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EDITORIAL

TO the superficial observer the University is never so much like a University as at this period of the year. The Redpath and other libraries are crowded. Scarce a student leaves for home without carrying a book or two.

A closer scrutiny, however, reveals other and less pleasing characteristics. The study is seen to be rather frantic than active. Undergraduates are heard boasting how little they have done till this moment, how much they intend to cram.

By thus subjecting the mind to a few weeks forcing in an intellectual hot-house a type of learning is produced that has the fibre of an asparagus shoot— young, tender and green. It is to be served hot upon the examination table, and to tickle the sensitive palate of the examiner.

TORONTO, Dec. 4—(Star Special).—Investigation of the University of Toronto on the ground that it was retaining professors who taught Free Trade and sympathized with Communism, was demanded by T. L. Church, M.P.-elect, in an address at a meeting of Ward 5 Conservatives last night.

'It is time for a show down. It is time to decide if the University is to be British or a university of European fads,' declared Mr. Church."

The learned members of the faculty of the University of Toronto must be shivering in their shoes ever since Mr. Church issued this bold pronouncement. With all the acumen of a private detective the newly-elected Tribune has ferreted out the fact that there are Communists and Free Traders among the professoriate of Toronto University; with all the fire and vigour of a minor prophet he has denounced such corruption, and has indignantly demanded an investigation, presumably with the object of discovering the malefactors and hounding them out of decent society.

every university in the world will soon be adorning the walls of Hart House.

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ON December 10th the *Daily* in its Editorial column made the following statement: "When Mr. Shaughnessy says that Canadian Rugby is played with more fight and spirit of competition than is the English game, we believe that he has struck the fundamental difference between the two games. In other words, the English play more for the sake of the 'game'; we play more for the sake of winning".

Is this, we wonder, an accusation that can fairly be laid upon our Rugby players? Despite the fact that none of them has answered the charge, we do not for a moment admit its validity as a generalization. Sportsmanship is not yet an English monopoly. We hope to see the question openly discussed.

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IT was a great honour to the people of Montreal and the students of McGill University to hear Dr. Harry Ward of New York a little over two weeks ago. We are particularly glad that he found time to speak before a gathering of McGill students at Strathcona Hall, into which place we were drawn by the attraction of his presence. Prof. Ward is not a missionary in the ordinary sense of the word, and his Chinese impressions came to us as a distinct relief from the almost unalloyed piffle which we have heretofore heard from many American and Canadian visitors to China. Harry Ward is one of a small number of Europeans who really sympathise with the new movement for intellectual freedom in China. As Colonel Bovey mentioned in his speech on the motion for a vote of thanks at the Strathcona Hall meeting, it is practically impossible to understand this Chinese movement by any means than personal contact.

To this need Dr. Ward has well ministered; and, after having heard him on the subject of the participation of Chinese students in the great demonstration of last May and June we are happy to go on record as being completely in sympathy with the courageous efforts of our fellow students in China on behalf of national integrity, freedom of the mind, and emancipation from European capitalism.

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WE were suprised the other day to discover in Byron a reference to our new Scarlet Key Society. The passage occurs in Don Juan, canto the seventh, stanza LXXXIV, and reads as follows:

"Medals, rank, ribands, lace, embroidery, scarlet,  
Are things immortal to immortal man,  
As purple to the Babylonian harlot:  
An uniform to boys is like a fan  
To women; there is scarce a crimson varlet  
But deems himself the first in Glory's van."

Those critics who have hitherto objected to this Society on the grounds that it introduces an occult symbolism into the simple duty of hospitality must now realise that such practices "are things immortal to immortal man".

## December

F. R. S.

It is related of Socrates that during the Retreat of the Ten Thousand he would walk for hours at a time over bare ice with no shoes or sandals on his feet, and that he was as near as can be indifferent to the hardships consequent upon severe cold. The story has always seemed to me to be peculiarly significant. It serves annually as my winter text. I recall it when the first icy blasts sweep down from the Laurentians; I bear it in mind on all below-zero days; I dwell upon it during the stormy boisterousness of December and the dreary cold monotony of January. More particularly I think of it when a sudden stab of pain compels me to rub my ears. . . .

