

THE BULLETIN

OF THE
SANDON STUDIOS SOCIETY



SPRING, 1913.

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QUARTERLY—No. 5.

JUNE, 1913.

GORDONCRAIGERY.

FIRST DEPRESSIONS.

WHAT is wrong with the ordinary type of stage scenery? Nothing. What is wrong with the ordinary stage scenery of Mr. Gordon Craig? Everything. That is my opinion, which I shall now attempt to justify by reason.

Ordinary stage scenery comprises a certain number of real objects such as chairs, tables or crockery, and often representations of real objects such as houses, trees, fields, clouds, and so on. These latter need not be of photographic accuracy, but serve their purpose if they are sufficiently descriptive to create illusion. Of course, in amateur theatricals a forest may be suggested by a pot of ferns, but this is only suitable for comedy. When we are witnessing Tragedy there are occasions when our dominant feeling is one of awe, and we forget the conceit of imagination that such scenery demands of us. The fern would assert itself to be only a fern, and a false note of humour might be introduced. Thus Shakespeare tried to give his plays an elaborate setting, gave minutest instructions concerning costume and made use of every stage device that was known in his time; for he did not wish the attention of his audience to dwell upon the trappings of a play (as it would certainly do if they were defiant or incongruous) but upon the language and conduct of the persons represented.

Now Mr. Gordon Craig is trying to introduce symbolism into stage scenery. But symbolism is only possible where there has been an agreement concerning it. Anyone can invent hundreds of conventional flowers and the most ignorant person would recognise them; but a symbolic flower may represent something

quite different from itself, a recollection, a quality, or a country. An individual can make a convention; but it takes a group of people or even a nation to make a symbol. Language and calligraphy are the best examples of this. Every word and every letter has a signification that is not natural to it but has been imposed from without. If we examine the stage settings of Mr. Gordon Craig, we find that they are not imitative; we are told, however, that strange moods, effects of solemnity, tragedy, mystery, infinity, even gaiety are produced by these scenes. I am compelled to be vague because Mr. Gordon Craig himself is vague. Now this is my complaint about him, that he has invented many symbols on his own responsibility, and yet is very, very angry with us because we cannot accept them. But I contend further that even if we could agree upon them, and they became current coin in the theatrical world, the introduction of symbolism at all would not be a sign of advance but of retrogression. The inevitable tendency of the arts is towards the differentiation of their functions. We must conceive of the arts as a group of potentates each eager to increase his own province at the expense of his neighbours, and only yielding up territorial rights after a severe struggle. Now Language has given undivided energies to the expression of ideas by means of symbols. Anything that any other art can do in this respect is of the most infantile crudity. Is it not obvious then that painting, and architecture, too, for that matter, must surrender to Language all that is symbolic? For this reason I can see no future whatsoever for a "pictorial drama" such as is advocated by Mr. Gordon Craig. If we wish to have a silent drama, we can repair to the cinematograph. If there is to be any talk at all, let it be done by the characters of the play. The scenery has no business to conduct a conversation of its own at the same time. But not only is the voice of the dramatist to be drowned in the theatre but the actor is to be smothered with a mask. It is easy to understand why masks were used in ancient times. The

Greek religious drama was performed in the open air before a vast multitude. It would have been impossible for the actors to be distinguished one from another had they not worn conspicuous masks; but the necessity of masks to-day is not so obvious. The artificial cultivation of mood with its accompanying facial expression is no small element in the actor's art, and our compact little theatres have been especially designed in order that we may be able to appreciate his skill in this respect. It is plain, however, that Mr. Gordon Craig is hostile to nearly all that has hitherto been considered to be drama. Let us look at the destructive side of his propaganda. He is animated by an intense hatred of realism in all its forms. We learn from his "Foreword" that this dreadful thing first appeared in Paris, but only after 1789, has passed into Germany "and other restless places," but has not yet arrived in England or America. Realism, it appears, popularises ugliness, bears false witness against beauty, injures the minds of the people and so on. I suggest that to Mr. Gordon Craig realism is a sort of Bogey most imperfectly perceived, for in apparent contradiction to himself he says, "Unimportant is it what subject the artist turns to,—his pleasure is to illumine all that he touches so that it shall shine brightly." This sentence might also be taken as the motto for members of the so-called realistic school. "Even in the midst of squalor," they would contend, "a dramatist can find his subject-matter, if only he have imagination;" and although it is not the business of an artist to expose our social ills, beauty is not an absolute necessity in the drama, as it is in architecture, sculpture and painting. Ugliness in these latter arts is utterly inexcusable, for their products are stationary. An ugly building is a ceaseless fountain of corruption. But often when we emerge from the theatre the chief "impression" on our mind is of a conflict of character which has been so acute that all memory of the scenery is quite obliterated. It is the function of the dramatist to interpret human nature, and provided that he has conceived of a great personality, is he not at liberty to display

