

WE AND OUR NEIGHBORS

Gibson has a new girl. She is English, has a small mouth, and wears darker clothes than his American type. If she is not so chic, she is less self-conscious and, therefore, more attractive. She is conscious of neither pose, costume nor figure. His new type has repose, simplicity, honesty. The how beautiful I am and how stylish of his American girl has gone, let us hope, forever.

In looking over Richard Harding Davis' "About Paris," illustrated by Gibson, there is an opportunity to get acquainted with Gibson's style as an individual. The single picture may exhibit departures from the rule. Twenty-nine drawings, such as "About Paris" contains, afford data for conclusions, or rather opinions. The sweep and freedom of line and the economical use of it is at once apparent. The figures appear to have always existed on the page, the faces are indicated by so few lines. The outline is always pure and accurate, and the expression unmistakable. The anatomy of his men and women shows skeleton study. Dislocations are rare and so far as my observation goes, do not occur in any of his drawings. It is only necessary to compare Du Maurier's figures with Gibson's to appreciate the latter's excellence in this particular. And after all I like Du Maurier best. The people he draws, some of them like nothing that ever was for length of limb and straightness of nose, are interesting as acquaintances and friends. Gibson's men and women are the work of a great draughtsman to man with as little permanent attraction for us as we have for them were they as alive as they look. The shadows are dark on clothes, and hair but between the figures of Gibson's compositions there are none. The have lost their shadows and this may be why the compositions lack vibration and a book full of them is tiresome. Compare the very different method of W. A. C. Pape in the illustrations to Rudyard Kipling's "In the Rukh." The shadow of the black panther falls on the snake Kaa and moves with it. All the jungle people are connected by shadows that move with them. Mowgli is covered with leaf shadows or the quivers of the water as he fishes. If there be light there must be shadow. Frequently, because of the relative position of the light to the plane on which the shadow is thrown it is distorted. It is never the same. It is somewhat presumptuous to guess why so eminent an illustrator as Mr. Gibson leaves out floor or ground shadows. With the confession that it is impudent perhaps it is safe to surmise that it may be because he wishes to make as few impressions as possible on the retina in order that those few may be clear. A shadow of a perpendicular object on a horizontal plane must be distorted and more or less confusing. This view of Gibson's reasons for his conduct is confirmed by the presence of shadow, in many compositions, on a perpendicular plane and only a few faint scratches in the twenty-nine drawings on a horizontal plane. If this be so, he gives up for singleness of impression, vibration; the great for the little, the mysterious for the commonplace, truth for bizarre. Vibration is not to be confused with action. His men walk and spring and run like athletes, his women have the quick, changing glance of accomplished coquettes, their draperies flow about them with a life that is at once feminine and from the nature of the folds, momentary. To enumerate Gibson's charms is easy. His faults must be hunted for. The slow, seductive smile of his French women, the purity, independence, poise of his

American women, and the elegance and fine figures of his American men everyone is familiar with. They delight all who study him. He is as great a wonder, in his way, as Zorn is in his. He can catch the expression of the loungers in a cafe and make of the various groups a picture; but as I said before, the individuals are better than the whole. A picture by Gibson is like a poem by Tennyson which is made up of exquisite words, phrases, lines, yet the poem as a whole does not satisfy. In the same way Gibson's phrasing is exquisite, his pictures lack tang, flavor—that quality which enables half-blind DuMaurier, bad draughtsman and ignorant anatomist as he is, to capture and keep the loyalty of all imaginative minds.

"About Paris," by Richard Harding Davis, appeared serially in last year's Harpers'. It is pleasant reading, and if, at times, the author's tone is a trifle elevated, inflated, or literary, it does not matter so much, because he assumes that the social position and the culture of the reader are equal to his own. It is "other people" that Richard Harding Davis' breeding compels him to conceal his scorn and real aloofness from. He reveals it to the reader, with a fine delicacy and assumption of equality and fraternity, because Richard Harding D. is in the book business and readers are customers and must be treated with the consideration that the permanence of his job demands, although he knows and we might know, that the canaille he describes, act, dress, talk very much as we do. It is only after finishing a sketch, fresh from his white fingers, in a moment of absolute rest from other thoughts that the impression settles down that the young author under consideration is scornful and takes liberties with "other people" that look like us. Literary hauteur is more inexcusable than the social kind and has less excuse for being. It also is followed by swifter punishment. The retribution of Ruskin should be a warning to all who think to speak as he spoke. To be sure, there are suicides who desire oblivion, but as long as there is no comparative why should these write at all?

McClure's Magazine for June contains five good articles—a larger number than any of the other monthlies at hand. "In the Rukh," by Rudyard Kipling, is a reprint except when it comes to the pictures. These are by W. A. C. Pape. The vignettes that top the pages represent the jungle people; they are the hunters, the boa constrictor, the black panther and the bear, the silent ones; the elephant folk, the poison snakes, the Seonee pack, the bandar log; the monkeys and the striped ones; tigers. They are drawn with feeling and satisfy those who have lost count of the number of times they have read the "Jungle Book." The picture of the four wolves dancing before Mowgli and Abdul Gafur's daughter and of Mowgli coming through a jungle so thick that only a few rays of sunlight can penetrate it, are of fascinating quality, yet I like the jungle people vignettes better. The elephants, bears, snakes and wolves are Kipling's and we have no use for any other since trying his. The curious tone of the vignettes is explained by the moon which lights them all, Kipling's moon-talk has at last found an illustrator who must have had the same foster mother as himself.

Anthony Hope's illustrator for "Phroso" has had, apparently, some practice in illustrating an edition of "The Arabian Nights." The pictures are drawn in line—always so much more satisfactory than photogravure

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