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The New Books

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS OF ITALY. By Henry Russell Spencer. World Book Co., Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York, 1932.

"WITHIN a large part of the political world, parliamentary government shows fatal weaknesses, and among the several collapses of recent years, the most striking change to a new form is found in Italy. Fascism obviously aims to establish something very different from a temporary, arbitrary control in a time of crisis. It proclaims the inauguration of a new order, in which government no longer is mere police power, an enforcer of legal rights, but the co-ordinator and regulator of all activities of life, embracing and dominating the entire interests of man. Fascism admits no rival in society, and it adopts the principle that the State, under Fascist control, must receive universal and supreme devotion. It permits of no division of citizens between parties with rival programs and opposing political theories. It admits only one party and one doctrine."

The quotation is from the editors' Introduction to Professor Spencer's sketchy but well-balanced volume on the government and politics of present-day Italy, and it sets forth in outline the wholesale political reorganization that has been brought about in that country. The aim of the "Government Hand-book" series of which this is part, is to provide a volume for each of the European countries treating of the political and administrative organization, each written by an author who combines a thorough knowledge of the subject and a personal acquaintance with the country and system which he undertakes to describe. To appraise the present struggle in Italy correctly, one must view it in the vast perspectives of Italian geography, ethnology, society, and above all in its historical background. Let me hurry to state, however, that while Professor Spencer has done so very scrupulously, his book should not be taken as a substitute for serious, painstaking study. But it is an admirable introduction to such study and an excellent survey of the field, and as such, therefore, it fills its place in the series very well. For a decade Italy has presented to the world the spectacle of a government in a state of transition. To be sure, Fascism is now firmly rooted in the political and social soil of the old forms of liberalism and democracy have been thrown overboard, opposition is silenced or at best reduced to inactivity. Party government has been banished in the face of one party—Fascism—which not only has all the power, but also "assumes the sole right of discussion

"Some Experiments in Appreciation of the Contributions of Our Foreign-Born Citizens to American Culture" is the sub-title of this interesting book. It is a record, profusely and handsomely illustrated, of various public exhibitions that have been held in several large American cities of the arts and skills of immigrants from all lands. Their varied customs, traditions, social attitudes and racial characteristics constitute a problem of assimilation and harmonization to which increasing and, it must be said, more judicious and farsighted attention is now being given than in the early postwar years. In a foreword, contributed by Shelby M. Harrison, general director of the Russell Sage Foundation, which issues this book, this more en-

lightened attitude is acknowledged in the following words: "Some of the efforts at Americanization were without doubt short-sighted and ill-considered, particularly those which assumed that the immigrant had nothing to contribute, that on landing he must discard all the values precious to him in his homeland. A better approach and one which has gained support through more recent years springs from an appreciation of what he has brought to his newly chosen country. . . . No other country, it must be remembered, has received such gifts as have come to the United States from the homelands of Europe. What this book aims to help are the various movements "consciously setting about to discover and conserve the best qualities which our immigrants have brought." But the way must be a friendly way, according to Lincoln's advice that "If you would win a man to your cause first convince him that you are his friend." And an abrupt manner with the immigrant is not calculated to make him friendly. But, by making the immigrant conscious of the fact that his contributions are valued, especially those in the arts and skills, which are universal, the way is made easier. The book sets down how this method has been utilized through folk-art exhibitions, etc. The part played by Italian immigrants is, of course, given its due high praise. Angelo Perri, the Piccirilli brothers, the Italian members of the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, and Nicola D'Ascenzo are but a few of the names mentioned. Yet no nation is favored; all are regarded as instruments in an orchestra, and all are necessary for the desired result.

FRANCESCO GRILLI

IMMIGRANT GIFTS TO AMERICAN LIFE. By Allen H. Eaton. 185 pages. Illustrated. New York: The Russell Sage Foundation, \$3.00.

In Italy, long famous for its marionettes, tradition has grown, ascribing to almost every province its own puppet, which is always jealously given a prominent part in the performances at the local marionette theatre. The natural play spirit of the people finds peculiar expression in these little clowns of its imagination. A whole literature of play and song has developed about this which is, doubtless, the oldest and quaintest group of puppets in Europe at least. The legend of friendly rivalry among certain of them is known to every little mountain town of Piedmont; to every remote marina of Calabria; is carried out in every puppet show from Genova to Taranto. Italy tends to grow closer together through the marionettes," writes the author. It is with these things in mind that this

PUPPET PARADE. By Carol Della Chiesa. 242 pages. Illustrated by Helene Carter. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. \$2.00

and of opinion . . . " and since Fascist doctrine is "essentially Nietzschean, it calls for a Super-Man. The practical governing system is now framed on Nietzschean lines. Italy's demographic, economic, educational, and spiritual destiny, within herself and as a member of a delicate balance of European forces, is now pivoted on the pathetically narrow base of a single human being. That man, however great he may be, in moments of intimate self-examination must imagine human limitations, and ask himself, 'L'Etat, c'est moi? Am I God?'" On the whole, the author very judiciously refrains from commenting on the absence of parliamentary government in Italy or from discouraging Italy on the challenge of democracy held in Fascism. He assumes his task to be that of the reporter and therefore to set forth how the system works. So that in the twenty-three brief chapters and in fewer than 300 pages is told, in plain and simple language, and against the background of Italian social life, not only the story of the evolution of the Fascist movement and how it finally captured power, but also how it has brought about such a complete and radical transformation of political life and thought. The author certainly does not come to any conclusion as to whether the achievements of Fascism have been for the better or worse, or whether or not Italy is now a better place to live in. That, and the discretion, and perhaps the taste, of the reader. If the question were put to Professor Spencer, his answer would be another question: "Does the modern man want liberty, or a life efficiently ordered for him by a ruling power set over and above him?"

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* Asterisk denotes that article appears also in Italian in the section "Atlantica in Italiano".

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As our article on Page 5 states, while peace has been entrusted to the League of Nations, the League "is merely attempting to preserve the status quo, a status quo that is intolerable to a number of European nations openly clamoring for revision, and even threatening to resort to arms for this purpose. These revisionist nations claim that peace must be based on justice and equality, without special privileges or hegemonies that can no longer be borne. Justice, they say, precedes peace."

It was during this visit that he was shown, and approved, a plan put forward by the Italian Premier, which aimed at bringing peace and security to Europe realistically, by first removing or revising the causes of friction, namely, the unequal provisions of the peace treaties that have long been under fire. The plan constituted the first official, as distinguished from unofficial, recognition of the movement for revision that has disturbed European tranquillity for more than a decade.

The eyes of the world were focused on Rome, the Eternal City, last month, when Premier MacDonald of Great Britain, viewing with alarm the increasing signs of nationalist tension on the European continent, paid a visit to Premier Mussolini of Italy to discuss the situation. As he said when he arrived at the Rome airport, where Il Duce personally welcomed him and accompanied him from his plane, "England and Italy are two of the strongest governments in Europe. Their chiefs must put their heads together to find some means whereby peace can be rendered secure. This is what I am here for."

The Cover This Month

TOPICS OF THE MONTH

By Rosario Ingarjola

ART AS A COMMON RACIAL DENOMINATOR

THE Town of Bairreuth, that shrine of Wagnerian glory, has conferred its honorary citizenship upon Arturo Toscanini in recognition of the great Italian's services rendered to the memory of the immortal German. The honor was conveyed in a letter which contained some notable sentiments—ringing words which deserve to be repeated and remembered:

"Richard Wagner, great German artist, was honorary citizen of Bologna; we are happy to be able to greet you, one of the greatest Italian masters of tone, as honorary citizen of our city, situated in the very heart of Germany. High art knows no geographical boundaries. Your language addresses itself to the people of all tongues, demanding and receiving comprehension. Particularly in these days of perplexing discords between the peoples is it the most potent medium of carrying to victory over all misunderstandings the unifying idea of human worth."

These beautiful expressions come as a timely reminder that Hitler's aberrations, persecutions and chauvinistic antics are not at all representative of the best thought and soul of Germany—the Germany of Goethe, Heine and Wagner. Art, in its many manifestations, is the great leveler of all hates and prejudices—the greatest common denominator of the races. In its never-ending flight, it soars above our poor humanities, to be fused into one organic whole: the Brotherhood of Man.

Yet it is sad to note that this spirit has not quite permeated some of our so-called best minds. Only the other day Congressman Dickstein of New York proposed a new immigration Bill designed to exclude "the horde of foreign actors" who swamp the American shores to the serious and, alas, irreparable detriment of our home talent.

It must be added, however, that the gentleman from New York was quick to explain that his *usage* would not apply "in the case of any

actor of distinguished merit and ability." That being the case, it is respectfully submitted that when his Bill becomes law Mr. Dickstein be appointed as a Board of One to determine the "distinguished merit and ability" of every foreign actor who wishes to enter the United States.

Is it any wonder that sometimes intellectual Europe laughs at America and brands us as primitive and uncouth?

THE OBSTACLES TO PEACE

ALL the world has by now become used to the legend, carefully nursed during the last ten years, that Italy represents the chief obstacle to peace. Every word uttered by Mussolini has been construed by certain people to contain God knows what hidden and sinister menaces to the peace and well-being of the world.

Charges upon charges have been heaped upon the head of the Italian Premier, with systematic virulence: apostle of war, sabre-rattling dictator, blood-thirsty imperialist: no adjective has been picturesque enough to describe his statements and his attitudes upon national and international questions. A legend, of course, pure and simple, but it has



(Continued on Page 48)

THE DUKE OF ABRUZZI: A MAN AMONG PRINCES

SOME men are born great, others have greatness thrust upon them and still others achieve greatness. It is the thought is Shakespeare's. It comes instinctively to one's mind in recalling the life and deeds of the late Duke of Abruzzi.

He was born great, but he didn't consider the accident of birth as a sufficient foundation for greatness. He had greatness thrust upon him,

from Rome.

Let us remember that the spectacle of an English Prime Minister flying to Rome to receive the gospel of peace is not only new, but symptomatic. As always, the light comes from Rome.

It seemed at first as if the plan would meet with general approval—and indeed it was hailed in resplendent circles as a great step forward. But very soon a search began for secret motives and nefarious purposes. France, as usual, led in the search, followed by her faithful satellites which comprise the Little Entente.

France's opposition has confirmed the suspicion that the real obstacles to peace are to be found beyond the Italian Alps. Nevertheless the legend still exists. Yet the Italians have a proverb which is quite applicable to the present situation: "Il tempo è galantuomo." While difficult to translate, the adage is easy to understand: let the future tell its story—and its vindication.

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Mussolini's Four-Power Peace Plan

*How the Project, Which Aims at Peaceful Revision
of Treaties Where Needed and Security*

Guarantee by a Concert of Powers,

as Viewed by the

World Press.

WHEN Premier MacDonald of Great Britain arrived in Rome last month for a talk with Premier Mussolini, he declared to correspondents: "England and Italy are two of the strongest governments in Europe. Their chiefs must put their heads together to find some means whereby peace can be rendered secure. This is what I am here for."

And the trip bore fruit, in the form of the announcement of a broad and realistic peace proposal on the part of the Italian Premier, to be handled by the four major Powers of Europe—Great Britain, France, Italy and Germany—which would guarantee, through under-standings among themselves, to preserve the peace of Europe for a period of at least ten years. Said the official communique: "The Ministers examined in these conversations a project for an understanding on larger political questions put forward by the head of the Italian government, with the object of securing the collaboration of the four Western powers in an effort to promote, in the spirit of the Kellogg Pact and a 'no force' declaration, a long period of peace for Europe and the world." Although the details were not officially divulged, it is understood that the basis of the plan consists of the peaceful revision of the treaties that have created a tense atmosphere in the Old World, which is already divided between those committed to the maintenance of the Versailles system and those committed to destroy it.

The Duce explained his plan in the following words: "We do not desire to impose any decisions on

other nations. We seek only to induce others to cooperate in establishing Peace in Europe for at least one generation. It is essential that negotiations occur between all nations in Europe. . . We are trying to establish a humanitarian peace, which is essential." In so doing as he went to the core of the European peace problem as it exists today.

It will be said, and it has been said already by France and her allies, that there already exists the League of Nations for the purpose of preserving the peace. Parenthetically, it must be remembered that Poland and the three nations of the Little Entente—Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and Rumania—owe their national existence to the Versailles treaties that followed the War, and the League, itself an outcome of these same treaties and now dominated by France and her allies, is pledged to preserve the Versailles system. But the League of Nations is merely attempting to preserve the status quo, a status quo that is intolerable to a number of European nations openly clamoring for revision, and even threatening to resort to arms for this purpose. These revisionist nations claim that peace must be based on justice and equality, without special privileges or hegemonies that can no longer be borne. Justice, they say, precedes peace.

This same defect in the Versailles system is thoughtfully commented on in a recent report of the Foreign Policy Association: "The Weakness of Peace Machinery," in which the conclusion is reached that "the success of peace machinery in abolishing

ing war will depend upon its ability to provide other means of satisfying legitimate national interests. . . . Neither the League nor the World Court is an international legislature. Can the League succeed in abolishing the right of self-help so long as it does nothing to bring about the international development of the world's resources to prevent some nations from starving while other nations are surfeited? If peace machinery merely protects the status quo, it may prove to be an instrument which assists the economically strong powers, many of whom secured their present territory by means of force before the days of the Anti-War Pact, in preserving their present wealth from attack by impoverished powers.

"It is also declared that if peace machinery is to succeed in abolishing war, it must devise methods of peacefully revising treaties which may be 'legal' but which clearly have become inequitable."

ALTHOUGH France and her allies have already expressed suspicion and disapproval of the Mussolini plan, what has been the comment of the world's press?

The Paris correspondent of the *New York Herald-Tribune* said that the project, "however askance the French were bound to view it as Rome proposed it, may yet serve the valuable purpose of having paved the way. For all sensible Europeans admit that the peace

The Mussolini plan, in its essence, constitutes one of the most sensible "methods of peacefully revising treaties which may be 'legal' but which clearly have become inequitable."

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treaties will one day be revised, probably within the next fifteen years, either by steel in cannon or steel in pens . . . Mussolini, despite his choice of oratory, still prefers the pen in practice." And the same paper adds editorially that "Doubtless many would agree that if such a concert of powers could be established it would be in practice a more efficient instrument of European tranquillity than the League mechanism."

Approximately the same thing was said in the *New York Times* by its Rome correspondent: "Whether the Mussolini plan is destined to die or to survive, it has already achieved an important result, inasmuch as it has shattered the taboo which hitherto has forbidden statesmen ever to whisper the words 'treaty revision.' Italy feels most strongly that there is no prospect for peace in Europe unless the principal injustices of the peace treaties are revised. It is believed that revision is bound to come, either by negotiations or by war; therefore it is necessary to start negotiation at once before war arrives."

The *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, editorially, was enthusiastic over the plan, terming it one of "a series of constructive moves by European statesmen to relieve tension, to seek accords that will make it possible to ease the economic situation and which, in turn, will make it easier to achieve definite results through the Disarmament and Economic Conferences."

Abroad, the *London Times* observed: "The pact can very warmly be welcomed by all in this country who realize that whether the association is desirable or not, Britain can never be completely disinterested from European affairs." And in Germany, the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* says that "Mussolini deserves thanks and acknowledgement of his efforts. We hope that the campaign of agitation which the French press has raised against the pact has not seriously disturbed it."

As was to be expected, the French press was hostile to the idea, terming it a threat to France's security because her allies are not included in the envisaged four-power "Peace Club." This view was expressed by the *Echo de Paris*, which stated: "France will never consent to her isolation within a triangle composed of Great Britain, Italy and Germany, which would mean separation from her allies, and which would compromise

our security. The sole basis for negotiations is to admit France's allies to equal rights."

In the same vein, though more temperate, was the comment of *Le Matin* of Paris: "Adhesion to Mussolini's 'Peace Club' would lead to certain rupture of our Eastern alliances, which, added to the diminished Army which MacDonald has asked of Geneva, would constitute the gravest danger to France."

Yet Senator Henri Berenger of France was gracious and long-sighted enough to remark that "The plan is insufficient to remark that the manifold problems, but is well-timed as a first step."

"It does not signify a diminution in the value of the little states: on the contrary, it gives them a guaranty and an example of a pacified Europe in which all, including the small, can live and prosper. This is the basis of the diplomatic action which will take place within the

demagogery and anarchy of parliamentarism.

without which there would ensue Fascist conception, because it is inspired by the gerarchial principles of the great states res- eminent of the just moral pre- it is founded on the just moral pre- tion is eminently practical, because matured in his mind. The concep- Milan, "not only is logical but well- important *Corriere della Sera* of tion of the four powers," noted the suring peace through the collabora- "Premier Mussolini's idea of as- its drift toward dangerous divisions. of staying the Continent off from ture already set up in theory and od of implementing the peace struc- that it is the most immediate meth-

II Duce



next few days between the various governments and through direct exchange of ideas between the states—and by the similarity of their resolutions, which, today, has given Germany also a leader capable of confronting the responsibilities of foreign affairs with firmness."

To anticipate the objection to the plan that it does not include the smaller nations, *La Stampa* of Turin explained: "Close and assiduous collaboration of the four great Powers does not signify belittlement of the smaller States, which are essential elements in the general equilibrium. No great Power more than Italy has shown her jealous guardianship of their sovereignty." And the *Tevere* of Rome came down to fundamentals when it stated: "The meeting promoted the cause of peace more than its obligatory session at Geneva with its obligatory oratorical procedure can ever promote it. This is the beginning of a revision of methods of promoting Rome (between Mussolini and MacDonald) showed three definite facts: the complete agreement of Mr. MacDonald with the plan of the Duce; the continuity of Anglo-Italian collaboration; and the faith of the Ministers in its success." The views of the *Resto del Carlino* of Bologna were shown in the following words: "England and Italy, by their collaboration, are in the best position to perform the task of opening the way to peace. England and France are joined by that entire cordiale which the French always have wanted a closed affair and which the English have wanted open and amplified in truly European spirit. Germany and Italy are bound by the large com-

prehension which the latter always has shown of the former's motives and by the similarity of their resolutions, which, today, has given Germany also a leader capable of confronting the responsibilities of foreign affairs with firmness."

And in conclusion, as an illustration of the undeviating quality of Mussolini's foreign policy, it will be recalled that in his first speech before the Chamber of Deputies, on Nov. 16, 1922, he said: "The treaties of peace, be they good or bad, once signed and ratified, must be carried out. No self-respecting State can hold a different view. But treaties are not eternal, are not irreparable. They are chapters in history, not an epilogue in history. "To carry them out means to test them. If practical application renders their absurdity manifest, this may represent a new factor, which would open up the possibility of a further examination of the respective positions."

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At the present writing, France has already been persuaded by her Eastern allies to reject the plan, after having cautiously accepted it previously in principle, and she has so to speak, sitting on the lid to hold down the rising steam as long as possible instead of taking the healthier and sounder course of Italy are bound by the large com-

R U N A W A Y

THE lamp is lighted in her room. Upon the mantle freshly cut Peonies burst into open bloom. Afar and inviting is the door. As she always liked to have it, but She doesn't live here any more.

Her book lies open on the chair. For all the world as if she'd take It up again; and with an air Of indecision someone stands— As if while he were half awake, She'd needlessly slipped through his hands. All her personal cherished things She left behind; here they exist Inanimate—her gowns, her rings. It seems as if she must return At any moment and be kissed— Instead, someone has much to learn.

—Helene Millins

Italian Words in English Speech

By Rudolph Altrocchi

Like the present when so many people are literate, so many people who do not merely speak, but read and write, that is, manipulate language, and more than one naturally feel an interest in it, a curiosity about it. Should we not, therefore, have an interest in and a curiosity about the language we speak? For language is, whether spoken or written, the universal medium of humanity. It is the tool not merely for the customary, daily exchange of ideas and emotions, for the transaction of all activity, for the government of organized society, but also for the creation of beauty,—not only literary beauty, as poetry, but the beauty that language achieves when properly used. Just as we may say that there is no such thing as a really pure race unmingled with other races,—and it is well that it should be so, we may also say that every language, in its formation and for its richness, includes numerous contributions from other languages. Indeed the formation of a modern language must not be regarded as having occurred in the distant past, but as occurring constantly. Any language which is alive is growing; if it ceased to grow, it would die. It grows by adopting new words and expressions, many from other languages, manufacturing some, killing others that have lost their usefulness.

English is very much alive, perhaps more alive in this country than in its original home. English is based on a mixture of Germanic and Latin words,—to mention only the two main ingredients, the Latin words having come, for historical reasons, mainly through the French. Some words, however, came into English directly from the Latin; some from the one daughter of Latin who resembles most her mother,—I mean Italian. Of particular interest to Americans of Italian stock should be the contributions

made by Italian. Let us look into this subject for a moment and see the significance of these borrowings. (It might be noted that contrary to the customary methods of

Rudolph Altrocchi, Professor of Italian and Chairman of the Department of Italian, University of California, Berkeley, was born in Florence in 1882; his father and grandfather were American citizens of Italian descent. He achieved the degrees, at Harvard, of A.B., in 1908, A.M. in 1909 and Ph.D. in 1914. He has taught at Columbia, University of Pennsylvania, Harvard, Chicago and Brown, before being called in 1928 to California. He is the editor of three Italian text books, of numerous scholarly articles, essays and even poems. He founded *Italia*, the Bulletin of the American Association of Teachers of Italian, in 1924. During the war he directed American propaganda in Italy and then joined the A. E. F. in France as liaison officer.

financial borrowing, languages are in the fortunate position of being in no way obliged or expected to return what they borrow, or to pay interest! And a borrowed word continues to be of use to its original owner!) I do not pretend to make an exhaustive study, which would easily fill a book, but just to give a brief sketch, a few trends, examples and curious instances.

ITALIANS in the United States and Americans of Italian stock should be proud to note the quantity of borrowing that English has done from Italian in the arts, especially music. And is not this natural? Italians are among the most musical of races; their language is considered the most lyrical of European languages; and Italy has been pre-eminent among all countries in the development of art, especially music. Grand opera, for instance, is an Italian invention. It developed in the Seventeenth Century as a by-

product of pastoral drama. So it is that, in the realm of musical terms, English, like other modern European languages, has been obliged to borrow greatly from Italian. See what an array of Italian musical terms one may gather:

Instruments: piano (abbreviation of *pianoforte*), viola, violin, cello (abbreviation of *violoncello*), *concertina*, *piccolo*, etc.

Singing: *alto*, *baritone*, *basso*, *basso profondo*, *tenor*, *contralto*, *soprano*, *coloratura*, *falsetto*, *cantatrice*, etc.

Opera: *opera*, *operetta*, *opera bouffe* (from the Italian through the French), *libretto*, *prima donna*, etc.

Dancing: *Tarantella*, *saltarello*, etc.

General Terms: *adagio*, *allegro*, *andante*, *andante cantabile*, *arpeggio*, *cantata*, *concerto*, *crecendo*, *intermezzo*, *maestro*, *piano*, *forte*, *pianissimo*, *fortissimo*, *accelerando*, *maestoso*, *presto*, *rallentando*, *sforzando*, *recitativo* (*recitativo*), *solos*, *trios*, *quartets* or *quartette* (*quartetto*), *oratorios*, *capella* (*capella*), *scherzos*, etc. And we might add *impresario*. Without Italian terms music would be in a sad plight.

In other arts too Italian has made valuable contributions. And this also seems natural when we remember the marvelous contributions made to design, painting, sculpture and architecture by Italy, especially in the Renaissance. Some of the terms mentioned below are somewhat technical, but nevertheless, I believe, legitimately adopted by English.

Design and Painting: *Aquatint*, *fresco* from *al fresco*, *aguardelle* (probably from the French, *fondod'oro*, *sienna*, *ultramarine*, etc. Architecture and Sculpture: *cupola*, *dome*, *pilastra* (through French), *pietra*, etc.

To these we might add, as terms applied to art and literature: *Quar-*

raised on it, monotonous and taste-
less.
Now to be sure, American cook-
ing is not identical with English.
We have a few specialties of our
own, among which are some deli-
cious things; and a few horrible
things, such as our mixed fruit
salads, which are a disgrace to the
culinary art. André Maurois right-
ly described them as "culinary he-
resies." "In them," he said, "you
will find slices of fresh fruit crim-
inally soaked in oil, cheese and cab-
bage gone astray. Beware of Am-
ericans inherited their good cus-
toms and traditions; unfortunately
we inherited their cooking. The
English, so admirable for many
qualities, are not renowned for their
cooking. They are adept in roast-
ing meats,—perhaps the most pri-
mitive form of cooking, so that
roast beef and beef steak, for
instance, have been adopted by
many other languages, even by
Italian: *rosbiffe, bistecca*. In other
forms of cooking, however, the En-
glish are very weak, possibly with
the exception of certain desserts,
pies and meat-pies (especially the
famous Cheshire Cheese Kidney-
Beef-Pie, which is the most deli-
cious thing ever concocted by British
talent). Was it not Voltaire who
said that the English were a pecu-
liar people, very different from the
French, for the latter had one God
and many graves, while the English
had many gods and only one gravy?
(I do not know to which one he
referred!) And when it comes to
vegetables, which in England are
almost always boiled, or rather,
drowned in hot water, was it not
a critical Englishman who once said
that the only way to get water in
London was to order a dish of cab-
bage? We may well say that with
very few exceptions, English, and
therefore ordinary American cook-
ing, is, to all who have not been

troubled, Cinqcento (the two cen-
turies of the Renaissance), and
such adjectives formed from fam-
ous proper names as: *Gottesque*,
Michelangellesque, etc. for art, and
Dantesque, Petrarchian, Boccacc-
que etc. for literature.
It is also natural that English
should have adopted many Italian
words for articles of food. And
here let me make a brief and per-
haps not irrelevant digression.



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first settled by the English, we
Americans inherited their good cus-
toms and traditions; unfortunately
we inherited their cooking. The
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ing, is, to all who have not been

By the way, in cocktails there ap-
pear at least two excellent Italian
words: *Martini*, from the firm of
Martini & Rossi, of Turin, manu-
facturers of the best Vermouth, and
Maaschino, a liqueur from Dal-
matia. The word *vermouth* is not
originally Italian; it comes from
Wormwood. With whiskey, Scotch
or Bourbon, Cognac (French) and
Gin, which word comes from Ge-
neva, though the liquor was origin-
ally made in Holland, this inter-
change of bibulous words gives the
merry impression of peoples offer-
ing each other drinks in interna-
tional conviviality. What a beauti-
ful picture!

Most Italian contributions to the
cullinary vocabulary indicate Italian
inventions, now established through-
out the world, and very popular in
this country especially since there
is hardly a city without an Italian
restaurant.

Let us have a verbal dinner to-
gether! Of course we shall begin
with *antipasto*, with a touch of sa-
lame or *Bologna*, then choose be-
tween *macaroni* (*maccheroni*), *ra-
violi*, *taglierini*, *vermicelli*, *risotto*,
or *minestrone*. At this stage a bottle
of *Chianti* would be in order. Shall
we then order a *fritto misto*, per-
haps with some *semolina* or *polenta*,
and, for vegetables, some *broccoli*?
By the time we have eaten all these
things we shall feel so satisfied, es-
pecially since the wine will have
made us much less eager for sugary
dessert, that we might top off with
a choice between *gorgonzola* (from
a village near Milan) and *zabalone*.
The *zabalone* should be made with
Marsala (town in Sicily, name of
Arabic origin). If, instead, we



should prefer fruit, why not a
cantaloup (from Italian *cantalupo*)?
Or would you prefer ice cream?
In that case, shall it be *tutti frutti*
or *pistachio* (*pistacchio*)? Or still
better, though these are not greatly
known in this country, a bit of
ricotta or a piece of *panforte*?
Have we not had a completely sa-
tisfying meal? Even from the point
of view of diet and the celebrated
vitamins, the inner man is delight-
fully pleased. (Especially by the
Italian dinner from A to Z, from
antipasto to *zabalone*.

NOR will such a meal leave us
with such a sense of heaviness
that we shall be too lethargical to
consider another and huge group of
Italian-English words, which we
may call miscellaneous. Here they
are, suggesting all sorts of in-
fluences from Italian culture and
life:

*Stiletto, vendetta, bandit, or ban-
ditti* (*banditi*), *lazzarone*,—let's
pass over these quickly, for they
can hardly be said to represent
Italian culture, or even normal Ital-
ian life. But here come better
words: *gusto, ghetto, duel*, (used
to be, in English, a *duello*), *imbro-
ghio, portafoglio* (*portafoglio*), *scroc-
co, lazzi*, and *zani* (*Zanni, Gianni*),
theatrical terms, these two, origin-
ating from the very Italian *Comme-
diantuccio*, *Fantalone* (from the
rannuccia), *Fantalone* (from the
French, from *Fantalone*), and sim-
ilarly *Fasquinade* and *bergamot*.
But let us come to still better
known words: *alert, doge, bravo*,
pecially since the wine will have
made us much less eager for sugary
dessert, that we might top off with
a choice between *gorgonzola* (from
a village near Milan) and *zabalone*.
The *zabalone* should be made with
Marsala (town in Sicily, name of
Arabic origin). If, instead, we

monsignor, beretta, canto, stanza, sonnet (an Italian, in fact Sicilian creation) *madrigal, moustache* (*mustacchio*), *motto, vista, belvedere, terracotta, tufa, bagatelle, bagnio* (*bagno penale*), *incognito, sotto-voce, malaria, influenza, volcano* and *Viva!*

Nor should we forget some modern scientific terms, provided by Italian genius: *volt* (from Alessandro Volta), *galvanism*, to *galvanize* (from Luigi Galvani), and the very recent *marconigram*.

To explain the Italian derivation of all these words would transcend the brief limits of this sketch. But let me, for good measure, and for the sake of curiosity, show the peculiar workings of a few words, each of which would make an interesting story. In fact the Italian for word: *parola*, comes from the Latin *parabula, parable* or *story*. A little romance is hidden in every one of the words mentioned.

Take, for example, the adjective *alert*. It came into English from the French, which stole it, quite honestly, from the Italian *all'erta*. And Italian has no adjective equivalent to *alert* though *all'erta* remains.

The origin of *macaroni* seems to be concealed in antiquity. This word, however, did some rich expanding in English. We have *macaroon*, also made of flour but sugary, a cooky; and we have *macaroni*, in the eighteenth century English sense of *fop, dandy*, from the existence of a Macaroni Club, whose members were "the most dressey travelled gentlemen in London." In this sense the word entered into perhaps the oldest of our American patriotic songs, *Yankee Doodle*:

"Put a feather in his cap
And called it macaroni."