it in any environment he may choose? Besides, how much of the personality of ordinary men is doomed never to find expression! In life we are in fetters. Let us stretch our limbs upon the stage. As for scenery, it is sufficient if it produces the illusion required.

This is the old-fashioned Drama, and in my opinion its resources have barely been tapped. But to Mr. Gordon Craig it is extinct, and there must be something new—"The Art of the Theatre!" He says, "I want to place the English Theatre first on the list of European theatres." I contend that it is not in the power of a scenic artist to place the theatre high or low. The welfare of the theatre depends upon the genius of those who write for it. Again he says, "I want the English Actor (with mask or without mask) to assert the qualities of his first-class national temperament." I hope Mr. Gordon Craig is not trying to win over the English Actor by the subtle arts of flattery. Actors are said to be vain! In this instance, however, let their vanity be their production. Surely they would not hide their faces under false ones of the most hideous depravity.

One more quotation: Mr. Gordon Craig says of the theatre: "Only by its freedom can its health be restored." But there is one respect in which he himself would impose a restriction. All kissing upon the stage must be abolished, for obviously people cannot kiss when wearing masks. The catalogue informs us that the blind man (No. 72) "sees with his nose." So perhaps actors trained under Mr. Gordon Craig will be able to kiss with the backs of their heads.

A.T.E.

* * *

THE SPRING EXHIBITION.

A LARGE assembly, representative of art in its newest phases, attended the formal opening of the Sandon Studios Society's post-impressionist exhibition, on Saturday, February 15th, the ceremony being performed by Mr. Frank Rutter, curator of the Leeds Art Gallery.

Professor Reilly, who presided in the unavoidable absence of Mr. J. G. Legge, said Liverpool might be congratulated on having a society so closely identified with the life of the age as the Sandon Studios, a contrast to the "still death" of the Alma Tadema autumn show. The Sandon Studios Society was doing valuable work for Liverpool by demonstrating the modern movements in art, and by collecting different groups of artists together in separate collections. Painters found compeers in foreign countries, an English artist, for example, claiming a compeer in France or Germany. Having urged people visiting the current exhibition not to condemn what at first they cannot appreciate, the chairman introduced Mr. Rutter as one who, though formally a musician, was today a celebrated art critic. It was a sign of the times when a city like Leeds appointed a man of Mr. Rutter's vigorous personality to be curator of the municipal art gallery.

Mr. Rutter, who was very cordially received, said the term "post-impressionism" was of purely British origin, and he believed it had been coined to cover their ignorance of several art movements in France which were bracketed together in this country. Even in this exhibition, described as "post-impressionist," would be found examples of very different movements. Having endorsed the opinion of Mr. Arnold Bennett that artists of the advanced schools would be worshipped a few years hence as ignorantly as they were at present condemned, he proceeded to speak in some detail of the "neo-impressionists," the "wild beasts," and other sections of artists, chiefly Parisian, who had made new departures in painting. Some had adopted a true principle, but crystallised it into a dogma, while others had abandoned the allurements of portrait painting in a progressive search after truth in creation, in form, and in colour. High ideals had been pursued. The mere representation of nature was not art. Art was the creation of something and an emphasis of something rather than a copying. It was often said of the so-called post-impressionists that any child

could do what they did in painting. Yet a painter might choose to be inspired by Giotto rather than by Millais or by Burne-Jones, though Giotto painted in his frescoes for Italian cities trees such as one never saw in nature. Still, Giotto won the praise of Italy and of John Ruskin. To-day people visited a municipal art gallery, and were bored with the indifferently painted pictures associated with some stupidly sentimental interest, such as an episode in the Cavalier v. Round-head campaign, or the Discovery of a Stowaway at Sea. He did not think, however, that anyone would be bored by these post-impressionist pictures. Some of the works should prove stimulating, and others might provoke disgust, but it was better to be disgusted than to be bored. If a picture made one think, it had accomplished its purpose to a large extent. Among the "wild beasts" might be included Mr. Augustus John, of whose association with Liverpool they should all be proud, Mr. C. J. Holmes, curator of the National Portrait Gallery in London, and Mr. John Duncan Ferguson, who was well represented in the Autumn Exhibition at the Walker Art Gallery. Now and then a charlatan might be found among this advanced school, but it produced nothing like the "pot-boilers" to be seen at any Royal Academy exhibition, and the "wild beasts" having made sacrifices for their ideals, ought to have the credit of sincerity.