Lately, however, I have been growing un-Socratic. It shames me to confess it, but there it is. I dislike cold. It is too—arrogant. It says in effect "Take me, or leave me". Generally I take cold. And the vision of Socrates marching barefoot over ice fails now completely to inspire a vicarious warmth in my members as I hurry past the Ritz corner on a windy afternoon. If anything it adds to my discomfort. He probably swore softly to himself, even as I.

Moreover with a loss of faith in the Socratic example has come a change of philosophic outlook. No longer am I able to convince myself that a climate such as ours forms a suitable environment for the cultivation of the higher arts. What snow-bound countries have ever proved themselves artistic in a truly creative sense? Russia has given birth to a quantity of garrulous pessimism in literature, and to a limited number of musicians, but to little else; the Scandinavian countries have done but little towards the beautifying of the world; the Swiss, though surrounded by and composed of three races each highly developed along its own artistic lines, have remained sturdy and un-aesthetic beneath their ice-capped Alpine summits. Canada then is left as the only other inhabited tract enjoying a long and severe winter. Is it not rather too much to expect that she will experience a fate different in an artistic way to that of other peoples similarly situated as to climatic conditions?

Cold, in fact, is at best a moral stimulant. It arouses a sturdy combativeness, a vigorous animalism amongst those who stand up to and defeat its attacks. It has a by-product, too, in an increased appreciation of domestic comforts. But the emphasis is all on the comfort, not on the spiritual side of home life. The aim is always to supply in the house the amenities that are lacking outside. In the struggle to achieve comfort much of the energy is wasted that should be devoted to an interpretation and appreciation of natural phenomena. So we do little else in these northern latitudes except to produce periodically championship ice-hockey teams, while our artists, if they are not looking across the frontier, are losing themselves in a vain search for the inspiration that exists only in diminutive quantities.

"Life," sang Julian Grenfell, "is colour and warmth and light, And a striving evermore for these". Unless mere longing can be a source of great art, which I doubt, Canadians are doomed annually to five months of shivering artistic stagnation. The dominant colour of winter is white. Nothing artistic can be done with mere white. Scientifically white is composed of all the colours, aesthetically of none. It is the expression of chromatic death. So with the light of winter. It is a dazzling glare or a uniformly monotonous grey.

(Continued on page 24)

## Some Remarks About Canadian Book Week

Dr. Etienne L. Bieler

IN writing this, my first—and many readers will wish it my last—article for the McGill Fortnightly Review I hope I may be allowed to express my very sincere congratulations to those who have braved many difficulties and brought this Review to life. In these days of very complete organization and centralization of all outside student activities, whether physical or intellectual, it is a very hopeful sign that a paper should be started which can express truly independent opinion on matters of concern to the student body, to the university and to the intellectual life of the country as a whole.

A paragraph in the editorial of the second number of the Review which touches on Canadian Book Week and Canadian Literature led me to take the pen. I claim no originality whatsoever for the ideas I am about to express; they are but echoes of two addresses I was privileged to hear at the Canadian Club of Montreal during Book Week, one last year from a well-known professor at McGill, who is by no means the least among Canadian authors, Stephen Leacock, the other this year, from a man who, though no longer at McGill, was for a time a very popular member of the staff, B. K. Sandwell. Both agreed with your editorial that it would be a crime against good literature to urge people to buy Canadian Books to the exclusion of others, but each tried to discover what may be done to encourage Canadian Literature so that it may some day have its place among the literatures of the world.

In order to have a Canadian literature we must first of all have a Canadian intellectual life, and no real intellectual life is possible as long as there is no public recognition of intellectual attainment. To quote the words of Dr. Leacock as nearly as I can remember them after a year, "We can have no Canadian literature worthy of the name as long as public opinion is not willing to recognize the man whose main concern is with things intellectual, the schoolmaster, the University professor, the minister, as the equal of the man whose sole title to fame is that he has amassed a great deal of money."

