THE ART OF THE GREAT RACE.

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

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

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

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

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

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

What shall we say comes from a pure fount of art ? Nothing, according to our notion, for the purest art is not tyrannic but is continuous, and Tourgenief's " Six Unknown " always existed and always will exist.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A VISION OF MUD.

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

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

Design for Programme Cover—Kermesse. Wyndham Lewis.

THE LONDON GROUP

1915 (MARCH).

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

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

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

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

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

Mr. William Roberts has a very brilliant drawing (done some time ago, I think) called " Dancers." Infinitely laboured like a 15th Century engraving in appearance, worked out with astonishing dexterity and scholarship, it displays a power that only the few best people possess in any decade. Michael Angelo is unfortunately the guest of honour at this Lord's Supper. But Buonarotti is my Bete-Noir.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

which cause misgivings in the unobservant as to our intentions, are aesthetic phenomena: our goddess is Beauty, like any Royal Academician's though we have different ideas as to how she should be depicted or carved: and we eat beefsteaks, or what we can get (except human beings) like most people—As to goose-steps, (the critic compares "rigidity" to "goose-step) as an antidote to the slop of Cambridge Post Aestheticism (Post-Impressionism is an insult to Manet and Cézanne) or the Gypsy Botticellis of Mill Street, may not such "rigidity" be welcomed? This rigidity, in the normal process of Nature, will flower like other things. THIS simple and massive trunk or stem may be watched. But we are not Hindu magicians to make our Mango tree grow in half an hour. It is too commonly suggested that rigidity cannot flower without "renouncing" itself or may not in itself be beautiful. At the worst all the finest beauty is dependent on it for life.

W.L.

MODERN CARICATURE AND IMPRESSIONISM.

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

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

Whether it is an abstract figure of Britannia, or of a Sportsman, or a Territorial, the method employed by the degenerate Punch cartoonist of to-day is always the same. A model must be sought, dressed and stuck up, and carefully copied in the required attitude. That being within a radius of five miles of the cartoonist's studio who, draped with a Leighton photographer's robe, looks the most like Britannia, must appear as our most authoritative conception of that august abstraction.

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

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

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

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

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

W.L.

HISTORY OF THE LARGEST INDEPENDENT SOCIETY IN ENGLAND.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

LIFE HAS NO TASTE.

The best artist is an imperfect artist.

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

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

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

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

You should be emotional about everything, rather than sensitive.

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

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

AMERICAN ART.

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

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

Red-Indian

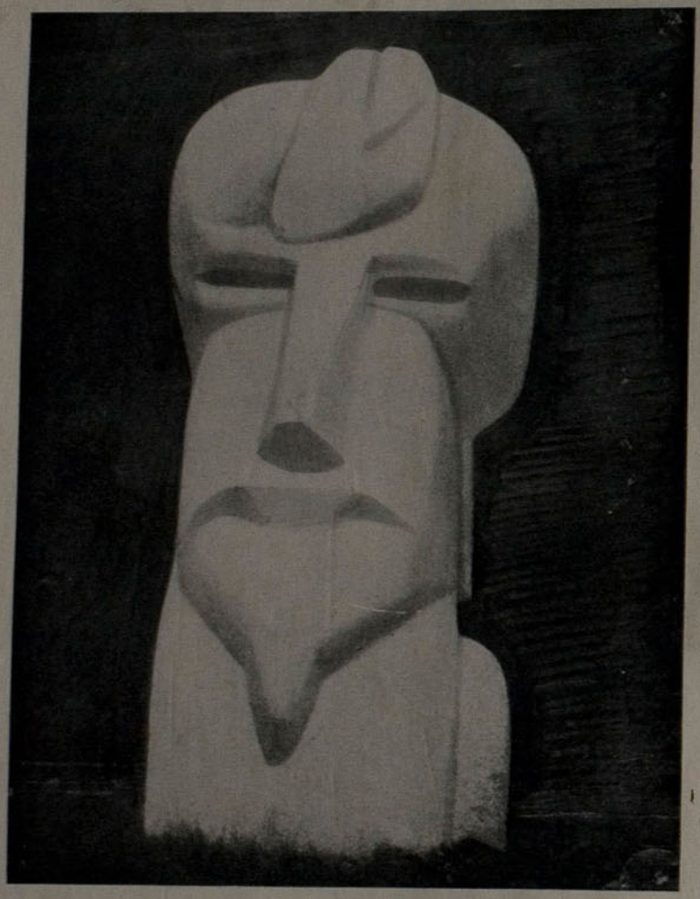
Edg. Allen Poe (series of sincere and solemn bluffs. Heineesqe lyrics, monotonously absorbed in the technique of romantic emotion).

