON EXHIBITIONISTS

by DAVID EWEN

Author, "From Bach to Stravinsky," "The Unfinished Symphony," etc.

THERE exists no group of musicians more addicted to vain exhibitionism and self-glorification, at the expense of the art they are supposed to exalt, than conductors of symphony orchestras. If any violinist, pianist or even prima donna attempted to gain the favor of audiences through the means employed quite casually and consistently by the usual batonist, he or she would be razed to death. The music audiences, however, are strangely tolerant where the conductor is concerned, and readily succumb to the pompous self-advertisement, sideshow gymnastics and Barnum showmanship which he employs to impress them.

Only recently I stumbled across a news item which prettily illustrates my point. "Paul Paray, talented and temperamental orchestra director of the Colonne concerts in Paris,"—so runs the United Press dispatch—"switches batons in mid-symphonic stream. In a recent rendition of César Franck's 'Variations Symphoniques,' Monsieur Paray changed sticks with such lightning rapidity as to leave his audience marveling at his apparent sleight-of-hand movements." The audience, we are told further, throngs the concert-hall in order to see this "talented" M. Paray go through his necronomic monkeyshines.

While most conductors do not go to quite such extremes to entertain their audiences, they nevertheless indulge in equally superfluous means to attract publicity and admiration. Many of them go in for an absurd corymbic gesturing which is carefully rehearsed to fascinate the audience but which succeeds, more often than not, simply in confusing the orchestra men. It was the late Artur Nikisch who convincingly proved that an orchestra can play superbly even if its conductor employed no gesture more exaggerated than an occasional upward and downward beat, so slight as to be hardly perceptible beyond the fifth row of the parquet. And in our own day, Mr. Toscanini—with his casual circular movement of the arm, which is almost unchanging in its rhythmic rigidity—is equally convincing.

Most orchestra conductors, however, employ head and arms and body in demonic movement; a savage in a frenzied religious rite seems apathetic in comparison with some of them. Wilhelm Furtwaengler, in a tender passage, swaying his body backwards and then raising his face and arms toward the sky as though in supplication to the Muse; Otto Klemperer twisting his torso into strange contortions in climactic passages; Sir Thomas Beecham going through exotic movements of exaggerated, even lascivious passion from the first bar of music until the last; Leopold Stokowski who, with each concert, gives a fine imitation of an aesthetic dancer—these belong in the theatre and not on the concert stage. I wonder how many of their absurd movements and gestures would be retained if there were no audiences behind their backs. As a matter of fact, I do not wonder, because I've seen some of them during rehearsals and have discovered that, strangely enough, they can urge equally efficient music from their orchestra without benefit of a circus performance on the side.

But absurd gestures are not the only weapons employed by the conductor to evoke awe. There is a conductor in the East (kindness, alone, prevents me from mentioning his name) who uses cosmetics before each concert; and this same conductor is notorious for detesting soloists on his program because, he feels, they rob him of some of his lime-light. There is another conductor—he is especially well-known for his summer concerts—who wears a corset at every performance so that he may cut an elegant figure in front of his men. Perhaps the aptest illustration, however, of the effort which orchestra conductors make to glorify themselves is to be had in an episode that occurred several seasons ago in Philadelphia.

At the last rehearsal of the season, Mr. Stokowski suddenly distributed the music of Johann Strauss' "Blue Danube" waltz to his men, and suggested a careful rehearsing of the work. The men, knowing well that the Strauss waltz was not on the final program of the season, were amazed that their conductor should wish to rehearse it for no apparent reason; nor did Mr. Stokowski's terse explanation, that he was interested in developing certain sections for his own curiosity, satisfy them. A week after this rehearsal, the summer season—under guest-conductors—began in Philadelphia, and the first concert was appropriately inaugurated with a speech delivered by the director of the orchestra. Suddenly he turned toward the boxes and announced: "I see that we are singularly honored in having, as a guest tonight, Mr. Stokowski. I wonder if Mr. Stokowski would honor us, and incidentally open our summer season auspiciously, by performing one number with our orchestra." Mr. Stokowski, in his box, made a gesture of refusing. What? Perform a composition without a fitting rehearsal! But the plea of the director, and the clamor of the audience, would recognize no refusal. And so, shrugging his shoulders in humble submission, Mr. Stokowski descended to the platform and conducted the orchestra in Johann Strauss' "Blue Danube" waltz, which made audience and press marvel at the fact that Mr. Stokowski could give such a thrilling performance of the work without a single rehearsal. (They ascribed it to his personal magnetism, which electrified his men.)

But the loudest grumble arises when symphony conductors exploit the music they perform for mere self-glorification. In their attempt to become distinct personalities of the baton they yield to the growing craze to give "new readings" of three-familiar works in which their personalities obtrude prominently. Very often, these "new readings" succeed in being nothing more than gruesome distortions of the original intent of the composer. Phrases are twisted into unrecognizable shapes; the rhythm entirely renovated; accompaniments given raucous predominance over the main themes. Bruno Walter injects *Windpausen*—extended pauses in the middle of the score to bring out more forcefully a certain passage—whenever the whim strikes him. On the other hand, Otto Klemperer sublimely disregards suspensions and rests. I have heard performances in which Willem Mengelberg took it upon himself to delete entire slices from a Tschai-kovsky symphony; and when Serge Koussevitzky, who knows better, felt that Schubert's "Unfinished Symphony" should be given a modernized version and changed the tempi and the phrasing so radically that the first movement became a sour ghost of itself. Acceleration of fast movements until they can compete for all-time speed-records, and ridiculous exaggeration of forte passages, especially in the wind, tympani and double-bass, are also frequent among conductors eager to thrill audiences with new conceptions of masterpieces. For these conductors have not yet learned that the highest art to which they can attain is to have their orchestra perform the score exactly as it is printed upon paper; and that the performances that electrify discriminating audiences are those on which the conductor has left no obtrusive fingerprints of his own.