But must we wait until we have good literature before we encourage literature at all? In all great literatures, beside the men whose works will live for all time, there is an innumerable host of men who write, whose writings may draw the attention of some of their contemporaries, but whose names will never go down to fame. To quote as well as I may, the words of Mr. Sandwell, "If we want good literature we must resign ourselves also to have bad. The great Greek tragedian Euripides entered the competition for tragedy held yearly at Athens many times during his life but only twice did he win the prize. The works of his successful rivals have been lost; perhaps we may be glad of it. They fulfilled their purpose; they provided the background for the work of Euripides." Let us not therefore neglect what literature we have with the excuse that it is not likely to gain a place among the great literary works of the world.

But, above all, if we want to have a literature we must not be too thin-skinned. As long as we expect

the writers to have nothing but words of praise for our Canadian ways and Canadian institutions we can have no literature worthy of the name. To quote Mr. Sandwell again "American literature had to pass through the very same phases. As long as it was nothing but a panegyric of the bravery of the great men of the War of Independence, of the heroism of the first settlers, of the Romance of the West it gained no recognition outside the United States. Now that the American writer has set himself to tackle the peculiar social and intellectual problems of American life, to paint the drabness of Main Street, the sordid utilitarianism of the inhabitants of Zenith, and to seek a solution, he has begun to win for American literature a place among the literatures of the world." It is interesting to set beside this the opinion of an eminent French critic, Firmin Roz, who, in an article in the October 15 number of the "Revue des Deux Mondes", "L'esprit nouveau du roman américain," analyses with great perspicacity the modern tendencies in American novel-writing. The fact that the modern American novel has drawn the attention of a critic in the great French conservative review shows that it cannot be set aside as insignificant. The way is open to the Canadian novel as soon as we allow our novelists to paint things as they see them.

If either of the men whom I have tried to quote happen to see these lines I hope they will excuse any freedom I may have taken in quoting them. Their words made an impression on me. They may have lost some of their colour in the setting down; their expression may bear the tinge of my own views, but I have tried to be faithful to the spirit of them.

If we want Canadian literature let us first of all have regard for the things of the intellect, let us learn to know and appreciate what literature we have and let us above all not blame the writer if he occasionally touches painfully upon our weaknesses.

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### Felicity

NO more exquisite felicity  
There is than this—  
To find an eccentricity  
In a familiar kiss.

Vincent Starr.

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### Prayer

(from the German of Lenau).  
Let thy dark eye linger on me,  
Wielding o'er me all thy might,  
Night so sombre, mild and dreamy,—  
Sweet, unfathomable night!

With the magic of thy darkness  
Lure this world away from me,  
And o'er all my being hover,  
Thou alone, eternally,

F. K.

## BOOKS

## Wild Geese

By Martha Ostenso

Toronto: McClelland and Stewart

WOMEN are continuing to turn out a mass of literature, and the Canadian Authors' Association has lately had the good fortune of adding the name of another to their list—one who has written of Canadian life and has done it with clarity and precision, and with such artistic perception as is not often found in the efforts of a person who has undergone the daily grind of giving to country children the first elements of an education. "Wild Geese" has won \$13,500 for Martha Ostenso. But beyond the financial reward, she has achieved something that is far more important—her work places her among our most promising writers. When we realize that this is her first substantial achievement we can certainly look forward with interest to her future efforts.

There is something fascinating in tracing the growth of the soil. Every year on the wide and sweeping prairies of Canada hundreds of men stand, each by their own acres and watch this mysterious force at work. They see the green rising slowly—they watch their master, the earth, producing and returning that which has been entrusted to him. And very often they stand by, and with chagrin and rage see the heavens letting loose torrents of rain and hail and in one blow bringing to an end months of hard and constant toil. They are bound to the soil. They are its slaves and yet they worship it; they love its fresh odour in the spring and they delight in its power to create and recreate. And yet it holds them in chains and they are forced to obey its insistent demands...

