

IN VANITY FAIR

"Why You Can't Afford to Miss This Number"

Straight Dope on Its Contents—In the Manner of Certain of Our Popular Fiction Magazines

It is the commendable policy of the less expensive American popular fiction magazines to make everything as easy as possible for the tired reader. Thus, to each story they thoughtfully prefix an analysis explaining the particular merits and appeal of each tale, with the result that you are enabled to appreciate the author and his work without the slightest cerebral effort.

Vanity Fair, not to be outdone where the comfort of the reader is concerned, attempts with this number a similar scheme, using the characteristic phraseology of our bright and brainy contemporaries.

"The Comedian"

You'll like JIMMY CABELL'S stuff right off the bat. Clean, straight-from-the-shoulder fiction—that's Cabell, every time. Those who have read his books (and who hasn't), especially *Jurgen*, know that this popular Virginia author can spin a love yarn with the best of them. Action? Oh Boy! And there is something about Cabell's women that—well, read for yourself and see if you don't think we're giving you the straight dope.

"Camera Studies in the Open Air"

Everybody likes nudes—that goes without saying—but few of us have had a good chance to see real Swedish nudes. Here we give you a page of them, done by "DOC" GOODWIN, who has spent years in both Sweden and Minnesota and knows his subject from the ground up.

"There Isn't Any Santa Claus"

"What's a good show?" How often have you made a city like New York on your spring trip, only to find that nobody seemed to know what theatres on the White Way to patronize. HEYWOOD BROWN knows—he has them all sized up from old Bill Shakespeare to "Gene" O'Neill, and he'll tell you in this article just where to go, and why. If Brown says it's good, brother, it's good.

"Cordially Yours"

Here's another of those NANCY BOYD 100% bull's-eyes, with celery and olives on the side all rolled up in a neat package and delivered at your door. Nancy may not be much on æsthetic stuff, and poetry, but she sure writes great stories for honest-to-God he-men, like you and I. Her letters are, if anything, franker than Clare Sheridan's.

"The Great Impressionists and Post Impressionists"

You know Bruce Barton, the great editorial writer for *Farm and Fireside*, of course. Well, this is RALPH BARTON and he is just as sincere and as uplifting in



MISS NANCY BOYD

We have received so many letters asking if our distinguished contributor, Miss Boyd, were a withered spinster of forty or a sophomore at Rutgers, that we take great pleasure in publishing this sketch of Miss Boyd made in her Greenwich Village home. The pyjamas are of Miss Boyd's own designing—after Poiret

his particular line as Bruce. Ralph goes in for sketching and we give you some of his side-splitting take-offs on these fake French brush slingers.

"The Two Generations"

Want a little bit of homely philosophy? FRANK COLBY'S your man. Nothing highbrow—just the kind paw used to hand out after supper on the old farm. It'll make you think a little about what a good old world this is we're living in, after all.

"Fun for Halloween"

There's two kinds of humour—the genial sort that makes folks laugh without hurting anybody, and the sarcastic "wit" of the uncharitable satirist. There's no question in which of these two classes we put "DON" STEWART, whose only aim is to go through life without hurting anybody's feelings.

"The Musician as a Parodist of Life"

"Music hath charms"—so old Doctor Johnson said, and once more we must admit the "Doc" said a mouthful. Brother, have you ever sat and listened to a violinist play the *Humoresque*? Have you ever heard Sousa play the William Tell Overture? Well, if you haven't we're sorry for you, and so is PAUL ROSENFELD who in this number tells all about a group of young French band and orchestra geniuses known as "The Big Six".

"Rollo Among the Artists"

We all remember the Rollo stories of our boyhood. GEORGE CHAPPELL is giving you a series of modern Rollo stories which will make you thoroughly like this author who, while often causing Rollo to do laughable things, nevertheless makes you feel that underneath it all his hero has a heart of gold and will come out on top. There are in these stories many a laugh—and, perhaps, a tear.

"Memoirs of Court Favourites"

NOEL COWARD is indeed no coward and in this article he delivers a few straight uppercuts in his characteristic fashion.

"Latter-Day Helens"

Here is the story you have been looking for. Time after time we have heard people say, "I wish W. L. GEORGE would write something about women!" This time he does it; and for a first attempt we'll say he has the fair sex down pretty cold.