NOTE that such words as *macaroni, spaghetti*, etc. are plural in Italian, but singular in English.

To an Italian it seems difficult and unnatural to translate: *Questi maccheroni sono buoni*, as *This macaroni is good*. Sometimes, likewise, when a word is transferred to another language, the idea of gender disappears. Thus in our American slang, we apply *bimbo*, Italian masculine, to a girl, without being aware of the absurdity of it: She's a cute bimbo!

Some words have changed so very much that their Italian features have entirely gone. *Wig*, for instance, looks like a thoroughly Anglo-Saxon word. It is, nevertheless, an abbreviation of *periwig*, from the French *peruque*, probably from the Italian *perucca* (*parrucca*). The musical term *scherzo*, on the other hand, might sound to some like a genuine Italian word, but it is a German importation, from *scherz*, made famous by Italian music.

Perhaps the most peculiar Italian derivation, if true (and this etymology is merely conjectural) is the expression *Dear Me!*, from *Dio mio*, or from such an exclamation as *Dio mi (salvi)*.

Here is another very peculiar story. Would you ever guess that *Jerusalem artichoke* comes from the Italian? This Jerusalem does not come from the Holy City, but is a corruption of *girasole*. Another word whose Italian origin you would never guess is *milliner*. It comes from *Milaner*, an inhabitant of the city of Milan, which city, apparently, was at one time and still is famous for hats. Similarly *florin* came from *florino*, the lily of Florence, stamped on its gold coins. And again both *tarantella* and *tarantula* come from *Taranto*. The poisonous spider has its habitat also in Southern Italy. In Tuscany, instead, where this spider, so far as I know, does not exist, the word has shifted to a sort of brown lizzard which crawls along old walls.

Talking of scourges, *malaria*

and *influenza* are obviously Italian. For *influenza*, which has become our *flu*, we know (though the best English dictionaries do not know it) that the word became connected with the disease in Florence about Dante's time and was so called because, according to local astrologers, it was due to the unpropitious influence of the stars.

And here are more words whose meanings, when they became naturalised English words, changed entirely: *confetti*, in Italian, *sweetmeats*, has now degenerated into strips of paper; *piazza, square* has been reduced to a *portico*; *seraglio* (*serraglio*) originally *inclosure*, and now in Italian an inclosure for wild beasts; *menagerie* achieved in English a more specific meaning, an enclosure for a Mohammedan's ladies, *harem*.

And, finally, here is a word which is, one might say, a manufactured mongrel: *braggadocio*. It begins with the English root *brag*, to which has been artificially added an Italian ending.

And thus I might go on for pages, especially if I should treat many words coming from Italian through French or Latin, such as *belladonna, travertine, granite, lagoon, soda* (is there a commoner word than *soda*?), etc. But I must stop. And I do so with the same thought with which I began. When we use language, let us use it as carefully as possible, with the reverence that is due to a tool delicate, though used every day, mysterious, though common, full of significance, whether manifest or occult, long-lived and always interestingly changing. Let us see the beauty of all languages and their numerous contributions to each other, which so eloquently reflect the basic kinship and helpfulness (at least verbal!) of all peoples. And let us, Italo-Americans, note with satisfaction the rich contributions made to our own English by the magnificent language of Dante.

The Italian-American in These Times

*Depression Has Brought His Virtues
into Higher Regard*

By Mirko Ardemagni

NEVER as at the present time have the Italians in the North American countries enjoyed such prestige. The economic depression in the new continent has in the last few years brought about such a change in moral and material values as to give an entirely new physiognomy to the mosaic of races included in the immense stretch between the Atlantic and the Pacific, between the Gulf of Mexico and the icy stretches of the Arctic.

The shock has been so violent, the collapse of Utopias so radical, the return to the unalterable laws governing the world's destinies so abrupt, that the American people themselves have been able to recognize how unsustainable was their hedonistic morality. Because of the somewhat meteoric character, more revolutionary than evolutionary, of the phenomenon, the American people, with their alert and open intelligence, have been able to review their own positions, they have been able to consider as defects and as sins those very characteristics which previously they had thought to be their superior virtues.

What had seemed to be harmful preconceptions on the part of Italians: their voluntary limitation of material necessities, their frugality, their continence, their sense of continuity, their sense of family solidarity, their attachment to their distant motherland, their religious sentiment restraining any intemperance have now suddenly shown their dominion over the laws governing life, they have taken their fatal revenge on the mad passions unleashed in the new continent under the false guise of a superior civilization.

America, swept off her feet by economic progress, had practically forgotten the *raison d'être* of humanity. The masses, having ven-

tured on the path of prosperity, attracted by the mirage of gold and the dream of abundance, had raced breathlessly through the past fifty years, altering their lung capacity, abandoning the useless baggage of traditions, leaping over the obstacles of morality, and forgetting their very natures. The race had become an end in itself. Man had placed himself at the service of goods, instead of subordinating them to his instincts and desires; quantity, and the statistics concerning the development of wealth and the increase of goods, became more important in the eyes of the American than

How does America, faced with the realities of a depression, look now upon the traditional virtues of the Italian? Are the Italians in this country beginning to undergo a new appraisal on the part of the older inhabitants, in the light of the patient and tenacious way in which they are weathering the depression? The author of this article, who was in New York last winter, thinks so, and he adds that this reappraisal includes a new respect for the Italians' thrift, love of the soil, industry and tenacity, which qualities were ignored during the boom twenties, but which are now being restored to their ancient position.

The author of this article, which is translated from "Gerarchia," the monthly magazine of Fascism founded by Benito Mussolini, is one of youngest of Italian journalists, having been born 32 years ago in Cremona. A member of the staff of the "Popolo d'Italia" of Milan, he also writes for many reviews and magazines. Among his travel books may be mentioned his African volume, "Dalla terra di Salambo ai laghi di Cristallo" and another on "Terra del Fuoco." His latest is "Russia: 15 anni dopo," which is soon to be translated into English.

quality and the values of the spirit; man was to forget the record of the past in the hope of the future, he was to forget himself and to live to wear himself out in the torment of "making good," he was no longer to appear as a creature biologically perfect except in the role of a consumer at an accelerating rhythm, as an organism willing to alter his own functions in order to assimilate an ever-greater dose of products.

THE Wall Street pyramid having collapsed, the fever of desperation having spread like lightning, and with all the outlets of economic life closed suddenly, the Americans were seized by that panic, by that alarm, by that crowding of thoughts and fears that comes upon runners when they are suddenly rendered immovable a few paces from their goal through a jesting fatality of destiny.

This salutary psychological revolution has been taking place in America for the past five years. Those very men who had hoped always to run, now, through a sudden return of their consciences, are asking themselves how it was they ever ran so much, why it was that only they were unhappy standing still. They are aware of having withdrawn too far away from the sources of humanity, of having acquired an artificial tenor of life, of having transformed their very natures, of having altered their very cycle of growth, of having impoverished their own individual resources by becoming machines of flesh and automatons without spirit. There is repentance over unenjoyed delights, over forgotten virtues, over that beautiful serenity that makes happy the peoples living in the lands of the old world.

For the great present-day phen-

omenon of America is this: the spontaneous revision of values, the return to the civilized positions of former times, the psychology of a people transforming, maturing and completing itself. Thoughtful men have already uttered cries of alarm. James Truslow Adams, author of one of the most interesting histories of the United States, calls the dying era of great trusts and mastodonic economic combinations "the age of dinosaurs"; others are asking themselves if the moment has not come to restore themselves according to the old wisdom of the Latin world in order to prevent America from becoming a victim of uncontrolled forces, and to improve man after having multiplied and improved goods. And they are certainly right, for it is useless to build skyscrapers to a height of 1200 or 1300 feet when men remain five or six feet high.

From the point of view of human experience America will certainly do more during this lustrum of the depression than it has during three hundred years of history.

All the rest is falsehood. Anyone who thinks he can draw apocalyptic consequences from the country-wide roaming of 200,000 homeless youths, who sees the end of the world because the barometer of unemployment has reached eleven millions, because gangsters engage in the liquor traffic or because they assault the Chicago banks, because the cadenced pace of hunger marchers has resounded on the pavements of Washington,—any such person is either acting in bad faith or he does not recognize the potential and inherited resources of America. The United States has never felt as it now does the paternity of Europe, it has never intuitively known as it now does the value of ancient civilizations, the necessity of remaking oneself according to the teachings of history, the opportunity of attaining the hopes of salvation through the examples of the old world.

THUS, and thus only, can we explain the orientation of public opinion toward Italy and toward the Italian-Americans collectively. Whether it is because of the attention the Fascist revolution has attracted throughout the world, or whether it is because of the great delusion experienced by America over her materialistic morality and her futuristic theories that deny the past, the fact is that our race and



Italian villagers engaged in joyous wine-making:
The old and inherited methods are still in tranquil use.

our régime, in this moment of adverse fortunes, have leaped up to a high place in the eyes of the new world.

In the universal lowering of values, in the vanishing of faith, in the terrestrial shock that has multiplied a hundred fold the sense of the provisional and the drama of the fleeting, the Italians in America, among all the ethnic communities, have represented and represent the example of an unassailable spiritual continuity, of an almost absolute economic stability, of a material equilibrium that withstands the aggressive waves of every tempest.

While entire multitudes—who lived in the folly of an unconscious optimism, who maintained themselves on credit, who placed blind confidence in happy endings—lost, in the short whirl of the depression, all their worldly goods, they noticed that the economic prudence of the Italian people had saved them from the dangerous, accelerating race, that the economic prudence of the calamity, that the unity of the family had saved the central nucleus of society, that the Homeric serenity of the poor, their patience and their faith in the future, were indispensable virtues, brought over from across the ocean together with the heritage of a Latin civilization that can look back over a period of centuries.

The Italians, even the boldest,

even the most adventurous, have labored in America with the typical sense of their continuity, with the mutual instinct of cooperation, not only to grasp the fleeting fruits of the moment, not only to satisfy their own individual ego, but also foresightedly for the preservation of the species, under the emulatory stimulus of a great past. Those who in Tunisia were known as Sicilian ants, those who in South America were called "golondrine" because they settled every season on the shores of the Plata River with the regularity of pilgrim swallows, are the same who are bringing to American civilization the example of that tenacity and that patience that teach us to build for the centuries, and that furnish the spiritual elements for the betterment of human nature.

TODAY, after the end of incantations, and faced with the reality of the present moment, the American people are becoming aware of the incalculable treasures that have matured on the distant soil of Italy, of the universal significance of its thousand-year-old political experience, and of the fundamental qualities and the superior virtues of a people that have been humiliated and affronted in vain.

An inevitable return to the sternest laws of life was needed for the epic of Italian industry in America to reach its apotheosis.



Looks As If the New Leadership Was Really Going to Lead.

—From the Kansas City Star

“We Have a President!”

By John A. Donato

FRANKLIN Delano Roosevelt stood on the inaugural platform, the traditional courage and confidence of great Americans reflected in his steady smile, and became the 32nd President of the United States. Even as he spoke, the country was in the throes of its direst banking crisis in many years. The penetrating, raw chill of the March day seemed to frown worriedly, and perhaps, defiantly on the man who, it was believed, faced the most exacting and arduous task to confront any Chief Executive since the chaotic days of Abraham Lincoln's second term. But Roosevelt smiled on, a figure of tremendous interest and importance to the entire world; an exceedingly appealing and admirable personality.

The words of his inaugural address came bravely and assuringly to prince and pauper alike, offering an extensive program for a “new deal” to harassed Americans. Slowly, as his speech's significance bored into the consciousness of the patient multitudes, a glow of confidence crept into the hearts of all, banker and iron-worker, scholar and laborer, rich man and poor. The dawn of a new outlook seemed to burst over the troubled millions even before his speech neared its conclusion. Here was no impres-

sive oratory calculated solely to dazzle its audience. Nay, it was an unflinching acceptance of a nation's burdens; a rational admission of our national shortcomings. Roosevelt knew what was expected of him; what seemingly insurmountable obstacles lay in the path of recovery. His speech connoted a full understanding of the situation and a definite, well-planned program.

“The only thing we have to fear,” he said, “is fear itself—nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance.”

Following a stringent censoring of the unscrupulous practices that had precipitated the failure of our credit system, he proceeded to relegate to the background those issues which were not of a purely internal nature.

“Our international trade relations,” he said, “though vastly important, are secondary to the establishment of a sound national economy.”

In a conclusion which brought riotous approbation, concerning dictatorial powers vested in himself, he said:

“It is to be hoped that the normal balance of executive and legislative authority may be wholly

adequate to meet the unprecedented task before us. But in the event that the Congress shall fail I shall ask the Congress for the one remaining instrument to meet the crisis—broad executive power to wage a war against the emergency as great as the power that would be given to me if we were in fact invaded by a foreign foe.”

AS vigorously as his speech promised action, it remained to be seen whether he would really carry it out to the letter. Few Presidents had been confronted with as many issues as faced Roosevelt on his first day in office. But Roosevelt wisely went about putting his own house in order before tackling questions of a more international flavor. So such issues as Tariff, War Debts, Armaments and Political Security yielded to the more insistent national problems. They could and would have to wait.

The banking and currency conditions were such as to demand immediate attention. The President refuted suggested methods of inflation, perhaps heeding the warning that such inflation would cut across party lines. He solidly upheld his platform plank of “a sound currency to be preserved at all hazards.” But banks were failing in

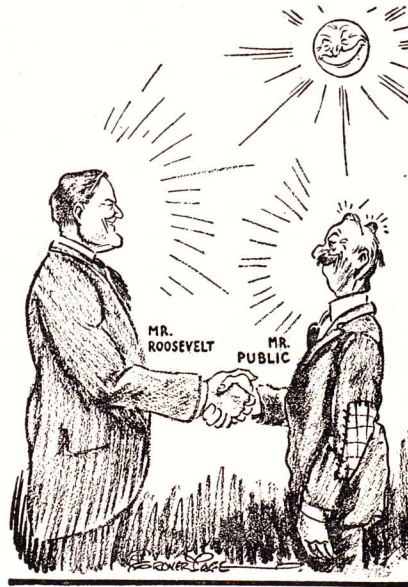
alarming numbers. The situation reached its lowest ebb on Inaugural Day. Continued withdrawals of gold by frantic depositors had drained the Federal Reserve. One by one, state governments were declaring bank moratoria. Acting without the slightest delay, President Roosevelt declared a national banking holiday and called a special session of Congress for March 9th. In a remarkably short message to Congress, he asked for immediate executive control over banks.

He spoke to the nation later, one Sunday evening, over the radio, the first talk of its kind ever attempted, explaining very simply and informally the government's banking policy. In very short order, Congress passed the banking bill, extending to Roosevelt those broad dictatorial powers desired. No dictator could have hoped for broader powers than those granted by this bill.

Soon, under strict supervision, banks of the soundest nature were allowed to re-open, and in succeeding days, those granted the privilege resumed business operations, although limited somewhat at the beginning lest a recurrence of heavy withdrawals should cause renewed embarrassment. The bill also provided for "conservators." These were intended as a half-way point for national banks between solvency and receivership. More money was issued in the form of new non-gold currency, backed by U. S. Government obligations at par, discounted commercial paper at 90% of its estimated value. Roosevelt's promise of "adequate but sound currency" was amply fulfilled. The old spectre of currency inflation, as a result, was routed.

THE President, satisfied that the banking bill was safely dispensed with, sent his second message to the Capitol. He boldly asked authority to slash veterans' expenditures and Federal salaries. Congress, which hitherto had feared to touch these points, balked ever so little at Roosevelt's proposed Economy bill of a half-billion dollar slash. There was expected opposition, but the solidly Democratic House finally submitted to the President's demands and passed the bill, not, however, without heated discussion. Here was Roosevelt's second triumph, as a consequence of which he saw "a reasonable prospect" of balancing the budget in a year.

As the banks re-opened, and the Economy bill went through, Roosevelt, in another message characterized by the crispness and brevity which had now become quite usual, asked for the legalization of beer. Although it was not unexpected, few imagined that he would set the machinery in order for this most popular of moves so quickly. Now the capital was in a feverish state.



It's Contagious

—From the Louisville Courier-Journal

Roosevelt's seventy-two word beer bill message seemed to clinch it. The man's flair for the sensational seemed remarkable, but it was merely the next step in a logical, well-ordered program. Here, after years of talk and niggardly Congressional indifference, he had capped only his second full week in office with:

"I recommend—immediate modification of the Volstead Act in order to legalize the manufacture and sale of beer—and to provide by substantial taxes a proper and much needed revenue for the Government." The House, which had already passed one beer bill in its previous session only to see the bill killed by the Senate, shouted in unison: "Vote — vote — we want beer!"

There was some difference of opinion concerning the alcoholic content of the new beer with respect to its constitutionality. The House fixed it at 3.2 per cent and passed it. The Senate lowered it to 3.05 per cent and included light wines of the same percentage. The House demanded 3.2 per cent while the Senate demanded the addition of light wines. Both won their points and the beer bill went through.

Roosevelt wasted no time in signing the bill, which became effective on April 6th, a little more than a month after the new President's inauguration.

Now Roosevelt turned his attention to the plight of the farmers and the vast army of unemployed. For the relief of the former he suggested the Farm Allotment Bill, recommending reductions of acreage in return for fixed bonuses, so that willing workers could be recruited to the soil. The bill, which resembled a price-fixing measure, was, at the time of writing, undergoing a revamping process by the Senate Committee on Agriculture. It was not without strenuous opposition, naturally, for the farming question had been for years a moot point, and a very touchy one at that.

TOWARD unemployment relief, Roosevelt suggested the creation of a peace-time army of 250,000 men to be engaged in the worthwhile processes of reforestation and conservation of national resources. The guiding forces of labor were prone to consider this an infringement upon the domains of organized labor, but the President reassured them that this peace-time army was akin to a military unit, serving a compulsory term of one year at a salary of a dollar a day. The actual organization of this army has already progressed considerably.

Never was there a dull day in the first three weeks of Roosevelt's administration. Day by day messages, short, crisp and intelligible, poured from the White House. Congress, more or less anxious to please because of aroused popular sentiment and of the patronage the President was still withholding, had pushed through more legislation in one single week than in the entire preceding session.

The usual torpor and silence which characterized other changes of administration suffered in marked contrast to the deluge of proclamations, conferences at all hours and unprecedented grants of power affecting the new executive branch of the government. The Senate galleries, as well as official and staid Washington, were exclaiming, "We have a President!" The capital was agog with activity. Roosevelt, in the unbelievably short period of one week, had succeeded in obtaining a concentration of

(Continued on Page 18)

Leopardi: Philosopher of Sorrow

By Rosario Ingargiola

I

AN Italian journalist recently visited Recanati, a small town on the banks of the Adriatic, where Giacomo Leopardi was born. He tells of his little journey to the home of this great man in a most interesting article in which he describes his feelings as he went through the rooms of the ancient castle which, at its very entrance, still bears the legend "Gentis Leopardae." Can you imagine the thrill of the visitor as the custodian took him from one room to another in the sombre palace where the immortal poet consumed the best years of his life in meditation and sorrow?

"This is his inkwell," the guide informs him in a droning voice; "just as it was more than a hundred years ago. This is the cloth which covered his desk: you can still see the stains on it. These are his books, his manuscripts, his bed. Everything is practically the same as it was when he lived here, in this 'savage burgh,' as he was wont to call his birthplace."

The visitor meets a neighbor, one of the oldest inhabitants of Recanati.

"Did you know the Leopardis?"

"No, sir, I didn't, but my mother did and she used to tell us about the poet. My mother would meet him frequently in the fields where she used to go to cut grass. She would feel sorry for the lonely and silent man standing there, upon that hill, all by himself, gazing, always gazing into the far-off horizon. My mother would say to him: 'You think too much, Signor Count. You ruin your health.' He would reply, a sad and wan smile playing on his lips: 'Yes, Maria Domenica, you are right. One should not think too much. God bless you, you are happy, you cut grass and sing.'"

Thought and solitude: these were his best friends and, curiously enough, his worst enemies.

Giacomo Leopardi, this "Job and Lucretius of thought in one," was not a philosopher in the strict sense of the word. He evolved no system of philosophy. He enunciated

no new credo. He founded no new school of thought. He was chiefly a poet, a philosophic poet, one of the deepest and sweetest that ever lived. Yet his entire life, brief though it was, represented a living chapter of philosophy, the word "philosophy" being taken in the noble Greek use of the term—love of wisdom, devotion to the pursuit of truth, knowledge of eternal reality and power of enduring all misfortunes in the manner of the Stoics.

II

LEOPARDI was born on June 28th, 1789. The bare physical facts about his life are brief and do not require extensive recital. He died in Naples on June 14th, 1837. The last 20 years of his life were the most dreadful imaginable. During all these years he seems to have been ravaged by every conceivable disease that flesh is heir to: his bones, his stomach, his lungs, his heart, his blood, his eyes—every organ of his frail and hunchbacked frame was, at one time or another, absolutely eaten up this or that ailment, mercilessly.

The only organ of his pain-racked body unaffected by the scourge of illness was his mind, that wonderful and divine mind of his, which remained clear and efficient to the last. He finally died of dropsy, with consumption probably as a contributing cause, at 39 years of age: death, so frequently and passionately invoked, came to him at last as a real deliverance.

His father, Count Monaldo Leopardi, was himself a writer and a man of learning, but one whom today we would call a reactionary. He was not at all in sympathy with the liberal and daring ideas of his son and it would appear that he was even jealous of Giacomo's growing fame. When Antonio Ranieri, Leopardi's unselfish friend who took care of the poet from 1830 until his death, first visited Count Monaldo at Recanati and told him how happy he was to meet the father of such a man, he observed that the stern-looking Count became visibly perturbed. In reporting this incident in his book

Seven Years of Companionship With Giacomo Leopardi, Ranieri makes the following comment: "I noticed that he didn't like the *such a man*, for he considered Giacomo his literary rival."

In his childhood Leopardi had two private tutors. They taught him literature and philosophy until the age of fourteen. After his fourteenth year his teachers were the thousands of books in the magnificent library in his father's household. Here, all by himself, he mastered Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French and Spanish. Early in his youth, overstudy hopelessly impaired his health and brought about curvature of the spine, a condition which caused the rustic inhabitants of his native town to nickname him "the Hunchback of Recanati."

In the evolution of Leopardi's thought his native town stands out as one of the determining factors. His hatred of Recanati, so evident throughout his letters, is very much suggestive of the future trend of his philosophy.

Leopardi's consuming desire, nursed in appalling loneliness, was to get out of Recanati, see the world and live among men. His native town, narrow and provincial, oppressed him. It stifled his growth. He had no friends there, not even his family was sympathetic to him, for no one in Recanati was big enough to understand and value his genius. He had wings and burned to soar.

"What is there in Recanati," he writes bitterly, "that one can admire? Nothing. God has made the world so beautiful, men have done so many beautiful things in it, there are so many people in it, that I yearn to see it. The earth is filled with wonders; and must I, at the age of 18, live and die in this rat hole where I was born? The only diversion here for me is study—a diversion which is killing me: the rest is tedium." In a moment of infinite desperation the thought of suicide came to him as a possible liberation and the idea gave him "a kingly peace of mind."

His father finally permitted him to leave Recanati when he was 24.

He went to Rome, where, for conscientious scruples, he refused to enter the Church despite the most earnest exhortations of powerful prelates.

After but a brief intercourse with men and a fleeting glimpse of the world he found himself utterly disappointed. What a disillusionment! "Human happiness," he now writes to his sister, "is a dream; the world is not beautiful, it is not even supportable, unless seen as you see it—from far; pleasure is a name, not a thing." He returned to Recanati, a sadder and a wiser man, and for two more years it again became his dark dungeon.

Meanwhile, his health grew worse. He left Recanati again in 1825; and now began his long *via crucis*: endless peregrinations from one city to another, in a vain quest for a more agreeable climate, in the hopeless task of regaining his fast-waning health: a dreary and hapless quest, which left in its wake an indescribable trail of misery and anguish, an epic Odyssey of sorrow, ending only with death.

III

LEOPARDI's philosophy of universal sorrow was undoubtedly the result of his own personal sorrow, although he indignantly resented the imputation. If he had been given by nature, the Arch Enemy, a normal, healthy body, regularly performing its physiological functions, one may reasonably assume that his intellectual development might have been radically different. This, however, detracts very little from the depth and truth of his observations, for men like Heine, Schopenhauer and Byron, perfectly normal and healthy individuals, have been no less articulate in their pessimism than Leopardi.

The only difference between Leopardi and most pessimists is this: while the others have written and discoursed about pessimism, Leopardi *lived* it.

The pessimism of Leopardi, at its inception, was the consequence of a keen and painful realization on his part that he could never play in life the great and heroic role which his youthful fancy had fashioned for him. He had been fed up on the romantic ideals so prevalent in his day. His cherished ambition was to do something big, be a noble hero or a famous writer.

The elegy on the *Approachment of Death*, written at 18, is fairly

indicative of this spirit. He intuits the coming of death, but is rather unwilling to die without first leaving his footprints on the sands of time. "Must I die? Die and leave in the world no greater vestige of myself than would a ripple in the



Giacomo Leopardi

—From his death mask

water or a bash in the air? Italy and the world shall bow to my glory, for my heart tells me that I am born to scale the heights. No, I was not born to die: I am eternal." Prophetic soul, indeed, that of this child bard who had seen the world only from the gloomy tower of his prison in a secluded little town by the sea. What a pathetic prelude to the tragedy of a glorious life! In his poem *To Italy*, composed at twenty, he would immolate himself in the cause of Italy's political regeneration, a new Horatius at the Bridge: "To me, to me the weapons, I alone shall fight, I alone shall die." The same heroic vision, woven out of the warp and woof of his dream-life, according to the predominant literary formula.

But it was not long before he discovered that the world which he would confidently set out to conquer was nothing but a world of illusions. The word *illusion* appears for the first time in his writings in 1818. From then on it recurs time and again, until it came to form the basis of all his philosophy. Illusions, happiness, glory, love, justice, virtue: everything in this world is an illusion, a figment, a phantasm.

The immediate process whereby he arrived at this conviction was caused by the partial loss of his sight. It was this physical impediment which constrained him to shrink within himself and think in

solitude. "I began to lose all hope," he explains, "and to meditate deeply upon all things." He now realizes that the passing of childhood, with its dreams, its illusions and its errors, means the end of life for one endowed with a sensitive nature.

Take love, for example. A man in love is but the victim of an illusion. In the exaltation of his emotions he believes to have become part and parcel of another being; an individual, that is, who is a total stranger to him. In reality, however, the object of his love is not an extraneous being manifesting itself to him in the shape of a woman, but simply a creature of his mind, a phantom of his imagination which he himself has created in his own consciousness and which he may therefore destroy and obliterate at will.

Curiously enough, he held that the "illusions" were a necessary ingredient of life. He always admitted the efficacy of their uses. Indeed, "they comprise life itself." Without them there would be nothing worth while ever achieved or even planned in the world. No one who is not inspired by a "sweet illusion" or a "powerful error" can ever hope to accomplish great deeds or rise to lofty heights. He values the "illusions" to such an extent that when he prophesies to his sister that her children will be either unfortunates or cowards, he counsels her: "Let them rather be unfortunates"—although at this time he had come to attach very little significance to the illusory character of either greatness or heroism.

IV

ANOTHER manifestation of his philosophy of pessimism is contained in his conception of the futility of all effort and of life itself. "Certainly," he declares, "the ultimate scope of existence is not happiness, for no creature or thing is happy." On the contrary, "most of our life is a constant withering"; everything tends to decay and annihilation: the cosmos and even Nature will some day be extinguished.

True, all animate beings strive for happiness; they dare all perils to obtain it; their best energies are wasted in the pursuit of this will-o'-the-wisp, until death overtakes them in the very act of their mad chase and ends it all. Nothing is truer

than the falsity of all earthly good; nothing is more certain than the vanity of all created things, except our own sorrow, which is real and positive.

Life is to be feared more than death: for death is the absence of all desires, whereas to live implies the existence of desires and of their natural concomitant, unhappiness. All unhappiness ceases with the cessation of the desire to be happy; that is, with the cessation of life itself; and the greater is life's intensity, the greater is man's infelicity. Even the average life, with its fleeting joys and commonplace pleasures, is far from being really happy; for, in the last analysis, the absence or privation of absolute happiness imports positive unhappiness.

Perhaps the most eloquent exposition of his philosophy is to be found in one of his best lyrics, the *Song of the Wandering Shepherd*, in which the poet describes a colloquy with the Moon. The Moon rises at nightfall, circles the heavenly deserts, travels the selfsame orbit and then disappears, to begin anew shortly. Man's life is not unlike the Moon's. Wither the Moon's endless wandering? Wither Man's brief wandering? Motion without goal, activity without rest: in the heavens, it is exemplified by the aimless rotation of the Moon; on the earth, by the purposeless straying of the Shepherd.

The Moon runs its fixed course: it can do no different. Its motion is not action, positive, independent action, expressed by intelligent will. Likewise, Man's fretful roaming is not action: his movements are controlled and limited by a superior force—nay, a brutal and blind force—represented by Nature, the Arch Enemy, and his will is as independent and free as the Moon's. Like the Moon, Man is the plaything of Fate.

To use a popular locution, Leopardi could see no rhyme or reason in all creation. What is all this wild scheming, this feverish hoping, this mad doing, this "sound and fury signifying nothing," when a mere "afflition of malignant elements or a slight subterranean tremor can reduce all this to smithereens and wipe out even the memory of its former existence?" Certainly, if the universe has a scope Leopardi was unable to discern it.

But what he did see was the utter indifference of Nature with res-

pect to Man's position in the universe. Man's happiness, or unhappiness, his suffering or freedom therefrom, are matters which admittedly do not concern Nature in the least. If it should prove expedient for her to annihilate mankind at one magic stroke, Nature informs the inquiring philosopher that she would not hesitate one minute to determine whether it were good or bad. Similarly, if humankind should suddenly vanish from the face of the earth, the stars and the planets and the rivers would nevertheless continue undisturbed in their course and certainly would not rush to put on a mourning garb in consequence.

V

PERHAPS the most revealing part of a great man's biography is that portion which relates to his love life. Very often his sexual life greatly affects the formative phases of his whole character; very often it explains the sources and motives of his acts. The works of Carlyle, DeMaupassant and many other famous men of history disclose characteristic traits which may be directly traced to certain abnormalities in their intimate lives.