Such a slave is Caleb Gare, the strongest figure in the book—slave to the soil and in turn the man who enslaves his family for the purposes of his master. Put to the very end the earth rules, and it is fitting that the slimy mire of the muskeg should close over Gare's head and end his harsh life. The very soil which gave him life, which was his very life, is triumphant.

Miss Ostenso knows the life of the farmer thoroughly. She has watched his grinding existence. She has taught his children in a country school house standing alone in the wild wastes, with the pupils coming great distances to obtain their meagre education. She has mingled with the womenfolk and realizes how starved they are, how they long for the life of the outside world. Above all she has come into contact with the younger generation and perceives how they are anxious to break away from the life which is often one of deadly monotony to them. Even the magic of nature and the mystery of growth and development is not adequate to hold them. Judith, in "Wild Geese" is a child of impulse, animal in her appetites, wild in her desires. She is spell-bound by the beauty around her, but she wants more. Youth will not tolerate drudgery; youth cannot bear solitude. Judith's soul cries out for social intercourse and the life beyond the prairie horizon. In the children of Caleb Gare, thus, particularly in Judith, we have this rebellion and protest which is long crushed but which eventually flares forth in the melodramatic climax of the book.

Over the wife of Caleb Gare Miss Ostenso has hung what Gare considers to be the great slip of her life. And Amelia, anxious to keep her illegitimate son within the pale of society is as pliant as a willow and bends to every demand of her husband. Jordan, the son, is himself a splendid type, and in his mouth the young authoress has placed one or two speeches concerning the farmers which reveal a very keen insight into their life. He says in one instance: "They seem to have no confidence in the soil—no confidence in anything save their own labour. Think of the difference there would be in the outward characters of these people if the land didn't sap up all their passion and sentiment." This is really the dominant note of the book.

In Lind Archer, the school teacher, Miss Ostenso probably sees herself, watching these farm-folk live their ugly life. She glories in the beauties around her and deplors the fact that to the farmer nature is as much an enemy as a friend. It builds up, but it is also capable of destruction.

It is Judith who is perhaps the most interesting character in the book. She is a very fine study of a farm girl who has been cut off from life, who knows of nothing but the herding of the cattle, the cleaning of the barns, the milking of the cows, the ploughing and the haying. When she does go into the depths of the wood she is dominated by her instinct only. The primitive blood of this child of nature cries out and she is overwhelmed by the beauties about her....

The book is exceedingly well written. Miss Ostenso expresses herself simply. Her pictures are carefully drawn. Her style is full of color. The only jarring note is the rather melodramatic climax, but then this is a first novel and the authoress should not be taken severely to task for such a blemish.

Withal a book of more than passing interest, a Canadian "Growth of the Soil",—and one of the few books which deals with the "great open spaces" in a logical and truly artistic manner.

L. E.

## To Beauty

COULD I, in alien dream or lofty trance,  
Pierce through the clouds that veil thee  
from my sight,

I would not feel the lust of utterance  
In my sealed lips, dumb with supreme delight.  
Nor in cold images of word and rhyme  
Born of unsated love, desirous eyes,  
Strive blindly to create the form sublime  
That still evades my deepest ecstasies.  
All longing dies in gazing on thy face,  
All yearning, all wild cries of banishment,  
And could I reach to thee I should embrace  
Eternal silence and divine content;

Abandoning these playmates of distress,  
The proof and feeble prize of unsuccess.

Brian Tuke

## In Defence of Slavery

"Vespasiano"

NOW that the age of Evolution, as distinct from Progress, has dawned, and it is admitted that the past is capable of offering lessons to the present, I do not fear opposition a priori when I take up the cudgels in defence of that excellent institution, now almost extinct—slavery. There are many grades of slavery, but, as the term is used here it is intended to signify the absolute subjection of one section of society to the will of another section. The most recent form of slavery in our civilisation is the plantation slavery of negroes in the southern United States—a racial slavery. Even for this there is much to be said, but at best it can be only a very imperfect form. Modern conditions call for something rather different.