The club stenographer not being present and there being a general hubbub in the room, it is impossible to reproduce word for word the vote of thanks to Mr. Rutter, proposed by Mr. Fletcher, an eminent American: but he was generally understood to say that they had a rotten Art Gallery in Liverpool; that in the Art Gallery, Arkansas, Ar., and Memphis, Ohio, they could show a picture or two; that art had not originated in the States; that the 18th century art was painted from photographs; that Constable in spite of his name was a photographer; that photography was the bane of the arts, but that photographers were the blessing of the artists; that until photography was invented no one under-

stood composition or design in a picture; that a photographer showed them how to do it; that Constable couldn't have been an artist because he was a photographer, and wal—the Post-Impressionists were great artists because they were bad photographers, and vice versa.

Mr. Dibdin, curator of the Walker Art Gallery, seconded the vote of thanks, but not being a club member we refrain from reporting a single word of his speech.

Mr. Arbuthnot, who also occupied a seat on the dais, proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman, Professor Reilly, in the following words, "When I first came to Liverpool a few months ago I found art in a bad way . . ." The remainder of the sentence was lost amidst the laughter of the gods on Olympus.

During the three weeks allotted to the exhibition, everybody interested in Art in Liverpool and its vicinity, flocked to the Sandon. On the evening of Wednesday, February 26th, Mr. Roger Fry, the principal exponent of Post-Impressionism in this country and the organiser of the Grafton Gallery Exhibitions in London, dwelt on the aims of post impressionist design in an illustrated lecture.

He showed that the present movement was an endeavour to make art pure. To many people in the street a picture meant a cinematograph. He felt that the cinematograph was bound to win in competition with pictures that illustrated fact. Take, for instance, the moving pictures of the wreck of the Veronese, which was one of the most thrilling spectacles he had ever seen. These pictures created a sheer emotion far surpassing any feeling of the kind he had ever experienced, but he thought that illustration, like a hardy weed, had destroyed pure art.

The cinematograph, together with photography, assisted the artist by demonstrating that illustration could be performed better by mechanical means. The result would be the separation of the two aspects of graphic art, making the pure artist pure and allowing him to concentrate his powers more on pure form. Blake divined some-

thing of the emotional possibilities of pure design, and in this he stood almost alone among English painters.

People talked a lot about the meaning of a picture, but they generally concentrated their attention only on the objects represented. But if a picture were a work of art it possessed a meaning that could not adequately be expressed in words. Much of the controversy about pictures was rendered futile by the fact that the opponents were looking at totally different things in the same picture.

The so-called post-impressionist school and the recent creations in French art, said Mr. Fry, indicated a desire to advance the study of pure form by more conscious methods than had ever been employed.

* * *

POST-IMPRESSIONISM.

SECOND DEPRESSIONS.

WHEN somebody said to me "Do you like Shelley?" I answered "No, I prefer port;" and when I was confronted with a flower, I asked, "What does it prove?" I suppose I look like a critic, and when I was asked to write about the Post Impressionists, of course, I said, "Yes." Now, I really don't see what all this painting is for. Architecture is all right—we must live in houses, you know—but most of what is generally called painting appears to me to be unnecessary and meaningless. It in no way administers to my personal comfort, it does not even help me to digest my food, as the drama does; so, to tell you the truth, it was not with pleasurable feelings that I entered the Post-Impressionist Exhibition; and I may add that it was not with pleasurable feelings that I emerged therefrom. Now, I have only one method of criticism, and it is this—to insist upon reasons for everything. If anybody says "Your attitude towards new work should be a sympathetic one; and you should not argue, but rely upon your artistic insight, poetic feeling, imagination and taste," I reply, "I approach all new work, for

the matter of that, in a spirit of hostility, and I have no artistic insight, poetic feeling, imagination, nor taste; and I *will* argue. Artistic insight, indeed! Bah!" And if I am called "Philistine," or "carping mathematician," I don't mind a bit. For I like mathematics, I like to see things placed in rows, if they are susceptible of such treatment. I like to tidy up drawers, and sort things one from another, I like what is definite, what can be clearly perceived at once.