The modern study of psychology and psycho-analysis has shown that the solution of many problems of conduct and behavior, hitherto unexplainable, may be greatly aided by probing deeply into our subconscious nature and particularly into our sex-life. In the case of Leopardi this fact must of necessity be borne in mind, if one would fully grasp the meaning of his life and work.

Until he was 34 years of age Leopardi never knew what real love meant. True, up to that time he had sung of Sylvia and of Nerina—and possibly of another woman—but these were dream-girls, symbolic images of his phantasy, allegorical idealizations of love, not real flesh-and-blood creatures who had given him the thrill of sensuous passion or desire.

The love crisis in his life came in 1832, or thereabouts, when in Florence he met Mrs. Targioni-Tozzetti, a most charming and cultured woman, wife of a University Professor. He was violently swept off his feet, almost at first sight. It was no platonic or romantic affair: it was, for the first time in his life, a veritable ravishment of the senses, an indomitable sex-urge which shook his innermost being to

its very roots and which up to his last days, he was completely unable to control.

The result was of course far from satisfactory for the poet. The beautiful enchantress might have vouchsafed the pallid and careworn lover one of her most bewitching smiles or shown a vapid interest in him, although it is recorded that she did not think much of his learning or accomplishments, but as for loving him, that was absolutely preposterous.

We do not know how far his philosophy was influenced by the fact that he died a virgin, but this would doubtless prove an interesting study for the psycho-analyst. That he died a virgin seems to be beyond dispute.

Antonio Ranieri, the faithful and heroic friend who daily ministered to the unfortunate man in his living death for seven young years, lends the authority of his intimate knowledge of the poet to the accuracy of this statement. In his book, already referred to, he writes: "This man, in every respect worthy of better times, took to his grave the flower of his virginity. He loved, albeit without hope, as no man has ever loved on this earth."

Another illuminating incident is told by Ranieri. To quote him *verbatim*: "Despite the fact that the sinister signs of illness were written all over his face and body, foreboding an immature death, Leopardi indulged in vain soliloquies of love, which, much to my regret, far exceeded the dignity of so great a man. On many occasions, about which it is best not to speak, I was often an unwilling and grieved witness."

Ranieri always refused to define the implications which naturally flow from this passage. Forty years later, being hard pressed by the critics, he answered them in this fashion: "They want to know what I meant by a *soliloquy* and why I didn't use the word *colloquy*. But I do not have to tell them and, in fact, I am in duty bound not to tell them." Which of course leaves the entire matter in its original equivocal position, although one may draw inevitable conclusions.

BYRON, no less a pessimist than Leopardi, lived a much different life. So did the greatest of the trio, Arthur Schopenhauer. They minimized the blessings of existence, but they were not averse to

enjoy its fugitive and fallacious pleasures. Not so with Leopardi.

Life is unbearable, men are wicked, happiness is like that certain inn-keeper who hung on his wall the legend *Tomorrow we trust*, death is a boon; these elements of his pessimistic philosophy were not mere intellectual manifestations of his genius. He actually felt and lived his philosophy of sorrow. It is this substratum of personal experience which forms the foundation of his system of universal sorrow.

What makes Leopardi's philo-

sophy of suffering so tragic, so human, so heart-rending is precisely this quality of sincerity which inspires his every word and which gives him the right to be placed foremost among the greatest world-sufferers of all times.

When he died, Naples was in the midst of a devastating epidemic of cholera. His last moments are thus described by Ranieri: "Coming out of a deep stupor, he said to me: 'I feel my asthma getting worse. Will you call the doctor?' I rushed out and returned at once. The doctor whispered to me to send for

a priest: there was no time to lose. As I drew close to his bed, Leopardi sighed: 'I can't see you any more,' and breathed his last. At this moment the priest arrived, but only to bless a corpse."

Due to the epidemic, his body was to be thrown into a common grave, together with countless others. But through Ranieri's untiring efforts the body was, during the night, surreptitiously taken to the little church of San Vitale, in the outskirts of the city, and there buried.

The Drudge

She'd often done those tasks
And bent her back for more—
But that day April flung
A jonquil through her door.

—Ione della Sala

"We Have a President!"

(Continued from page 14)

powers in himself that we never knew in war time. There had been more government in less time than ever before. Critics were wont to compare the Rooseveltian command of power with that of the famous war-time President, Roosevelt's Democratic predecessor, Woodrow Wilson. What did they find? This: that in a more challenging epoch than Woodrow Wilson's, Roosevelt presides over a greater crisis and has more power.

Of course, Roosevelt was afforded the advantage of a solidly Democratic Congress. It would be interesting to reflect on what would have been accomplished had a hopelessly split Congress been in the place of the strong support he enjoyed. But, in view of what he has achieved, and bearing in mind his definite intention of assuming dictatorial powers regardless of the balance exerted by Congress, one is led to venture the opinion that here is a case of the workman and not the tools. Yet, as strongly partisan as the new Congress appeared, it was beyond reason to hope that they could have functioned so har-

moniously right from the opening gun. What transpired to render a notoriously militant body of men so meek and submissive? The channels of politics are deep-running and secretive, but this was entirely in the open. One of the prime reasons for their willingness was the flood of messages to Congress that took the form of this single order: "Support the President; give him anything he wants."

There were some doubts concerning Roosevelt's selection of his Cabinet members and official family on the basis of their loyalty to him during his campaign. In the light of consequent events, the President's advisers could not have been more wisely chosen. They constituted the embodiment of his principles; they fitted into the pattern he was making; they helped to define what he was after.

We have had ample opportunity to judge Franklin D. Roosevelt. What can we say? Has he succeeded? So far, he has exceeded beyond our fondest hopes the promises of action he gave us on March 4th. In one short month he has

practically renewed the faith of the entire nation. Americans no longer are asking "Will he do it?" They are betting that he will. The confidence he has instilled by an honest, progressive determination to hold the cards in his own "new deal" is a fitting monument to the resourcefulness of America's millions.

There seems to be no reasonable indication at present that in the future he will not continue to exercise the same ready impatience to accomplish things that has become a salient feature of the man. The morale which he has jacked up to miraculous heights will probably last for quite some time. He has had the luck to start at the very depths whereas Hoover differed in starting at the top. The answer is purely mathematical. When something has reached its lowest possible point, any change thereafter must of necessity be for the better. Roosevelt has made a great jump from the black depths of stagnant politics and there is every reason to believe that his political future is destined to be a great one.

The Love of Demetrio Benoni

A SHORT STORY

By Cesare Giardini

Decoration by Ione della Sala

"When the body sleeps the soul keeps vigil."
—SOCRATES

SOME time ago I met a strange young man, one worthy of singing, as Shelley has done, a hymn to intellectual beauty. He was called Demetrio Benoni. It is no exaggeration, I think, to assert that no one will ever be able to render as intensely and continuously as he could the life of the spirit at the expense of the material one. Demetrio Benoni lived in a world of abstractions. He would write verses with such faith and fury as to make one think every rhyme might mean his life. The existence which we all live, enclosed within well known and controllable formulae, had no value at all for him. It was impossible for him—these were his very words—to act in accordance with the mass of his fellow-creatures, or, at least, to remain motionless in the center of the movement and observe. A force, about which he could not even say whether it was an internal or an external one, projected him outside of the merry-go-round of the elementary sensations and he seemed to fall into the power of the infinite, similar in his mind to a system of concentric waves which, from the center of that same stormy merry-go-round on which he could not realize any kind of existence, expanded toward the distant shores, washed by the tranquil waters of time. At first the waves, reacting to the disordered impetus of their generating center, are rapid and discordant, but later, gradually widening, they become calm and their movement almost imperceptible, lulling embryos of worlds to come and the golden sarcophagi of dead worlds, it makes for a harmony similar to that intuited by Pythagoras.

I don't know how much truth there was in these follies, but certain it was that listening to Demetrio Benoni and watching his eyes while he recounted them to me convinced me more and more that the habit of living in an extra-human realm is not to be counted as among the best of habits, a truth, this, of

which my friend was to offer me, later, a tragic example. The eyes of Demetrio Benoni in his face that was like that of an adolescent devil condemned to live, were full of inexpressible things which he perhaps thought he had seen in his ventures

Cesare Giardini, born in Bologna forty years ago, is, on his own authority, an exceptional writer. He first became known to his readers as a translator of Catalan and Armenian, and only lately has he published original works. Memorable among his volumes are "La realtà dei Burattini" and "Uriele o l'angelo malato," in which, taking his inspiration from Poe, he has written tales that transport the reader to the world of mysteries and the subconscious. His two latest volumes: "Varenne; la fuga di Luigi XVI" and "I processi di Luigi XVI," both published last year, are detailed and faithful historical reconstructions.

outside of the confines of reality; sinking into them my own scrutinizing eyes seemed to draw me, despite the limitations of time and space, into the remotest past.

Our friendship soon became very close. We had long walks together. Sometimes Demetrio Benoni would be silent, absorbed for a long time, and I would respect his silence, or he would speak softly, outlining thoughts that certainly were not crystallized in his mind but which came to him alive and perfect from a sphere superior to ours. He made me think, from time to time, of Keats, for whom beauty was all, and of Poe, a divine stethoscope placed on the heart of the unknown absolute in order to count its palpitations.

One day Demetrio Benoni happened to come to my house, where he sat down before me and fixed his eyes on me without speaking. After a long silence he asked me abruptly:

"The soul must be tenuous, don't you think? What do you think about it?"

FRANKLY I did not know what to reply: many empirical, scholastic, scientific and esoteric definitions came to my mind, but before I could expound some in a well-ordered discourse, Demetrio Benoni continued:

"Don't you think that a soul can... *se glisser* in a dream?"

Then, while I wondered why he, master of every shade of our Italian language, should make use of a French verb, he continued:

"I'm asking you because for a number of nights a soul has been insinuating itself into my dreams."

I looked at him stupefied, uncomprehending. He persisted:

"It took place for the first time a few weeks ago. I can swear to you that no exterior excitation during the day had anything to do with my dream. I believe I read a little of Verlaine before falling asleep. I became drowsy tranquilly, lulled by the broad rhythms of the Alexandrine poetry of *Sagesse*. Suddenly, during my brief dream, a curtain of dark heavy velvet opened on a garden of unworldly beauty. Think of a spiritual countryside and perhaps you can have an idea of the country that presented itself to my eyes, and into the center of which I was transported without any ado. The verdure around and over me rustled so sweetly as to remind me clearly of the "divina foresta spessa e viva" in which Dante met Matilda. Alone, I walked along the bypaths, stopping every now and then to contemplate, with exclamations of wonder and pleasure, the new aspects which the landscape offered me, but without succeeding in understanding in just what there was contained the fascination that surrounded me, whether in the amber light that was diffused everywhere, or in the variety of the innumerable flowers.

"The dawn drew me from this enchantment, but the light of day did not prevent me from wandering, spiritually, in the nocturnal garden. Well, the following night, in my sleep the garden returned and once again I wandered through it with all my senses, slowly divining its



"She has become my dear beloved..."

soul, which I recognized to be of the purest lyrical essence. Now while disturbed and happy, I was treading the soft green grass, I felt that something new was about to happen. The light increased in intensity about me, and in the new brilliance everything was brought more sharply into focus; the leaves rustled with renewed sweetness, blending the different voices into one song; a kind of panicky intoxication seemed to possess everything. And suddenly a woman was before me and I felt that I was touching "tutti li termini de la beatitudine." She was not alone: two girls, who would have seemed very beautiful without her presence, were

following her, and she was proceeding with a soft and lithe grace that was new and eternal at the same time. I did not, however, have the opportunity of satisfying myself with her vision as I would have liked, when importunate dawn once again inserted its fingers to unravel the golden texture of my dream. And here is where, for me, a superior and uncontrollable power began to manifest itself: every night after that up to the last one, my dream has been repeated. Yet mark you, not reproducing itself exactly alike, but rather unfolding itself like a motif in a symphony, by adding elements to elements, so as to resemble life

surprisingly. My dream is not the result of banal daily sensations but an autonomous and perhaps superior existence."

"And the lady?" I asked interested despite myself.

"She has become my dear beloved. Every night she comes to meet me and I seek her in that part of the garden which she prefers. It is near a little temple of strange architecture, over which a climbing rose-bush has laid a red-and-green covering, that she habitually stays with her companions. I know very well the way to the little temple. For that matter, the whole garden is now as well-known to me as though I had always lived there. When I reach her she leaps up to meet me and kisses me on the mouth. Sometimes I approach her without her being aware of it, and I remain a long time admiring her in silence "carco d'oblio," like Petrarch. She is so beautiful that a halo of more intense light seems to enshroud her and follow her through the amber atmosphere of the garden. All objects, the smallest and the largest, know her and feel her approach. About her I notice always that kind of panicky intoxication that caused me to wonder at her first appearance."

NOW Demetrio Benoni was speaking with a trace of anxiety in his voice, as though none of the words he used was the one he sought.

"What is her name?" I asked him.

He looked at me in amazement. Then:

"I don't know. I love her, that only I know. Her name is sweet and flexible and its syllables give joy and gladness to the lips, such as no human word could. But I forget it whenever dawn comes. And that isn't all: when we are wandering about the garden she sometimes stops before a flower and tells me its secret: she explains to me how the harmony of a rose is regulated by its quality and its rhythm. She knows the secret of all things, and she speaks to me of them when, tired, we stretch out on the grass in the shade of a hedge. But the light of day banishes all my remembrances . . . She knows how the flower or the weakness of beings finds its place in the universal rhythm: she reads, syllable by syllable, verse by verse, the poem of creation, for me . . . But I don't remember . . . I can't remember . . ."

He was silent, and I too was quiet for some time. Then I said:

"Have you ever thought that the whole affair might be due to a demon?"

Of course I was joking, but Demetrio Benoni looked straight at me as though I had been speaking seriously.

"Nevertheless," I continued, "the existence of demons has been ascertained. St. Augustine, St. Thomas, St. Bonaventure, Dionysius the Carthusian, Pope Innocent VIII and others all attest to it. Many men have been led to their deaths by these demons. And, now that I observe you well, it seems to me that you are looking less healthy than when I last saw you."

But I could not continue because Demetrio Benoni interrupted me with violent suddenness. "Don't talk like that. If you but knew her as I know her, you wouldn't speak that way. She is divine; there is something in her that it is impossible to describe with words. Look, she is here"—and he touched his forehead—"but I cannot describe her; if I could you would soon be convinced. She is music, as the poet says, whose spirit I fain would drink. I love her as it is not possible to love in this world . . . and she eludes me. For some nights now I can no longer find sleep. The thresholds of the miraculous garden are closed to me. Sometimes after a long and hellish spell of insomnia, I manage to sleep. But then she cannot be found, or she chides me in a friendly way for my long absence. She suffers also, because she loves me, because she lives for me. She has become more diaphanous and more transitory . . . And I see with terror the day approaching when I will no longer be able to sleep . . . Then she will be awaiting me for a long time and in vain beside the little temple with the climbing rose-bushes . . . She will weep for her lost lover . . . And she will die . . ."

AT this point an unconquerable need of rebelling against the nonsense of Demetrio Benoni took possession of me, and, as though a fury long contained within me had erupted, I cried: "Come, that's enough of that, Demetrio! All that is madness. After all, you know very well that she does not exist!" And this last phrase I must have shouted, literally, for I had the feeling that my logic was accursedly wrong before the illogicality of my friend. A long silence

weighed down upon us, after which Demetrio Benoni resumed, smiling bitterly:

"You say she does not exist because no one, outside of myself, can see her. But she is in my mind. Her image had been in me for a long time, for every lover bears within himself the image of the loved one. *Verus amans assidua sine intermissione coamantis imagine detinetur*. Every brain is a limbo in which there live future ideas like latent beings that would crystallize themselves in life or in art. I have objectified an idea, the most beautiful of all those in my mind."

"But the reality?" I asked.

"I am beyond reality, because I have entered into the truth," was his answer.

* * *

These words closed our colloquy. Demetrio Benoni left in silence, leaving me alone with my thoughts, in the first shadows of the twilight that were already flooding the room. "After all," I told myself, "I don't see anything strange in the continuity of this dream. Rousseau dreamed the same dream all his life. That is known. Demetrio Benoni is thinking too much of the enchanted garden, of his imaginary love, and this preoccupation of his during the day prepares the night's dream. It's a phenomenon of suggestion and nothing more."

Having arrived at this conclusion, I said aloud: "The ancients believed that a twig of *porcacchia* placed under the pillow prevents dreaming. I must remind Demetrio Benoni of this." And I lit the light to drive away the apparitions of the evening.

* * *

THE following morning there plumped into my study Dr. Vanzini, a young physician with a great future whose friendship was very dear to me. His features were upset. "Don't you know?" he cried upon entering, "Demetrio Benoni is dead!"

I leaped to my feet, terrified. In a flash I recalled everything said by my friend the previous evening. He had been seated for a long time on the chair which now, abandoning his large body to it carelessly, was occupied by Dr. Vanzini.

"What do you mean? Why?" I asked.

"Carelessness, deplorable carelessness," replied the doctor, "Yesterday Demetrio Benoni came to the hospital where I am attached.

He told me that for a number of nights he had not been able to sleep and that this was becoming insupportable. 'Could you recommend something that would help me to sleep?' he asked me. I thought it would be well to examine him, for he looked worn and haggard. His nervous system was very greatly upset. I had the hospital pharmacy prepare for him a potion of which he was to have taken a minimum dose every night. He bid me goodbye and left much more calmly. This morning they called me in a hurry to his home. I got there too late: and I was aware of it as soon as I entered his room. He was lying on his bed, placid in countenance, as though he had passed from sleep to death without having been aware of it. I saw, on his night table, the little bottle that had contained the potion . . . empty."

I was listening. I had the impression that the doctor's words were reaching my ears from the icy distances of the infinite, in which at that moment the ardent soul of my vanished friend was floating in search of perceived truth, single and eternal. The doctor continued, explaining:

"I suppose that the first little dose of the opiate had had no effect at all on the shattered nerves of Demetrio Benoni. Then, no doubt, he must have continued to take more of the potion, one spoonful after another, until sleep finally came upon him. But in the meanwhile the lethal substances of the potion acted on his heart, which, as a consequence, softly stopped beating. There is no other explanation."

Again I was silent, lost in my thoughts, and my soul meanwhile was withdrawing far away from me, following in the wake of another soul. And this was how Demetrio Benoni departed, a poet worthy of singing a new hymn to intellectual beauty, and I suffered for no longer being able to say, now: "Yes, Demetrio, you were right, you who are now dead. Perhaps in your nocturnal garden, O poet, you had sipped a strange madness from the white and upturned chalice of the stramonium, or from the mouth of woman; and yet you were right, for we, closed up within the unbreakable human formula, cannot conquer any other reality but that which is born in us for us alone, and for this reality, child of our most profound desire, Demetrio Benoni, it is worth while suffering and dying!"

Arturo Giovannitti and His Poetry

By *W. F. Mulcahy*

THE name of Arturo Giovannitti is one that means little to the average student of contemporary American poetry, yet it embraces an entirely new world of thought and feeling, and may not well be ignored. Here and there we encounter some of his work in various anthologies, the best-known being Untermeyer's "Modern American Poetry," and some mention of him in several of the better known magazines. Beyond this wholly inadequate representation, however, he is little known to the people of the United States. Some brief attention, therefore, to his origin and background may not be out of place before we discuss the peculiar qualities of his poetry.

Giovannitti was born January 7, 1884, at Ripabottoni in Southern Italy. He was educated in Campobasso and at the age of seventeen came to this country, full of hope for the future, and respect for the name of the republic he had been taught to love. His first years in America, however, were bitter, disillusioning ones. He first found employment in the coal mines of Pennsylvania where the misery and poverty of many of the foreign workers went to his heart. After this experience he studied theology in several schools, and then took up journalistic work in New York. Some time later he joined the Socialist movement and became the editor of the Italian journal, *Il Proletario*. His was the fervour of one who is working for the redemption of humanity, and in spite of the poverty he saw on every hand, he set out to spread his ideal that every man shall have his share of life and beauty.

His poetry is but the out-spoken desire for the triumph of this ideal. To the uninitiated it is a strange poetry, spurning both the vacuous unintelligibility of a Hart Crane on the one side and the clear-cut but pointless verse of the Imagists on the other. As Helen Keller says, in her brilliant introduction to his single small volume, "Arrows in the Gale":

"Giovannitti's main theme is the class war, the immediate battleground of which is what we call labor troubles, the strike, the lock-out, the visible clash between employer and employed."

And again:

"Giovannitti's poetry is an effort to express a multitude of men lost in an immensity of silence, swallowed up in meaningless darkness. With burning words he makes us feel the presence of toilers hidden behind tenement walls, behind the machinery they guide. He turns the full light of his intense, vivid intelligence upon the worn faces of the workers who put every breath and nerve into the struggle for existence, who give every hour and exhaust every faculty that others may live." And now let us see whether or not this praise is extravagant.

HIS single volume, as has been said, is not large in size, but surging forward on the crest of the great wave of the new poetry in 1914, its depth and scope may not be judged lightly. In the opening poem, Giovannitti strikes the pitch that is maintained throughout. He warns us against misinterpretation:

These are but songs—they're not a
creed
They are not meant to lift or save,
They won't appeal or intercede
For any fool or any knave;
They hold no covenant or pledge
For him who dares no foe assail:
They are the blows of my own sledge,
Against the walls of my own jail."

This is the key note. Giovannitti realizes better than anyone else that his is but one voice in the mighty cry for freedom. But he is glad of his ability to fling this single shaft into the face of the foe, as his comrades are doing all along the far-flung battle line. If his book adds but a cheering word to the men striving hard for victory; if it but lessens for a moment the stress of difficult hours, he will find it enough.

Perhaps of all the poems which the book contains, the best-known

and most frequently quoted is "The Walker." It is a vivid portrayal of the mind of a man in jail, his thoughts on his fellow prisoners, his dreams of escape, his philosophy, and the strange, uncanny influence of The Walker:

"I hear footsteps over my head all night.

They come and they go. Again they come and they go all night.

They come one eternity in four paces and they go one eternity in four paces, and between the coming and the going there is Silence and the Infinite.

For infinite are the nine feet of a prison cell, and endless is the march of him who walks between the yellow brick wall and the red iron gate, thinking things that cannot be chained and cannot be locked, but that wander far away in the sunlit world, each in a wild pilgrimage after a destined goal."

Of the other poems in the book, it may be well to consider and quote from a few of the more outstanding.

"The Thinker" is an indictment of those who exploit their fellow men, fully as bitter and prophetic as Markham's "Man With the Hoe," and filled with a deep, understanding sympathy for the down-trodden:

"Aye, think! Since time and life began,
Your mind has only feared and slept;
Of all the beasts they called you man
Only because you toiled and wept.

On all the ages firmly set,
Lone pillar of the world you stood;
Beyond your hunger and your sweat
You never knew, nor understood—

* * *

From you, the chained, reviled outcast,
From you the brute inert and dumb,
Shall, through your wakened thought
at last,
The message of tomorrow come.

"Twill come, a dazzling shaft of light,
Of truth, to save and to redeem,
And—whether Love or Dynamite—
Shall blaze the pathway to your dream."

IN "The Stranger at the Gate," "Out of the Mouths of Babes," "The Magdalene," that passionate cry from two thousand years of

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JUBILEE YEAR AT VATICAN CITY

By Alice Seelye Rossi

WITH the promulgation of the Holy Year, which the Pope announced to the world on Christmas Day, large numbers of pilgrims from all parts of Christendom are flocking to Rome for the celebration of the 19th Centenary of the death of the Saviour, and, since the opening of the Holy Door in St. Peter's on April 2d, new interest is focused on Vatican City and the recent developments within its walls. For not only in the Rome of Mussolini have wondrous things been achieved in a relatively short space of time, but in the Pope's territory, as well, there are noteworthy innovations and improvements, which compel one's attention.

Since the Lateran treaty of 1929, several new buildings have been erected alongside of and behind that architectural grandeur which is St. Peter's, so much so that Vatican City is acquiring the appearance of a truly independent State.

The railway station—modern and up-to-date in every detail—occupies a spacious area and the Governor's residence is, indeed, an imposing structure. Moreover, the new picture gallery, the construction of which is one of the happiest measures taken by the present Pontiff, equipped with all latest technical and scientific improvements, enables one to see to the best advantage the great works it contains. Designed by the architect Luca Beltrami, this building has two floors; the lower one containing laboratories for repairs and photographic purposes, as well as storage rooms, while the upper one is the picture gallery proper and comprises fifteen rooms, differing in size, communicating and forming, thus, two long parallel wings. The pictures are arranged in chronological order, beginning with the pre-Giotto primitives and Byzantines, followed by the works of Giotto, Fra Beato Angelico and Bellini, thus leading up to Raphael, whose three masterpieces—*The Coronation of the Virgin*, *The Transfiguration*, and *The Madonna of Foligno*—hold a privileged place, as they figure in the largest and richest room, on the walls of which hang also the lovely tapestries he designed.

That Raphael should be given a place of honor in this picture gallery is a just recognition, for apart

Miss Alice Seelye Rossi, daughter of Gr. Uff. Egisto Rossi, well-known both in Italy and America as Commissioner of Italian Emigration, long connected with Ellis Island, and sister of Dr. Paul A. Rossi, formerly Italian consul in the United States—has for a number of years contributed articles on interesting Italian topics to the American Press, thus strengthening the bonds between these two countries. Although residing in Rome, she has lived and traveled in the United States, hence has an extensive knowledge of both countries.

from any artistic value his name is indissolubly linked with the Vatican, where his faithful services to the Papacy were productive of works of art that brought glory not only to Italy, but also to the two Pontiffs—Julius II and Leo X—under whom he laboured extensively.

From Raphael's room one passes into Leonardo's, then, progressively, into Titian's and Domenichino's, until the last room is reached, wherein there are portraits dating back to a century ago, which is the chronological limit of the paintings in this Picture Gallery.

ENRICHED by numerous pictures from the Vatican apartments and chapels as well as from the Pope's Palace at Castelgandolfo, this collection, although not so large numerically as some of the other great world collections, is none the less one of the richest in quality.

In its present-day aspect, with the pictures restored, freshened up and placed in settings specially designed for them, the Vatican picture gallery is the last expression in technical, scientific and artistic efficiency.

Another recent innovation is the new entrance to the Vatican Museums at the Viale Vaticano, not far from the Piazza del Risorgimento, which makes that vast repository of art more accessible to the public.

The Vatican Radio Station, also newly erected, and equipped with latest scientific improvements under Marconi's personal supervision, has just recently been linked with the Papal Palace at Castelgandolfo, and has created rumors as to the Pope's possible visit there in the near future. However that may be, it is certain His Holiness will appear in public on different occasions during the Holy Year to take part in some of the religious ceremonies, thus adding solemnity to the Jubilee celebrations.

With the appreciable railway reductions granted by the Italian Government during the Holy Year and with the vast organization, ecclesiastical as well as touristic, to meet the needs of visitors, it is expected that unprecedented numbers will be coming to Rome, the economic crisis increasing rather than abating the religious ardor of the masses.



Vatican City—The Governor's Palace

The Letters to Myself

A SHORT STORY

By *Dino Provenzal*

LINA had broken off with me, and this time seriously.

So serious was it that, a few hours after, I had received a sealed packet containing all my letters: how could it have arrived at this stage?

Seated in my easy chair, with my head in my hands, I was looking now at the letters and now at the brazier that was aglow in front of me. Had I covered carefully the fissures of the windows and the doorway, the brazier itself would have become my liberator, but I did not want to die. Better to let the letters die and, with the dolorous correspondence destroyed, the passion itself, too, would be reduced to ashes. Amen: and let's begin a new life.

But a thought came to me suddenly: a thought hanging by a thread—ah, how light!—of hope. Was it possible that she had not written me a note, a word, to ask of me her own letters? I rummaged anxiously through the two hundred and more letters to find her note: perhaps I would be able to see, between the lines, a ray of light: perhaps, in studying the form of the hand-writing, I might perceive that her hand, and her soul, had already calmed down: or at least I would have a new memento of her, and I would have kissed it and breathed its perfume.

No, there was nothing.

So—it didn't matter at all to her that I might show her letters to others? Or was it that she felt sure of me, because respect outlives love? Or perhaps . . . ah, that's it! . . . it was not a definite break and Lina had not wanted to burn all her bridges behind her.

Always this mania for hatching and nursing illusions in the heat of my devouring love!

Enough, now! Be strong, re-read them, destroy them, don't think about them any more.

While I was arranging the letters chronologically, and this methodical task was placating my afflicted nerves, I reflected:

The author of this amusing short story, Dino Provenzal, though a schoolmaster, is more well-known in Italy as an author. His writings include school texts and books for children, but his fame rests principally on three creative works of a general nature: "Le passeggiate di Bardalone," "Manuale del perfetto professore" and "Lina m'aveva piantato." "The Letters to Myself" (*Le lettere a me stesso*) has been translated from the Italian from "Lina m'aveva piantato," a book of short stories, each one of which begins with the title-line.

Dino Provenzal, born in Leghorn on Dec. 27, 1877, was formerly Director of the R. Scuola Normale Femminile in Teramo, and is now Dean of the Liceo of Voghera.

"Why does she keep my letters so mixed up, whereas I am so careful about classifying hers? Perhaps people in love do that: my collector's pedantry is unthinkable in a woman in love; and Lina was—or is she still?—in love with me. How is it that I open her letters with a letter-knife so as not to spoil them, while these envelopes, instead, are rumpled, torn, soiled? . . . Who knows in what haste she must have opened them, and the place and the time, running even the risk of being discovered, poor dear! . . . How is it that . . . oh, this is wonderful! . . . a letter of mine and the milliner's bill in the same envelope. . . . Ah, but of course it must be the bill for that hat which framed her sweet face so well in *Santa Maria del Fiore* when I told her she looked like a Madonna by Angelico descended to earth for a minute!"

The letters were now all in order and numbered: two hundred and twenty-two.

"Who knows what cabalistic significance may be possessed by a number that repeats the 'two' three times?" I pondered, extending over the brazier my fingers, which had become cold at the contact with the paper.

And I began reading.

TIMID and respectful were the first letters with the formal "lei," until, from the ninth letter on, I noticed a certain ostentatious wit, a desire to please, to put my intelligence on exhibition.

Here was the "voi" and the letters became more serious, with the familiar "tu" occasionally peeping in . . . in verses, however.

How many verses! They seemed to be, now, battalions of soldiers that I had sent out, one battalion after another, to conquer a fortress. One right after the other, in the manner of a general who does not spare the lives of his men in order to arrive, sooner or later, at victory.