The socialist doctrine that all men are equal is one of the most childish ideas ever promulgated. Many of us may justly take it as a personal insult. The most casual observer of Nature can scarcely fail to see its falsity. All men are different, and the mass of humanity is on a very low intellectual plane. Under the system of democracy this mass is in theory given political sovereignty—a most disastrous state of affairs. The truth is that these are the very people who should be given no voice whatever in public matters.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century they had no voice, but the Industrial Revolution and the new social conditions to which it gave rise, enabled them to clamour until they had secured the power they demanded. Since that time we have been progressing rapidly toward chaos. It was found that the proletariat was far more chauvinistic than the old monarchs and oligarchies, and the Napoleonic wars and the war of 1914 have resulted. This is but one example of the dangers to which civilisation is exposed. One is compelled to trace such troubles as these back to their source—the rise of democracy—and to speculate as to their remedy. To repress the proletariat into their old position will be infinitely more difficult than it was for our grandfathers and great-grandfathers to keep them in that position, but we may imagine that, had our forebears known what would follow, they might have striven a little harder in the repression than they did. In any case it is by no means impracticable to suggest to-day a determined attempt on the part of the intelligent element of society to bring about some such wholesome reaction. Mussolini and the Fascists do not impress one as being particularly intelligent, though the main plank of their platform, autocracy, is excellent. Intelligent or no, they have met with considerable success; how much more, then, should the really intelligent be able to succeed in such an undertaking?

But that is not enough. Mussolini is not by any means secure in his position, and while this may partly be due to his own shortcomings, it is also partly due, and may be largely due, to the fact that the Italian proletariat is now in the position of pre-democratic days and, under modern conditions, still has at its disposal the means to clamour for a political hearing. This means should be taken away from it, and the only possible way to accomplish this is to repress it still further, in fact to the logical conclusion—slavery. Indeed was there ever anything more rational and logical than slavery?

But the matter does not end here. We have suggested that a racial slavery is imperfect. So also would be one based on the suppression of the whole class, which is known as the proletariat. The reason is that racial divisions give no absolute criterion of individual worth, any more than do class divisions. The kind of slavery which is needed to-day is a scientific slavery, whereby each child's ability may be measured in early years, and his place in society determined. To-day the psychological knowledge necessary is available as it was not in the past. Such measures as these, moreover, avoid the inhumanity of depressing into slavery those who have learned to live under other conditions and would miss their freedom.

To estimate what percentage of the population should thus be trained to slavery is a very difficult task, and one which can only be performed by experts. I am therefore quite ready to be contradicted on the point, but my own feeling is that at least 99% should be so treated. This, I feel, is a moderate estimate, for it suggests that as many as one person in every hundred is fit to govern his own behaviour and to have a voice in political matters. I imagine that my readers and others interested in this burning question will be more pessimistic than I am.

The great beauty of such a system in practice is that it will solve all our industrial and political questions. To-day there are a number of intelligent people working in factories, adding up rows of figures behind desks, and performing the mass of unpleasant occupations which the industrial age has brought forth. All these would be relieved from their degradation by slaves. And the many men, who are by nature artists, and yet must prostitute their art to gain a living or undertake some loathsome trade in their spare time, could be supplied with the wealth hitherto squandered on paid artisans, and could, moreover, be given slaves to minister to their material wants. Further than this—and here is perhaps the greatest blessing—these gormandising hogs, those ignorant self-satisfied addle-pates, those fat lazy football-watching useless mouths, whom democracy raises to positions of authority, could be thrust down to the position of servitude, in which they properly belong.

## To my Lady of Laughter

Though you came to our world in a snowstorm  
Yet the wonder of cloudless skies  
And the laughter of sun-kissed waters  
Shines from the pools of your eyes.

On your cheeks is the glow of the roses  
That smile in a garden fair,  
And the flame of a forest in autumn  
Gleams from your tumbled hair.

I know there are laughing ladies  
Who would deem these lines too bold,  
But I'll pray for your smile and your pardon  
Since you're only four years old.

H. A. S.

DRAMA*The McGill Players' Club*

December 3rd, 4th, 5th.