If a fruiterer has a quantity of melons, cucumbers, oranges, plums, grapes, and every kind of fruit, he feels compelled to put them in groups according to their respective kinds; but if he has only two rotten apples and a gooseberry the necessity for arrangement is not so apparent. If reason and analogy are of the slightest value anywhere, I maintain that if an artist has a wealth of ideas and many means of artistic expression, he will find it to his advantage to codify both in a logical manner; he can then survey them better himself, and display them better to others. It appears to me that we need most urgently to-day, firstly, a clear analysis of the functions of the arts, which analysis would infuse fresh life into them all, and, secondly, accurate definitions of every technical term used, each of which would be the symbol of an intellectual victory that would give to the artist the clarity of purpose that results in style. But what shall we say of the critics who aid and abet the artist in his resistance to those who would demand exactness from him? Are they not traitors to their calling, sycophants, cowards? What have the critics to do snivelling at the heels of artists, copying their wretched phrases "æsthetic instinct" and the like, phrases which were especially coined to make all criticism nugatory—to draw the teeth of the critics! For how can imposture ever be exposed except by means of reason? It would appear that not only the works, but even the utterances of painters are to be immune from judgment by an intellectual standard! It is obvious, however, that when they employ as their medium the written or the spoken

word they have left the art of painting, and have begun to practise the art of language, and their achievements here must be judged by the canons which apply to the art of language, canons which are concerned with style and manner but to a very much greater extent with coherence and logicity of subject matter.

In the "Afterword" to his catalogue Mr. Gordon Craig says "Cubism, Post-Impressionism and Futurism, are not original. They are the work of a horde of imitators—the imitators of the faults of men of genius." I must confess I was rather staggered by this authoritative pronouncement, especially as the method by which Mr. Gordon Craig had arrived at his conclusion was not indicated ever so slightly. I was determined, however, to seek further light upon the subject, and was very glad when I heard that Mr. Roger Fry was going to lecture in the Exhibition Room. Needless to say, I listened to his words with the most rapt attention. His demolition of the old-fashioned type of painting, the merely descriptive, the didactic and the problem painting, must have pleased everybody. Of course, painting must not encroach upon the domain of language, nor upon that of photography. Oscar Wilde and other people have stated this before, but it requires to be stated again and again. I pricked up my ears when Mr. Roger Fry began to talk about "pure form," but when he proposed to illustrate the meaning of this expression I was all agog with excitement. He showed us a small constellation of dots arranged in a simple geometrical pattern. The pattern signified nothing, and yet if you took a part of it away it was ruined; it had cohesion, an identity of its own apart from that of him who made it, it was a self-sufficient thing. I was delighted beyond measure, for I was convinced that Mr. Roger Fry was about to give utterance to the view I myself held—that upon a plane surface the only pure form was geometrical form, and that all other forms must necessarily carry alien associations with them. Imagine my dismay, therefore, when he proceeded to speak of his pattern as if it were not a type of pure form, but

merely an illustration! He showed us many pictures of human beings, animals, trees, and still life, all of which, he declared, had the same quality of pure form which the little pattern possessed. For this assertion he offered no kind of proof. But in the case of the pattern its cohesion was patent to all the people in the room, and it bore the test of analytical investigation. When we are told that "one cannot help feeling" that such-and-such a picture has "rhythmic design," or "decorative unity," or exhibits "abstract form" or a "logic of space relations," we are surely entitled to some definition of these phrases. The use of the word "logic" must especially be noted; people who lay claim to logic cannot be surprised if they are pressed for an exposition of it. As a matter of fact I did not "feel" any of the things which Mr. Roger Fry said I ought to have felt.