Victory! The letter that was all flash and glitter, but without pronouns: with only one ambiguous verb toward the end, a "credi" skillfully dissimulated, for it was written as "crede," with a dot over the half-closed "e". I did not want her to be offended by thinking that I was taking advantage of her capitulation.

What letters, after that, what letters! Reading them, I felt flames rising to my face, I trembled all over, I wanted to kiss the pages. I seemed to be listening to a monotonous but sweet music, a humble and ardent prayer, a song that began with a sigh and often died in a sob.

I remembered that just at the beginning of our love I had read a historical anecdote that had made an impression on me. It related how Tommaso Campanella, during the trial, imitated the posture, the attitude, and even the physiognomy of the judge who was questioning him, in order to feel arising in himself the same thoughts as the judge, and thus understand and dominate him. At that time everything I saw or heard ended up in the crucible of my love, and I soon fused that anecdote too with all the rest. Before writing, I would stretch myself on the rocking-chair, as she did, I would entwine, as she did, my

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The Art World

By Maurice J. Valency

THE LITTLE FATHER OF ALL THE SURREALISTS

AT the Brummer Gallery may be seen once more very many pretty examples of the work of this painter of 'very many pretty things.' It is all very beautiful, for Pierre Roy is clearly a painter of the first rank. And it is very sad.

What a piece of work is man, says Shakespeare. How noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! and, he might have added, how mysterious is his digestive apparatus! For is it not strange that so many humble and fleshy things—*choux-fleurs*, and carrots, and onion, and glasses of *vin ordinaire*—daily consumed at noon with proper gravity by the artist at the corner of Rue St. Benoit and Rue Jacob should be metamorphosed thus magically into perpetual paint, enclosed not in dishes but in frames, and served up again in mystery, not for the palate but for the eye?

What strange digestive process makes logic of the relation between a chestnut and a castle, an onion and a stretch of unclouded sky, we can only mutely admire. The world is full of a number of things, but thingness is a question of category. You need only become a little insane or philosophical, or poetic, or hungry, to cause the categories to merge with the things, the machines to melt into the onions, the soul into the liver, and all things together, in one magnificent onion-stew, fragrant with the odor of sanctity. You need only become a little insane to cause the categories to multiply, until each thing acquires a unique, and sometimes alarming personality of its own. For the child, each marble, each bit of string, each cabbage, has such individuality. It is when we grow up that we lose this nice sense of discrimination. Then cabbages lose their identity, and all men become alike; we can no longer tell one Chinaman from another; and our sense of distinction becomes strictly moral, so that cabbages are either good cabbages or bad, large or small, and that is all.

It is otherwise with Roy. Whether he never grew up in that pleasant city which has never seemed to grow old, or whether deliberately he set out a *la recherche du temps perdu*, he has certainly made good his escape from the adult world. But without going into psychology, one can hardly doubt, among his pictures, that one is in the presence of overwhelming decadence, a maturity from which all but the years has fallen away, a stupefying preciosity, which certainly one is bound to condemn, at least on moral grounds, before its attraction becomes narcotic and irresistible. For it is possible that protracted interest in a good example of Roy's work will do more injury to one's moral fibre than almost any other form of depravity. It may be dif-

ficult to pass legislation against them, in a state so highly cultured as ours, but certainly all but the very young and the most abandoned should be warned to have a care how they look at these pictures.

OUT of some vegetables, some bright bits of string, a ribbon, a wheel, a feather, arranged and painted with morbid precision, consummately skilful, Roy achieves a synthesis of detail which almost seems to have purpose. They threaten you with their meaning, these tragic leeks, crucified on a rood of packing wood, and the malignant carrot that thrusts up at them like the lance of the Roman soldier, while below sits in all its pomp and majesty the majestic cauliflower over against the clear sky of blue with its single cloud. They don't mean anything, but they should,—this castle, this egg, the lascivious asparagus, flanked by the white wine and the red—they should mean something, they clamor for meaning, and since no one quite knows what they mean, not even, we suspect, the artist, this is a serious and a menacing matter, of which we had rather not be reminded. For surely there is magic about this wheel, the bits of cloth, the bird's eggs delicately and carefully laid out like jewels, painted with diabolic piety, their every detail pried into with an inquisitiveness that would bring tears to the eye of a camera. But something tells us it is not well to dabble in this kind of magic. You cannot carry objectivity to such lengths, after a certain age, without falling into vice. These answers without questions, these solutions without problems—all this can come to no good end.

And so let us admit that there is a kind of logic in Roy's work, though it be a kind of logic that makes us shudder. Within his own system he is logical enough, logical enough even to have achieved at times a new kind of banality. In composition, in color, in drawing, he is supremely the realist. It is in



Robert Brackman—"Rochelle in White"

—Macbeth Gallery

arrangement that he transcends reality.

But when you transcend reality, reality immediately turns the tables on you. It transcends you, and there you are, real enough, but a little upset.

PIERRE MATISSE GALLERY

THIS gallery is showing a number of not very distinguished things by various distinguished Frenchmen. The greater part of the pictures on exhibition are in watercolor, and among these, undoubtedly, R. Dufy's "Racetrack at Deauville" is outstanding. Gromaire's "Barmaid" is largely by Gromaire. She is a proud and suspicious beauty and bears exotic drinks, the consumption of which might go a long way to make her palatable. There is a pencil sketch of Matisse, of no especial interest, and a very bad pastel of a reclining nude, by the same master. Masson's "Fish in Combat" are bloody but unbowed, and in that state we come to two pictures by Severini, both noteworthy. "Still Life" is of course reminiscent of Chirico, and it brings us back with pigeons, grapes and crayfish to the Glory that was Greece and the Grandeur, etc., while the other is called "Harlequin," and it is lots of fun, a decorative and well-planned abstract. Near the door hangs an excellent Rouault, the torso done in clear deep blue, only slightly bloody, while down in the street you will perhaps stop to stare happily at an oil by Dufy, probably called "Racetrack at Deauville," if not elsewhere, and indeed it does much to make gracious this part of 57th Street.

BRACKMAN: MACBETH GALLERY

BRACKMAN is rather given to pink and blue, and I suppose his work is a little sentimental, and conventional, and what people sometimes call adequate. Sensitive too, particularly to mood, and particularly to one mood. There is no denying that "Rochelle in White" is a pretty piece of work. It is beautifully and simply painted, and it is no fault of the artist if it reminds me of a picture first seen long ago in the "Book of Knowledge," involving a Christian maiden about to be martyred around the Arena. "Seated Nude" is executed without undue vigor, a conventional composition including nude, bowl of leaves, guitar, and bedsheet. The color,

here as elsewhere, just misses dinginess, and the flesh tones lack vibrance, but there is no doubt of either the painter's sincerity, or, within his present limitations, of his talent.

MONET: DURAND- RUEL GALLERIES.

ONE may be a great man in art and yet not be a great artist. A man who has exerted enormous influence is, I suppose, a great man, but men are sometimes greater who have had no influence. For in art, the paintings speak for themselves, long after the man has given over speaking, and his influence has been merged with the gravy. And so after a time, the men are forgotten, the pictures remain, and this is also very sad and beautiful.

Which is as much as to say that while Monet was historically a very great man his work at the Durand-Ruel Galleries seems to me to fall into the class of very valuable, but not very great, work. We can, of course, only vaguely recall the splendor with which it must have flashed upon the dazzled eyes of the studio painter; the sounds of that conflict are only a murmur in the confused rumble of the past. And we who were born to look with suspicion upon Academies, and to accept revolt as the simple and natural, though somewhat useless, reaction of life to its environment, we can only stare at this work, sometimes a little stodgy, sometimes a little pompous, often hysterical, and wonder what was all the shooting for. We wonder moodily about the swiftness with which conventions spring up, the astonishing aptitude of humans for walls and fetters, the swift superposition of moral taboos upon aesthetic standards. We wonder just what there could have been about these innocuous paintings and what could have been the state of mind of those to whom they seemed iconoclastic, irreligious, or heretical. But the point is that the function of paintings is no more to bring about this kind of musing, than the function of music is to call forth pictures.

It is significant, then, that we react indirectly to these Monets, while we react directly to their importance. The works themselves take a second place. Thus perhaps we can understand why the painting-masters had a hard time liking them. It was perhaps partly that they were not very good pictures. A new technique had been evolved,

and it was to be exploited for all it was worth. The results were to be, we now know, a new impetus in the colorist's art, a new sparkle and shimmer in the depiction of surfaces. Sunlight, like new blood, was to stream red and molten through the veins of an anaemic generation. But after all, it was merely a new technique. It remained for greater artists than Monet to make great art of it, artists who were not merely impressionists, who not merely saw, but had something to say. It remained then for Manet and Renoir and Cezanne. And Seurat was to be a great painter in spite of his painstaking pointilism, rather than because of it. It was necessary for the emphasis to be shifted again from technique to idea, for art to escape the inanity of the haystacks and the Nymphaeas, and painting to get over the measles.

FOR no one any longer seriously pretends that the world around us is presented to the eye in a mosaic of primary colors. It simply isn't. And the fact that you can represent it that way, while it adds somewhat to the interest of existence, hardly affects the facts of life. You may mix yellow and blue paint on the palette and make a green sufficiently resembling the green of a rubber-plant to fool almost anybody. But it is not the green of the rubber plant. It is nonsense to argue that the impressionists can make a nearer approximation to that green by juxtaposing points of yellow and blue on the canvas. You will look in vain for points of yellow and blue in the leaves of the rubber-plant, for nature is not an Impressionist. Moreover, while the mixture of yellow and blue pigments makes green, a mixture of yellow and blue lights produces not green, but, as everyone knows, white. The effect, on the retina of an Impressionist, of a mixture of yellow and blue light therefore could only approximate a green if the Impressionist were an adept in self-hypnosis.

Little as we know of the facts of color-vision, it is enough to demonstrate that from any scientific point of view the Impressionists were excellent artists, but only minor prophets. There is no one way to produce a given sensation in the visual centers of the brain. The sensation called whiteness may be produced by the reflection into the eye of an unassorted sheaf

(Continued on Page 32)

The Theatre

By Anthony H. Leviero

MR. PERCIVAL VIVIAN, master mind of the Shakespeare Theatre, announced from his stage on March 18 that the income of his company at last had exceeded the expenses, something unheard of since his troupe ventured into the land of the Philistines last November. The speech set off the thunderous applause it deserved.

Certain of the dramatic commentators, who dwell in a high intellectual elysium, home-made, and in whose nostrils whistles the dense atmosphere that comes from snobbery, have scoffed at the efforts of Mr. Vivian's struggling company. Sometimes the comments have been less than good-humored, and some criticism less critical and less serious than wanted, while some reviewers merely saw new opportunities for turning fancy phrases, which only proves the low state of the fine art of criticism in the great city of New York.

Some of our more generous reviewers have at least been sympathetic with the efforts of the theatre, recognizing that mediocre Shakespearean fare is better than none at all. The acting may be slovenly and, on the whole, un-Shakespearean, the scenery somewhat rickety and some of the dramatis personae self-conscious and amateurish. But there are a few members of the cast who redeem the rest, and the least that can be said for the theatre is that it gives school teachers and pupils a more accurate conception of what Shakespeare means than they can conjure by themselves in dull, piping declamations in the class room.

Against whatever faults we may find let us weigh the serious intention of Mr. Vivian and Julius Hopp, producing and managing directors, respectively, for in this wise is paved the high road to art. And let us not forget that in our barren fields melodrama and sex for money's sake are most likely to grow into hardy theatrical perennials, while the delicate, colorful Shakespearean

foliage withers for want of fertility and nurture.

When we last visited the theatre we saw Curtis Cooksey in an excellent performance as Shakespeare's ambitious monomaniac. If to this we add Charles Wilhelm's Macduff, Leslie Austen's Malcolm, the latter part of Frederica Going's performance as Lady Macbeth and a few others of the lesser characters, and divorce what is left, we have a performance of "Macbeth" well worth seeing.

Mr. Cooksey gives vivid expression both in speech and action to the chief role. He simulates powerfully all the aspects of the human emotions which make "Macbeth" a great psychological study—the first reaction to temptation; fear, unknown on the battlefield, but tremendous and awesome before criminal murder; remorse and fear born in a sick conscience and growing greater with each murder that compels the next and finally leads to tyranny and massacre; and underlying all, the vestiges of nobility which now can never redeem the lost Macbeth but only increase his self-torture and his crimes.

This is a role which requires a whole well-spring of dramatic stock-in-trade, a well-spring that can be made to flow gently, like a noble thought, or seethe like goodly passion or fearful fury. And in all this, in shade of mien, in substance of gesture, word and action, Mr. Cooksey acquits himself. Miss Going merely dragged her role along with her in the beginning. Once she was guilty of delivering a long passage like a valedictorian instead of as a wife with ambitions for a manageable husband. She vindicated herself, however, as the play made great demands upon her, and finally we find her doing with vigor and reality the things that scheming and treachery require.

SONG AND DANCE

HOWEVER poorly Hall Johnson may have put together his

first play, "Run, Little Chillun," now at the Lyric Theatre, it finds justification in the Negro music for which he is famous and especially for a marvelous dance scene. This spectacle comes in the second scene of the first act in the meeting place of the New Day Pilgrims, who advocate free expression of the body and soul. Now this free expression goes very far, as the inhabitants of Toomer's Bottom find out. Their own practice of religion in the Hope Baptist Church, with all its singing and testimony and seizures by the holy spirit, is mild by comparison and one discovers in them a tinge of jealousy for those brave enough to become pilgrims. The plot deals mostly with their efforts to save Jim, the Rev. Jones's son, from the rival religionists.

And so we find Jim and Sulamai, his paramour, looking upon the weird rites of the Pilgrims. From a slow, solemn procession of white-surpliced devotees, it develops gradually into a fantastic dance of life. Music beats an imperative tempo. Like a whip it lashes at the elemental human forces, exciting the spirit and the flesh, lashing willing creatures until in the space of a few minutes they have been driven down the gamut of centuries into pure atavism.

Savagery and lust, motion and music, light and color mingle, swirl, separate and blend again and again in a frenzied, kaleidoscopic vision. It is the human spirit, exulting, free as Arctic winds, as free as ever it can be, and yet unsatisfied, tortured, struggling as if it would burst out of its fleshly prison. At its unbearable climax Sulamai joins in as passionately as the rest and Jim, appalled, carries her off, and the dance goes on. As the curtain goes down, the imagination has but little to conjecture as to what the dénouement of such a spectacle must be. It is, by itself, one of the worthy contributions to this theatrical season, and having said this much, we need not go further with a description of the play.

WHAT would Broadway comedies be without the good old institution of marriage to kick around? The late "Honeymoon" is one we recall with a wry face. But now Miss Tallulah Bankhead is "Forsaking All Others" at the Times Square Theatre and we found it a rather engaging business—from the distance of our fourth row seat. She is left to stand and wait and wait and wait with the lilies in her arms and the organ pealing, but later she turns

the tables on Dillon Todd, played by Anderson Lawlor, who struts about the stage like one of Nature's certainties. The jilter feels what it is like to be jilted.

It is a sophisticated play with sophisticated humor and in it Miss Bankhead has ample opportunity to show all the versatility of which she is capable. And you must believe us when we say that a trembling lip and a sudden hand-spring, as part of her reaction to being jilted, are not incongruous.

It takes a good actress to do both and still make you believe they are symptoms of unhappiness.

One of the humors of the play concerns the man who comes into Charlie's speakeasy in search of his mother and discovers that she has run up to Harvard. This much being written, we shall now run down to Charlie's to see if she is back and free for the evening. There are such interesting mothers in this generation!

ARTURO GIOVANITTI AND HIS POETRY

(Continued from page 22)

prostitution, and "The Bum," Giovannitti reveals his sure grasp of the essentials, and especially the dramatic presentation of poetry. Here is no mere experimentation, but rather the sure touch and sense of justice and beauty of a true poet. In "The Praise of Spring," with its lofty tone and strong wording, there is an unmistakable touch of the Old Testament poetry of James Oppenheim; while "Sing Me to Sleep," with its quiet resignation and longing, is undoubtedly one of the tenderest lyrics in modern verse. The ultimate downfall of capitalism is prophesied in the satirical and

forward-looking "Utopia"; while the strength, thoughtfulness, and pathetic irony of "The Last Nickel," make it delightful. "The Republic" is a realistic picture of the rise of freedom and the fury of the mob during the French Revolution. Its picture of Liberty, at first, as the virgin bride of the people, and, after the fight is won, as a wanton of the streets is unforgettable. Also worthy of note is the solemn, portentous description of "The Funeral," where:

"...we followed the lonely hearse
up the silent street, the street un-
souled and grief-stricken by the

gray omens of the coming first
snow,
And we looked not at each other and
we did not speak."

The sprightly optimism, hopefulness, and the galloping, spirited meter of "To Joseph J. Ettor," the out-spokenness of "The Sermon on the Common," the joy of living and the delight in little things in "The Peaceful Hour," and the unusually dramatic presentation of "The Cage," make "Arrows in the Gale" a work of which any poet may well be proud, one singularly original in both substance and craftsmanship.

THE LETTERS TO MYSELF

(Continued from page 24)

fingers on my right knee and look straight before me fixedly, with a light fluttering, almost a quivering, of the eyelashes: that was what she did when she was lost in thought. Then I would write seeing Lina, approaching Lina, becoming Lina, till I was sure that every one of my words would produce the desired effect, that effect and none other, for they were no longer words, but caresses, kisses, embraces, cries.

Now the miracle was being repeated, but in an opposite way. The letters that had perturbed her were now upsetting me. I felt myself praying, supplicating: every page demanded of me love eternal, and that I be not a passing caprice, no,

for heaven's sake, no: rather death than that!

And I read, I read on, while emotion was conquering me: every letter, as soon as it had been read, ended up in the brazier, where it aroused a little flame of vivid gold and then curled up, black and almost impalpable, but the fire that blazed within me left no ashes: and I was consumed with grief.

Finally a spasmodic letter in which regret, love, jealousy and desire writhed, no longer finding words suitable enough, and her name was mingled with that of the things most dear to me, my dreams, my hopes, my delusions and my dead ones; that letter made me giddy. I

arose and murmured: "Yes, yes, I will always love you: don't supplicate so any more, don't lower yourself so any more, my love!"

I had the feeling that she was speaking through my mouth and it was natural, because I was she; in fact I had read all those letters, therefore they were directed at me and now it was she—or I, which is the same thing—who replied: "Yes, my love, yes!"

I seized my pen and wrote still another letter, but I did not mail it, for the ringing of the doorbell shook me.

It was a special delivery letter from Lina:

"I'm expecting you: come."

Notes on Garibaldi's Life in Staten Island

By Francesco Moncada

SINCE October, 1850, Garibaldi, together with the tenor Salvi and Major Bovi (both fast friends of his) had been living at the home of Antonio Meucci in Staten Island, in order to seek some rest and seclusion from the constant demands made on his time, and also for purposes of economy.

Many were the activities to which these four turned their minds and hands at about this time. Major Bovi, for example, in his native city of Bologna in Italy, had acquired a knowledge of sausage making, and Garibaldi thought they could make use of it. Accordingly, the necessary materials were acquired and, alongside of Meucci's modest laboratory in the cellar, a small salami factory was started, with the work divided among themselves. General Garibaldi's task was that of removing the meat from the bones, and one day his knife slipped suddenly and cut a small piece of flesh from his finger. Where was it? They couldn't find it.

"Never mind," he said, "don't search for it; it will make the salami Republican."

The business, however, did not prosper to the extent hoped for, since there was a lack of fish and game, and too often they ended up by making a meal of salami, bread and "mortadelle." So they willingly returned to fishing and hunting, in which, at least, no capital investment was necessary.

In comparison with his active life, the sight of friends who were unemployed pained him. One day he said to the good Meucci: "Captain Buontempo (Fairweather), tell me, with all your worthwhile ideas in your head and with the little money you have in your pocket, couldn't you attempt some new business and so give work to these people, at the same time earning some money for yourself? I hate to see them out of work. It's up to you, my friend, to correct this state of affairs."

And Meucci, nicknamed "Captain Fairweather," who had worked for some months on his invention of paraffin candles (for which he later obtained a patent) intensified his researches and study into the

subject. When he finally went to the General and told him the results of his experiments, Garibaldi, in a burst of spontaneous enthusiasm, exclaimed: "Bravo! It is a good idea! We will employ many poor and unfortunate immigrants. We can't fail this time, because everybody needs light, and candles cannot be eaten, like salami. I will be your partner, and since my friend Carpeneto is coming soon (he's a merchant from South America) we can interest him, too. Don't delay; begin immediately."



Giuseppe Garibaldi

UNDER Meucci's direction, the work of setting up the factory was started at once, in the very same cellar where the salami had formerly been manufactured. It was decided to try it out first on a small scale, while awaiting the return of Salvi, temporarily engaged as a singer, to expand their operations. General Avezzana, who was in business in New York, promised his help, and obtained for them a couple of boilers and some other needed equipment.

Work started, and, under Meucci's guidance and with Garibaldi's example, the plant progressed full blast, with everyone intensifying his efforts. Later Lorenzo Salvi arrived, and bought from Mr. and Mrs. William Townsend, on Sept. 10th, 1851, their little country house with nine surrounding lots of land, for \$1800. A large candle

factory was then built, with many Italian exiles really employed, among them Giovanni Morosini, who, in 1868, became secretary to Jay Gould, the financial magnate, and later became himself a famous banker and millionaire. Even the women lent a hand, preparing wicks and packages.

* * *

While in Staten Island, Garibaldi's aid was given gratis, in order to pass some time and also as an example to the others, not, as some biographers have erroneously stated, to earn a living. He himself says ("Memorie di Garibaldi," Barbera, Firenze, 1920, p. 266), "In Meucci's house I was entirely free and if I wanted to, I could work."

Usually the General gave his aid, which was more moral than material, after returning from hunting or fishing. And so the business was beginning to hum. On May 12, 1852, Meucci and Salvi bought from the Townsend couple their "Forest Cottage," located between Forest Street and Maple Avenue, for \$2500, and on July 1853 they bought 18 additional nearby lots for \$4800, according to the Richmond County Clerk's records. To enable Salvi to purchase this land, Meucci had loaned him \$2000 more, which brought the former's debt to \$5500.

They worked happily and peacefully, with occasional jesting and pranks. Domenico Mariani of Milan, when not working as a musician, would make candles in Clifton, and he was always a sure target for the others' jests. Though rather old, he would come from New York well pomaded, powdered, and with his hair and mustache dyed. Once Meucci, his hands greased with some chemicals he had been working with, began playfully stroking his hair and mustache, with the result that Mariani's hair was restored to its original color, to the laughter of the others.

However, the merriment did not last long, for, instead of success, gradual failure greeted the candle business, and soon it went into bankruptcy. Salvi then sailed for Mexico to resume his former work in the theatre, and since he owed Meucci \$5500, he ceded him his property rights on May 10, 1854. This left Antonio Meucci alone, for soon after that Francesco Carpeneto's invitation to Garibaldi to accompany him to Central America was accepted, and the General left Staten Island.

THE NEW BOOKS

(Continued from Page 2)

story has been written, "that the marionettes may go farther and make Italy better known to the world outside."

"Puppet Parade" is a clever bit of work, with lively illustrations, in which are brought together all these laughable *pupazzi* of the land where laughter is native to the soil and sky and sea. The whole company of them take part in a plot which makes that mischievous little wooden boy *Pinocchio* (famous as the hero of Lorenzini's stories, and unquestioned favorite of every child of Italy) king of them all.

These two hundred and forty jolly pages are, to be sure, prominently and properly catalogued for the junior list; yet, because of the universal and almost age-long tradition of many of the marionettes which they present, such for example, as *Pulcinella*, the French Polichinelle, the English Punch, etc., popular for four hundred years in Europe and found even in Egypt a thousand years ago, they are bound to be commended by all who are interested in the history of the play spirit and the common language which it speaks.

Richard F. Mezzotero

TEOSOFIA. By Ugo Janni, 431 pages. Fratelli Bocca, Turin, Italy.

For those who live in America the title of this book can be anything but pleasing. To them, the word *theosophy* suggests an unimportant sect, the cavillous and narrow-minded Theosophists, who in their spiritual fanaticism have shrunk and circumscribed the true significance of the word. The author, however, does not neglect to remind his readers that the meaning of his title is the true etymological one: "Knowledge concerning the divine," and that Theosophy is *reinterpretation of the religious values of traditional Christianity in the light of modern thought*.

The author has gathered and sifted together the findings of both ancient and contemporary masters of the subject, and in spite of the magnitude of the undertaking, has been able to maintain throughout a sense of objectivity and balance which allows him, not only to speak without bitterness of the great luminaries of theology and philosophy who before him faced the problem from different angles, but to point out many of their opinions and judgments with advantage.

In this age of decadence and spiritual instability, it is truly a relief to meet with a believer who has overcome certain conflicting ideas to his own satisfaction and solved for himself one of the eternal problems which confront every serious thinking man.

To the difficult task he has undertaken, of comparing and analysing a host of seemingly discordant, yet related ideas, Janni brings an unbiased appreciation and a keen analytical perception, making of his book a

monumental work. Some of the most striking passages: the analysis of the three forms of being and of the Christian trinity (103); the fact that Christianity is not only a phenomena which occurred twenty centuries ago, but is a living force of the present (301-2); the gospel assurance that the Kingdom of God is not only a social fact, but is primarily an individual affair, and the condition *sine qua non* for participation in that Kingdom is the New Birth (321); the sublime significance of the cross (355); an edifying ray of light on the mystery of the resurrected body (146); an examination of the doctrine of free will as compared to predestination (140); the problem of evil as a phenomenon completely apart from the problem of pain (179); an interpretation of the essence of true religion, which is not a hope of future reward or a fear of future punishment, but the realization and acceptance of duty as a necessary element of existence, and the appreciation of its intrinsic moral value (55).

The perennial question "*Cur Deus homo?*" is answered decisively, with: "The purpose of the incarnation — in response to the finality of the Creation — was to introduce the infinite into the world; but the infinite could not be introduced into the world if God did not incarnate Himself by union *summo modo* with humanity, that is, with Nature, which holds all of the created elements, and embraces the world; therefore God assumed the nature of humanity, in the *Logos* — which is God (217). Furthermore, even if man had not sinned, Christ would have incarnated himself" (343) in order to establish the Kingdom of God on Earth.

Amedeo E. Santini

THE FANTASTIC CITY. By Amelia Ransome Neville. Edited and Revised by Virginia Brastow. Houghton Mifflin Company.

The cultural side of the San Francisco of an earlier day has been quite lost sight of in a fanfare of six-shooters. The thoughtful reader owes a debt to Amelia Ransome Neville, whose *Memoirs of the Social and Romantic Life of Old San Francisco* show *The Fantastic City*, as she has named it, at its best. Daughter of a Federal engineer and born at Columbus, where her father was resident engineer of the Ohio Canal, the author was taken to England, presented at Court, later married to a captain of the British Army, and came to San Francisco in the early fifties.

Her many references to the part Italians played in the cultural life of the young city are of more than passing interest: Mancinelli conducting "Carmen" for Calvé; Albani as Elsa in "Lohengrin"; Ristori, in private life Marchesa de Capronica, the Italian tragedienne who had recently made a conquest of Paris and who played Marie Antoinette with the fire of her genius still flaming.

Mrs. Neville tells of visits up and down the Peninsula, when Belmont, named, perhaps, for Portia's Belmont, was the property of Count Cipriani, who called it 'Canada de Diablo.'

The writer, only recently returned from abroad, says that she never saw a more effective setting for a ball than the Count's oval ballroom with its great crystal chandelier hung from the frescoed ceiling in the domed wing of his villa.

Adeline Patti was one of the singers over whom San Francisco went mad. Mrs. Neville tells of a personal meeting with the prima donna. Of Madame Schalchi the author says that she had the richest of contralto voices.

Throughout the book one finds many references to Italian music: such as Madame Fabbri's leading the five hundred choristers in their ode of welcome to General Grant at a band concert in the Palace Hotel. The book contains a fund of information delightfully given and not otherwise accessible.

Laura Bell Everett

THE PLAYS AND POEMS OF W. S. GILBERT. With an introduction by Deems Taylor. 1280 pages, illustrated by the author. New York: The Random House. \$3.50

The delightfully comic operas of Gilbert & Sullivan, that pair of Victorian (and yet un-Victorian) English wits, have an amazing longevity. Written and produced originally in the 70's and the 80's, hardly a year goes by without a revival of one or more of them.

It is useless to try to convey adequately to the uninitiated the quality of the Gilbertian humor and wit. Mr. Deems Taylor, accomplished writer and musician that he is, in his preface admittedly succeeds only in making one familiar with the life of Gilbert, but not his fantasy. One must actually see the operas, or, failing that, read them, and since the present edition has no equal, it can safely be recommended as at least the second best way of becoming acquainted. Containing the 14 operas and 3 additional plays by Gilbert, it is complete, it contains all the Bab Ballads as well, it includes some 200 original drawings by Gilbert, and it is a finely bound book, a typical Random House product.

To the really fanatic enthusiast of the two Savoyards, lines like "What, never?" "Well, hardly ever" immediately set them to repeating others: "Our attitude's queer and quaint . . . you're wrong if you think it ain't!" or the references to "his sisters and his cousins and his aunts" or the following priceless bit of alliteration:

"So I object
To sit in solemn silence in a dull,
dark dock
In a pestilential prison with a life-
long lock,
Awaiting the sensation of a short,
sharp shock
From a cheap and chippy chopper
on a big black block!"

Inevitably, however, the reviewer must refer the reader to the plays and ballads themselves, with the reminder that if he is not familiar with these deliciously illogical but satirical fantasies, he is in for a real treat.

Things Italian in American Books and Periodicals

A Bibliography of Recent Publications of Interest to Italian-Americans

PERIODICALS

THE EUROPEAN PEACE PLAN GREAT ALARMS FRANCE — *The Literary Digest*, April 1 1933.

A summary of typical press opinion from American, French, British, Italian and German newspapers concerning the 1919-1920 ten-year peace pact for Europe recently proposed by Premier Mussolini. "French objections," states the article accurately, "are based, according to Paris press cables, on France's refusal to permit herself to be divorced from the Versailles Treaties, the League of Nations, or her Central European allies, Poland and the Little Entente."

MUSSOLINI BUILDS A ROME OF THE CAESARS — By Valentine Thomson — *The New York Times Magazine*, March 19, 1933.