"America's Small-Town Taste"

Do you remember the time your best girl read *An Old Sweetheart of Mine* to you? Do you recall that lump in the throat? Well, here's the lad that's going to be another James Whitcomb Riley if he keeps on. JOHN WEAVER'S his name, and he's a "regular fellow" who writes poetry that you or I can understand.

"George Moore and His Dead Life"

Whether you are a Sinn Féiner or a Lloyd George-ite you'll like ERNEST BOYD'S treatment of the Irish question in discussing that bright novelist, George Moore.

"The Philosophy of Rowing"

"Rah, Rah, Rah, Princeton"—how often in the past few years have we heard the jubilant boys of Woodrow Wilson's alma mater shout forth that cheer as their varsity crew swept across the line ahead of the other eights. And much of the credit is due to DR. SPAETH, their coach, who, in this number, tells us how he does it.

"The Winning Age in Sport"

There isn't much about sport that GRANTLAND RICE doesn't know. He can tell you who pitched on the Harvard nine in 1918 and whether to use a mid-iron or a brassie in a water hazard. And in this month's article he shoots the works.

"Say It With Flowers"

"Say It With Flowers"—boys. This story is like a garden of beautiful climbing roses—the kind your best girl used to wear. And the author—FRANCES MARION—is an American girl with a God-given gift.

D. O. S.



EVENING—A WOODCUT BY J. J. LANCKES

Vanity Fair

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The Comedian

In Which a Novelist Attempts to Discover and Appraise His Hero

By JAMES BRANCH CABELL

IT is salutary enough, in the teeth of average opinion, for a writer to consider his own books. For he then, unique among mankind, enjoys the wholesome privilege of laying hand and eye upon just what, precisely, his life has amounted to; and the spectacle, one estimates, is very ill adapted to betray either the great or the popular into much self-conceit. No matter whether the assembled volumes compose a monument to the man's talents or to his more generally companionable lack of them, the upshot of all his existence is there before him, a tangible and visible and entirely complete summing-up within humiliatingly few inches.

So for my soul's health, when the day's stint of work is over, I sometimes appraise a foot and a half of book-backs—the dispiriting total of all that to which, whether for good or ill, I have amounted,—and I wonder just what, precisely, it is that I have been doing in these last twenty years. I try to make apparent, if only to myself, my real object in writing so much as is now written of this Biography, which seems to me an endless history of the life of Dom Manuel of Poictesme, and in which each of my books, when rightly considered, I take to compose a chapter.

WELL, on the face of it, this Biography, made up of thirteen books, is now a disjointed chronicle of the terrestrial feats of Poictesme's squinting hero and of some twenty-two generations of various persons variously descended from him. So the precise would incline to describe it as a family tree; and yet in fact, I think, it is a true biography; a biography of nine centuries of Dom Manuel's life. For, of course, the life that informed tall Manuel the Redeemer did not become extinct when the gray champion rode westward with Grandfather Death: the body and the appearance of Dom Manuel was gone, but his life remained perpetuated in five children, who afterward transmitted this life to their progeny, as did they in turn to their own offspring; so that this life flowed on through time—and through such happenings in France and England and America as, one by one, my books have recorded,—with every generation dividing and subdividing the troubled and attritioned flowing into more numerous streamlets. And Manuel's life came thus to Lichfield and the twentieth century, by and by, and is not yet extinct in my contemporary Townsends and Kennastons and Musgraves, of all whom these books trace the descent, in the twenty-third degree, from Manuel.

Thus too, I perceive, it is about this life that I have been writing always, in many places, in various chapters of a Biography which is largish now, but stays incomplete, and will not ever be completed. For this human life, as I consider it, appears to me a stream that, in journeying toward an unpredictable river, is fretted equally (still to preserve the fluvial analogue) by the winds of time and by many pebbles of chance. So are there various ripples raised upon the stream as it goes—ultimately—seaward; and, noting these, we say this ripple is Manuel, that Ormskirk, and the other Charteris; noting also that while we name it the small stir is gone. But the stream re-

mains unabated, nor is the sureness of its moving lessened, any more than is the obscurity of its goal.