As I am incapable of æsthetic emotions, I can only give you some of the thoughts which this exhibition provoked in me; this is easy, as thoughts, unlike emotions, can always be communicated from one person to another. For the purpose of this criticism I make use of my recollections of the first Post-Impressionist Exhibition held in London a few years ago. Now, it appeared to me that the artists whom Mr. Roger Fry groups into one movement, exhibit the most diverse and even contradictory tendencies, and really comprise several movements. The only thing in common between them all is a revulsion from realism. I maintain that Gauguin would have recoiled with horror from Matisse or Picasso. Let me try to explain this assertion. For convenience, I shall divide the pictures roughly into three sets, and take each of these painters as representative of one of them; but before considering Gauguin as a decorator, I should like to mention some of the qualities which we may reasonably demand of a decorative painting. Firstly, there should be as little perspective as possible, for it is to be seen from many points of view besides the point of sight; secondly, the shadows shall be absent, or not pronounced, because shadows are restless things; to fix them on canvas is like put-

ting a pin through a butterfly; thirdly, in subject matter, there must be repose; for instance, a woman in the act of threading a needle would be an ill subject for a decorative painting. We may also insist upon a little dignity in the subject. For my own part I do not think much of a decorative painting that dispenses with the human figure. The Greeks always employed it both in vase and frieze. Let there be conventional treatment of natural forms, of trees and clouds and water, but it is dangerous to take much liberty with the human figure, for the result is apt to be ludicrous. The Japanese conventionalised a man's hair, and his clothes, but never distorted his body, in the way, for instance, that Matisse does in his sculpture. Again, the type of picture we are considering must give pleasure from afar; hence large masses of colour arranged in flat planes, very bold and simple composition are most desirable. It is in this respect that the painting of Gauguin excels. However far you recede from them they maintain their character. This is the style for mural decoration. The school of Gauguin aims at beauty, and produces the type of painter that architects, I imagine, would most delight to employ. But I am speaking of Gauguin as he was in his second period. All throughout his first period he was in a state of spiritual perdition, in which state the vast majority of those who call themselves Post-Impressionists still continue to linger. For in his first period he was of opinion that the subject matter of a painting was of little importance, and that the manner of vision was everything. Thus he thought that however insignificant an object might be, if we could only depict it as we imagine it would be, as seen through the eyes of a child, some fresh interest would be imparted to it. But this is an error. The crude drawings of a child do not represent his real vision of the objects concerned, but his incapacity to depict them properly. He is aiming at realism all the time. However, as reason is forbidden to the devotee of art, this simple fact is obscured, and we have a whole crop of pictures by grown up people displaying a childishness

which is both affected and real. But Gauguin soon discovered that realism of manner was not the only cause of dullness in a picture, but that too much particularity of subject matter may be another cause. That was why he fled from civilization and drew the savages of Tahiti. He wanted to find humanity free from accidentals. His journey was unnecessary, for there is such a humanity in our midst, only waiting for the painter to reveal it to us; but in my opinion, by his desire to reveal it, Gauguin showed that he had rightly apprehended the function of painting.

The school of Matisse appears to be making experiments with colour, and I hope it will be successful. The school of Picasso has for its object the expression of moods. Its members are tremendously sincere. Their pictures represent exactly what they feel. All I can say is "If you really feel things like that, keep them dark, keep them to yourself as a ghastly secret, tell them not in Gath, publish them not in the streets of Askalon; for there are occasions when sincerity becomes a vice."

A. T. E.

* * *

CROWBOROUGH COMMON.

A STORM-TOSSED sea of clouds;
wind-swept and black,
Grey distance where the earth and
heavens meet
Far-reaching yellow broom, and moorland
track
Worn hard and bare by wandering shep-
herds' feet.
While evening, in her dark and sombre
hood
Outspreads her purple cloak o'er Ashdown
wood.
A sea-gull's distant cry, discordant, hoarse,
Echoes, then dies away, for silence deep
Has cast her spell, and heath, and moor-
land sleep,
As night mists from the valley veil the
gorse.

With lingering thoughts of vague regret
I turn,
Leaving the moorland life, its subtle spell,
The eerie tales its drowsy voices tell,
To where the lights of Crowborough dance
and burn.

N. D. H.



THE SPOOF.

THE cardboard-cut is a translation of delirium tremens, not an illusion.

Infernal Patronage sets forth on his Quest for the Muddled in Art, which develops into Inebriation. He comes to the slopes of Abandon, down which are Precipitated all the Contemporary Postures of Artiness (direct from the Grafton and Sackville Gates of the Metropolitan Paradise), accompanied by quantities of Sand-on the Eyes of the Studio-acious imprisoned on the Dizzy Heights below.