"Under the hand and eye of Mussolini a Rome part new and part older than our own era is being integrated. Sacred monuments of antiquity are restored to the view of the populace, and, as some of the medieval city superimposed upon them is cleared away by the necessities of archaeology, a new action rises to house the tenants displaced." The article is an account of the operations involved in building up a city reminiscent of that of Augustus, which is deemed to be the most cherished of the Duce's vast projects, together with comment by Mussolini himself and a picture of the city that is slowly emerging.

MR. MACDONALD TRAVELS — *The Commonweal*, April 5, 1933.

Explaining why the British Premier went to Rome, "which action might well constitute *Less Number One* in world diplomacy for Americans," this article says:

"Nor did Mr. MacDonald go to Paris. Realizing that the French are caught in the coils of a bourgeois civilization typified by the old blokes of the Academy on the one hand and the investors in Schneider-Creusot on the other hand, he understood perfectly that M. Daladier would greet him with a sigh, a smile and a shrug of the shoulders. For the past five years, Gaul has resembled a lady who has tried in vain to take the cold shower recommended by her physician."

ITALY'S CLOISTERED COWS AND THEIR HYSTERICS — *The Literary Digest*, April 8, 1933.

A re-write and quotation from an article by Robert H. Davis in the *New York Sun*, which concerned itself with

"an explanation of Italy's cowless landscape."

HOLY YEAR — By Beniamino De Ritis — *Italy America Society Bulletin*, April 1933.

The opening of the Holy Door of St Peter's by the Pope on April 2nd, symbolized the liberation of humanity from the misery of the world and its admission into the City of God. This article is a short history of Jubilee years throughout history, since the first Jubilee in 1300.

DISARMAMENT OR A NEW WAR? — By Count Carlo Sforza — *The New York Herald Tribune Magazine*, April 2, 1933.

The subtitle of this article by the former Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs is "Which will triumph... fear, which leads to armaments and war, or security, by means of disarmament? The world's new machinery of destruction increases the likelihood of war... against this is the certainty that a new conflict would wreck civilization."

HITLER AS MUSSOLINI — AN APPRAISAL — By Emil Lengyel — *The New York Times Magazine*, April 2, 1933.

There are striking contrasts both in character and in methods between the two dictators, says the author, although "Hitler has adopted Mussolini's conception of the State, in which the word of the leader is law." Later he adds, "Hitler has been paying ardent tributes to the Duce, the master who has been his inspiration. Mussolini's tributes to Hitler have been less glowing."

ITALY AND SOME OF HER EARLY AMERICAN COMMENTATORS — By Emilio Goggio — *Italica* (The Quarterly Bulletin of the American Association of Teachers of Italian) March 1933.

A discussion and analysis, in scholarly fashion, of early American travel books dealing with Italy, most of which, says the author, "were very unreliable, since their authors lacked the necessary qualifications for writing works of that nature."

FLORENTINE MERCHANTS IN THE DAYS OF THE MEDICI — By Dino Bigongiari — *The Romantic Review* (A quarterly journal devoted to research in the romance languages and literatures) January-March 1933.

An exhaustive review of "Letters and Documents from the Selfridge Collection of Medici Manuscripts," a book edited by Gertrude R. B. Richards and published by Harvard University Press.

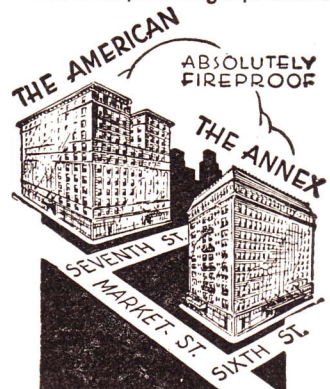
BOOKS IN ITALIAN — Books Abroad ("An international quarterly") April 1933.

A regular section of this publication, containing reviews of 13 of the latest books of general interest published in Italy recently.



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AMERICA ANSWERS ROME —
The Commonweal, March 29, 1933.

An article concerning "the unique and splendid cooperation" of Protestant, Jewish and Catholic leaders who gathered on Sunday April 2nd at Radio City Music Hall in public celebration as Pope Pius inaugurated the Holy Year in Rome. A long passage is quoted from the Pope's allocution to the cardinals of the Catholic Church, and the point is made that "Surely the times demand the application of a force more fundamental and far-reaching even than the best plans of statesmen or economists."

THE STATUS OF ITALIAN IN THE COLLEGES — By Elton Hocking — *Italica*, (The Quarterly Bulletin of the American Association of Teachers of Italian) March 1933.

In this survey "to determine to what extent Italian is accorded equality of standing with other leading modern languages," based on returns from questionnaires sent to 112 colleges, the results are tabulated in order to show the general trend of policy in representative institutions.

Concludes the author: "In view of the general recognition of the value of our subject, we teachers of Italian should feel encouraged to carry on the struggle against the forces of indifference, incomprehension and inertia which always handicap the progress of a cause which is strong in principle, but lacking in the brute strength of numbers. In only a small number of colleges are the students still denied the right to 'satisfy the requirements' by learning the language of Dante."

BOOKS

ONE, NONE AND A HUNDRED THOUSAND — By Luigi Pirandello — New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., \$2.75.

Pirandello says: "This book not only depicts dramatically, but at the same time demonstrates by what might be termed a mathematical method, the impossibility of any human creature's being to others what he is to himself."

MODERN ITALY: A SHORT HISTORY — By George B. McClellan — Princeton: Princeton University Press. \$3.00.

The story of the unification of Italy and of her rise to her present position as one of the great powers.

BEATRICE CENCI — By Corrado Ricci — Translated from the Italian by Morris Bishop and Henry Longan Stuart. Illustrated by Arthur Zaidenberg — New York: Liveright, Inc.

This latest book in the Black and Gold Library is "the amazing story of one of the most infamous families in history" and contains both volumes of the original Italian work in one.

ITALY AND THE ITALIANS IN WASHINGTON'S TIME — By Garlick, Jr., Guidi, Prezzolini, Rosselli and Russo, with a foreword by Edward Corsi — New York: Italian Publishers.

This volume was prepared under the auspices of Casa Italiana of Columbia University, and contains chapters on Philip Mazzei, Francis Vigo, Lorenzo da Ponte, Washington and the Italians, and American Travellers in Italy at the Beginning of the 18th Century.

THE FATE OF THE CARBONARI: Memoirs of Felice Foresti — Translated by Howard R. Marraro — New York: The Italian Historical Society.

Eleuterio Felice Foresti was exiled to America in 1836 after serving 17 years' imprisonment in the dungeons of Austria for his participation in the carbonari movement in Italy, which aimed at the liberation of that country from all foreign oppressors. In America he continued his work in behalf of his native country, and was one of the most outstanding Italians. He was Professor of Italian at Columbia from 1839 to 1856.

THE KING OF ROME — By R. M. Wilson — New York: D. Appleton & Co.

FERRUCCIO BUSONI — By Edward J. Dent — New York: Oxford University Press: \$5.75.

A biography of the composer.

THE MEDICI — By G. F. Young — The Modern Library, New York, \$1.00.

One of the Modern Library Giants Series, with 32 illustrations in aquatone.

MODERN COMPOSERS — By Guido Pannain. Translated by M. R. Bonavia — New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. \$3.50.

Studies of twelve modern composers, all of them living except Ferruccio Busoni, by a noted Italian music critic.

OF THINGS WHICH SOON MUST COME TO PASS: A Commentary on the Book of Revelation — By Philip Mauro — Washington, D. C.: The Perry Studio.

An exposition of the Book of New Testament Prophecy by a member of the Bar of the U. S. Supreme Court, written in non-technical language.

THE ART WORLD

(Continued from page 26)

of light rays of various frequencies, by a mixture of specific yellow and blue, or red and green, or by a smart tap on the eye-ball delivered not by the canvas but by the fist of the artist. Or on the skull with a baseball bat. No one of these ways is more holy than the others. All are effective; some use the one, some the other.

"Chrysanthemes" is clearly much too excited to be a fine painting. "La Japonaise" is certainly very imposing. But one does not always like to be imposed upon. I think it is, for all its magnificence, a bit stuffy, and should have a good airing. "La Cathedrale de Rouen,"

frankly floating like a cloud in utter formlessness in the sweltering sun, calls forth, I fear, the one literary reaction of our age to the problems of existence—the devastating question 'So what?' And in the "Pins-Parasols," the "Canotiers," and "Peupliers au bord de l'Epte" isn't the color somewhat coarse and gory, or else trite and vaguely sickening? Except of course historically, from which point of view it is undoubtedly very fine?

Of these pictures, then, I like best the unpretentious "La Maison Bleue" with its carefully reticulated blue wall, and "La Plage de Ste.

Adresse." "Les Dechargeurs de Charbon" is unquestionably a fine canvas, regardless of what theories lie behind it, scientific or economic. Over the rest of the paintings, I must confess to a certain lack of excitement. But I must confess also to a certain quiet and boundless joy in them, for in their presence, if one listens closely, one can hear the distant strains of the Marseillaise. It was good that they were painted. It was good, and let us offer thanks, that they put out of business, at least for a time, the stuffed lords of the academies, like stately puppets, all straw and punderon.

The Italians in the United States

THE PRESS

"The Northwest Democrat," a six page standard size Italian weekly printed entirely in English, recently made its initial appearance in Portland, Oregon. Well edited and planned, the paper is published and edited by Johnny Morrow.

The appointment of New York University student editors to the editorial boards of the Washington Square College Bulletin, the undergraduate publication, was announced recently. Among the appointees are Thomas Montalbo, managing editor, and John S. Radosta, associate editor in charge of news.

"The Lion," monthly organ of the Junior Lodges of the Order Sons of Italy in America, edited by Miss Rosina M. Bonanno, contained an editorial not long ago on the study of Italian. Exhorting young Italo-Americans to do their share in bringing about further study of the language of their fathers, the editorial concluded: "Other languages are taught in the curriculum of our schools both as compulsory and elective subjects. Why cannot we persist in demanding that Italian be recognized as one of the compulsory lingual units?"

President Emilio Goggio of the American Association of Teachers of Italian, has reappointed Professor H. D. Austin as editor of "Italica," the association's quarterly bulletin, for 1933; and has appointed Prof. J. G. Fucilla of Northwestern University and Prof. John Van Horne of the University of Illinois as consulting editors.

SOCIETIES

An Italian festival under the patronage of the Italian Ambassador in Washington, Augusto Rosso, and the Consul General of Italy in New York, Commendatore Antonio Grossardi, was held on board the new Italian steamship Conte di Savoia, in New York harbor on April 6, for the joint benefit of the Leonardo da Vinci Art School, 149 East Thirty-fourth Street, and the Dante Alighieri Society.

More than a thousand guests were present for dancing, a buffet supper and entertainment.

The program of entertainment included several Broadway and Metropolitan Opera stars, among them Tullio Carminati, the celebrated Italian actor and star of "Strictly Dishonorable" and "Music in the Air," and Tino Martini, well-known radio singer.

In addition to the Italian Consul General, those present included Dr. Pier P. Spinelli, Mr. Antonio Loggioso, Dr. Giorgio Serafini, Dr. Umberto Caradossi, Dr. George T. Beni, Chevalier Gaetano Spatafo-

ra, Italian Vice-Consuls in New York; Grand Officer Joseph Gerli, Count Alfonso Facchetti-Guiglia, Grand Officer Gene Pope, and Mr. Italo Falbo, editor of "Il Progresso" and president of the Dante Alighieri Society; Comm. Lionello Perera, Comm. Felice Bava, Comm. Siro Fusi, Grand Officer Almerindo Portfolio, Comm. Meriggio Serrati, Comm. Angelo Ruspini, Comm. Cosulich; Justices John J. Freschi, Louis Valente and Salvatore Cotillo; Mr. Howard Eric, Comm. Emanuele Gerli, Comm. Paulino Gerli, all of the board of directors of the Leonardo da Vinci Art School; Comm. Stefano Berizzi, Comm. Ercole Locatelli, president of the Italian Chamber of Commerce, and Colonel George Ruppert.

The Leonardo da Vinci Art School, established in 1923 by a group of prominent Italian citizens, seeks to encourage the appreciation of good art by the youth of today. Professor Attilio Piccirilli, noted sculptor, is director of the school, aided by Professors Giovanni Caggiano and Michele Falanga. On March 7 Mr. Joseph Gerli was decorated by the Italian Consul General, on behalf of the King of Italy, at a reception marking the opening of the annual art exhibition of the school.

The Dante Alighieri Society, New York Chapter, an Italian society in all countries, was founded for the propagation of Italian culture.

The directors of the Italian Steamship Line generously offered the use of their ships to the school and society.

Mr. Remo Fioroni and Mr. Giovanni Caggiano were the secretaries of the Committee in charge of the affair.



Tullio Carminati
(See Page 33, Column 1)

A move toward greater unity in Italo-American life, much to be desired, took place in Newark last month when representatives of about 40 Italian organizations of all kinds—mutual benefit, political and civic—gathered at the first congress of the Federation of Italian Societies in that city. Held at the headquarters of the Italian War Veterans, 166 Bloomfield Avenue, the bringing together of these societies is credited to the untiring initiative and efforts of Dr. Luigi Martucci, Atty. P. Raffone and Joseph Crisci.

The New York State Grand Lodge of the Independent Order Sons of Italy will hold its grand annual Festa and dance at the Hotel New Yorker in New York City on May 21.

The Nastro Azzurro Society, composed of Italian war veterans who have been decorated with the nastro azzurro or blue ribbon, last month celebrated its centenary. Its headquarters are in Italy, and the New York branch, under the presidency of Prof. Rev. Robotti, is at 254 W. 54th Street.

A new chapter was added last month to the Junior Lodges of the Order Sons of Italy in America, the Abraham Lincoln Lodge No. 27 of Brooklyn.

On April 23rd, the Junior Lodges will hold a gala dance at the St. George Hotel in Brooklyn.

Cav. Stefano Miele, Grand Venerable of the Order and the man to whom credit goes for having organized the junior lodges, spoke recently over Radio Station WOV, describing the purpose, activities and the future of the new movement.

A group of Italian-Americans of Washington Heights and Inwood, under the leadership of Frank J. Epifania, have organized and chartered the Italian-American Civic League of Washington Heights and Inwood, the purpose of which is to unite citizens of Italian descent in the community. The first meeting was held on April 6th at the Paramount Mansion in New York, although headquarters are at 587 West 181st St.

Some of the most active members assisting Mr. Epifania, who is executive member of the new civic league, are Joseph V. Micciancio, Cav. D. Borgia, J. Denina, Dr. L. H. Nicargi, Nicholas Pape, Alfred De Filippis, Nicholas Verrastro and Joseph Tecce.

The Board of Directors of the Italy America Society, meeting last month at the office of Paul D. Cravath and under the presidency of H. R. Winthrop, approved the program for

coming year presented by Miss Carla Orlando, secretary. The Society is now in its 15th year.

At a meeting last month attended by representatives of 42 mutual benefit societies of Providence, R. I., Dr. Luigi Cella, former Alderman, was chosen president of the Columbian Committee. The initiator of the Committee, Frank Andreano, was made Honorary President, and other officers elected were B. Ortoleva, and D. Mastronardi, vice-presidents, D. Mauro-Corona, secretary, and V. Morsilli, treasurer.

At the Casa Italiana of Columbia University last month, under the auspices of the Dante Alighieri Society of New York, a concert took place participated in by Remo Bolognini, first assistant violin master of the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, Rosa Tentoni, soprano, and Pietro Cimarra of the Metropolitan Opera Company. The president of the society, Dr. I. C. Falbo, spoke on Wagner and Italy.

The Columbian League of Kings County, at a meeting last month at its headquarters, 107 Pierrepont St., Brooklyn, inducted its new officers into office, with County Register A. L. Jacoby presiding and assisted by the Judges C. J. Liota and S. Sabbatino. The new officials are A. J. Mayo, pres.; J. Parascandolo, L. E. Drago and V. Ferreri, vice-presidents; J. Savarese, exec. sec.; A. R. Cinque, treas.; H. Rigano, rec. sec.; L. Zappala, fin. sec.; and G. F. Tabone, corresponding secretary.

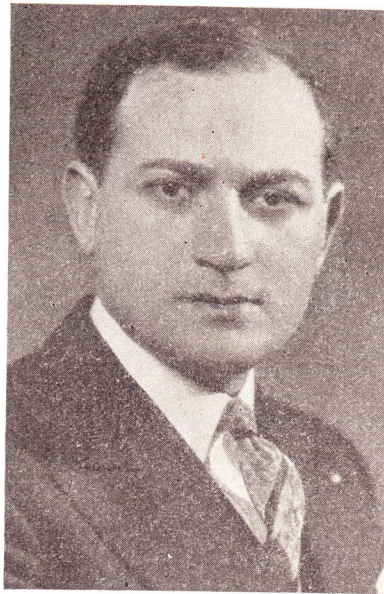
A group of women and young women have organized a women's section of the Annex District Democratic Club in New York. At the club's headquarters, 3811 White Plains Road, the Bronx, last month they inducted the following into office: Ella Beninato, pres.; Mary Jerone, vice-pres.; Christine Ritchie, treas.; Margaret Guarascia, rec. sec.; Helen Maffia, corr. sec.

Free naturalization aid furnished to slightly more than 4500 aliens during the months of January and February at the branches of the National League for American Citizenship brings the total number of such persons who have been helped so far this year to get their citizenship papers without cost to them for this assistance to a figure that promises well to surpass that of 1931 and 1932.

On various evenings of the week throughout the year, without interruption except for holidays, groups of aliens in the Bronx gather in the halls of the Woodstock Public Library at 761 E. 160th Street on Monday evenings from 7 to 9 P. M., to receive free assistance from the branch secretaries of the League. These secretaries have had many years of experience in naturalization work with different agencies and in some cases with the Government itself. The aliens come from all parts of Greater New York and many of them become users of the library itself as a direct result of their introduction to their local branch through this naturalization work.

The secretaries for the League fill out application forms for the aliens who seek first or second papers or who desire to verify their arrival in this country. They also look into the matter of applications that have been long delayed, help aliens who are weak in the information that is required of them in order to qualify for citizenship and extend general aid to aliens who seem to be in difficulty. Because of the unemployment situation, large numbers of aliens are seeking to become citizens in order that they can be assured of retaining their positions.

Aliens are welcome to bring their problems to this branch for solution.



Frank J. Epifania
(See Page 33, Column 3)

EDUCATION AND CULTURE

Gold medals were conferred last month by the Italian Government, through Comm. Antonio Grossardi, Italian Consul General in New York, on four outstanding Italian educators, Prof. Dino Bigongiari, head of the Italian Department of Columbia University; Dr. Angelo Lipari, since 1924 head of the Italian Department of Yale University; Prof. Leonardo Covello, head of the Italian Department of De Witt Clinton High School; and Prof. Angelo Patri, principal of P. S. 45 and nationally known through his syndicated newspaper articles and radio talks as one of the foremost of American educators.

The ceremony took place at the Casa Italiana of Columbia University, where Prof. Giuseppe Prezzolini, its director, introduced Comm. Grossardi. A tea preceded the presentation.

For the benefit of the Student Aid Fund of the De Witt Clinton High School in New York early this month an Italian Festa, the 20th annual one of its kind, took place. The program consisted of music by the school band, Italian folk songs and folk dances by the Italian Choral Society, two short one-act plays in English and Italian, and selections by prominent Italian singers. Honorary

president of the festa was Gr. Uff. Generoso Pope and the Chairman was Judge John J. Freschi. The Festa was arranged by Leonard Covello of the Department of Italian of the school.

The purpose of the Festa was twofold: to increase interest in the study of Italian, and to raise money for the Student Aid Fund to take care of needy students.

The fellowships awarded every year by the Guggenheim Foundation, averaging \$2500 each, are among the most prized of all honors, and are given to foster the work of persons of exceptional talent, selected annually from more than 1000 applicants.

One of those to be selected this year, in the field of art, was Mrs. Carlotta Petrina, artist and book illustrator of Brooklyn. She has exhibited frequently and illustrated an edition of Milton's "Paradise Lost" and of Norman Douglas's "South Wind."

Gold, silver and bronze medals were conferred last month by the Italian Government on a few Americans and Italo-Americans who, either by financial contributions or otherwise, have advanced Italian culture in America.

Gold medals were awarded to Dr. Comm. Charles Paterno, Comm. Joseph Paterno and Comm. Michael Paterno, all of New York.

Silver medals were awarded to Prof. Walter Bullock of Chicago, Frederick V. Blankner and Janet Richards of Washington, D. C., Mons. Antonio Isolero and Prof. George Nietzsche of New York.

Recipients of the bronze medals were Prof. Rudolph Altrocchi (a contributor to "Atlantica" in this issue) and Father Alberto Brandisi of San Francisco; Julia Cuniberti of Washington, D. C., Mons. Bove of Providence, R. I., Mons. Joseph Tonello of Los Angeles, Countess Lisi Cipriani of Chicago, and Prof. Domenico Vitnerini of Philadelphia.

The "Circolo Italiano" of Washington Irving Evening High School gave a concert and dance at the Casa Italiana of Columbia University on Saturday evening of March 4th. Over 200 people attended the function. Many were guests from New York University, College of the City of New York and Manhattan College. There were a number of faculty advisors from the high school itself, and from metropolitan institutions. The concert recitals were especially well rendered. Miss Ethel Candel sang a group of Italian songs. Miss Marie Signorilli sang two folk songs. Both were accompanied by Miss Anita Candela. Later, Miss Mildred Palermo gave a piano-forte solo; she played a Beethoven sonata, and she was followed by Miss Dorothy Dell Potter, the radio and choir singer, who rendered some vocal selections.

During the early part of April the "Circolo Italiano" will give a concert at which the famous lyric tenor, Giuseppe De Benedetto, well-known artist of station WEAF, will offer a program of Italian songs.

The officers of the "Circolo Italiano" are Miss Mildred Zuchero, pres.; John Generale, vice-pres.; and John Campione, sec.-treas., with Dr. Peter

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Sanmartino, Miss Anita Candela and Joseph Landari acting as faculty advisers.

"Italian Prophets of the New Age" was the theme of a lecture recently delivered at the Town Hall in New York by Miss Fredericka Blankner, of the Department of Italian of Vassar College.

Prof. Peter Riccio of Columbia University lectured last month on "Humorous Italian Poetry" at the Regular Branch of the New York Public Library at 174 E. 110th Street. Miss Leonilda I. Sansone, who is in charge of the Italian section of that branch library, arranged the lecture.

Dr. Franco Bruno Averardi spoke recently on "Italy and Fascism" before the Rhode Island Branch of the English Speaking Union in Providence.

One of the students to be listed in the roll of honor of Syracuse University's College of Liberal Arts recently was Anthony John Fantaci of 29 Colvin Street, Syracuse.

At the Mayflower Hotel in Washington last month, Judge Wendell Phillips Scafford addressed the Italy America Society of Washington on Dante and the Divine Comedy.

Six Italian-American students of the New York University School of Commerce, Accounts and Finance were among the 150 honor students recently named at that institution. They are Arthur Parolini, Anthony Rose, James A. Lembo, Louis A. Manfredi, Nuntio Ricci and Cano M. Sica.

The Casa Italiana of Middlebury College in Middlebury, Vermont, is offering five scholarships of \$100 each for the study of Italian at Middlebury during the summer session. For particulars, address Dr. Gabriella Bosma, Tower Court, Wellesley, Massachusetts.

Captain Amedeo Enrico Santini recently received a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree from the University of Michigan. Capt. Santini was an officer during the War and is now a Captain of the Reserve Officers Association of Detroit.

Florindo A. Simeone, of Providence, R. I., a third year student of medicine at Harvard University, was the recipient recently of a James Jackson Cabot Fellowship for the Harvard Medical School.

Miss Armida Lignante of 62 Bay 5th Street, Brooklyn, was recently awarded a \$50 scholarship for proficiency in Italian and for her enthusiasm and activity in social manifestations by the Italian Alumni Association of 1525-74th Street. Miss Lignante has just entered Brooklyn College.

The Italian Ministry of Education has conferred silver medals on the Boston Public Library and the Cir-



Fredericka Blankner
(See Page 34, Column 3)

colo Italiano of Boston, and bronze medals on Professors G. C. Wood of Dartmouth, A. H. Baxter of Amherst, Margaret H. Johnson of Wellesley, Margaret Rooke of Smith, and Mary V. Young of Mount Holyoke.

Peter T. Campon, who continues to lecture in various cities on Italian contributions to world advancement, spoke recently before the Senior Assembly of Johnson City (N. Y.) High School; the Catholic Daughters of America in Cortland, N. Y.; a group of Italian-American business men in Passaic organizing a club; and the Women's Literary Club of Callicoon, N. Y.

His audiences are still enthusiastic and Mr. Campon "carries on."

Liberino Patricelli of Seattle, Washington, recently won a medical scholarship for Harvard University. He is a graduate of the University of Washington, having received a B.S. there in 1930.

Professor A. D. Fearon of 8850 Terrace Drive, Berkeley, has just received from the press of James



Angelo Patri
(See Page 34, Column 2)

Gillick and Company of Berkeley his translation of "Major Logic." Professor Fearon has made the translation with additions and explanations from the work of Rev. Francis Varvello, Professor of Philosophy, Turin, Italy, for his own students in the University of San Francisco. The foreword is by Rev. William Lonergan, President of the University of San Francisco. This is the second volume put out by Professor Fearon, and he has others in process of completion.

The American Association of Teachers of Italian, at its annual meeting held recently at Yale University, elected the following officers for the current year:

Honorary president, Charles H. Grandgent of Harvard University.

President, Emilio Goggio, University of Toronto.

Vice-Presidents, Kenneth McKenzie of Princeton University and Hilda Norman of University of Chicago.

Secretary-Treasurer, Camillo P. Merlino, University of Michigan.

Councilors, Angelo Lipari, Yale University; Walter L. Bullock, University of Chicago; Fredericka Blankner, Vassar College.

Professor Leonard Covello reported in January that there were about 900 students taking Italian at De Witt Clinton High School, with 1000 or more probably enrolled for the coming year.

RELIGION

With the Most Reverend Pietro Fumasoni-Biondi, Apostolic Delegate to the United States and Mexico, elevated to the rank of a Cardinal last month, the new Apostolic Delegate is the Most Reverend Amleto Giovanni Cicognani, a member of four of the great Roman congregations and of the Pontifical Commission for Russia. According to "Time," the weekly newsmagazine, "A new \$400,000 Renaissance villa is being built for the U. S. Delegate on Washington's Embassy Row (Massachusetts Ave.). It will contain living quarters, chancery offices, a splendid chapel, a unit (with separate entrance) for entertainments. Washington hostesses know better than to attempt to lionize the Pope's representative or to get invited by him for tea or dinner. No woman is ever included among the Apostolic Delegate's guests."

Last month marked the completion of the second year of the new Columbus Hospital in New York, operated by the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart.

The Italian Barbers' Benevolent Society announced last month, through its president Giuseppe Susca, the donation of \$100 annually for the upkeep of the hospital, an action that was warmly greeted.

Recently, too, Miss Felice Cafferata, treasurer of the Ladies Auxiliary of the Columbus Hospital, of which Mrs. Antonio Pisani is president, made a report for the year ending February 1933, showing a total of more than \$6000 raised for the Hospital through dues, donations, bridge

parties, and the annual opera benefit which this January netted \$4,837.

According to Edoardo Marolla, writing in "La Voce del Popolo" of Detroit last month, the first and one of the greatest missionaries in Montana was the Italian, Father Antonio Ravalli, a member of the Society of Jesus.

Born in Italy in 1792, he became a priest in 1827 and in 1843 he came to America with Fathers Ascolti and Nobili. Learning English, in 1845 he began his work among the Indians in what is now the State of Washington. Shortly after he was transferred to the Santa Maria mission on Bitter Root River in western Montana, a wild territory.

There he taught the Indians agriculture and many other useful arts, which he himself participated in. He opened the first pharmacy there and for years was the district's only doctor. Thus he worked till circumstances forced him to abandon the mission, following which he became a roving missionary throughout the West. Sixteen years later, however, he returned to Santa Maria Mission, where he continued to work until, in 1884, at the age of 92, he died. His death was a loss to the entire State of Montana, and in the city of Stevensville business was suspended and the flags lowered because of his death.

Count Luigi Criscuolo of New York has been awarded a high papal decoration, that of the Gran Croce di Giustizia del Sacro e Militare Ordine di N. S. di Betlemme.

"The Trial of Jesus" was the subject of an address early this month by Rev. Comm. A. Fasulo at the Italian Church of Maria Ausiliatrice, 440 East 12th Street. Rev. Fasulo is a member of the Order of Salesians.

A committee of welcome recently greeted Rev. Cav. Felice Di Persia, rector of the Church of the Madonna of the Rosary in Jersey City, N. J., on his return from a trip to Italy.

Rev. C. Molinari, rector of the Church of St. Michael the Archangel in Chicago, was tendered a banquet recently by his friends on the occasion of his having been made a Chevalier of the Order of the Crown of Italy.

A new Italian church has been erected in Raritan, N. J., called the Church of St. Anna. Rev. Amedeo Russo is its rector. Emile G. Perrot and F. La Ferrara were the architect and contractor, respectively. Mons. Maurice Spillane, vicar-general of the Diocese of Trenton, was present at the dedication.

The 6th annual charity ball of St. Lucy's Holy Name Society in Newark, composed of 150 Italian young men, will be held on April 22 at the Newark Athletic Club.



Pearce F. Franklin
(See Page 37, Column 3)

BUSINESS, PROFESSIONAL & OCCUPATIONAL

The March issue of the Bulletin of the Italian Chamber of Commerce of Chicago contains the news of the recent election of new officers for the coming year.

Santo Garofalo, head of the firm of Garofalo Bros. Co., was elected president. Mr. Garofalo, 38 years old, is a native of Sicily.

The vice-presidents elected were Messrs. Anelli and Pecci De Nictolis, with Cav. Vincenzo Formusa as treasurer and Atty. George Spatuzza as Legal Counsellor. Giovanni Ugolini will continue as secretary.

The Board of Directors is made up of the following:

Dr. M. Adrogna, Cav. F. Bragno, Cav. E. Maglione, A. Matucci, L. Marucci, E. Toniati, V. Chiara, J. Antognoli, A. Morici and S. Ewald.

One of the "conservators" appointed last month following the banking crisis was Achille G. Vervena, treasurer of the Columbus Exchange Trust Company of Provi-



Mildred Zuchero
(See Page 34, Column 3)

dence, R. I. The State Commissioner of Banks appointed him to handle the business of the same bank.