Yet, with reflection, this metaphor appears to me less apt than does another figure, to which I thereupon shift fancy. I begin to liken this continuously reincarnated life of Manuel to an itinerant comedian that with each generation assumes the garb of a new body, and upon a new stage enacts a variant of yesterday's drama. For I do not find life's comedy ever to be much altered in its essentials. The first act is the imagining of the place where contentment exists and may be come to: and the second act reveals the striving toward, and the third act the falling short of, that shining goal, or else (the difference here being negligible) the attaining of it, to discover that happiness, after all, abides a thought farther down the bogged, rocky, clogged, befogged heart-breaking road, if anywhere. That is the comedy which—to my finding, to-night, in my unmeritedly comfortable and quiet library—the life I write about has enacted over and over again on every stage between Poictesme and Lichfield.

I call it a comedy. Really there is thin sustenance for the tragic muse in the fact that with each performance the costume of the protagonist is spoiled, and the human body temporarily informed with life is thrown perforce to the dust-heap. There is not even apparent, to reflection, any economic loss: for the wardrobe of this mundivagant posturer is self-replenishing, in that as each costume is used it thriftily begets new apparel for the comedian to ruin in to-morrow's rendering of the old play. The parent's flesh is flung by like an outworn coat: but the comedian, reclad with the child's body, tricked out with strong fresh sinews and rouged with youth, is lustily refurbishing, with a garnish of local allusions and of the latest social and religious and political slang, all yesterday's archaic dialogue and inveterate "situations".

AND in the light of this comœdic metaphor—the metaphor which upon the whole I prefer,—my books appear to deal with a ludicrously small portion of the vagabond's wardrobe. For I have in my books concerned myself with only that relatively brief part of the tour wherein life has worn human bodies. Previously—I now reflect—the scenery was arboreal, and my comedian wore fur and a tail; as before that his costume was reptilian, and yet earlier was piscine. So do the scientists trace backward his career to life's first appearance upon the stage, when the *vis comica* which later was to animate the thews of Manuel, and of all men that have ever lived, had for its modest apparel only a small single bubble embedded in primeval slime.

Always, I perceive, my comedian has dressed his rôle with increasing elaborateness, progressing from a mere pinhead of sentiency to all the intricate fripperies of the human body, with its wealth of modern improvements in the form of forward-looking bifocal eyes and prehensile fingers and multiloquent lips. And so magnificently has he, through many centuries of endeavour, reorganized his stage-setting in

the sundry nooks of Earth enriched with his main centres of civilization and his stupendous fulminating wars that it is not past the reach of poetic imagining to suppose the telescopes of Earth's nearest neighbour may quite possibly have detected some one of these fermenting pustules.

That proud contingency as yet remains guesswork, but less remotely this comedian has made sure of his art's last need. For upon Earth's epidermis he has created an audience more certain and immediate than those it may be interested Martians, by very patiently training some cells in the human brain once in a while to think. And since every form of æsthetic effort is spurred by any prospect of applause from any source however trivial, one must surmise that the performance is given with renewed gusto now the comedian's antics may be marvelled over by this gray beading so unobtrusively inwrought into his latest costume.

YET there is a grave drawback, I suspect, to this evolving of man's brain as a dramatic critic. It is that the one honest verdict to be wrung from the small wet sponge, which lines, they say, the skulls of patriotic orators and of our popular clergy too, must always be a lament that, even in the primordial ooze, the drama was (and, for that matter, bids fair to remain, in the last cold electric-lit futurity) a bit depressingly confined to this theme of striving toward a goal which, gained or lost, proves not to be the true goal, after all. And then *da capo!* . . . Yes, it really is depressing, because there is in this unending captaincy of a forlorn hope, in this futile and obstinate romanticism of life's vaudeville, just the element to which our most applauded "realists" most strenuously object as being untrue to life; and in the withering light of our best æsthetic theories the performance seems rococo and unreal.

And I speak overrashly of futurity, before which, really, my imaginings baulk. To-morrow the age-old comedian will be wearing none knows what, though in reason the restless artist that we call life cannot long stay content with human bodies for his apparel and medium. Already, in considerate eyes, life tends to some more handsome expression, by means of the harnessed chemistries and explosions, and collaborating fly-wheels and vapours, and wire-dancing thunderbolts, that in all our cities dwarf the human beings who serve as the release levers. Already, as many philosophers recognize, we are so generally fed and clothed and sheltered and carried everywhither by machinery that we can lay no grave claim to be thought more than its parasites. And already the era appears well in sight when every need of civilization and every business of life will be discharged by the pressure of electric buttons, and when, in America at least, the one essential part of man will be his forefinger.

