

United States wishes Cuba. The Pearl of the Antilles annexed to the Union would supply the United States with sugar and in time would deprive France and Germany of the English market.

The Americans pretend that simply in the name of humanity and liberty they take the part of the Cubans. One must needs be very naïf in order to believe them willing to declare war merely from a chivalrous point of view. Certainly this generosity is not in keeping with their character. They are interested in Cuban affairs solely as a business transaction into which enter strongly the elements of filibustering."

This article is mild indeed in comparison to some with which the French have delighted to honor us. Imbued with ideas of the Anglo-Saxon versus the Latin it is utterly impossible for them to look upon Cuban affairs in an unprejudiced manner.

#### A PRAIRIE PASTEL.

Across the level prairies,  
faint at first  
As tint of opal,  
creeps a tinge of green  
That overcomes at last  
the gray and brown,  
As tides, the sands that gird  
the ocean's sheen.

And ever as the verdant  
tide moves on  
The bending skies  
grow softer overhead,  
And near the shallow stream  
that flows thro' sand  
The stunted willow  
lifts its lance of red.

On broken gum-weeds  
sings the meadowlark,  
His song seems calling  
to the stirring earth  
To loosen from their prison  
in the mold  
The prairie flowers that decked  
the spring babe's birth.

And now and then  
a sonorous call comes down  
From out the sun-kissed air,  
as northward fly  
The wild geese in an arrow  
huge and black,  
The only shade against  
the azure sky.

The shimmering sunshine  
floods the earth and sky  
As with a bath of gold;  
the light winds lift  
The fragrance of the grass  
and bear it far  
To some bare land and leave  
their precious gift.

As far as eye can reach,  
the level land,  
Its floor unbroken  
by a rift or seam,  
Outstretches till it meets  
the curving sky  
A world as fair as ever  
graced a dream.

—William Reed Dunroy.

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GEO. W. BONNELL, C. P. & T. A.

## The Passing Show.

WILLA CATHER.

"In my mad youth when George the Third was king."—Don Juan.

I know of no art product in which the atmosphere, customs, society, sentiment of an historical period are more perfectly and evenly and unobtrusively reproduced than are those of the Georgian period in Charles Coghlan's play, "The Royal Box." The play is, like most of our plays, an "adaptation from the French," but this time it is a French play of English life, Dumas' "Edmond Kean." In his adaptation Mr. Coghlan has unfortunately weakened the love story, which is none too fervid in the original, but he has given the play something that Dumas never did—atmosphere, that rare and elusive quality, that volatile, indefinable something which gives one the actual impression of a given time and society. There are few plays which so deserve success. The intensely dramatic situations which the elder Dumas knew so well how to construct almost insure the popularity of the piece with the masses, and to this dramatic potency Mr. Coghlan has added a fine literary quality and keen intellectual interest. It is not really an emotional play any more than Mr. Coghlan is really an emotional actor; like him it is thoroughly intellectual and always eminently artistic.

The first act of the play takes place in the reception room of the Swedish embassy, where some dear lady friend is twitting the Countess Felsen—the ambassador's wife—about her affection for the actor James Clarence. In the middle of this interesting conversation Count Felsen and the Prince of Wales enter. Such a prince! Why the ghosts of the Hanoverian kings rise up before you. He is the sturdy Black Forester with the sort of heavy, brutal good looks that all the princes of that house, even down to the present one, have possessed. As soon as he has saluted the ladies, the "first gentleman of Europe" of course begins talking scandal. Miss Celia Pryse, a young heiress, has run away from the stupid lord she was about to marry and fled for help to the actor Clarence. The prince implies that she is probably still with Clarence when the actor himself is announced. I must confess that Coghlan's appearance was at first a painful shock. Why he is an old man and he is still in the years which give a man no right to be old. He has the haggard, tired face of a man who has let life get the better of him. His teeth are gone and his enunciation has a looseness that makes him seem older than Jefferson. One thing he has retained, his magnificent figure; generous, shapely and vigorous, the like of which is not to be seen anywhere on our stage today.

Clarence explains that the purpose of his visit is to contradict the gossip about Miss Pryse. The young lady is not with him and he wishes to show the Countess Felsen the letter he received from the young lady and to ask her to publicly testify to its innocent character. The Countess read the letter, and on turning the page finds a love letter from Clarence to herself, asking her to meet him at the theater and telling her of a private door to his dressing room.

The second act takes place in Clarence's lodgings. His old dresser who has served him ever since his old barnstorming days comes in lamenting over his master's wild ways, and really appearances are rather against Clarence.

Bottles and glasses are the articles most in evidence. One gentleman is stretched out on the table and another reposes under it. Clarence himself is lying on a couch at the rear of the stage, his muddy boots on and his linen crumpled and stained with wine. The dresser gets rid of the guests and proceeds to waken Clarence, who rubs his eyes and mutters: "I say, is my act called?" The dresser begins lecturing him on the error of his ways and Clarence puts his hand up to his head, one of those excruciating "next morning heads," and promises to do better. The son of his first manager with whom he used to do an egg dance comes in with a hard luck story and asks Clarence to stand god father to his father's thirteenth son. Clarence promises to give a benefit which will net funds enough to bring up the whole thirteen. Then Celia Pryce—the part is charmingly played by Miss Grace Filkins—enters and announces that she has determined to become an actress rather than marry her distasteful suitor. Then follows Mr. Coghlan's magnificent speech, the matter of which ladies and gentlemen of his profession naturally find objectionable. Though the conditions of the dramatic profession have changed for the better since the times of the George's the public is still ever ready to calumniate those who follow it, and that speech is certainly indiscreet and in rather questionable taste. I wonder that a man who has a sister and daughter and several wives on the stage should consent to speak such lines, yet I thought he delivered them with a sort of bitter relish.

"Pray let me speak frankly, my dear young lady. Have you considered that even should you be so fortunate as to take some manager's eye, you would earn at first no more than a pound a

week? O you could live on that, perhaps! But the dresses? O that must be well dressed, or no manager would look at you. Of course there are plenty of young men who would gladly supply the dresses, but I—I scarcely think their conditions would be acceptable to you. There, do not be angry, you said I might speak frankly. And the manager, good-hearted fellow, so genial, so cordial at first. He will soon find you cold, mechanical, unemotional, unless you take pains to convince him to the contrary. And your rivals. Have you considered that on the stage our friends are our rivals, and that those who smile and drink with us are those who grudge us every good fortune and rejoice in our every ill?"

The cool malignance of that man Coghlan is beyond belief, yet I think any actor worth the name would forgive him the slander for the sake of his elocution. He infuses light and shade, vitality and color into every line he speaks.

Miss Pryce throws out her hands to him with a gesture supremely generous and womanly and says:

"If a woman young and rich were to say to you, 'Here, take all I have, leave this profession which humiliates you and be happy!'"

Clarence starts to his feet: "Leave the stage? The stage? Leave Green and Melville to reign while I am forgotten? Impossible! I wonder if the world can ever know what a shirt of Nessus it is that we actors wear. It tortures us beyond bearing, yet when we try to tear it from us, it tears away the flesh of our bodies. Ah no, the feet that have once pressed that burning path must tread it to the end, and when we die, we must die like Moliere, with the echo of the applause speeding our departing spirit."

The third act does very little but further develop the character of the fascinating Clarence. Indeed the whole play does little more than that. I never saw so omni-present a character. Hamlet does not more completely dominate the play which bears his name than does

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