At the sight and sound of the rocks and Craigs, the groans, Chownes, and Johns (please rhyme for the sake of Æsthetic Uniformity) he is Overwhelmed with Post-

Depressionism and beats a Tom-Tom, singing "Rule Britannia" in a Paroxysm of Transcendental Cacophony, as though he would wring the Necks of the Paradoxical Abnormalities reverberating to the Alluring Gyration of Dionysian Ragtime. Beyond, in the Dim Mystery of the Tea Sanctuary, the Calmful Chinsk, who personifies the Repertoracity of Art, the Absorbent, 'Airy and Atmospheric (Lip, Chin, and Sky), feels the Reiterant Strains of Primæval Folk-Song, vibrating through its Digestive Organ, arousing the Dormant Blasphemies which Overflow in Mighty Daubs, being Converted into the "Irresistible Jimmy-o-Goblins that never fail," spanning the immeasurable Gulf between the Nebulosities of Bohemious Conversation and the False Realities of Flat Ale.

CARROLLUS.

* * *

A LAMENT.

HAD you not given all, yourself, your soul,
Denying naught, for love demands the whole;
Had you not met my every kiss with such
A fire of love and passion that your touch
Could kindle fire:
Had you not loved, even as I loved too,
I had not lost my world when I lost you.

N. D. H.

* * *

ASSOCIATION.

A MOMENT ago as I looked out, watching the cheerless twilight deepen in the square, a little child—a ragged, pinched, wee mite—pattered by wailing with a most lamentable cry that struck sharply upon the silence. The cry died away, and as it passed out of hearing, my mind, by a strange freak, sped from the city to a scene in the far Western Highlands.

I had worked all day with the shepherds separating the lambs from the ewes and was now resting on a knoll watching and listening. The bereaved ewes hung about among the heather making a spectacle most pitiful and forlorn. Not a head went down to nibble, and the solemn brown eyes of

the beasts sought vacantly for the stolen lambs, now penned in the fank. But more moving than the sight was the sound. The grave immensity of the Highland scene was vibrant with innumerable sorrows. At the edge of the wailing one detected the pathetic quavers of individual meh-mehing, but at its heart the sound rose into a unison mournfully passionate and urgent. It was a dry, piercing, tireless lamentation, like a despair that is past words.

At last the flocks of stricken mothers were being driven away, and past where I sat went to their accustomed grazing-grounds a doleful procession of mehing ewes. The stolid shepherds stalked behind; the collies yelped and chased, and at the menace of the dogs the sheep made reluctant progress. Momentarily one would face round and meh with a sharp intentness as if seeking in the dismal chorus the dear note of her young. So with lookings back and endless wailing the ewes moved grudgingly away.

I watched them till they passed from view. But ere the sound of them had quite died down, a mincing, eager crunching on the bridle-path close by arrested me. It came from a weak, sickly-like black-faced lammie running on the gravel. The little thing panted with mouth quaintly agape, and every few yards it stopped to cry a long thin trembling cry. It passed me at a queer, intent, jerky trot, and in the stillness of the growing twilight I listened till its shrill grieving faded among the lonely hills.

I suppose it was the same note of anguish in the cries of town child and mountain lammie that so strangely associated in my mind just now the city and the distant hillside. A. P.

OVERHEARD IN WILLIAM BROWN STREET.

She—The poor Shakespeare Theatre! I was afraid it would come to that . . .
And now I hear they're going to turn the Walker Art Gallery into a Picture Palace.

He—Then Art will get a bit of its own back.

AN EVENING AT THE PHILODORIC SOCIETY.

I WAS sitting the other day in my club, when my friend, Sir Morbid Ozone, grasped me by the hand and said warmly, "My dear fellow, you are indeed well met! We are just in time for the performance of the Philodoric Society."

Sir Morbid is a man that has still got some new whim-wham—once it was Wagner, then Wiertz, and the other day half-a-dozen French novelists whom nobody has ever heard of but himself.

"Not know the Philodoric," cries he; "the most wonderful development of the soul thro' the senses? Talk about music, literature, painting—my dear sir, mere paltry mechanical stuff! The nose, sir, the nose"—here he twisted his nostrils—"what sense can compare with that of the nose? Is not the olfactory nerve, as learned physicians tell us, the first of all the cranial nerves? Is not the nose the proscenium of the face?" Seizing me by the arm, and holding forth thus, we stepped into a cab and were driven to the Philodoric Hall.

The room, which was about 7 feet high, was plainly furnished without any hangings. The performers sat at one end, the air entering at their backs and being wafted slowly past the noses of the audience, and escaping by an orifice at the far end. Sir Morbid found me a seat, and sat down beside me.