An excellent little publication is the "Morgagni News-Letter," the monthly organ of the Lambda Phi Mu Medical Fraternity. The following excerpt from the March issue is self-explanatory:

"About one hundred eligible men are now studying at the Regia Università di Roma. Amongst these are several of our fraternity brothers. Several of these have written separately for recognition. We are in receipt of a cablegram from Brother Dante Crisonino, a letter from Brother Scalzo, and a joint one from Brothers Joseph Sattilaro, Thomas Angelone and Charles Policastro. It remains for our central group to smooth out a few wrinkles.

"The final word rests in the granting of permission by his Excellency, Premier Benito Mussolini. We feel hopeful of favorable action mainly because the aims of our organization are in keeping with the qualifications expected of us. Get together, fellows, and let's start a strong nucleus of Circoli Morgagni in Italy."

The Lambda Phi Mu Medical Fraternity is the largest Italian-American, national, professional fraternity in the United States. It comprises numerous chapters scattered throughout the country. Five new chapters are being formed in Italy, as Circoli Morgagni, in Rome, Naples, Turin, Bologna and Milan.

By royal decree of the Italian Government, Dec. 22, 1932, it has been fixed that the number of decorations that may be given out during the year 1933 are limited to the following, in the Order of the Crown of Italy: Cavalieri di gran croce, 26; Grandi Ufficiali, 204; Commendatori, 1307; Ufficiali, 2355; and Cavalieri, 8330.

The annual dinner-dance of the Arcolian Dental Arts Society of Chicago was held recently in that city. The committee in charge of the affair held by the Society, which is made up of Italo-American dentists, was chairmanned by Dr. A. Pecaro. Officers of the Society for 1933 are Dr. R. P. Tufo, pres.; Dr. Carl J. Madda, vice-pres.; Dr. L. Griseto, sec.; and Dr. Michael De Rose, treas.

Among those recently made honorary members of the New York Academy of Medicine is Professor Roberto Alessandri, professor of anatomy at the University of Rome and well-known throughout Europe as an outstanding surgeon.

Charles Giammatteo of Wilmington, Del. has been elected president of the Retail Meat Dealers Association of that city.

An "Italian Night" was held last month at the Astor Hotel in New York by the Foreign Commerce Club, the seventh in a series of foreign nights, at which representatives of Italy were present. Consul General Antonio Grossardi was the guest of honor.

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Wiggo Pario of the Banca Com-
merciale Italiana of New York, has
been made a Cavaliere of the Order
of the Crown of Italy.

Last month the Italian Lawyers
Club of Michigan appointed a com-
mittee of three (Messrs. Joseph J.
Geraci, Anthony A. Esperti and
James Montante), to offer the pro-
fessional services of the club to the
Italian community of Detroit, free
of charge, insofar as it concerns prob-
lems raised by the recent banking
crisis. This action was welcome
and well received by the Italians of
that city.

The appointment of Edmund J.
Mazzella, an Italian young man and
a graduate of Harvard, as one of
the secretaries of his staff, was re-
cently announced by Congressman A.
D. Hensley of Somerville, Mass.

Dr. Chevalier Jackson, noted pro-
fessor of bronchoscopy at Temple
University, Philadelphia, was recent-
ly decorated with a medal given by
the Italian Government in recogni-
tion of his services to humanity
through the bronchoscope, which he
invented. Consul General Pio Mar-
gotti made the presentation.

Ralph Carchio of Milford, Mass.
was last month appointed by Gov-
ernor Ely as Master in Chancery.

On April 21st, the Eastman Dental
Dispensary in Rome, made possible
by the donation of one million dol-
lars by the late George Eastman of
Rochester, before his death, will be
formally dedicated. The Italians of
Rochester, in appreciation, organized
an Eastman Best Committee, to have
a bronze bust of the donor in the
entrance to the dispensary, composed
of Cav. E. C. D'Annunzio, chairman,
Cav. Dr. J. Carlucci, A. Gioia, Dr.
J. Genova, A. L. Di Nieri and
Frank Cappellino.

Italian Mengarini, the noted sculp-
tor of Rome, was designated by the
Committee to make the bust, which,
when completed, pleased Mr. East-
man very much. The Committee will
be present at the dedication in Rome,
with Dr. Joseph Carlucci at the head
of the delegation.

With the new Democratic Chair-
man, Atty. Felice Forlenza, exercis-
ing some influence in the distribu-
tion of political patronage in Newark,
Atty. C. W. Caruso of that city last
month was appointed secretary to
the newly elected Judge Smith of
the Circuit Court.

Dr. D'Acerno of Union City last
month spoke on "Italy, Cradle of
Medicine" in West New York, N. J.

A reception was held last month
in honor of Ambassador Augusto
Russo in Washington, D. C. by mem-
bers of the Bureau of Commercial
Economics, at which Dr. Beniamino
De Ritis of the Italy America So-
ciety delivered a talk on the Italy
of today.

PUBLIC LIFE

Among those who lost their lives
early this month in the tragic sink-
ing of the naval airship Akron were
two men of Italian blood. Joseph
Zanetti, aviation machinist's mate, of
Ballston Lake, N. Y., was a member
of the Akron's crew, while Pasquale
Bettio was chief machinist's mate on
the Navy Blimp J-3, which fell into
the water off the New Jersey coast
in the search for the Akron's pos-
sible survivors. He was attached to
Lakehurst.



Hon. Vincent Palmisano
(See Page 37, Column 2)

A move has been started among
Democrats of South Philadelphia, es-
pecially the large Italo-American
group, to have Atty. W. A. S. La-
petina appointed as Judge of the
Common Pleas Court, No. 3 by
Gov. Pinchot, to succeed to the place
recently left vacant by the death of
the former Judge Ferguson.

During a debate in Congress last
month on the Celler bill to remove
limitations on the number of liquor
prescriptions that may be issued by
physicians, a bill that subsequently
passed, Congressman Blanton, De-
mocrat, of Texas, indiscreetly refer-
red to Congressman Palmisano, of
Maryland, as an "ex-bartender."

"It's worse than the beer bill,"
Blanton, leader of the drys in the
debate, shouted, "The wets are run-
ning true to form. You even have a
wet, a former bartender, presiding
over the House. He should have on
a white apron, and every doctor in
the country should have on a white
apron."

Palmisano, to whom he referred,
relinquished the gavel and took the
floor, saying impassionedly:

"Yes, I have been a bartender. I've
never denied it. I command the re-
spect of every man, woman, and child
in my district." He explained that
he was an Italian by birth and that
his constituents in Baltimore were
largely citizens of foreign extraction.
As a young man he had tended bar
there for a time. Asserting his op-
position to prohibition, he said: "I
saw the evils then, and I see the
evils now."

To fill the place of Alderman of
the 20th District in New York City,
recently left vacant by the election of
James J. Lanzetta, as Congressman,
H. Warren Hubbard, Democratic
leader of the district, last month ap-
pointed Pasquale J. Fiorilla to this
position.

In the auditorium of Barringer
High School in Newark, N. J. last
month, Judge Nicholas Albano of the
Third Criminal Court of the city,
spoke before 1600 night school stu-
dents on the duties of citizenship.
Judge Albano, who is the author of
the recently published book: "Good
Morning, Judge!", is a candidate for
City Commissioner in Newark.

Governor Ely of Massachusetts last
month appointed former Representa-
tive Felix A. Marcella of Boston as
a member of the Metropolitan Dis-
trict Commission, at a salary of \$1000
although, in spite of the salary,
membership in that body is regarded
as important, for it has charge of
public works.

The Citizens' Committee and the
Newark TaxPayers' Association are
in support of the movement to elect
Judge Anthony F. Minisi as one of
the four City Commissioners of New-
ark.

Cav. Joseph A. Tomasello was last
month reappointed by Mayor Curley
to the City of Boston Appeal Board,
for the term ending April 30, 1936.
Cav. Tomasello is now chairman of
the Board.

Pietro Calcaterra, the Italian mayor
of the town of Norway in North
Michigan, is basing his campaign for
re-election on the fact that during the
past year the city's expenses have
been cut 54%.

Congressman Peter A. Cavicchia of
Newark, N. J. was last month ap-
pointed to the House of Representa-
tives Banking and Currency Com-
mittee in Washington, D. C.

Dr. Giovanni Giurato, who has been
for some time Italian Vice-Consul in
Pittsburgh, Pa., was last month pro-
moted to the rank of Consul in the
same city.

Former Judge J. Victor D'Aloia of
Newark, N. J. recently won a legal
victory in that city in the trial of
Serritella and five companions on a
legal question which, by being ap-
pealed to a higher court, set a pre-
cedent.

Pearce R. Franklin, counsellor at
law, is a candidate for City Commis-
sioner in Newark. Mr. Franklin, with
offices at 744 Broad St., was a mem-
ber of the House of Assembly of
New Jersey during the sessions of
1921 and 1922, former Secretary to
the Senate President and Assistant
Secretary to the New Jersey Senate.

FINE ARTS

Giulio Setti, chorus master of the
Metropolitan Opera Company, was
recently presented with a bronze tab-
let in commemoration of his twenty-
five years with the organization. His



Giulio Setti
(See Page 37, Column 3)

assistants and the entire chorus took part in the presentation. Giulio Gatti-Casazza, general manager of the opera company, thanked Mr. Setti on behalf of the company for his services during his long association with the Metropolitan. The tablet was inscribed as follows:

"To Maestro Giulio Setti, who for the past twenty-five years has guided to the highest successes the chorus of the Metropolitan of New York, his collaborators and the members of the chorus have had their names engraved in this bronze as a proof of their esteem, gratitude and good wishes."

"Mussolini Speaks," the feature-length film produced by Columbia Pictures showing the achievements of the Italian Premier, interspersed by action scenes of the Duce delivering a speech, with running comment by Lowell Thomas, was presented last month at the Palace Theatre in New York, where it had considerable success, being held over for two weeks before going about the country. Outstanding among the great Italian's utterances were the lines "If I advance, follow me; if I retreat, kill me; if I fall, avenge me!" and "The past does not exist for me. I am interested only in the future."

Last month the Leonardo da Vinci Art School of New York held its annual art exhibit of the work of its students at its new quarters, 149 East 34th Street. Besides a program of music, the event was featured by a reception to the Italian Consul General, Comm. Antonio Grossardi.

The Italo-American Club Players of Providence, R. I. last month presented the three-act comedy, "Is Zat So?". Joseph Lorenzo coached the players in the play, the proceeds of which went for the club's educational activities.

The Educational Committee, made up of Arthur Falcone, chairman, Arthur Famiglietti, Benjamin Colavecchio, Andrew Venturoni and Alex Bevilacqua, has prepared a brief series of lectures for this Spring, the first of which will be by Professor Felix Forte of the law faculty of Boston University.

Under the auspices of the Italy America Society of New York, Maria Carreras, pianist, gave a recital last month at the Astor Galleries in the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York.

Maria Carreras' art has gained a considerable reputation in Germany, Russia, France, Spain, Italy, England, Scandinavia, and Portugal, where she has repeatedly played in over two hundred and fifty cities. In three seasons, she has played two hundred and fourteen concerts in South America.

In October, 1932 Madame Carreras appeared with the Philharmonic-Sym-Toscanini conducting, and she appeared again as soloist under the baton of Inez Lauritano, violinist, and Miss Alda Astori, pianist.

A joint recital was given last month in the Auditorium of the Casa Italiana of Columbia University in New York, under the direction of Maestro Alberto Bimboni and featuring Miss Inez Lauritano, violinist, and Miss Alda Astori, pianist.

"The Centaur," a work of sculpture by Ludovico Ferraglio of Brooklyn, was included in the recent annual exhibition of the National Academy of Design at the American Fine Arts Galleries in Manhattan.

Rose Ricciardi, soprano, made her New York debut in a recital at Chalif Hall in New York early this month before a large and friendly audience.

The Casa Italiana's last concert of the season under the direction of Maestro Alberto Bimboni took place early this month at the McMillin Academic Theatre of Columbia University. Among the artists featured were Miss Winona Bimboni, interpretative dancer, Mr. Benjamin De Loache, baritone, and Miss Inez Lauritano, violinist.

A decorative panel by Bruno Neri of Perth Amboy, N. J., was recently exhibited at the Architectural League Exhibition in New York.

Dante Fiorillo, youthful Italian-American composer, has recently "discovered a composer who, although a German by birth, has created works that should be known all over Europe." Mr. Fiorillo has undertaken to promote these works in this country, having already given two radio programs of the works of the composer, Dr. Kurt Beythien.

Remo Bolognini, first assistant violin master of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, was the soloist of that internationally famous musical organization in the Mendelssohn violin concerto during the week of April 16th in New York, under the baton of Maestro Arturo Toscanini.



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IN ITALIANO

Rassegna della vita italiana contemporanea

A cura di Salvatore Viola

GLI ITALIANI NEL NORD AMERICA

di Mirko Ardemagni

Mirko Ardemagni, che abbiamo avuto occasione di conoscere lo scorso dicembre, nella sua ultima visita a New York, è uno dei più giovani giornalisti corrispondenti della stampa italiana. Redattore del "Popolo d'Italia" l'Ardemagni collabora inoltre a parecchie altre riviste e settimanali. Dei suoi libri di viaggi meritano di essere menzionati il suo volume africano "Dalla terra di Salambò ai laghi di Cristallo" e l'altro su la "Terra del Fuoco." Recentemente ha pubblicato un volume sulla "Russia: quindici anni dopo" il risultato di dirette e fedeli osservazioni, il quale sarà tradotto prossimamente in inglese. L'Ardemagni è nato a Cremona nel 1901.

CROLLATA la piramide di Wall Street, propagatasi in un baleno la febbre della disperazione, chiusi tutti d'un colpo i passaggi a livello della vita economica, gli americani furono presi da quel panico, da quello sgomento, da quell'affollamento di pensieri e di paure che incoglie i corridori quando sono improvvisamente immobilizzati a pochi passi dal traguardo per una beffarda fatalità del destino.

Sono cinque anni che in America sta avvenendo questa salutare rivoluzione psicologica. Gli uomini che speravano di correre sempre, per un brusco ritorno della loro coscienza, si chiedono ora perchè mai correvano tanto, perchè mai loro soli stando fermi sono tanto infelici. Si accorgono di essersi allontanati troppo dalle sorgenti dell'umanità, di aver acquistato un tenore di vita artificiale, di aver trasfigurato la propria natura, di aver alterato il proprio ciclo vegetativo, di aver impoverito le proprie risorse individuali diventando macchine di carne e automi senza spirito. Vi è il pentimento delle gioie non godute, delle virtù dimenticate, di quella bella serenità che rende felici i popoli accampati sulle terre del vecchio mondo.

Perchè il grande fenomeno odierno dell'America è questo: è la revisione spontanea dei valori, è il ritorno sulle posizioni civili di un tempo, è psicologia delle folle che si trasforma, si matura, si completa. Uomini di pensiero hanno già gettato grida d'allarme. James Truslow Adams, che ha scritto la più interessante storia degli Stati Uniti d'America, chiama "età dei dinosauri" l'epoca soccombente dei grandi trust e delle mastodontiche affiliazioni economiche; altri si chiedono se non sia venuto il momento di rifarsi alla vecchia saggezza del mondo latino per impedire che l'America diventi vittima delle forze incontrollate, per rendere migliori gli uomini dopo aver moltiplicato e mi-

loro imperio sulle leggi che governano la vita, hanno preso la loro fatale rivincita sulle passioni frenetiche scatenatesi nel nuovo continente sotto le mentite spoglie di una civiltà superiore.

L'America, travolta dal progresso economico, aveva quasi dimenticato le ragioni di vita dell'umanità. Le folle, avventurate nei solchi della prosperità, affascinate dal miraggio dell'oro e dal sogno dell'abbondanza, avevano corso affannosamente, negli ultimi cinquant'anni, alterando l'ansito dei loro polmoni, abbandonando il bagaglio inutile delle tradizioni, saltando gli ostacoli della morale, dimenticando la loro stessa natura. La corsa era diventata fine a sè stessa. L'uomo si era messo al servizio della materia invece di asservirla ai propri istinti e ai propri voleri. La quantità e le statistiche relative allo sviluppo delle ricchezze, all'accrescimento dei beni, diventarono più importanti agli occhi degli americani che non la qualità e i valori dello spirito. L'uomo doveva perdere il ricordo del passato nella speranza dell'avvenire, doveva dimenticarsi di vivere per logorarsi nel tormento di "farsi una vita", non doveva più apparire un essere biologicamente perfetto se non sotto la veste di un "consumatore" a ritmo accelerato, di un organismo disposto ad alterare le proprie funzioni per assimilare una dose sempre maggiore di prodotti.

Molti come all'epoca presente gli emigrati italiani hanno goduto tanto prestigio nell'America del nord. La depressione economica del nuovo continente ha provocato in questi ultimi anni un tale rovesciamento di valori morali e materiali da dare una nuova economia del tutto nuova al mosaico delle nazioni che popolano l'immensa distesa compresa tra l'Atlantico e il Pacifico, tra il golfo del Messico e le gelide propaggini dell'Artide.

La scorsa è stata talmente violenta, il crollo delle utopie talmente radicale, il ritorno alle leggi inalterabili che governano il destino del mondo così brusco che il popolo americano stesso ha potuto prendere conoscenza di quanto fosse insostenibile la propria morale edonista. Per il carattere pressoché meteorico del fenomeno, per il rivoluzionario che evolutivo, il popolo americano, che ha l'intelligenza rapida e aperta, ha potuto rivedere le proprie posizioni, ha potuto constatare come difetti e come peccati quelle particolari caratteristiche che esso prima riteneva fossero le sue uniche virtù.

Quelli che sembravano i pregiudizi delle masse emigrate italiane, la spontanea limitazione delle necessità materiali, la parsimonia, la continenza, il senso della continuità, il senso della solidarietà familiare, l'attaccamento alla patria lontana, il sentimento religioso a freno di ogni intemperanza, hanno improvvisamente manifestato il

giorato le cose. Ed hanno certamente ragione perchè è inutile costruire dei grattacieli di 400 metri di altezza quando gli uomini rimangono alti uno e settanta.

Dal punto di vista dell'esperienza umana l'America farà certamente più progresso in questo lustro di crisi di quanto non ne abbia fatto in trecento anni di storia.

Tutto il resto è bugia. Chi crede di trarre conseguenze apocalittiche dallo sbandamento di duecentomila ragazzi abbandonati, chi crede alla fine del mondo perchè il barometro della disoccupazione ha toccato il vertice di undici milioni di individui, perchè i *gangsters* fanno contrabbando di liquori o perchè assaltano le banche di Chicago, perchè sul selciato di Washington è risuonato il passo cadenzato dei marciatori della fame, o è in mala fede o non conosce le risorse potenziali ed ataviche dell'America. L'America non ha mai sentito come ora la paternità dell'Europa, non ha mai intuito come ora il valore delle antiche civiltà, la necessità di rifarsi agli esempi della storia, l'opportunità di attingere le speranze della salvezza dall'esempio del vecchio mondo.

COSÌ e non altrimenti si spiega l'orientamento dell'opinione pubblica verso l'Italia e verso le collettività italiane emigrate. Sia per la risonanza che la rivoluzione fascista va riscuotendo nel mondo, sia per la

grande delusione che l'America ha provato verso la sua morale materialista, verso le sue teorie avveniriste che rinnegano il passato, fatto si è che la nostra razza e il nostro regime, in questo momento di avversa fortuna, sono balzati all'onore del nuovo mondo.

Nella pandemica degradazione dei valori, nel dileguare della fiducia, nella scossa tellurica che ha centuplicato in America il senso del provvisorio e il dramma del momentaneo, gli emigrati italiani, fra tutte le comunità etniche, hanno rappresentato e rappresentano l'esempio di una continuità spirituale inattaccabile, di una stabilità economica quasi assoluta, di un equilibrio materiale che consente di reggere agli aggressivi marosi di tutte le tempeste.

Mentre intere moltitudini, che vivevano nella follia di un ottimismo inconsciente, che campavano a credito, che confidavano ciecamente nell'"happy end", nell'immane lieto fine, perdettero nel breve giro della crisi tutti i loro beni, ci si accorse che la prudenza economica delle collettività italiane le difendeva dalla pericolosa corsa allo sbaraglio, che le proprietà immobiliari scampavano al flagello, che la solidarietà delle famiglie salvava il nucleo centrale della società, che la omerica serenità dei poveri, la pazienza, la fiducia nell'avvenire erano virtù indispensabili, portate d'oltreoceano insieme al sedi-

mento di una civiltà latina che regge al corso imperversante dei secoli.

Gli italiani, anche i più audaci, anche i più avventurosi, hanno lavorato in America con il senso tipico della loro continuità, con il mutuo istinto della cooperazione, non solo per cogliere i frutti fugaci del momento, non solo per soddisfare il proprio egoismo individuale, ma in previsione della conservazione della specie, sotto lo stimolo emulatore di un grande passato. Quelli che in Tunisia sono conosciuti con l'appellativo di "formiche siciliane", quelli che in sud America venivano chiamati "le golondrine" perchè sbarcavano ad ogni stagione sulle sponde del Plata con la stessa periodicità delle rondini pellegrine, sono gli stessi che apportano alla civiltà americana l'esempio della tenacia e della pazienza, che insegnano a costruire per i secoli, che forniscono gli elementi spirituali per il miglioramento della natura umana.

Oggi, dopo la fine degli incantesimi, di fronte alla realtà dell'ora che volge, il grande popolo americano si accorge degli incalcolabili tesori che sono maturati sulla lontana terra italiana, della portata universale della sua millenaria esperienza politica, delle qualità fondamentali e delle virtù superiori di un popolo che fu vanamente umiliato ed offeso.

Ci voleva il fatale ritorno alle più dure leggi della vita perchè l'epopea del lavoro italiano in America giungesse alla sua apoteosi.

LE LETTERE A ME STESSO

NOVELLA

di Dino Provenzal

Dino Provenzal è livornese (nato nel 1877). Ha trascorso però gran parte della sua vita da una parte all'altra dell'Italia come insegnante con più o meno lunghi soggiorni in Teramo, Catanzaro, Siena e Voghera — ove trovatisi attualmente in qualità di Preside di quel Liceo. Scrittore dei più piacevoli il Provenzal ha pubblicato relativamente poco, lasciando perciò nell'animo dei lettori un certo rammarico. Dei suoi migliori lavori ricorderemo "Il Manuale del Perfetto Professore," "Le Passeggiate di Bardalone" e "Lina mi aveva piantato." Dei suoi libri per la gioventù meritano di essere segnalati "La città dalle belle scale" e più specialmente il suo "Dante dei piccoli" cioè come tre ragazzi arrivarono a capire la Divina Commedia.

LINA m'aveva piantato e questa volta sul serio.

Tant'è vero che, poche ore dopo, avevo ricevuto un pacchetto suggellato con dentro tutte le mie lettere: quando mai era arrivata a quest'atto?

Seduto sulla poltrona, con la testa fra le mani, guardavo ora le lettere ed ora il braciere che mi ardeva davanti. Se avessi tappato accuratamente le fessure della finestra e dell'uscio, il braciere stesso sarebbe divenuto il mio liberatore, ma io non volevo morire. Meglio era far morire le lettere, e, distrutto il doloroso epistolario, anche la passione si sarebbe ridotta in cenere. Amen: e cominciavo una vita nuova.

Ma un pensiero mi venne a un tratto: un pensiero appeso ad un filo

— oh quanto leggero! — di speranza. Possibile che non m'avesse scritto un biglietto, una riga, una parola per richiedermi le lettere sue? Frugai ansiosamente fra le dugento e più lettere per trovare il biglietto di lei: forse ci avrei visto fra riga e riga, un raggio di luce: forse, studiando la forma della scrittura, mi sarei accorto che la mano e l'anima di lei s'erano già calmate: o per lo meno avrei avuto una nuova reliquia di lei e l'avrei baciata aspirandone il profumo.

No, non c'era nulla.

Dunque non le importava affatto che io mostrassi le sue lettere ad altri? Oppure si sentiva sicura di me, perchè la stima sopravviveva all'amore? Oppure... ah, ecco la verità! non era una rottura definitiva e Lina non aveva voluto bruciar tutti i ponti.

Se sempre questa mania di covare le illusioni al caldo del mio divorante amore!

Basta: siamo forti: rileggere: distruggere: non pensarci più.

Mentre ordinavo le lettere cronologicamente, e questo lavoro metodico mi placava i nervi dolenti, facevo alcune riflessioni.

— Perchè serba le mie lettere così alla rinfusa mentre io ho tanta cura di classificare le sue? — Forse chi ama fa così: la mia pedanteria di collezionista non è possibile per una donna innamorata; e Lina è stata — od è ancora — innamorata di me. — Com'è che io apro le lettere con uno spillo per non sciuparle e queste buste invece sono squalcite, strappate, macchiate? — Chissà la furia con cui le apriva e il luogo e il momento, esponendosi anche al pericolo d'essere scoperta, povera cara! — com'è che... oh questa è meravigliosa!... nella stessa busta una mia lettera e il conto della modista. — Ah, ma certo è la fattura di quel cappello che le incorniciava così bene il visino in Santa Maria del Fiore e io le dissi che pareva una madonna dell'Angelico scesa in terra per un minuto!

Le lettere erano tute ordinate e numerate: dugentoveventidue.

— Chissà quale significato cabali-

stico avrà il numero che ripete il due per tre volte? — rimuginavo stendendo sul braciere le dita che mi si erano gelate al contatto della carta.

E incominciai la lettura. Timide, dispettose le prime lettere col "lei" finchè, dalla nona lettera in poi notavo una certa ostentazione di arguzia, un desiderio di piacere, di mettere in mostra la mia intelligenza.

Ecco il "voi" e le lettere si fanno più serie e fa capolino il "tu . . ." in versi, però.

Quanti versi! Mi parevano, ora battagioni di soldatini che avessi mandati, gli uni dopo gli altri, a conquistare una fortezza. Gli uni subito dopo gli altri: da generale che non risparmiava la vita dei propri uomini pur d'arrivare, prima o poi, alla vittoria.

LA vittoria! La lettera tutta lampi e sprazzi, ma senza pronomi: con un solo verbo ambiguo verso la fine, un "credi" abilmente dissimulato, perchè c'era scritto "crede," con un puntino sull'"e" semichiusa. Non volevo che lei si offendesse pensando che io menassi vanto della sua caduta.

Che lettere, dopo quella, che lettere! Leggendole io mi sentivo salir le fiamme al viso, fremevo tutto, avevo voglia di baciare le pagine. Mi pareva di ascoltare una musica monotonica, ma dolce, una preghiera umile

e ardente, un canto che incominciava con un sospiro e spesso moriva in un singhiozzo.

Ricordai che proprio al principio del nostro amore avevo letto un aneddoto storico che m'aveva fatto impressione. Diceva che Tommaso Campanella, durante il processo, imitava la positura, l'atteggiamento e persino la fisionomia del giudice che l'interrogava, per sentire nascere in sé gli stessi pensieri di lui e così conoscerlo e dominarlo. In quel tempo ogni cosa che io vedessi o ascoltassi finiva nel crogiuolo della mia passione e subito fusi anche quell'aneddoto con tutto il resto. Prima di scrivere, mi sdraiavo sulla sedia a dondolo, come lei, le dita sul ginocchio destro e poi guardavo davanti a me fissamente con un leggero battito, quasi un fremito delle palpebre: così faceva lei quand'era soprappensiero. Poi scrivevo vedendo Lina, avvicinandomi a Lina, diventando Lina, finchè ero sicuro che ognuna delle mie parole avrebbe prodotto l'effetto voluto, quell'effetto e non altro, perchè non erano più parole, ma carezze, baci, strette, grida.

ORA il miracolo si ripeteva, ma all'inverso. Le lettere che avevano turbato lei sconvolgevano me. Mi sentivo pregare, supplicare: ogni pagina mi domandava amore eterno,

non voleva che il mio fosse un capriccio passeggero, no, per carità; piuttosto la morte!

E lessi, lessi ancora, mentre la commozione mi vinceva: ogni lettera, appena letta, finiva nel braciere, dove levava su una fiammella d'oro vivo e poi si arrotolava, nera e quasi impalpabile, ma il fuoco che divampava entro di me non lasciava cenere: e mi consumava di dolore.

Finalmente una lettera spasmodica in cui rimpianto, amore, gelosia, desiderio si torcevano non trovando più le parole, e il nome di lei si mescolava a quello delle cose più care, dei miei sogni, delle mie speranze, delle mie delusioni e dei miei morti, quella lettera mi diede le vertigini. Mi levai da sedere e mormorai: "Sì, sì, ti vorrò sempre bene: non supplicare più così, non ti abbassare più così, amore, amore mio!"

Ebbi la coscienza ch'essa parlasse per bocca mia ed era naturale, perchè io ero lei; infatti io avevo lette tutte quelle lettere, dunque erano indirizzate a me ed ora era lei — o io ch'è lo stesso — che rispondeva: "Sì, amore mio, sì."

Presi la penna e scrissi un'altra lettera ancora, ma non la spedii, perchè una scampanellata mi scosse.

Era un espresso di Lina: "T'aspetto: vieni."

UN AMORE DI DEMETRIO BENONI

NOVELLA

di Cesare Giardini

Cesare Giardini, nato a Bologna, quarant'anni fa, è, come mai darsi, uno scrittore d'eccezione. Si rese noto ai lettori prima come traduttore dal catalano e dall'armeno e solo ultimamente ha pubblicato opere originali. Dei suoi volumi ricordiamo "La realtà dei Burattini," e "Uriele o l'angelo malato," raccontati con i quali, traendo ispirazione da Poe, ci trasporta nel mondo dei misteri e del subcosciente. I suoi ultimi volumi, "Varennes; la fuga di Luigi XV" e "I processi di Luigi XVI" pubblicati l'anno scorso sono fedeli e minuziose ricostruzioni storiche.

"Quando dorme il corpo veglia l'anima."

