

The Passing Show.

WILLA CATHER.

"The day you won your town the race
We cheered you through the market place;
Man and boy stood cheering by
While we bore you shoulder high.

Now, the way all runners come,
Shoulder high we bring you home,
And set you at your portal down
Townsmen of a stiffer town."

—A. E. Houseman.

I suppose no military funeral since Sherman's has equalled in solemnity that which awaited the body of Lieutenant F. W. Jenkins here when it was sent home from Havana. No city in the country felt the horrors of the Maine disaster more keenly than Pittsburg. Lieut Jenkins was born here, had always lived here and enjoyed that universal popularity which only a military officer can know in a big provincial town. All the morning of that fateful 15th of February when the news of the disaster first reached us, the dead man's brother sat at my elbow waiting for the message of the clicking wires. Two weeks later an old, broken hearted woman, dressed in black, came in leaning on his arm to thank the telegraph department for the interest it had taken in her son. She did not say much, she was not melo-dramatic; but when she left, there was not a dry eye in the office. I doubt if such a scene had occurred since the war of the rebellion. I sat at my desk thinking with astonishment of the days when I used to laugh at the "patriotic bathos" of "The Ensign" and similar military and naval dramas. The most tawdry of them would move me now.

As the long search for Jenkin's body continued I grew to feel an almost personal interest in it, and when one of our reporters went down to Cincinnati to meet the body I almost wanted to go too. When the casket arrived it was placed in the Allegheny postoffice. The rotunda was heavily draped in black; back of the platform on which the casket lay was a forest of palms, and about the platform were heaped American Beauty roses. At the foot of the casket stood the Naval Reserves as a guard of honor; all young fellows, standing motionless and silent as statues, but with tight lips and flashing eyes. The great windows were all open; outside the sunlight flashed with blinding brightness upon the gilded dome and the curves of the river; the morning wind whispered through the hall and rustled the green fronds of the palms. There were no flowers on the casket; across it lay only the flag, his flag, and despite the heavy fringes the long end caught again and again in the breeze and strained and fluttered to be free. From the thousands who filed by not a word, not a breath; the only sound that soft fluttering of the flag. It was as though the flag itself had spoken.

The body was then taken to the county court house in Pittsburg, and at two o'clock the funeral cortege was almost two hours in passing; there were four thousand men in line, all in uniform. All the troops in the state were out carrying the old banners that had been through the civil war, some of them were faded strips of silk, so burned and rent that it seemed as if the wind would rend their tattered ends flying from the staff. Regiment after regiment passed in silence, band after band each with some dirge more solemn than the last until the

last band came playing Chopin's "Marche Funebre." Behind it came hearses full of flowers, and after them on a low gun carriage, fitting hearse for a soldier, was that black casket wrapped in the flag, and that new young flag seemed to flutter back the challenge of the old banners in front and to say, "I too have my heroes!"

Last fall, when the president of the republic was driven down that same street, the bands played very different music, and the crowd swayed and surged and men shouted and waved their hats in the air. That was the enthusiasm of a holiday but this was something deeper. An old Englishman told me next day it was the most genuine demonstration he had ever witnessed in America. The impressive feature of the scene was not the soldiers nor the sailors, nor the glittering guns and regimentals, but the men and women packed by thousands and tens of thousands behind the ropes along Fifth avenue, each of whom was a soldier or mother of soldiers to be. Young and old men, laborers and capitalists, stood bare-headed, shoulder to shoulder; women held their babies high and men lifted their little sons to their shoulders to let them see that low gun carriage as it passed. The procession passed on across the bridge, down the river to the old Uniondale cemetery; through the ways where many a time he had scampered when a boy they bore the hero home.

Is it any wonder that here in the streets, in the markets, in the foyers of the theatres, in the vestibules of the churches, in the glowing mills where stripped to the waist they hammer out the iron plates for battle-ships, men talk of war?

...

Richard Mansfield has been with us in his new play, "The Devil's Disciple," by G. Bernard Shaw. Saint Simon once said to Madame de Stael, "Madame, you are the most remarkable woman in France, and I am the most remarkable man; if we should have a child it would certainly be the most remarkable child in the world." By the same reasoning it would be safe to predict that the joint brain production of those two brilliant eccentrics, Richard Mansfield and G. Bernard Shaw would be the most eccentric and unusual of dramas. This fact was conclusively proven in "Arms and the man" and is no less adequately demonstrated by "The Devil's Disciple." It is quite impossible to judge such a production by the ordinary laws of dramatic art, for it flouts at all of them, and yet, by its biting satire, its brilliant, whimsical intellectuality, it achieves a distinct and startling originality, which many law-abiding dramas woefully lack. It acquires, indeed, an individual and almost personal flavor. One thing at least is certain; from the Shaw-Mansfield combination nothing commonplace can ever emanate, and in art it is only the commonplace which hopelessly and irrevocably damns.

The first act of "The Devil's Disciple" is sane, serious, rational and constructed on the most approved lines. The drama is supposed to take place at the beginning of the Revolutionary war. The scene opens in a New Hampshire farm house. Farmer Durgeon has gone to Springtown to see his brother hanged for smuggling and died there. The minister comes in to inform Mrs. Durgeon of her loss. Then comes a bit of

character work which is certainly a credit to Mr. G. Bernard Shaw. The widow denounces her husband's inconsiderateness in dying and leaving the burden of the family on her shoulders. The minister makes some conciliatory remarks about her aching heart, etc., and she cries out that she has never yielded to her heart. "Are we not taught that the heart is desperately wicked? I have never weakened, Sir, as you did when you married a pretty faced woman because you loved her!" She takes great credit unto herself for never having loved her husband, and proudly asserts that while she loved the scapegrace Durgeon who was hanged yesterday, she had prayed for grace and married his brother because he was a church goer. When the minister intimates that her husband has left the bulk of his property to his eldest son, Richard, a ne'er-do-well, like his uncle, she curses her son roundly. The poor minister makes an effort to restrain her and says: "Mrs. Durgeon, I once had some influence with you; when did I lose it?" The old Spartan folds her arms and, glaring at him, replies, "When you were weak enough to marry a woman you loved!"

Presently the family assembles to hear the will read. There is the mortuary array of psalm-singing, hypocritical aunts and uncles who have killed the heart to save the soul; the mother who has frozen herself in her icy creed, schooled herself in the gospel of maceration until she can curse her own son whom her narrow and pretentious piety has sent to the devil. Well, these forbidding people have come together to whine over the death of a man they never loved and to wrangle over his will, when Richard, the eldest son, the "Devil's Disciple," burst in, bringing with him the wholesome breath of life and the world. Nay, even before he enters, his laugh outside the door rings out like the cry of life in the damps of a charnel house. He jollies the aunts and tells uncle John it's the first time he has seen him since that worthy quit drinking, and flings a few irreverent remarks at the minister's pretty wife, who

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regards him in speechless horror. As he moved about puffing his pipe and venting his uncontrollable hatred of his kin and their life, in almost hysterical phrases, I thought of that terrible utterance of Kierkegaard's, "The only passion of my soul is scorn." There was one member of this dismal family I forgot to mention, a little cowed, frightened child, the natural daughter of Richard's uncle, who is taught that she is sin incarnate and is shunned as such. Among all the masterly things that Richard Mansfield has done in his time, he never did anything more delicate, more exquisite than his treatment of that miserable little child. From the first moment when, with that quick, sheltering gesture, too full of nervous intensity, so suggestive of childish sufferings still unfor-