The people appeared chiefly curious on account of their dress; the women, with their short hair and tall collars, at first sight had the aspect of flabby men; while the men, with their long hair, lace collars, and painted faces, resembled very plain ladies. Their faces were not remarkable for intelligence, but I observed that their noses seemed expanded to a surprising extent, for I discovered that a person was considered to have no soul unless he could dilate his nostrils like a horse or twitch them like a dog to catch any fleeting odour.

I could not understand the general conversation at all, which seemed to run

entirely on smells and souls and other such intangible matters, and so I was rather relieved when the orchestra took their places amid the thunderous use of pocket-handkerchiefs.

The first composer was Mr. Lushington. "Rather a mystic," whispered Ozone, "and quite Swinburnesque, but a beautiful nose."

The piece was called a "Reverie Religieuse," and he performed it on a small table, well in front of the orchestra. He was furnished with several bowls, vases, tripods and chafing dishes, and in a few minutes the room was filled with a heavy fume of unguents and oils, and a blue haze of incense. The company got up and crowded round the table, a rapt expression in every eye, and every nostril working like the gills of a fish. The next thing I was aware of was that I was fervently grasped by a warm, moist hand of a sumptuous negro-looking lady, whose nostrils dilated in an ecstasy like a heifer's. Next minute, the cloud growing thicker, in a religious rapture she endeavoured to give me a close embrace, from which I extricated myself with some difficulty, and escaped to a chair in a far corner, where I sat in a trance till the piece was ended and the windows opened, which somewhat revived me; whereupon I caught sight of Morbid's pale face almost engulfed beside the massive charms of one of the lady Philodorists.

Several perfumers followed this, among others a very subtle and delicate maestro, whose odours were so fleeting that they could only be detected by his applying his thumb and forefinger, previously smeared, to the nostrils of his odoraters, one by one, to their no small satisfaction. This caused me some uneasiness, as the gentleman next but one to me seemed to be suffering from catarrh; and sure enough next morning I woke up with a severe cold in my head.

After a short interval, Herr Hogbin, the famous realist virtuoso, from Berlin (as Morbid whispered me), stood up, and prefaced his symphony with a few remarks.

"The ideal and unctuous perfumes of Mr. Lushington and others," he said, "are all well enough in their way; but to the sentient and discerning nostril the commonest paths of life furnish savours on every hand full of interest and beauty; and it is from these humble whiffs that my selection to-night will be taken. Perchance in this emasculated age there may be some present who fear to smell the truth; if this be so, let me beg them at once to retire, lest they be offended with the honesty and simplicity with which we picture nature."

"I'm afraid you'll find him rather strong in parts," said Morbid. But the truth's the truth, you know, and he's not the man to flinch.

The first movement was an *andante con moto*, and its leading motive was a London 'bus on a rainy morning in summer. The orchestra each held a small vial with a curious top in their hands, which they opened and shut with great dexterity, now swelling out into a full body of harmony which nearly stifled me, and anon dying away into the faintest aroma of reeky mackintoshes and sodden shoe-leather. At the end of the movement it seemed to be the thing to discuss what each shade of perfume represented, and there arose a sharp debate between two ladies sitting near me as to the meaning of a short sour smell which came about half way through. The discussion, which was waged with some spirit between Mrs. Wrekin and Miss Bubblijock, was rather too particular for me, and I again shifted my seat.

The next movement was a short one, for which I thanked the Lord; it was an *adagio langoroso*, founded on the perfume of a stuffy room in the early morning. I edged as near to the door as I could, whispering Mrs. Wrekin that I always liked to be at a little distance so as to get the general blended effect. She was afraid I should miss the full value, "And it's so true," said she in a rapture, "I've observed it myself dozens of times."

The last movement that ended this powerful composition was an *allegro pastorale vivace, quasi fugato*. It began with the three main themes, given out quite

simply, one after the other—hog-stye, cow-byre, and dog-kennel, and then, after a slight embroidering on each theme, came the development section, in which these three wound in and out in an endless variety, occasionally taking up a new odour from the loose-box, rabbit-hutch, and sheep-pen, which merged imperceptibly into the others, forming new and surprising combinations; when suddenly the allegro stopped short and dropped into a *largo sostenuto* of the frouzy fume of the hen-coop; but in an instant it was overwhelmed by a rush from the middle, which nearly threw me on my back, and then back again to the first three themes, which swirled along together, until towards the close a perfectly new subject was introduced—the "graves" from a hop-yard—with four grand open major puffs, the most powerful I ever smelt, and then a short but stinking coda of hog-stye, cow-byre, dog-kennel, muck-midden, and rabbit-hutch brought this odoriferous symphony to an end.