—Socrate

MI acciuffo in altri tempi un giovane singolare, degno di cantare, come già Shelby, un inno alla bellezza intellettuale. Si chiamava Demetrio Benoni. Non temo d'esagerare affermando che nessuno saprà mai rendere tanto intensa e continua la ricerca vita spirituale a scapito di quella materiale quanto egli seppe. Demetrio Benoni viveva in un mondo fantastico. Scriveva versi con una cura e una fuga tali da far pensare che ogni cosa potesse decidere della sua vita. L'esistenza che tutti viviamo, che si chiude entro le formule non controllabili, non aveva nessun valore per lui. Gli era impossibile — come parole sue — agitarsi concordemente alla folla dei suoi simili, o, come uomo, rimanere immobile al punto del movimento ad osservare. Una cosa della quale non sapeva

neanche se fosse interna od esterna a lui, lo proiettava fuori del carosello delle sensazioni elementari ed allora gli pareva di cadere in balia dell'infinito, simile per lui a un sistema d'onde concentriche che, dal centro di quello stesso carosello turbinoso sul quale egli non poteva realizzare alcuna specie d'esistenza, s'allargassero verso le prode lontane battute dall'acque tranquille del tempo. Dapprima le onde, risentendo dell'impulso disordinato del loro centro generatore, erano rapide e discordi, ma poi, a grado a grado ampliandosi, diventavano calme e il loro movimento quasi insensibile, cullante feti di mondi a venire e sarcofaghi d'oro di mondi defunti, faceva un'armonia simile a quella intuita da Pitagora.

Io non so quanto ci fosse di vero in queste pazzie: certo che ascoltandole e guardando gli occhi di Demetrio Benoni allorchè me lo raccontava, mi convinsi sempre più che l'abitudine di vivere in un regno extraumano non

è da annoverarsi tra le migliori; verità questa della quale il mio amico doveva offrirmi più tardi una tragica riprova. Gli occhi di Demetrio Benoni, nel suo volto di demone adolescente dannato alla vita, erano pieni di cose indicibili ch'egli forse aveva creduto di vedere nei suoi viaggi oltre i confini della realtà; affondando in essi le mie pupille scrutatrici mi pareva d'avventarmi, a dispetto dei numeri del tempo e dello spazio, nel più remoto passato.

La nostra amicizia divenne presto strettissima. Facevamo delle lunghe passeggiate insieme. Qualche volta Demetrio Benoni taceva assorto per lungo tempo ed io rispettavvo il suo silenzio, o parlava "rado con voce scave" esponendo pensieri che certamente non si concretavano nel suo cervello ma gli venivano vivi e perfetti da una sfera superiore alla nostra. Egli mi faceva pensare, volta a volta, a Keats, nel quale la bellezza era tutto, e a Poe, stetoscopio divino posato sul cuore dell'assoluto ignoto per numerarne i palpiti.

ORA, un giorno, Demetrio Benoni capitò in casa mia e si sedette dinanzi a me fissandomi senza parlare. Dopo un lungo silenzio mi chiese a bruciapelo:

— L'anima dev'essere sottile: non vi pare? Che ne pensate?

Francamente non seppi cosa rispondere: molte definizioni empiriche,

scolastiche, scientifiche ad esoteriche mi vennero alla mente, ma prima che potessi esporne qualcuna in un ben ordinato discorso, Demetrio Bènoni riprese:

— Non credete che un'anima possa... *se glisser* in un sogno?

Poi, mentre io mi chiedevo perchè, padrone d'ogni sfumatura della nostra lingua, si fosse servito d'un verbo francese, continuò:

— Vi chiedo ciò perchè da qualche notte un'anima s'è insinuata nei miei sogni.

Io lo guardai stordito, senza comprendere. Egli proseguì:

— La cosa si è verificata, per la prima volta qualche settimana fa. Posso giurarvi che nessun eccitamento esteriore concorse a preparare durante il giorno il mio sogno. Credo di aver letto prima di addormentarmi un po' di Verlaine. Mi sono assopito tranquillo, cullato dal ritmo largo degli alessandrini di *Sagesse*. A un tratto, nel mio sogno breve, un velario di pesante velluto oscuro s'è aperto su un giardino d'una non terrestre bellezza. Pensate a un paesaggio spirituale, e forse potrete farvi un'idea del paese che si presentò ai miei occhi e nel centro del quale io fui trasportato senza transazione. La verzura intorno e sopra me stormiva in modo così soave da farmi pensare nettamente alla "divina foresta spessa e viva" nella quale il Poeta incontrò Matelda. Passeggiai solo lungamente per viali fermandomi a ogni poco a contemplare con esclamazioni di meraviglia e di piacere i nuovi aspetti che il paesaggio mi offriva, ma senza giungere a comprender in che risiedesse il fascino che mi avvolgeva: se nella luce ambrata diffusa ovunque, o nella varietà degli innumerevoli fiori.

L'alba mi tolse all'incanto ma la luce del giorno non mi impedì di vagare in ispirito nel giardino notturno. Ebbene, la notte seguente, nel mio sonno, ritrovai il giardino e nuovamente lo percorsi in tutti i sensi, indovinandone lentamente l'anima che riconobbi essere della più pura essenza lirica. Ora, mentre turbato e felice calpestavò l'erba morbida e verde sentii che qualche cosa di nuovo stava per accadere. La luce aumentava d'intensità attorno a me e nel nuovo folgere tutte le cose stagliavansi più esatte; le fronde stormivano con rinnovata dolcezza fondendo le diverse voci in un canto; una donna fu dinanzi a me e io credetti di toccare "tutti li termine de la beatitudine." Non era sola; due fanciulle, che sarebbero apparse bellissime senza la sua presenza, la seguivano, ed essa cedeva con una morbida e snella grazia ch'era nuova ed eterna ad un tempo. Non ebbi campo però di saziarmi come avrei voluto della sua vista, chè l'alba importuna ancora una volta insinuò le sue dita a districare la trama d'oro del mio sogno. Ed ecco dove per me una potenza superiore e incontrollabile comincia a manifestarsi: tutte le notti seguenti, sino all'ultima trascorsa, il mio sogno si è ripetuto. Ma notate bene questo, non riproducendosi staticamente sempre uguale a sè stesso, bensì svolgendosi come un tema in una sinfonia aggiungendo elementi ad elementi, così da somigliare sorprendentemente alla vita. Il mio sogno non è il risultato di banali sensazioni quotidiane

ma una esistenza autonoma e forse superiore.

— E la donna? — chiesi io, interessato mio malgrado.

— Essa è divenuta la mia amica appassionata. Ogni notte essa mi viene incontro e io la cerco in quella parte del giardino che essa predilige. E' presso un tempietto di strana architettura, sul quale un roseto rampicante ha gettato un gran drappo rossoverde, ch'essa s'intrattiene abitualmente con le sue compagne. Io conosco assai bene la strada che conduce al tempietto. D'altronde tutto il giardino mi è ormai noto come se vi avessi sempre vissuto. Quando io giungo essa mi balza incontro e mi bacia sulla bocca. Qualche volta io m'avvicino senza che essa si accorga di me e rimango a lungo ad ammirarla in silenzio "carco d'oblio" come il Petrarca. Essa è così bella che un alone di luce più intensa sembra avvolgerla e seguirla attraverso l'atmosfera ambrata del giardino. Tutte le cose, le minime e le grandi, la conoscono e sentono il suo appressarsi. Intorno a lei noto sempre quella specie d'ebbrezza panica che mi meravigliò al suo primo apparire.

ORA Demetrio Bènoni parlava con una specie d'ansia nella voce, come se nessuna delle parole ch'egli pronunziava fosse quella cercata.

— Come si chiama?? — gli chiesi.

Egli mi guardò stupito. Poi:

— Non lo so. — disse — L'amo, so questo solo. Il suo nome è dolce e flessibile e le sillabe di cui è composto danno gaudìo alle labbra come nessuna parola umana potrebbe. Ma io lo dimentico ad ogni alba per ritruovarlo al limitare del mio sogno. E non è tutto: quando vaghiamo pel giardino essa si ferma talvolta dinanzi a un fiore e me ne dice il segreto: mi spiega come l'armonia d'una rosa sia regolata dal numero e dal ritmo. Essa conosce il segreto di tutte le cose e ne parla con me quando, stanchi, ci stendiamo sull'erba all'ombra d'una siepe. Ma la luce del giorno mi toglie ogni ricordo... Essa sa come il fiore o l'infimo degli esseri s'inseriscano nel ritmo universale; essa legge sillaba per sillaba, verso per verso il poema del creato, per me... Ma io non ricordo... Non posso ricordare...

Tacque e anch'io tacqui a lungo. Poi dissi:

— Non avete mai pensato che potrebbe trattarsi d'un succubo? S'intende che io celiavo, ma Demetrio Bènoni mi fissò dirittamente nel volto come se io parlassi seriamente. — Nondimeno — continuai — l'esistenza dei succubi è accertata. Sant'Agostino, San Tomaso, San Bonaventura, Dionigi il Certosino, Papa Innocenzo VII e altri lo attestano. Molti uomini sono stati condotti a morte da questi demoni. E, ora che vi osservo bene, mi sembra voi siate singolarmente deperito da quando non vi vedo.

MA non potei continuare perchè Demetrio Bènoni m'interruppe con subita violenza: — Non parlate così. Se voi la conoscete come io la conosco, non parlereste così. Essa è divina: c'è in lei qualcosa che non è possibile descrivere con parole. Vedete, essa è qui — e si toccò la fronte

— ma io non posso descriverla: se lo potessi sareste subito convinto. Essa è una musica, come dice il poeta, della quale vorrei bere lo spirito. Io l'amo come non è possibile amare nel mondo... ed essa mi sfugge. Da qualche notte io non trovo più il sonno. Le soglie del giardino miracoloso mi sono chiuse. Qualche volta dopo una lunga, infernale insonnia, riesco a dormire. Ma allora essa è introvabile o mi rivolge amorevoli rimproveri per la mia lunga assenza. Anch'essa soffre perchè mi ama, perchè vive di me. E' diventata più diafana e più labile... E io vedo avvicinarsi con terrore il giorno in cui non potrò più dormire... Allora essa mi aspetterà a lungo e invano presso il tempietto delle rose rampicanti... Piangerà l'amante perduto... E morrà...

A questo punto un bisogno invincibile di ribellarmi alle pazzie di Demetrio Bènoni mi prese, e, come se un furore lungamente contenuto in me, erompesse, gridai: — Andiamo, finitela, Demetrio! Tutto ciò è pazzesco. Infine voi sapete bene ch'essa non esiste. — E quest'ultima frase la urlai, letteralmente, perchè avevo la sensazione che la mia logica avesse maledettamente torto dinanzi all'illogicità del mio amico. Un lungo silenzio pesò su di noi, dopo il quale, Demetrio Bènoni riprese, sorridendo con amarezza:

— Voi dite che non esiste perchè nessuno, oltre me, potrebbe vederla. Ma essa è nel mio cervello. La sua immagine era in me da tempo, perchè ogni amante reca in sè l'immagine dell'amata. *Verus amans assidua sine intermissione coamantis imagine detinetur*. Ogni cervello è un limbo in cui giacciono le idee avvenire come esseri latenti che vogliono concretarsi nella vita o nell'arte. Io ho oggettivato un'idea: la più bella di quante attendessero nella mia mente.

— Ma la realtà? — chiesi.

— Io sono di là della realtà perchè sono entrato nella verità — rispose.

Queste parole chiusero il nostro colloquio. Demetrio Bènoni se ne andò silenzioso lasciandomi solo con i miei pensieri nelle prime ombre del crepuscolo che empivano già la stanza — In fondo — mi dicevo — non vedo nulla di strano nella continuità di questo sogno. Rousseau sognò lo stesso sogno per tutta la vita. E' noto. Demetrio Bènoni pensa troppo al giardino incantato, alla sua amante fantastica e questa sua preoccupazione del giorno prepara il sogno della notte. Si tratta d'un fenomeno di suggestione e nulla più.

Arrivato a questa conclusione, dissi forte: — Gli antichi credevano che un ramoscello di *porcacchia* messo sotto il guanciale impedisse di sognare. Voglio ricordarlo a Demetrio Bènoni. — E accesi la luce per cacciare i fantasmi della sera.

LA mattina seguente piombò nel mio studio il dottor Vanzini, giovane medico di grande avvenire la cui amicizia discreta m'era assai cara. Il suo viso era stravolto: — Non sapete nulla? — mi gridò entrando. — Demetrio Bènoni è morto.

Balzai in piedi esterrefatto. In un attimo ritrovai nella mia mente tutte le parole pronunziate la sera prima dal mio amico. Egli era stato a lungo seduto sulla sedia, che ora, ab-

bandonandovi di schianto la sua larga figura, aveva occupato il dottor Vanzini.

—Ma come? Perchè? — chiesi.

— Una imprudenza, una deplorabile imprudenza — rispose il dottore. Ieri Demetrio Bènoni venne all'ospedale ove presto servizio. Mi raccontò che da qualche notte non dormiva e che ciò gli era insopportabile. — non potete consigliarmi qualche cosa che mi aiuti a dormire? — mi chiese. Credetti bene visitarlo. Era assai deperito. Il suo sistema nervoso era eccitatissimo. Gli feci preparare dalla farmacia dell'ospedale una pozione della quale avrebbe dovuto prendere una dose minima ogni notte. Mi salutò e se ne andò molto più tranquillo. Stamane mi hanno chiamato in fretta a casa sua. Sono arrivato troppo tardi: me ne sono reso conto appena entrato nella sua camera. Egli già

ceva sul letto placido in sembianti come se fosse passato dal sonno alla morte senza accorgersene. Vidi vuota sul tavolino da notte la bottiglietta che aveva contenuto la pozione.

Io ascoltavo. Avevo l'impressione che le parole del dottore mi giungessero all'orecchio dalle lontananze gelide dell'infinito, nel quale in quell'ora l'anima ardente dell'amico scomparso navigava in cerca dell'intravista verità unica ed eterna. Il dottore continuava, spiegando:

— Suppongo che la prima piccola dose del sonnifero non abbia avuto potere alcuno sui nervi scossi di Demetrio Bènoni. Allora egli ha continuato senza dubbio a sorbire la pozione, un cucchiaino dopo l'altro, sino a che il sonno cadde su lui. Ma frattanto le sostanze letali della pozione agivano sul suo cuore che

s'arrestò dolcemente. Non v'era altra spiegazione.

Ancora io tacqui perso nei miei pensieri e l'anima mia se n'andava intanto lungi da me, presa nella scia d'un'altra anima. Così era scomparso Demetrio Bènoni, poeta, degno di cantare un nuovo inno alla bellezza intellettuale, e io soffrivo di non poterli più dire, ora: — Sì, Demetrio, tu avevi ragione, tu che sei morto. Forse nel tuo giardino notturno, o poeta, avevi bevuto una strana follia dal calice bianco e riverso dello stramonio o da una bocca di donna; pure avevi ragione, perchè noi, chiusi nell'infrangibile formula umana, non possiamo conquistare altra realtà oltre quella che nasce in noi per noi soli, e per questa realtà, figlia del nostro più profondo desiderio, Demetrio Bènoni, vale la pena di soffrire e di morire!

LA CASA DI TRILUSSA

di G. B. Angioletti

HO passato qualche giornata con un poeta di Roma. Trilussa. Mi pareva appunto, con lui, di scoprire meglio il segreto della città terrestre che mi aveva turbato e di cui egli è oggi il più legittimo cantore; cercavo, con lui, di cogliere il fondo di quella sfacciata e adorabile realtà quotidiana, così pronta tuttavia a collocarsi negli esatti limiti di una poetica scena.

Egli è un vero figlio di Roma; si rivolge ai piaceri del mondo a braccia aperte, cordiale, senza ritrosie o pentimenti, come se l'allegrezza a lui dovesse andare, e non lui all'allegrezza, con un'imponente padronanza di sé stesso; e se ne ritrae prima d'esserne sazio, con un gesto ironico di stanchezza, con un sorriso dove c'è forse più benevolenza che non gratitudine. Noi, gente del Nord, siamo sempre scontrosi e sospettosi davanti ad un bene concreto, ma guai se l'amore ce ne coglie, chè più non lo lasciamo fin che non ci si avvizzisce e consuma fra le mani. Forse per questo le nostre città sono diventate così brutte, e Roma serba quasi intatti i suoi splendori.

La casa di Trilussa è il museo della realtà; nulla di quelle luci metafisiche, create da complicazioni di vetri e cortine, come si vedono da noi; altri; nulla di quelle pareti deserte e lucide, scherni di fredde sensibilità, dove lo sguardo a poco a poco si fa allucinato e triste; ma un caos, un cataclisma di oggetti disparati, sparsi dappertutto, per terra o appesi al soffitto e maschere cinesi, e ceramiche italiane, coccodrilli impagliati, ritratti di belle donne, armi, bronzi, cuscini morbidissimi, statue, e tutti i ritrovati "moderni," dal bocchino per fumare la sigaretta a distanza alla chitarra meccanica, dalla radio al fonografo, tutto messo lì insieme come un campionario geniale e ironico dei prodotti umani, muto ed eloquente nei più impensati accostamenti. E'

la realtà inventata, la stessa realtà che Roma accoglie e vezzeggia, senza esclusioni o gelosie per le cose del passato. Perchè Roma è la città italiana che con maggior calore accoglie la modernità.

Casa di un ironista in una città di ironisti. Tre, quattro giovani donne, sedute su divani e cuscini, a rappresentare la grazia vivente e fragrante, l'eternità; la musica nasale di un *jazz-band* mandata da un fonografo, ad esprimere il quarto d'ora di paz-

zia e d'infantilismo che il mondo attraversa, quarto d'ora che un uomo saggio non può rifiutarsi di vivere; e tutte quelle vecchie fotografie e cianfrusaglie appese alle pareti, testimonianza di altre pazzie e fragranze smarrite. In questo regno non può mancare un trono, un vero trono alto e pomposo, col suo baldacchino e i suoi cortinaggi; Trilussa vi accede e si siede, dignitoso, soddisfatto, a contemplare per qualche istante la vita giovane e le memorie che, tutte insieme, rendono omaggio alla sua fama. Pochi istanti, chè subito il poeta è ripreso dal suo demone; e allora apre lo schienale del trono, nè più nè meno che una finestra, e scopre la strada: "Vedi che commodità, per la estate? Tu stai in trono, tranquillo, e pigli pure il fresco."

Tutta Roma è così.

Campane d'Italia

Campane d'Italia, ploranti sui passi dei figli,
Che van dispersi alle città lontane;
Nostalgici saluti sul cuor di chi muove agli esili
Dell'arte, dell'amore, del doloroso pane:
Campane oscillanti sul lembo dei pascoli alpini
Dove giunge una tarda eco del mondo
E voi che inviate gli squilli sui flutti marini,
Dall'isole perdute del nostro mare in fondo;
Campane che date la vostra esultanza sovrana
Alle vigilie tepide e serene,
Nella città lombarda, nel cuor della dolce Toscana,
E nelle illuminate festività tirrene;
Campane che udimmo cennar dal remoto Appennino,
Nelle soste dei treni e lungo il mare;
Campane solenni nell'ozio di Roma divino,
Dove ogni cosa ascolta la romba alta passare,
Al caro aspettato, che batte alla casa ospitale,
O vien da lunge a un trepido convegno;
A chi rattizza il fuoco nell'esule stanza, a Natale,
O cerca ai muti ruderi l'eco d'un morto regno,
Piovetate dai cieli quest'aura di erranti fortune,
Che l'inquieto spirito ne ammalia;
Serbateci un fido consenso di patria comune,
O nostalgiche voci, o campane d'Italia.

Giovanni Bertacchi

ERCOLANO DISEPELLITA

di Alberto Consiglio

CHI ha visitato Pompei, o Ercolano quale appare dopo i nuovi scavi, serba il ricordo e il vanto di aver visto qualcosa di "unico al mondo." Temo che questa attrattiva sia proprio quella che spinge verso le due città riesumate il maggior numero di visitatori stranieri. E, invero, le opere d'arte e i documenti dell'antica vita campana, gli edifici e le reliquie macabre, formano un insieme così complesso che difficilmente il visitatore può ritrarre, dopo una mattinata o un pomeriggio, una impressione men che sommaria e superficiale.

E' questo il motivo per il quale si rimane perplessi innanzi alla città fondata da Ercole Egizio. Ci son voluti, pensate, due secoli di studi perchè gli archeologi reagissero alla tesi dell'origine ellenistica delle due città morte. Non ritornava rudere alla luce, in Campania, che non si attribuisse allo spirito ellenico. Oggi, anche chi non è semplicemente archeologo, riconosce nel colore, nel gusto della vita pompeiana ed ercolanese lo spirito delle popolazioni campane, di quei magnifici Osco-sanniti che presero, sì, le armi contro Roma, ma per chiedere, dopo aver duramente pugnato contro Pirro, l'onore e l'onere della cittadinanza romana. Le due città dissepolte, in cui rivive la forte gente campana, mostrano come non millenni, non civiltà potenti, non invasioni barbariche o travolgimenti religiosi siano riusciti a cancellare o a mutare le sue caratteristiche fondamentali.

Tuttavia, la differenza tra le due città è abissale, e consiste nell'aspetto dei ruderi, nel grado di integrità in cui son risorti, quelli pompeiani dal lapillo e dalla cenere, quelli ercolani dal fango solidificato in tufo. In Pompei, uno scalino di pietra vesuviana consunto dai piedi dei clienti colpisce la fantasia come un documento caldo di vita. Ad Ercolano, l'intonaco intatto, i bronzi appena ossidati, le volte integre, i piccoli peristili, ove è risorta persino la piccola flora locale, non solo raggiungono, ma oltrepassano di colpo la capacità di stupore di chi vede per la prima volta l'incomparabile miracolo. E, se fosse possibile, con un riso disincantato o divertito, si griderebbe al falso. Quando, dopo un attimo di invincibile incredulità, ci si convince che sull'intonaco bianco sembra tracciata di fresco la prospettiva razionale del terzo stile (e nei piccoli pannelli i satiretti danzanti o Arianna abbandonata mostrano le tracce lineari del pennello), ci si domanda se questo restauro non sia opera di alchimia, se non abbiano segreti magici questi artefici che paiono comuni operai.

S'è molto parlato del merito degli illustri archeologi italiani, che presiedono a questa gigantesca opera di ricostruzione. Ma nessuno ha fatto parola dei loro assistenti, che paiono umili esecutori d'ordini, e sono collaboratori preziosi, indispensabili. L'archeologo ha un compito di su-

periore cordinamento, di direzione scientifica, di critica e d'illustrazione. Egli dirige le ricerche secondo le necessità degli studi e recando l'ausilio indispensabile dell'esperienza culturale. Ma chi scova la preda? L'archeologo vede tutto, dove il comune mortale non vede nulla. Una colonna dorica gli svela con le dimensioni tutta la geometrica armonia del tempio al quale apparteneva: ma chi prepara il rudere, il monumento per gli occhi di chi ha sete di bellezza classica, per chi vuole gettare uno sguardo sulla intima vita dei nostri lontani progenitori?

Vedrete, ad Ercolano, delle scale di legno fossilizzate, chiuse nel vetro come nelle teche, e potrete posarvi su la vostra suola di fibra. E vedrete architravi intatti, ma tramutati in carbone, reggere le volte. Vedrete una strana costruzione antisismica immaginata dopo il terremoto del '63, che inquadra le mura in una gabbia di legno, mostrare l'armatura carbonizzata intatta.

HERCULANEUM sorgeva, minuscola e rettangolare, tra due misteriosi fiumi, il Veseri di Tito Livio e il Dragone. Ove son mai? Dopo le problematiche acque dell'illustre Sebeto, fino al Sarno non s'incontravano rivi. L'uno, il Veseri, è stato disseccato, evaporato dalle lave ardenti, ma l'altro è prigione della terra plastica. Se avvicinate l'orecchio alla parete di qualche antro nella regione di Resina, sentirete un gorgoglio di acque sotterranee. E in un punto della spiaggia l'acqua è dolce: il Dragone vive, simile a un vero mostro, nelle viscere della terra. Saranno capaci gli assistenti del Prof. Majuri di farci trovare, un giorno, Ercolano sorgente di nuovo sulla sua breve mesopotamia?

Nella meravigliosa Casa del Chiosco, da un mucchio di piccoli frammenti di marmo, dei quali il maggiore era forse grande come un pugno, si son tratti due cervi morsi dai cani, due di quelle potenti sculture naturalistiche che a quei tempi facevano gli artigiani, e che ci fan sentire piccini. Nelle acque marine temperate dai due rivi, la pesca era ricchissima. Vi si pescavan, forse, quelle triglie famose che eran messe poi ad ingrassare nei vivai, e che raggiungevano il peso spettacoloso di due chili e il prezzo da collezionista di tre o quattromila sesterzi! Ebbene, troverete gli ami, le canne, le reti, i panieri, le gomene intatte. Se avete una toga o una tunica di buona lana, non avete che a portarla nel *thermopolium*: il pressoio meccanico è pronto: può, se mai, sporcavvela un po' di carbone, ma forse riuscirà ancora a stirarvela.

Casè di arricchiti, queste, sì, non dei Balbi, o dei Pisoni, ma di liberti romani o di commercianti campani, giunti ad Ercolano quando già tutte le case del quartiere monumentale, intorno al teatro, al foro e alla basi-

lica, erano occupate dai consolari in pensione. Comprarono delle case di pescatori, dei poveri tuguri, e ne fecero delle abitazioni signorili, ricavandone dei piccoli atrii, dei minuscoli peristili, e triclinii, echi e cubicoli come si poteva. E tuttavia, poichè il letto, basso come si usa oggi, coi bronzei piedi di leone, e il legno di cedro carbonizzato, e qualche frammento di cuscino, è ancora lì, poichè su di un tavolino di marmo è ancora l'ampolla di vetro, e si può presumere che nella piccola cassaforte si conservi qualche *mummius* del Consolato di Silla, poichè nel tablinio sono ancora i paraventi lignei che difendevano le riunioni familiari dagli occhi dei passanti, ancora una volta si può gettare l'occhio indiscreto sulla vita intima della famiglia antica. E nessun documento ci informerà meglio di una di queste case ercolanesi.

Come intima, raccolta e stretta da una runione quasi religiosa! Era un mondo chiuso, una vita che voleva svolgersi intera nel piccolo perimetro dei muri. La via era fuori di questo mondo. Le camere da letto, i salotti da ricevimento, i triclinii, lo studio ove si trattavano gli affari, ricevevan luce dal giardino familiare, e su di esso le camere delle donne avevano le loro finestre. In casa i numi tutelari, in casa le acque correnti e i fiori le opere d'arte e tutte le gioie che il reduce dalle guerre persiane o galliche, o dalle più amare fatiche dei comizi civili, poteva chiedere alla vita familiare.

NON tutti possono avere i gusti raffinati di chi tra i ruderi ci vive. Quali gusti? Ecco. Chi ha visto venti volte Pompei ed Ercolano ci arriva da sè. Anzi comincia a sentire più viva e piacevole l'impressione che dà il colore sbrindellato, arso, consunto dei vecchi scavi pompeiani, prima di essersi reso conto della ragione di questo sentimento. Infatti, è più eloquente il rudere che ha continuato a vivere nei millenni, del monumento che è rimasto balsamato, intatto, su cui pare che il tempo sia passato invano.

Ma questa, ripeto, non è che un'impressione, e, per giunta, un tantino romantica, sebbene io abbia tentato di darle una spiegazione razionale. Chi vuole una forte sensazione, di primo colpo, scenda giù a visitare il teatro per i cunicoli sotterranei scavati dagli ingegneri di Carlo III. Lo metteranno anch'esso all'aperto? Per carità. Già la luce elettrica è una molto larga concessione. Si scende attraverso la *summa*, la *media* e l'*ima* cavea, mentre i posti degli spettatori rimangono prigionieri del tufo. Si raggiunge l'orchestra, e alla tenue luce, un tempo fornita dalle fiaccole, si getta uno sguardo sulle pietre che hanno sentito il pianto di Antigone e il furore di Clitennestra. Ai lati non vegliano più i due mecenati ercolanesi, Marco Balbo seniore, proconsole della Cirenaica, e Marco juniore. Dal pozzo borbonico, onde Carlo III li fece trarre alla luce, si vede un tantino di cielo. Qualche fantasia più accesa può ripensare, passando attraverso i cunicoli, al mondo trogloditico della Luna immaginato da Wells; ma chi oserebbe affermare che questo teatro sepolto non viva d'una misteriosa e possente vita?

Dalle Pagine della Letteratura Italiana

IL CONTADINO E I CAPPONI di Baldassar Castiglione

VI fu in Padoa uno scolar siciliano, chiamato Ponzio; il qual vedendo una volta un contadino che aveva un paro di grossi caponi, fingendo volergli comperare fece mercato con esso, e disse che andasse a casa seco, chè, oltre al prezzo, gli darebbe da far colazione; e così lo condusse in parte ove era un campanile, il quale è diviso dalla chiesa, tanto che andarvi si può d'intorno; e proprio ad una delle quattro facce del campanile rispondeva una stradetta piccola. Quivi Ponzio, avendo prima pensato ciò che far intendeva, disse al contadino: — Io ho giocato questi caponi con un mio compagno, il qual dice che questa torre circonda ben quaranta piedi, ed io dico di no: e appunto allora quand'io ti trovai aveva comperato questo spago per misurarla; però prima che andiamo a casa, voglio chiarirmi chi di noi abbia vinto: e così dicendo trassesi dalla manica quello spago, e diello da un capo in mano al contadino, e disse: — Dà qua; — e tolse i caponi, e prese il spago dall'altro capo; e, come misurar volesse, cominciò a circondar la torre, avendo prima fatto affermar il contadino e tener il spago dalla parte che era apposta a quella faccia che rispondeva nella stradetta; alla quale come esso fu giunto, così ficcò un chiodo nel muro, a cui annodò il spago; e lasciandolo in tal modo, cheto cheto se n'andò per quella stradetta coi caponi. Il contadino per bon spazio stette fermo aspettando pur che colui finisse di misurare; in ultimo, poi che più volte ebbe detto: — Che fate voi tanto? — volse vedere, e trovò che quello che tenea lo spago non era Ponzio, ma era un chiodo fitto nel muro, il qual solo gli restò per pagamento dei caponi.

(dal "Cortegiano")

TIMORE E PAURA di Giuseppe Grassi

La *paura* è un errore de' sensi, e viene da viltà; il *timore* è un errore di calcolo, e viene da un eccesso di prudenza; l'uno ha per opposto la speranza; l'altra il coraggio. *Paura* è effetto di alterazione d'animo, *timore* procede da ragionamento; e quando il ragionamento è falso, allora si dice *timor vano*, *timor panico*, accertando con questi addiettivi un significato che naturalmente non ha. Nell'indagare l'origine della voce si trova che *paura* è dal latino *pavor*, e questo *pavor* viene dai grammatici latini originato dal verbo *pavio*, battere, quasi che la *paura* ti dia una stretta, un battimento al cuore; non così il *timore*, che è più occulto e meno concitato. *Timore* può prendersi in senso buono, *paura* non mai; ed anche preso in mala parte, *timore* è sempre meno di *paura*. Il prode Boiardo fu chiamato il *cavaliere senza paura*; lascio ai lettori il giudicare se si potrebbe dire nello

stesso signicato il *cavaliere senza timore*. *Timore* chiamiamo poi quel sentimento di ossequio che gli uomini onesti hanno per le leggi divine ed umane; quindi diciamo *quegli è timorato d'Iddio, quei teme le leggi*; nè si potrebbe dire *quegli ha paura d'Iddio*, e solo i malandrini hanno *paura delle leggi*.

