

have been laid, cities have been planted, schools have been established, mines have been dug and expensive machinery imported by the English in opposition to the Dutch who, as a race, are as conservative as the American Indian. They have got as far as frame houses and porches but still look with suspicion on bay windows—in houses. If they possess the nervous energy and scrapping ability of our Puritan forefathers they will find some way to beat England out. If they fail, so much better for the Transvaal. Racial movements are neither right nor wrong. The race with the strongest vitality, the strongest race, elastic enough to take advantage of circumstances will win the victory. The Anglo Saxon has beaten in so many contests, that this one in the Transvaal seems already decided in his favor. If the Dutch are really like the Puritans in New England they will win for there was a greater difference between England and the colonies in 1776 than there is now between England and the Dutch in Africa.

#### The Royal Box.

Last Friday night at the Oliver Mr. Charles Coghlan and his excellent company played *The Royal Box*; a romantic play in five acts founded on a drama by Alexandre Dumas and adapted by Mr. Coghlan. The play has some weak points, Mr. Coghlan and his company none. From the star to the footman the acting was flawless. It was as good as a book which is usually much better than a play. The vraisemblance of costumes, furniture and manners to the first years of the century when George IV was still prince of Wales was complete enough to satisfy the audience, which knew no more of the period than that men wore knee breeches, low shoes, and took snuff; that women wore empire gowns, were invariably intriguing, and that the manners of both men and women were flowery and more deferential if less sincere than they are today. The audience had learned these things about the first years of the century from books, prints, and miniatures. The artistic and scholarly designer of the costumes and furniture for *The Royal Box* knew the outward aspect of people and things of the time he sought to recall from a closer study of "remains" just as Dumas was able to reproduce the words, the manners, and the peculiar habit of thought, so that the episode supposed to have happened a hundred years ago, happened again last Friday night. The real literary flavor of the play, as Mr. Coghlan presents it, is exquisite and lasting. It is unfortunately true that actors seldom know or value that quality which gives a play and its performance an abiding flavor. Mr. Booth never forgot it. Mr. Irving, Mr. Jefferson, Miss Marlowe, and now Mr. Coghlan recognize and impart this flavor, a flavor which is to be found in Chaucer in Shakespeare in Thackeray, and which we are too limited to know by any other name than literary—but it might as well be called X for we do not know its secret, we cannot analyze it, and if never a book had been written it would still exist in the way certain men and women tell a story or act it.

For employing so fine a company and trusting to western audiences to recognize their ability and quality as well as his own eminent gifts, Mr. Coghlan exhibits a confidence and faith that is touching and should be rewarded by large audiences.

If there had been nothing more than the first act, set as a reception room in the Swedish Embassy in London, with painted walls and spindle-legged,

enameled furniture, with the dialogue between two court dames with axes in their hands with which they gashed each others' hearts and reputations and the entrance of the Swedish ambassador, the Prince of Wales and Clarence the actor at the end of the scene, still the fragment, like one of Phidias' was enough to make the heart of a lover of beauty for beauty's sake beat quicker for satisfaction.

The little acrobat, Taylor Granville, in soiled rose colored small-clothes was not the least perfect part of Mr. Coghlan's rare good company, and Mr. Tipps, a constable, Mr. Henry Warwick, had the perennial, classical flavor of constables since Shakespeare made the cup winner.

The construction of the play is so clever that there is never a creak of machinery. Each act of the five is short, the action is rapid and does not halt. But at the end of the last act, where third rate playwrights place the caste all in a row coupled for life, Clarence the first matinee hero of the century who was but now madly in love with a woman of fashion is pined off with a Miss Pryce the first matinee girl whose lines from her first entry sound the familiar matinee girl's key in G—gush. So much in love with the countess of Felsen that he was willing to sacrifice his reputation as an actor and to denounce the Prince from the stage, it is not credible that Clarence would turn immediately to the matinee girl who has sought to arouse his sympathy by tales of a trite cruel guardian who is forcing her to marry a wicked lord whom she cannot love. But in the last act of *The Royal Box* Clarence actually and radiantly accepts the colorless stage-crazy young lady who so persistently visits him.

#### Kipling's School Days.

The school days and early life of Mr. Kipling portrayed in "Stalky and Co." explains the Rabelaisian coarseness of his mature work. A coarseness of the camp, of college and of clubs, a repulsive coarseness of diction and of subject said to prevail in camps, and colleges, in mining camps, and occasionally in men's clubs. Whatever the function and purpose of woman may be—and just now her *raison d'être* is being debated with some warmth—one of the most important is to associate with man and to prevent him by precept, example and exhortation, from degeneration. Without the constant presence of good women, men can be soldiers, good business men or successful novelists but their conversation and the product of their minds when isolated, is said to be Rabelaisian.

The effect of the boys' boarding schools upon Englishmen is apparent in English literature, but I know of no writer who responds so markedly to this influence as Kipling. In spite of his gifts he has not been able to portray, except faintly and incorporeally, a good woman. In *The Light that Failed*, *The Phantom Rickshaw*, and many other Indian tales the women are of a class much below even those which Fielding chose, not for heroines but for minor characters. Taken away from their mothers and from all female influence at eight years of age it is not surprising that the speech of Englishmen is repulsively frank and that only a few English writers are capable of a real heroine such as the world has worshiped since Eve.