Everyone crowded round Herr Hogbin to congratulate him, and Morbid beckoned me to approach and be presented. The great man was somewhat affectedly waving a branch of roses in his hand, and thinking to compliment him, and glad of the change, I leant forward to smell at them; instantly, with great dexterity, he withdrew the roses, and produced from under his frock-coat a brown earthenware jar half filled with a rich compost, which he thrust immediately beneath my nose. "There!" said he, "who would smell the puny exhalations of a rose, when he can snuff up the rich invigorating matrix from which all its virtue proceeds."

Finding the compost a little more than I could stand, I endeavoured to make a complaisant answer, and hurriedly left the club precincts. Nor can I be tempted back by Ozone's descriptions of Herr Hogbin's further efforts of realism.

P.A.

CLUB SOCIALS.

THE following Club Socials were held before Easter. On January 17th, the artist members arranged a debate on the controversial subject of Post-Impressionism. Mr. Malcolm Arbuthnot led off with a short paper, which was followed by general discussion; this included some severe criticism by Mr. P. Abercrombie. On January 31st members had the privilege of hearing Mr. Lascelles Abercrombie read his play, "The Adder," before its production the following week at the Repertory Theatre. On February 4th, Professor Ramsay Muir opened an informal discussion on Liverpool and its tendencies, in the course of which the Walker Art Gallery came in for a good deal of abuse. On March 14th, the winter season was brought to an end by a most successful evening, when Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Muspratt acted as host and hostess. The proceedings opened with a variety of entertainment and ended with a dance, and it was noticeable that by the end of the evening most of the members and visitors had by mysterious means changed from normal into fancy dress.

The Summer Dance is to be held on June 17th, 9 p.m. to 2 a.m.

The Annual Meeting will take place on Monday, 30th June, at 5 p.m.

* * *

NEW MEMBERS.

ARKLE, B., Parkfield, Spital, Bromborough.
 BELL, R. N., Elsmere, Birkenhead Road, Gt. Meols.
 BLIGHT, F. J., 78, Rodney Street.
 BOSANQUET, Prof., 24, Devonshire Road.
 BURRELL, Kenneth, 19, Fulwood Park, Aigburth.
 CARVER, Guy A., Cranage Hall, Holmes Chapel, Cheshire.
 CRAIGMILE, Mrs., Cluny, Manor Road, Liscard.
 CRICHTON, Douglas, Montpelier, New Brighton.
 " Mrs. " Brighton.
 GARSIDE, J., 4, Buckingham Avenue
 HACKETT, Miss N. D., 4, Maryland St.

HILES, H., Blakeway, Sunningdale Road, New Brighton.
 KEARNS, Miss Audrey, Barnston, Cheshire.
 KELLY, Miss G., 15, Curzon Rd., Prenton.
 KENDALL, C. K., 16, Mariner's Drive, Blundellsands.
 MELLY, Heywood, 13, Belvidere Road
 O'HAGAN, Mrs. " "
 PROBST, Miss Mary, South Grange, Park Road N., Oxtan.
 PRYOR, A. R., Elgin, Agnes Road, Blundellsands.
 ROBERTS, Dr., Mill Lane Infirmary.
 SEATON SMITH, Dr. Anna, 30, Princes Avenue.
 THOMPSON, Edwin, 25, Sefton Drive.
 WALLACE, Mrs., 1, Gambier Terrace, Hope Street.
 ZIEGLER, Miss Edith, Gorsfield, Noctorum,
 " Jack, " B'head.

THE following ladies and gentlemen are in charge of various departments and may be addressed at the Sandon Studios Society, Liberty Buildings, School Lane, Liverpool.

Hon. Sec. General Committee, Mrs. Calder
 Hon. Treasurer Mr. Sewell Bacon
 Hon. Sec. Executive Committee,
 Miss Lilian Allen
 Hon. Sec. Entertainments Committee,
 Miss M. Bulley
 Hon. Sec. Artists and Exhibition Committee Mr. Noel Irving
 Hon. Sec. House Committee,
 Mrs. Abraham
 Life Class Stewards Miss Page and
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Extra copies of THE BULLETIN (price threepence each) may be had from the Housekeeper, Sandon Studios Society, Liberty Buildings, Liverpool.

Pictures, prints, and publications by members, may always be obtained through the Society.

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