Whistler (Nocturnes, lithographs, etc.)

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

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

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



Head of Eza Pound. Gaudier-Brzeska.

CHRONICLES.

I.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

II.

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

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

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

OYEZ. OYEZ. OYEZ.

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

WHY?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Thank god for our atrabilious companions.

And the homo canis?

Will go out munching our ideas. Whining.

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

III.

LAWRENCE BINYON.

We regret that we cannot entitle this article "Homage to Mr. Lawrence Binyon," for Mr. Binyon has not sufficiently rebelled. Manifestly he is not one of the ignorant. He is far from being one of the outer world, but in reading his work we constantly feel the influence upon him of his reading of the worst English poets. We find him in a disgusting attitude of respect toward predecessors whose intellect is vastly inferior to his own. This is loathesome. Mr. Binyon has thought he has plunged into the knowledge of the East and extended the borders of occidental knowledge, and yet his mind constantly harks back to some folly of nineteenth century Europe. We can see him as it were constantly restraining his inventiveness, constantly trying to conform to an orthodox view against which his thought and emotions rebel, constantly trying to justify Chinese intelligence by dragging it a little nearer to some Western precedent. Ah well! Mr. Binyon has, indubitably, his moments. Very few men do have any moments whatever, and for the benefit of such readers as have not sufficiently respected Mr. Binyon for his, it would be well to set forth a few of them. They are found in his "Flight of the Dragon," a book otherwise unpleasantly marred by his recurrent respect for inferior, very inferior people.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

E.P.

Drawing. Roberts.

On the way to the Trenches. Nevinsen.

WYNDHAM LEWIS VORTEX No. 1.

ART VORTEX.

BE THYSELF.

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

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

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

There is nothing so impressive as the number TWO.

You must be a duet in everything.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Do not marry it, either, to a maiden.

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

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

Hurry up and get into this harmonious and sane duality.

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

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

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

We artists do not provide wives for you.

You have too many as it is.

BLAST

Brangwyn, Etcetera

Orpen, Etcetera

Mestrovic, Etcetera

W. L. George

Mrs. E. A. Rhodes

Bevan, and his dry rot

Pennyfeather

Birth-Control

The Roman Empire

Lyons' shops
(without exception)

Mr. Hiccupstein

Mr. Stormberg

Mr. Backbeitfeld

The Architect of the
Regent Palace Hôtel

Oh! BLAST COLONEL MAUDE

BLESS

Koyetzu
Rotatzu
Korin

Bottomley
A. G. Hales

Basil Hallam
Bombardier Wells

War Babies
Selfridge

Mrs. MacGaskill
Mr. MacGaskill
The scaffolding around
the Albert Memorial
The War Loan
All A.B.C. Tea-shops
(without exception)

MAX { Norton
Burgomaster
Linder

Warneford
The Poet's Bride (June 28th)

THE CROWD MASTER.

1914.

LONDON, JULY.

THE CROWD.

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

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

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

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

THE POLICE however are contemptuous, cold and disagreeable.

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

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

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

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

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

Do the idiots really mean——?

THE CROWD.

THE CROWD is the first mobilisation of a country.

THE CROWD now is formed in London. It is established with all its vague profound organs au grand complet.

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

THE INDIVIDUAL and THE CROWD: PEACE and WAR.

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

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

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

Men resist death with horror when their time comes.

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

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

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

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

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

THOMAS BLENNER.

BLENNER was in Scotland at this time. He is a man of 38, retired 1st Lieutenant Indian Army with a little money. He writes a little, abusively as regards the Army. Leg in splints, getting better, from a fall from a horse. He motored over with his friends to the nearest town. The others went to play golf, he went into the town alone to get the morning papers.

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

MORPETH OLYMPIAD
RECORD CROWD

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

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

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

GERMANY DECLARES WAR ON RUSSIA.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

THE JOURNEY TO ENGLAND.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

He is capable of doggerel easily.

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

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

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

Arrogant and crafty sheep ! A la lanterne !

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

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

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

He found sailors sprawled about in most compartments.