Di questa differenza ebbi io una graziosa lezione in quella contrada, ove il popolo non potrebbe, volendo, errare nella proprietà dei vocaboli, voglio dire nella Toscana. Un accidente mi obbligò a soffermarmi per pochi momenti in Barberino, terra posta sulla via dei colli che mette da Firenze a Siena; appena sceso dal legno, si fece ad incontrarmi una gentil contadina profferendo con tutta modestia il suo aiuto: le pendeva dal collo un rosato fanciullo; ed io volendola pur ricambiare della sua cortesia, e sapendo quanto son tenere le madri de' loro figliuoli, la ringraziai come seppi, poi le lodai il bimbo, e gli stesi la mano per accarezzarlo; ma questi stizzito mise un grido, e nascose il capo in seno alla donna; ne rimasi mortificato, e dissi: spiaceci d'avergli fatto *paura*; ma ella, accortasi del mio rossore, e volendo scusare il fanciullo rispose subito con bel garbo: *E' timore non è paura*. Io sfido tutti i filologi a far un complimento con maggior grazia della villana da Barberino.

Nei derivati *timido* e *pauroso*, la differenza sfuma un po' più e divien meno sensibile a cagion dell'impiego pressochè indistinto delle due voci: m'ingegnerò tuttavia a dimostrarla. Un prode soldato che ha sempre versato nei quartieri e ne' campi della guerra, viene introdotto in una splendida conversazione; uomini e donne gli si fanno intorno ad accoglierlo, ad onorarlo; sopraffatto egli da questi modi, arrossisce, ad ogni inchiesta balbetta le risposte, e si rannicchia confuso in un canto: *Poverino*, esclamano le donne che hanno il sentimento d'ogni gentilezza, *egli è timido*; nè direbbero mai *egli è pauroso*.

(dal "Saggio intorno ai Simonini")

UNA LETTERA DEL TASSO Ad Antonio Costantini in Mantova

CHE dirà il mio Signor Antonio, quando udirà la morte del suo Tasso? E per mio avviso non tarderà molto la novella; perch'io mi sento al fine de la mia vita, non essendosi potuto trovar mai rimedio a questa mia fastidiosa indisposizione, sopravvenuta a le molte mie solite; quasi rapido torrente, dal quale, senza potere avere alcun ritegno, vedo chiaramente esser rapito. Non è più tempo ch'io parli de la mia ostinata fortuna, per non dire de l'ingratitude del mondo, la quale ha pur voluto aver la vittoria di condurmi a la sepoltura mendico; quando io pensava che quella gloria che, mal grado di chi non vuole, avrà questo secolo da i miei scritti, non fusse per lasciarmi in alcun modo senza guidardone. Mi sono fatto condurre in questo munisterio di Sant'Onofrio; non solo perchè l'aria è lodata da' medici, più che d'alcun'altra parte di Roma, ma quasi per cominciare da questo luogo eminente, e con la conversazione di questi divoti padri, la mia conversazione in cielo. Pregate Iddio per me, e siate sicuro, che sì come vi ho amato ed onorato sempre ne la presente vita, così farò per voi ne l'altra più vera, ciò che a la non finta, ma verace carità s'appartiene. Ed a la Divina grazia raccomandando voi a me stesso. Di Roma, in Santo Onofrio.

ROSSINI E ROTHSCHILD

Nel 1864 il barone Rothschild mandò in dono al Rossini della splendida uva delle sue serre e n'ebbe questa risposta:

"Grazie! La vostra uva è eccellente, ma poco mi piace il vino in pillole."

Il barone capì l'antifona; anzi, gustò tanto lo spiritoso biglietto che fece subito spedire al Maestro un barilotto del suo migliore Chateau-Lafitte.

Vita e Morte

Vita e Morte van sempre in compagnia,
con abito gentil, sotto la luna;
e, il tempo ad ingannar, lungo la via
conversano coi Numi e la Fortuna.

Un bel raggio sul fronte ha ciascheduna,
e una grazia di ciel che non s'oblia:
e piena, al sol che nasce o al dì che imbruna,
dei due fantasmi è la pupilla mia.

Vita e morte è in ogn'erba e in ogni foglia;
vita e morte in ogn'aura e in ogni sasso;
vita e morte in ogn'ombra e in ogni stella.

A me piace adorarle; e non m'invaglia
raffrettare o tardar l'ultimo passo,
non sapendo ben dir qual'è più bella.

Giovanni Prati

Avvenimenti e Discussioni del Mese in Italia

I RECENTI COLLOQUI tra il Primo Ministro britannico e il Capo del Governo italiano, seguiti con tanto interesse in tutto il mondo civile, sembra che abbiamo raggiunto il fine desiderato a giudicare dai commenti della stampa italiana. Il *Corriere della Sera* del 20 marzo in un editoriale intitolato "A Roma si è disincagliata la nave della pace" crede che "lo spirito di leale, sincera collaborazione italo-inglese è un elemento positivo della situazione politica europea: esso ha perciò portato su un piano di elevata e nobile visione politica le conversazioni che hanno avuto i due Primi Ministri e il ministro degli Esteri inglese. In questi due giorni è stato esaminato un progetto preparato dal Capo del Governo Italiano per promuovere la collaborazione delle quattro Potenze occidentali, nell'intento di assicurare un lungo periodo di pace all'Europa e al mondo.

Mussolini ha una visione vasta e completa della situazione europea: la politica estera fascista vuole essere elemento sincero ed efficace di pace. I particolari del progetto del Duce non si conoscono, ma si può ritenere che essi si ispirino appunto alla comprensione larga e umana che Mussolini ha della situazione generale."

A conferma di ciò il *Times*, secondo il corrispondente londinese del giornale milanese, afferma che "il successo o il fallimento di Ginevra dipende dai colloqui di Roma."

* * *

IL CONCORSO per la nuova stazione di Firenze, che tante polemiche ha suscitato in Italia, ha avuto il suo epilogo con la chiusura, il 22 del mese scorso della Mostra, dei bozzetti in Palazzo vecchio. Il dibattito si è svolto, com'era da supporre, tra i fautori della tradizione e gli ultra-moderni. Che questi ultimi abbiano riportato, come suol dirsi, la palma, sembra più che evidente. "Su 102 progetti, a sentire M. Bernardi nella *Stampa*, 71 sono decisamente moderni; questa schiacciante maggioranza è l'indice lampante di una necessità estetica che potrà far versare torrenti di lacrime di rimpianto, ma che nulla varrà ad arrestare. Aggiungiamo che i restanti 31 progetti 'tradizionalisti' sono semplicemente orrendi: altra prova che l'ingegno si allea con le idee giovani, od almeno tradisce quelle vecchie." Il progetto vincitore è quello del "Gruppo Toscano" dalle linee prettamente moderne e geometriche. "Però, segue, ammonendo lo stesso critico, non vorremmo che si generalizzasse, e che questa approvata Stazione fiorentina costituisse un tipo architettonico pacificamente ammesso nell'arte dell'edificare. Il van-

to dell'architettura razionale è la sincerità. Siamo dunque sinceri fino in fondo, prendendola per quello che è, e non per quello che si pretende che sia."

* * *

IL DUCE, a un anno di distanza della morte del fratello, ha scritto una "*Vita di Arnaldo*" che, pubblicata il mese scorso, è stata una vera rivelazione di un Mussolini poco noto. Il lato affettuoso, ma senza sentimentalismi, di un uomo che, oramai tutti siamo portati a considerare come di ferro, si mostra ai nostri occhi per la prima volta da queste pagine. La critica italiana ha accolto il libricino con unanime e sincero entusiasmo. Antonio Baldini, nella *Nuova Antologia*, riassume per tutti le qualità stilistiche in poche frasi: "sono un centinaio di pagine di tono serrato, scritte col cuore gonfio, senza mai ombra di letteratura e di retorica. Nei momenti di più intensa commozione la scrittura si fa telegrafica, ringhiottate aggettivi e parole come le lacrime."

* * *

DOMENICO TRENTACOSTE, scultore dei più insigni ed Accademico d'Italia, si è spento il 17 marzo scorso, nel suo villino di Firenze. Era nato a Palermo sessantasette anni fa. Ugo Ojetti nel *Corriere della Sera* ne rievoca la prima giovinezza quando a dodici anni andò garzone dallo scultore Costantino. Questi lo prese subito a ben volere; e una mattina sopra una tavoletta di marmo schiacciò una mano di creta, le pose accanto una mano di gesso e disse al ragazzo: — Io torno tra un'ora, e tra un'ora devi averla copiata. — Quando tornò, furono grida di gioia che fecero accorrere parenti e garzoni dalla casa e dal laboratorio. Dopo anni e anni il Trentacoste ripeteva: — Anche ora quando finisco una statua e mi piace, sento nelle orecchie la eco di quegli applausi e rivedo tutti quegli occhi che mi guardano stupefatti"... Ojetti scolpendone in pochi tratti le qualità caratteristiche lo definisce "siciliano, figlio di artigiani, vissuto tra artigiani, superbo di quello ch'è ancora ellenico nella nobiltà e finezza della sua razza."

* * *

E' IL FASCISMO FENOMENO UNIVERSALE? si chiede Giuseppe Lombroso, in *Critica Fascista*, in risposta alle implicite domande che oggi si sentono un po' dappertutto, specie dopo l'ascesa di Hitler al potere e dell'insediamento della nuova "administration" a Washington. "Agli stranieri, egli suggerisce, si può pacatamente rivolgere un discorso di

questo genere: voi sapete qual'era l'Italia prima del Fascismo. Noi siamo giunti sull'orlo dell'abisso, abbiamo combattuto, sofferto e ci siamo salvati. Come ci siamo salvati? Ecco qua, tutti possono vederlo, ma noi non insegniamo una speciale metodologia perchè non l'abbiamo mai avuta. Potete ricavarne una a posteriori, ora che la Rivoluzione è un fatto compiuto. Se vi si taglia approfittatene, e se già esistono, come è certo, le condizioni negative per invocare il Fascismo, cioè lo sgoverno democratico, formate presso di voi gli stati d'animo, le sensibilità, le esigenze spirituali, in una parola l'humus e noi vi daremo la nostra dottrina. Col nostro esempio e con la nostra dottrina ogni popolo può ritornare sulla strada maestra."

LA MORTE IMPROVVISA ed inaspettata del Duca degli Abruzzi, ha trovata un'eco commossa non solo nella stampa italiana ma altresì in quella degli Stati Uniti, dove Luigi di Savoia era, forse, il solo dei Principi sabaudi conosciuto e ricordato. I giornali hanno ampiamente commentato gli episodi della sua vita avventurosa, mettendo in rilievo le sue qualità di marinaio, di esploratore e di scienziato. Nell'*Italia Letteraria* del 26 marzo, Sebastiano Timpanaro, ha esaurientemente risposto ad alcuni, i quali nella vita del Principe hanno forse voluto vedere delle qualità alquanto enigmatiche non esistenti: "Con esasperato romanticismo, qualcuno ha visto nelle leggendarie ascensioni di Luigi di Savoia dei tentativi vani di placare il suo ardore di grandezza; nella guerra in Adriatico un tradimento della sua sorte; nella sua vita esemplare il dramma dell'eroe che non potè realizzare pienamente sè stesso. Non si vuol negare che questi giudizi (come quelli simili che si son dati tante volte su Leonardo e Michelangelo) abbiano qualche apparenza di verità. Se si considera non ciò che il Principe ha fatto ma ciò che astrattamente avrebbe potuto fare, è troppo facile presentarlo come un vinto. Giudicato dall'interno, Luigi di Savoia ci appare invece l'eroe che riuscì a realizzare sempre più pienamente sè stesso. Dal punto di vista morale il dubbio è impossibile: il Duca degli Abruzzi ebbe per tutta la vita una fede incrollabile nei suoi ideali, nella sua missione, nè ci risulta che si sia mai lasciato abbattere dalle avversità. Nella sua vita non ci sono inquietudini morbose, non c'è caccia all'impossibile, non ci sono pose. Come tutti i forti, sapeva osare al momento opportuno e sapeva rinunciare. Ad una cosa non rinunziò mai: alla sua dignità."

Libri Italiani del Mese

Valentino Piccoli — "L'Incompiuta," romanzo, 295 pp., Milano: Treves, 1933 Lire 12

"Dicono che si chiami *Incompiuta* solamente perchè fu interrotta, e manca del terzo tempo e del finale. Ma io credo che si tratti di una più vera incompiutezza. E' incompiuta, perchè è piena di antitesi insuperate; è una creazione tormentata..." Così si esprime uno dei personaggi di questo romanzo, nel dare un giudizio su la Sinfonia in si minore di Schubert, la quale dà appunto il titolo al volume.

Incompiuta e, ancor più tormentata, si delinea già sin dalle prime pagine del libro, la protagonista, Amina, dolce creatura di sogno. La sua vita e il suo amore, si direbbe che altro non sono se non una ultima eco del lontano romanticismo dei nostri nonni. La trama su cui l'autore svolge le vicende del suo racconto è quanto mai delicata e sottile. C'è, a dir vero, come una vena d'irrequieto contrasto che serpeggia nella struttura del romanzo; lentamente e quasi impercettibile prima, ma, irrefrenabile, poi si concretizza e scoppia. Contrasto tra lo spirito eterno ed indistruttibile e la mediocre vacuità della vita moderna.

Amina appare a quelli che la circondano, ad eccezione di Arvali che l'ama, una ragazza moderna: moderna nelle forme esteriori e nelle abitudini quotidiani. (Vive sola ed è indipendente; questo fatto basta agli occhi del mondo, a classificarla tale.)

Essa racchiude in sè però, il dono nascosto di un cuore pieno d'amore. Ma l'amore solo non è sufficiente, non potrà mai renderla felice. L'uomo che essa ama e da cui è riamata non può sposarla. Amina, dal canto suo, è promessa ad un altro giovane verso il quale si sente più che legata da un altissimo senso di dovere. "Tu dovresti avere il coraggio," le dice Ugo pur conoscendo la vanità delle sue parole, "di affrontare una posizione irregolare, di fronte a un mondo che è indulgente verso gli amori segreti, ma non rispetta l'amore quando ha il coraggio di presentarsi in tutta la sua pienezza, per le vie della terra... Purtroppo ci sono 'gli altri': c'è una vita esterna, fatta di rapporti sociali, tediosi e tristi." In mezzo a questi tumulti che le dilanano lo spirito, Amina si tormenta e ne soccombe.

La passione amorosa rattenuta dentro il suo cuore, quasi torrente furioso, a volte prorompe e grida con

voci sorde di indicibile dolore. I sentimenti che si susseguono dibattendosi nella sua mente sono come onde sonore su cui l'anima si libra e si abbandona.

Il romanzo, per quel forte senso di spiritualità che lo infonde richiama alla memoria il *Daniele Cortis* del Fogazzaro. Ma l'analogia, se così veramente può chiamarsi, è solo superficiale. Quella irrequietezza che pervade non solo Amina ed Ugo ma persino i personaggi secondari del Piccoli è tutta moderna e tutta nostra.

Una prosa levigata ma senza raffinatezza dà un sicuro calore alla narrazione. Le immagini in gran parte musicali, dovute indubbiamente all'ispirazione originale, si dischiudono risonanti e fresche. "Tutto intorno, nella penombra, era un profondo silenzio, ma a lui parve che quel silenzio fosse ravvivato da una vasta musica, come se tutto nelle vibrazioni dell'anima, fosse canto."

I personaggi inferiori si staccano appena dallo sfondo, quasi temessero di sopraffare la protagonista che essi circondano. Amina stessa appare a volte più l'incarnazione di un'idea che creatura vivente; rimane, troppo spesso, adombrata e solo nelle scene finali balza vibrante di vita e di pianto nell'infinito suo soffrire.

Il libro piace forse appunto per questo e si legge con crescente interesse. Un sano e forte senso etico spira da ogni pagina.

S. Viola

Giuseppe Tarozzi — "Socrate," 96 pp., Roma, 1933, Formiggini, Lire 5.

Il Socrate che l'Autore presenta in questo "Profilo" sembra a tutta prima non allontanarsi da quello della

DE AMICIS A GENOVA

De Amicis era entusiasta di Genova, del suo mare, del suo porto. E diceva a Gandolin che gli sarebbe piaciuto tanto, se avesse potuto fissarvi la sua dimora, o almeno passarci un lungo periodo. Se avesse avuto un bello studiolo, aperto sul mare, al sole, chissà quante cose avrebbe potuto fare...

— Ah no! ribatte Gandolin — perchè qui, vedi, la prima idea è quella di stare alla finestra: la seconda, di non far nulla.

— E la terza?

— La terza non viene mai!

tradizione. E infatti il Tarozzi non ha la pretesa di contrapporsi ai moltissimi che ne hanno scritto per presentare una sua nuova interpretazione. Ma fa di meglio. Compone artisticamente cogli elementi che offrono i *Memorabili* di Senofonte, e i *dialoghi* Platonici, la singolare e sublime figura del filosofo. Principale assunto dell'Autore è stato di penetrare, specialmente con analisi psicologica, questa grande anima; di far rivivere come spirituale protagonista, in un periodo tragico della democrazia d'Ate-ne, l'immortale filosofo, e di mostrare le ragioni per cui l'umanità, ancor oggi, lo venera ed ama come iniziatore di un'augusta tradizione di virtù e di sapienza, come sereno e limpido ed arguto amico, cittadino del mondo.

"Aneddoti Genovesi" raccolti da F. E. Morando, 320 pp., Roma, 1933, Formiggini, Lire 9.

Oltre che una miniera d'aneddoti, il libro (ventesimo della Collezione Aneddotta) è un'accolta di notizie curiose e storicamente interessanti sopra fatti di rilievo, usi pittoreschi e costumanze singolari. Aneddoti originali e in maggioranza umoristici si incontrano su quasi tutti i grandi cittadini genovesi da Colombo a Gandolin; figure tutte che nella loro luminosità trapassano le mura cittadine.

T. Maccio Plauto — "La commedia del Fantasma — Il soldato smargiasso," — Versione di Moricca, 212 pp., Roma, 1933, Formiggini, Lire 10.

Il volume, che si presenta tra i migliori dell'artistica collezione dei Classici del Ridere, contiene, tradotte, due fra le più belle commedie di Plauto, la *Mostellaria* e il *Miles gloriosus*. Pur mantenendosi scrupolosamente fedele al testo latino, il traduttore s'è studiato di ottenere che la forma italiana fosse così agile e spigliata e ricca di armoniose movenze da parere, a chi legga non esangue lavoro di filologo, ma viva opera d'arte, che gareggi con l'originale e le esilaranti volgarità del linguaggio. Il traduttore nel condurre il suo lavoro, si è imposta, oltre alla legge della bellezza, anche quella della verità: due principi che non si contraddicono, ma s'integrano a vicenda, per la migliore intelligenza dell'opera antica e della civiltà che la produsse.

TOPICS OF THE MONTH

(Continued from page 4)

but he always treated such a thing disdainfully. He preferred to achieve greatness—to fight for it, work for it, suffer for it: even die in the task of achieving it.

What a wonderful saga, what an immortal epic, might be written of this man's daring and genius! Born to a life of royal ease, he preferred the thrill of living dangerously, gloriously, in the constant rhythm of daily struggles. He anticipated by at least forty years the heroic challenge of the little Italian soldier who braved death in the blood-stained fields of the barren Carso with the all-conquering consciousness that it is better to live an hour like a lion than a century like sheep.

Explorer, scientist, mountain-climber, naval commander, organizer, colonizer: the Duke of Abruzzi carried far and wide Italy's colors and Italy's ancient traditions of daring and conquest. The spectacle of a Prince living down the impediment of royal restrictions and thus rising to undreamed-of heights—a Man among men, a Prince among Princes—is rare indeed. But still rarer is the spectacle of a Prince, already world-famous, who at the age of sixty penetrates into dark Africa, like a colonizer of old, there to build a new State, there to win new glory, there to die.

"Itala gente dalle molte vite"—a people of many and diverse lives, indeed: a people who can never perish as long as men like the Duke of Abruzzi are born to lead and honor them.

BERNARD SHAW: "SAYER OF SMART THINGS".

BERNARD SHAW, that super-annuated master of paradox and — oftener than not — of impudence, has at long last condescended to visit our benighted States and thus give these fool Americans a fleeting glimpse of the miracle man of the age.

Truth to tell, I am one of those few—they must indeed be very,

very few—who fail to wax admiring about Shaw's humor. This statement is tantamount to a confession of asininity on my part. However, I'd rather be a Boeotian and bay at the moon than such an admirer of his wit.

For those who feel inclined to consider the septuagenarian globe trotter as the greatest humorist of all times I shall give here a characteristic instance, as reported by Helen Keller, that marvelous woman whom all the world admires and reveres.

"Then why don't you come to America?" I asked.

"Why should I? All America comes to see me."

Lady Astor laid her hand on his arm and shook it a little, as if he were a child behaving badly before company.

"Shaw," she said, "don't you realize that this is Helen Keller? She is deaf and blind."

His answer must have shocked everybody; but a few moments passed before I knew what it was. A quiver ran through Mrs. Macy's hand—I was shut off from the scene, and I stood wondering and waiting. Then Mrs. Macy spelled to me what Mr. Shaw had said:

"Why, of course! All Americans are deaf and blind—and dumb."

Poor Helen Keller, a tragic and pathetic figure, one of the noblest creatures that ever walked God's earth, being thus mercilessly hurt by an insolent old fool who must say smart things at all costs! This sort of humor is on a par with his solemn asseveration that President Roosevelt was elected because he got himself photographed with a baby in his arms.

Frank Harris, an infinitely greater writer than Shaw, a master of English if ever there was one, gave Bernard Shaw his start in literature, many years ago—a fact of which Shaw had to be reminded often. A few years before Harris died, poor and forgotten, he said to Shaw: "The only way to conquer me, Shaw, is by being more generous to me than I can be to you: surpass me in that and my arms fall of themselves."

A concise and penetrating analysis of Shaw's character: generosity, loving kindness, tenderness—these are qualities entirely foreign to his literary personality. I can't

see how he can conquer one American heart by thus insulting the greatest American living woman.

I commend the following thought by Pascal to Mr. Shaw's benign consideration: "Your sayer of smart things has a bad heart."

* * *

THE EFFICIENT AMERICAN: AS MR. BRISBANE SEES HIM.

THE announcement by the Head of the Italian Government that he would like to see Italy's population increased in the next ten years by seventeen millions has brought forth a vivid comment from the pen of Arthur Brisbane. I have had occasion to refer in these columns to Mr. Brisbane's clear vision and brilliant style. His wisdom and wit make him, in my opinion, the outstanding American journalist that he is.

I hope that I may be allowed to reproduce some passages from his interesting article which appeared recently in the Hearst papers.

"A country much smaller than California, far behind California in fertility and wealth of every kind, already possessing nearly ten times the population of California, proposes to add in ten years four times California's population to what Italy has already."

"Wise Mussolini knows that the real wealth of the world is INTELLIGENT POPULATION, and that he will find room and useful work for the seventeen million new Italians when they come."

"If Mussolini could send us seventeen millions of his good Italians that know how to work and are willing to work ON THE SOIL, they would add billions a year to the wealth of this country and consume wheat that our farmers cannot sell. They would utilize the fertile lands of Florida, California and the Gulf Coast now wasted. They would be a blessing to the United States and do more than all our talking and Technocracy nonsense to make this country prosperous."

"What is true of Italians is true of the other hard working races, if we can get them. We need fifty million more Irishmen, Scotchmen, Englishmen, Germans, Australians, Russians, all of the racial strains that, combined, have produced the EFFICIENT AMERICAN."

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Art & Music

Ricci, E. — "Mille Santi nell'Arte", 1 volume, 8vo., 734 pages, 700 illustrations, Milano — Hoepli ...\$4.80

This beautiful volume recently published seems to fill a demand long felt for a work of this kind among religious people as well as lovers of art. It is unique in its field. It contains a beautiful biography of 1000 saints, for most of whom the author supplies a reproduction taken from well known works of art. One cannot be too appreciative in view of the splendid results which the author has achieved, after so many years of patient labor.

Classics

Dante — "La Vita Nuova" (seguita da una scelta delle altre opere minori — per cura di Natalino Sapegno) — Firenze, Vallecchi ...\$1.00

The comment on this new edition of "La Vita Nuova" is not only philological but philosophical. Some of the most obscure allusions, especially in "Le Rime" are interpreted according to the latest philological and philosophical developments in the study of Dante.

Russo, L. — "Antologia Machiavelliana" (Il Principe, pagine dei Discorsi e delle Istorie) con introduzione e note — 1 volume, 16mo, 270 pgs. — Firenze, Le Monnier\$1.00

Prof. Russo has included in this handy volume "Il Principe" in its complete text, and selected parts of "I Discorsi and Storie Fiorentine". The volume is extensively annotated, and can be easily classified as one of the best school texts of this classic in Italian Literature. In the introduction of more than 25 pages, the compiler shows why the problems Machiavelli deals with are ever present, and more so in these trying days of political turmoil.

Religion and Philosophy

"La Sacra Bibbia" — 1 volume, 12mo., 1630 pages, India paper, full leather Firenze — Libreria Editrice Fiorentina\$5.00

This edition of the Catholic Bible is the first ever published in a small handy volume. The previous editions have all been large 4o. Whether it was because, as some have insinuated, the Church did not care to have it circulated among the poorer class, or whether it was because publishers would not venture into the publication, we do not know. The fact remains that the Catholic Church has authorized this new translation, and a in a handsome edition. This translation has been conducted by the Compagnia di San Paolo under the general editorship of Rev. Dr. Giovanni Castoldi.

Fiction

"Aneddotica" — a collection of anecdotes about people and things published in handsome 16mo of about

250 pages each, Roma — Formiggini each \$.90

1. Testoni — *Aneddoti bolognesi*
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16. Sandro — *Nuovi Aneddoti teatrali*
17. Manetti — *Aneddoti Carducciani*
18. Petrai — *Roma sparita (figure e figure)*

Falqui e Vittorini — "Scrittori Nuovi", 1 volume, 664 pages, Lanciano — Carabba\$1.80

In this volume the compilers have covered the best of contemporary Italian poets and novelists. A larger space is given to the younger authors, of whom 74 are herewith represented with selections from books which, in many cases, are already out of print. This volume is publishing house has issued the volume recommended to those who are interested in post war developments in Italian literature.

Drama and Poetry

Capasso, A. — "Il Passo del Cigno ed altri poemi" con una prefazione di G. Ungaretti, 12mo, 142 pages, limited edition, Torino — Buratti \$1.00

Capasso is one of the youngest of Italian poets. Although he has written one or two books of criticism, especially on French modern literature, this "Passo del Cigno" is his first book of poetry. His aim seems to be to combine a modern poetic sensibility with the traditional form of Italian lyrics, particularly that of the pre-Dantesque period. Awarded, in conjunction with De Michelis, the Italia Letteraria Prize, 1932.

Levi, E. — "Fiorita di Canti tradizionali del popolo italiano" scelti nei vari dialetti e annotati con 50 melodie popolari tradizionali, 1 volume, 385 pages, board\$2.00

The folklore of Italy expressed in the poetry and songs of its people is collected by the author in this valuable volume. From the provinces of Lombardy and Piedmont, the author goes all the way through Italy down to Sicily and Sardinia, gathering the words and music of the people's songs. The musical lines reproduced are left in their original form, not tampered with and not harmonized. The phrases in dialect which may present difficulty have been translated into modern Italian by the author.

Political and World Problems

Schanzer, C. — "Il Mondo fra la Pace e la Guerra" (Il problema bellico nel pensiero umano — Insegnamento della Guerra Mondiale e previsioni circa una guerra futura — L'organizzazione della pace dopo la guerra mondiale — Il problema bellico nell'avvenire) — Milano, Treves-Trecani-Tumminelli\$3.00

The Italian philosopher and sociologist, who was for a time Minister of Finance, sets down in this volume the Fascist point of view on the present day situation and the possibility of a new war in the near future.

History and Biography

Alberti, A. — "Verdi Intimo", 1 volume, 8vo, 350 pages with 16 full page illustrations, Milano — Mondadori\$3.00

Correspondence which Verdi had with one of his closest friends in which he reveals his keen musical mind, not only about his own work, but the music of his contemporaries. Within these pages the musical activities of Europe for a period of about 25 years from 1861-1886 are passed in review and commented upon by Verdi in caustic letters to his friend Arrivabene.

Fulop-Miller, R. — "Il Segreto della Potenza dei Gesuiti", 1 volume, 8vo, 484 pages, with 116 illustrations, cloth, Milano — Mondadori\$4.00

A translation of the famous book of Fulop-Miller. The Italian critics in unison with critics of other nations have acclaimed this volume one of the best ever written on the history of the Jesuits.

Locatelli, A. — "L'Affare Dreyfus" (la più grande infamia del secolo scorso) 1 volume, 8vo, 550 pages profusely illustrated, Milano — Corbaccio\$2.25

Locatelli has written in a most readable style the story of the famous Dreyfus case. He has made use of all the available documents which have been recently published, not least of all the papers left by Esterhazy, the real culprit, just before he died in England a few years ago.

Miscellaneous

Brunacci, A. — *Dizionario Generale di Cultura*, 2 vols. 16mo, over 2000 pgs., cloth, Torino — S. E. I.\$5.00

Here we have one of the smallest of encyclopedias complete in every subject and in every detail. 1747 illustrations and 40 maps are included in these 2 volumes. Every question pertaining to history, science, literature, religion, philosophy, etc. finds its short but complete answer within these pages. This compact encyclopedia seems to be the answer to our modern civilization which compels us to live in small apartments not big enough to house a large encyclopedia, and which also forces us to move from place to place.

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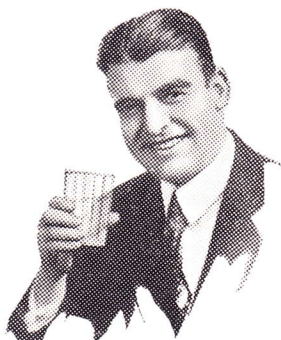
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