The three odious little cynics of *Stalky and Co.* have prototypes enough in this country but compared to the boys who are scolded, bossed, and tucked into bed by their female relatives their number is small, thanks to the institution of the public school. A boy that has a little talk with his

mother at the end of the day, who loyally recognizes her as his commanding officer has all the chances in his favor. He is the sort of man, when he gets to be one, that girls want to marry and that corporations want to hire. The gamin who is sent away to school because his mother cannot control him is the exception in America. Mr. Kipling frequently expresses his contempt in *Stalky and Co.* for the day school boy who returns to his mother when school is over. But if those same day pupils were possessed of the literary gifts of little Rudyard they would now be able to portray a female character who would not deserve our contempt. What we scorn in our youth, later logic and experience will not transfigure. The mind of youth has not been transcribed or written upon. The first marks make so heavy an impression it can never be written over. It is the youthfulness, the clearness of the image or the impression a writer is able to communicate that makes him fascinating or commonplace. Kipling knew nothing about women in his youth. He lived in an atmosphere of scorn for their weakness and sentiment and the inevitable result of his bringing up is the life-long concealment of their secret from him. Mr. Kipling would not mind this at all, if his trade were not writing and his wage the price of seeing true. More than all that, when posterity's turn comes the glamour and newness of *Soldiers Three* will have been worn off and posterity will judge him for his faithful delineation of the men and women of the latter half of the nineteenth century and it is more than likely Kipling will be sentenced to oblivion for assault and battery on women. For in some respects the most modern and the most gifted writer of this period, in female portraiture, he is the least gifted of all novelists. Hardy, Black, James, Du Maurier, Howells, Wilkins, Harris, Cable, and even Zola might look down upon him from unmeasured heights. While Tolstoy's, Turgenieff's, and Dostoyevsky's women are modern with the quality of the eternal feminine so inexplicably conveyed that even their personality forever attracts. Even the unfortunate women are portrayed by these men so sympathetically that instead of the loathing and contempt which Kipling's creatures excite, the spirit the intellect, as in Anna Karenina forever haunts the reader.

Many an author whose books have been received with indiscriminating enthusiasm has made the mistake that Kipling made in *Stalky and Co.* Neither the American nor the British reading public can receive an autobiography like this one of Kipling's without immediately applying it as a key to the books he has written. The next book Mr. Kipling writes the reviewers will handle with less veneration. There will be no longer any illusion concerning his views and he himself has furnished exact information which explains his limitations.

I've discovered a way to get rid of those cigars my wife gave me on Christmas.

How?

I give one every Wednesday and Sunday evening to the young man who calls on my daughter. The poor chap does not dare refuse them.—Bazar.

Native—Ye wanter keep pretty straight in this here town, stranger, for the citizens lyuch a man on the slightest provocation.

Tenderfoot—Would you lynch a man for killin' a dog?

Native—Would we? Why I've knowed a feller to be lynched fer killin' a chinsaman.

## THE PASSING SHOW

WILLA CATHER

"I hate him, for he is a Christian."  
—Merchant of Venice.

Miss Viola Allen and Hall Caine's much advertised monstrosity, "The Christian: a Play;" all I that can say is that it is neither Christian nor play, and that heatben lands would blush to have given it birth. Mr. Hall Caine's income is twenty thousand pounds a year, and Mr. Henry James, the first living writer of pure English and the highest exponent of refined literary art, makes an income of three hundred pounds a year, a smaller sum than most expert accountants are content with. Now if the figures of the two men's incomes were reversed, it would indicate the millennial dawn of public taste.

The only merit I have ever heard he claimed for "The Christian" is that it is exciting, and so it is in a thoroughly illegitimate manner, much as "The Sign of the Cross" is exciting. That is to say, it is frankly and aggressively sensational. If an author denies himself no liberty, shuns no situation, however trite and cheap, permits himself all the ugly, disagreeable words that yellow journalism has invented, he ought to be able to concoct some sort of excitement for the gallery, at least—and in all audiences the gallery element predominates, no matter where they happen to sit. If Mr. Hall Caine fails to interest his devoted readers, it is certainly because of no delicate scruples as to the means he uses.

The plot of the play follows closely that of the novel, with which the public is, alas, more familiar, than with that of many a better book. The first act is placed in the Isle of Man, where Glory Quayle flirts a bit with some strange gentleman from London, and makes her plans to go there and take up the vocation of a trained nurse, during which conversation her glum, ecclesiastical lover sulks among the ruins of the old castle. Miss Allen's desperate and conscientious attempts at kittenishness, I found both inadequate and painful. She is an earnest, serious young woman, with much strenuousness and something of the puritanic in her make up. She is a wonderfully thorough and capable actress, but she is by no means great enough to escape the limitations of her own decided personality. Mr. Hall Caine himself did not seem to have any very clear or consistent conception of "Glory Quayle," save that she resembled Ellen Terry physically and temperamentally, and that she was a madcap creature, full of life and health and youthful blood. Now when Miss Allen essays to play a madcap girl of smiles and tears, she goes against nature, and all the positiveness of her own intense individuality is against her. That she can play so exotic a character so well as she does attests much as to her skill and training, but after all an actress is more fortunate when she pulls with the current of her own nature.

The ending of this first act is little less than ludicrous. "John Storm," the sulky lover, makes some vague suggestions that if "Glory" would consent to remain on the island and marry him, such a proceeding might not seriously interfere with his theological studies. When she fails to fervidly embrace this icy opportunity, he talks church and renunciation, and suddenly calls his sweetheart down to the front of the stage before the assembled populace of the Isle of Man, and announces to her that he has decided to become a monk and will have none of her. Was ever a heroine called upon to face a more trying and awkward situation?