THE tumult and the shouting having died, it remains but to take a final glance at the season's first production by the McGill Players' Club—a triple bill consisting of Bernard Shaw's *The Dark Lady of the Sonnets*, Alfred Sutro's *The Man in the Stalls* and a vaudeville skit called *All Gummed Up*, the author of which may deservedly remain in the obscurity to which my memory has consigned his name. The plays were produced in the lecture hall of the Biological Building on the evenings of December 3rd, 4th and 5th.

Before proceeding to any detailed criticism of the acting, staging and general suitability of the three plays it must be stated at once that the Players' Club has placed everyone connected with the university under a distinct obligation. Undaunted by the severe handicap of having only a temporary theatre and a makeshift stage, its members made a bold attempt to place before McGill students something at least as worthy of their attention as an interfaculty football match. That it was not so well patronised as such a match is no reflection upon the club. Indeed, it is possible that had the standard of the offering been of less excellence the performance would have been more largely attended. Certainly the least meritorious play seemed to win the heartiest approbation of the groundlings.

I think, however, that I have the greater part of those who witnessed the plays in agreement with me when I say that from the point of view of acting and production *The Man in the Stalls* was the most successful of the three plays. From the moment of the rise of the curtain Miss Dorothy Freiman, Mr. Frank Godine and Mr. Graeme Taylor, who composed the eternally triangular cast, had the audience with them. There was an ease and polish and verve about their performance rarely seen upon the amateur stage. Miss Freiman, in the role of a passionate, wilful woman using her husband as the unwitting tool to prevent her lover seeking peace and quiet in the arms of a lawfully-wedded wife, displayed herself as an even more accomplished actress than in the somewhat sombre part assigned to her last year in Galsworthy's *The First and the Last*. Mr. Frank Godine, as the husband, rang the changes on varying emotions in an accomplished manner, and threw an illusion of reality over a part which many might have been tempted to caricature too broadly. Mr. Taylor brought to the rôle of the lover all the excellent qualities which were a discovery of last year's production, and was an adequate foil to the more spectacular parts assigned to the mistress and husband.

*The Dark Lady of the Sonnets* is always pleasing for its witty lines and the gentle fun which Mr. Shaw pokes at the too devout worshippers of the god Shakespeare. The Players' Club production, however, was rendered rather ineffective by reason of the lack of proper staging facilities. The staging was not adequate for the merit of the play itself, and, as a matter of fact the very fine settings which were a notable feature of last year's production were conspicuously absent from all three of this year's plays. Miss Frances

Levikoff, as Queen Elizabeth, was statuesque and imposing; her voice was good, and most of the time, under excellent control. L. S. Giulianelli had a difficult part as Shakespeare, and he played it in an interesting manner.

It is to be regretted that the producers felt that our extremely moral college atmosphere necessitated their removal of one or two typically Elizabethan jests which Mr. Shaw had put into the mouth of Shakespeare. The practice of bowdlerizing is more in accord with the customs of a Sunday School Dramatic Club than with those of a university organization.

Of *All Gummed Up* there is little to be said. It was well acted and well produced, but to do an evil thing well is no very creditable performance, and an evil thing the play certainly was. Whoever was responsible for the choice of such a vulgar piece of inanity has committed a grave error.

The Players' Club, however, has shown us, that McGill Students can act and can produce plays, and that there is a lively body of undergraduates sincerely interested in the drama. Whether the aid of some experienced outsider would not be of use to the Club is an open question, but whatever minor points of criticism can be brought against the first production of the season, the fact remains that the Players' Club has been responsible for the most praiseworthy and interesting work done by McGill students so far this year. Its next production will be awaited with keen interest. I would submit that a three-act serious play would be the most welcome offering the Players could bring before us.

S.