Mobilisation was everywhere. The train was quite full.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

" No, I'm called up.

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

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

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

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

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

Cold resentment ; near his pension, perhaps.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Blenner talked to him when the navvy left the train.

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

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

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

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

York platforms were comparatively empty.

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

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

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

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

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

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

" Chatham ", said the Scot, in flat deep solemnity, taking his pipe out of his mouth, and leaning a little towards him.
The York reservist began grumbling about the upset, the conventional thing to do.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

They none of them doubted that mobilisation meant war.

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

KING'S CROSS was reached.

LONDON.

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

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

He was another sort of reservist.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The war was like a great New Fashion.

Multum was a man of Fashion.

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Because I was born there."

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

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

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

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

He still stood in the attitude of shame and reverie.

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

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

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

AUSTRIA FINDS SERVIAN REPLY UNSATISFACTORY.

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

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

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

Blenner hunted for professional military news: appointments, changes.

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

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

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

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

THE CROWD MASTER.
By BROWN BRYAN MULTUM.

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

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

That should be something!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sun only comes from ahead.

It invents when it desires, and moves away.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

I am the vulgarest thing on Earth. Amen."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Montparnasse?" Blenner suggested.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

BROWN BRYAN MULTUM.

2, Bristol Avenue, Regent's Park.

Blenner looked at it not understanding for a moment.

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

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

Blenner ran after him and said:

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

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

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

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

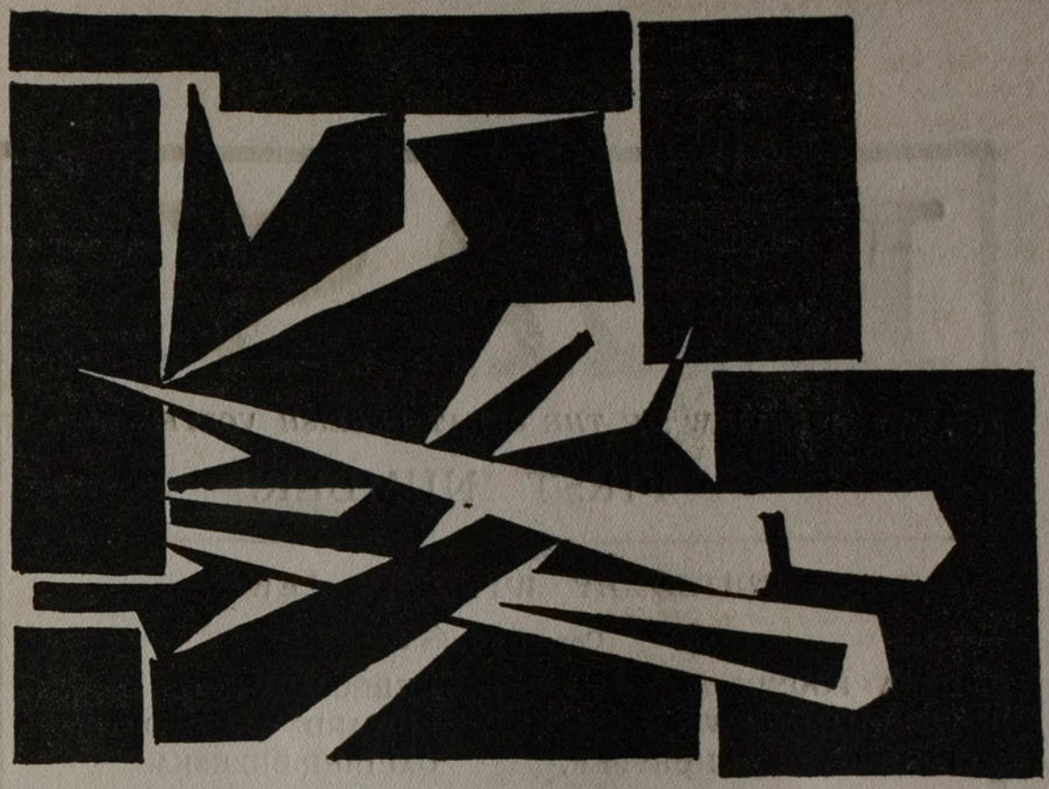
Blenner nearly dashed into the tall fat young man of the Geddes station platform as he turned away. He felt guilty; ashamed of his precipitation, and, for the first time in his life, vexed at the brightness of his eyes.

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

PRELUDES.

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

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



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