MUSIC*The Possibilities of the Piano*

AT first glance it would seem that in the world of music today all the great work has been done. The fugue and the prelude, the sonata and the symphony—all these varied forms of musical expression have been perfected, and nothing remains for the contemporary composers but to place pictures in the frames which are already available and so create new works. This seems to be particularly true when we realize that the fugue was made perfect many years ago by Bach, and is still with us—that the sonata was worked out many years ago by Beethoven and is as popular today as it was when its creators played it to their amazed audiences. And when it seems that we are gorging ourselves on the works of the past, and they seem to be adequate for our appetites, certain distinct individuals come who refuse to walk the beaten paths. They seek something new; they try to cut new roadways for themselves. These extreme individualists are to be found in the world of music as among our poets and painters, breaking all the sacred rules which have been set up and which the conservative artists slavishly follow. The latter group forget that Bach and Beethoven were also breakers of the written law. They forget that true art is a thing of the soul and that the soul varying with the individual is extremely capricious and will often refuse to tolerate the hard and fast bounds which limit it in its expression.

Such an artist, who has cast aside the traditions of the pianoforte and who has worked out something that is truly individualistic, recently visited Montreal in the person of Mr. Henry Cowell. Mr. Cowell is a young man, but despite his youth he has already swept aside many of the difficulties which faced him in his task of uncovering new possibilities for the piano. How can there be such possibilities, is the natural question that comes from those who see the ivory keyboard and point to the fact that man has only ten fingers. Mr. Cowell immediately turns to the forearm, the palm of the hand, the fist, and also points to the fact that in the scientific study of acoustics there is yet a virgin field in which much can be explored.

Mr. Cowell realized several years ago that there were certain ideas that he wished to express on the piano which he could not render through the use of merely his ten fingers. And so came his experiment—that of using other means to express himself. With infinite labour he worked out these new steps, and so came the tone clusters. What he has achieved can not be regarded as a new method of playing the piano. It is merely an addition to the old, broadening its cope and making possible the expression of ideas which could not be adequately rendered in any other way.

We can take "The Tides of Manaunaun" as an example—Mr. Cowell draws frequently from old Irish legends for his themes which have been translated in an impressionistic manner. How can the boom of the tide, its rushing swell, its solemn majesty, be more exquisitely given to us than by the careful pressure of the fore-arm on the lower notes of the piano so that several octaves are struck at once? Mr. Cowell manipulates his fore-arm and fist and the palm of his hand with as much dexterity as a pianist ordinarily commands when he merely employs his fingers.

The final question one asks is why the sounds are not blurred and confused,—how is it that one gets anything but extreme and ugly noises? Here again Mr. Cowell has prepared the way carefully. He has devoted much time to the study of acoustics—he has experimented with over-tones, and so achieves results which are in most cases exceedingly pleasant to the ear. There are moments however when the ultra-modernity of his pieces is most pronounced, as in "Advertising." This is a horrid bit of realism—and yet there is that imagination there which lifts it out and makes it art. One sees advertising in all its ugliness. The brazen lights flash and glare, forcing the eyes to take one glance and turn away in disgust from the crude signs. In "An Amiable Conversation," too, there is marked dissonance, but the idea is distinctly carried out.

The actual use of his forearm, Mr. Cowell told me is but a passing phase. He is now at work on a pedal which he hopes will eliminate many of his difficulties. He has shrewdly evolved a system of writing down his ideas and publishers have accepted many of his compositions.

But what Mr. Cowell has done above all else is to reveal to us the vast possibilities of the pianoforte—such possibilities as one can hardly entertain unless Mr. Cowell is actually seen putting his ideas into practice. We must note that he has gone further and even uses the piano strings as one distinct instrument. This phase of his work is itself full of untold promise.

Orfeo

## Poem

LET us invert the world, and laugh,  
And stare with downcast eyes  
Below the world to where the stars  
Are littered on the skies,

And drop a pebble at our feet  
And watch it falling up  
Gathering size as it recedes  
Till all the vasty cup

Of idiot infinity  
Is single solid stone  
To chisel into kinder things  
Than blood and brain and bone.

A. J. M. Smith

in "Poets of the Future, 1924-25"

## Europeana "Enar"

THERE was an old saying in Tzarist Russia: "A law-abiding citizen consists of three elements—a body, a soul and a passport." Well, this was before the war for democracy was fought. After the war for liberty was over, one passport did not do. There were so many independent countries and ever so many governments claiming their legitimacy that one had to have at least a collection of half a dozen of these blessed documents to satisfy the different governments.

A friend of mine, who happened to take a course at the University of Prague, on one occasion had to perform some skilful juggling with the different passports in his possession. He was a citizen of Poland. The Czechs, the rulers of Prague, do not like the Poles very much—and this was a year of strained relations between these two countries. The Prague authorities refused therefore to issue permits of stay to students of Polish citizenship. My friend was thus in trouble. But there lived next door to him a Ukrainian consul who represented some government, that existed somewhere, at some time before the Bolshevist revolution. His government had long ago fallen to pieces—its premier was probably washing dishes in some American cafeteria—but the consul, happy in his office, carried on the profitable business of issuing passports to anyone who established his Ukrainian origin by a 50 *krone* note. Now since the Ukrainians hate the Poles, and the Czechs are also far from friendly towards them, the Prague police authorities extended a hearty welcome to all bearers of documents of a friendly power. My friend, thus, came among the happy ones. But, when he planned to visit his relatives in Germany, the German consul refused to attach his visa to a document of a state which no longer existed.

My friend thus had to produce his Polish passport to get the visa. But one cannot leave any country in Europe before interviewing the police authorities. Here he had to protect himself with the Ukrainian document. Coming back to Czecho Slovakia a new change of decoration was necessary, until my friend became so muddled up with this passport juggling that in order to evade heavy consequences, should he produce the wrong document, he assigned separate pockets for each one and, to be doubly certain, he initialled one pocket with a "P" and the other with a "U".

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But this is quite serious. . . . European universities can certainly teach us a good lesson, in the first place in reference to the absurd rule of compulsory attendance. With insignificant exception this measure is not known in the European institutions of learning. There is no compulsory attendance and still the universities flourish and students pass examinations with greater success than is attained here. Voluntary attendance produces a higher type of student, and then it makes for a higher standard of lectures. With compulsion non-existent, it is only the good, the interesting, the worth-while lecture that attracts the student. The professor, again, is fully aware that he faces an audience eager to listen—and not a crowd of yawning, chewing and “Daily”-reading victimized people. Voluntary attendance brings into play the principle of the survival of the fittest, applied to the staff as well as to the student body. The good lectures are over-crowded while the bad ones—well they go on but they are rendered harmless. Only the four walls must submit to being bored!

There are no organized athletics there, nor is there any debating schedule. The intellectual and physical vigour of the students is displayed at various political gatherings, demonstrations and parades where the racial, religious and social differences of the student body find proper expression. Chairs pass from hand to hand, or better from head to head with a greater rapidity than the ball at a senior rugby game, and arguments are refuted in a far more effective way than in our inter-faculty debates. The score is counted by the number of broken heads and noses. The sad story about it is that the referee is very often the Police Force. It is invigorating and exciting, but I prefer a rugby game rather than a monarchist-nationalist - republican - socialist - communist - anarchist -

Ukrainian - Polish - White - Russian - German - Jewish - Lithuanian muddle. . . .

Whatever may be said against these new states, of Europe their administrative efficiency is above all criticism. An application from a certain town in Latvia to the central government for a money grant to remove snow early in the winter was promptly answered in June, in which it was stated that effective steps would be taken. . . .

### December

(Continued from page 18)

There are few variations, few shades and tints and combinations. These the artist may invent, but cannot discover. And winter is barren of sound, save for the mournful dirges sung by the wind in leafless trees. Birds have vanished, streams have ceased to murmur. Life is blanketed, suffocated, beneath a pall of snow that itself descends in utter silence from the sky.

But I do not despair. I pin my faith to autumn, with its limitless varieties of colour, its sad farewells of sound, its spirit of tragic and impending doom that gathers with each shortening day. There is inspiration, there are the possibilities of great art. Let us concentrate on that, and on such other beauties as may be extracted from the preparatory seasons of spring and summer, and cease to tire our fingers with unworkable clay. If we cannot go away for winter, let us pass through it with such Socratic indifference as we may be able to muster.

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