But at prophecy, I repeat, I baulk. I am duly tempted to weigh the likelihood that with disuse the other members of the inhabitants of these states will disappear, and that our national nicety will then make an end of all by suppressing this surviving forefinger as

(Continued on page 98)



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Dental science has found a better way to clean teeth. Modern authorities approve it. Leading dentists everywhere advise it. Millions of people already employ it.

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These things should be daily done for better tooth protection.

See the benefits

Send the coupon for a 10-day Tube. Note how clean the teeth feel after using. Mark the absence of the viscous film. See how teeth whiten as the film-coats disappear. Watch the other good effects.

Judge then by what you see and feel and know. Decide if the people in your home should brush teeth in this way. Cut out coupon now.

The Comedian

(Continued from page 40)

considerations there is happily no need to enter. It may seem to hidebound logic quite certain that human beings are just one season's fashion in life's clothes, and that next season something entirely different will be worn. With such sartorial forecasts I have no quarrel, and if I do not blurt out the real truth of the matter it is merely because I do not know it. I merely know that, even though the life of our planet may by and by discard mankind just as it has discarded the dodo and the dinosaur, at present men and women are life's latest clothing: and I take it to be the

part of urbanity to accept the mode of our day. So I must tacitly confine myself to this one season in Dom Manuel's life—and in all our human existence so far as known to me,—and neither here to-night nor in my books may I presume to prattle of apotheoses.

With which decision I very lightly pass my finger-tips over a foot and a half of book-backs, and touch in this small gesture, so didactically small, the whole of that to which, for good or ill, I have amounted. And thereafter, with a continuing sense of wholesome allegory, I go quietly to bed.

Food

(Continued from page 51)

principal dishes may be had upon application to my secretary, Miss Switzler.

The Golf Dinner

ONE of my whimsical thoughts was to design a golfers' dinner. This may seem a far cry from the dry pedagogy of an institution of learning but, believe me, we younger faculty members are not as dull as we seem, and many a midnight spread have Prof. Bumstead, the piano instructor, and I had after hours!

Accordingly I bent my best energies to a study of golfing in which I was tremendously assisted by Miss Lampwell, one of my seniors, who can hit the ball an amazing distance, speaks the language perfectly, and is extremely fair to look upon. We worked up the golfers' dinner together in my private laboratory.

Picture a table laid with a green-cloth, padded with soft napkins, to resemble the undulating surface of a well-kept course. The guests should be limited to nine or eighteen if possible, as each place is marked with a small box full of salt, identifying the hole and corresponding to the guests' dinner card. Convenient hollows in the cloth may also be filled with salt, pepper or sugar to represent bunkers. Celery makes excellent rough.

One of the merriest features of the affair is that the food, which is of course very Scotch in design, cock-a-leekie, finnan haddie, haggis, scones, and so forth, is eaten, not with the usual implements, but with a small bag of golf clubs placed at each cover. I was at first puzzled as to how to secure these miniature clubs without the excessive cost of special casting, until Miss Lampwell (who was suffering from an ingrowing wisdom tooth at the time) hit upon the happy expedient of using dental tools! Her keen eye had noted on the dentist's tray, that every form of mashie or click was practically reduplicated in the doctor's equipment. This feature, coupled with the fact that the menu is a score card with a stated bogie for each hole with a prize for the winner, gives a tremendous amount of zest to the evening. Par for my dinner is 72. If the host's cellar permits a pleasant feature may be made of a 19th hole, as near the table as possible, which never fails to add to the pleasure of the occasion.

During the process of designing this dinner, I naturally became familiar with all phases of the ancient and royal game, incidentally learning that Miss Lampwell was something of a moral hazard. Dear child! I wonder where she is now.

But my real bias lies along more intellectual lines. The dinner which I prepared to precede the Fancy Dress Ball of the students and Faculty will live long in the annals of Cook College. Here the dominant note was one of mystery. The food was costumed, so to speak. Every dish was a disguise. The oysters wore black masks made of truffles, the broiled squab went as ballet-dancers, with elaborate paper skirts. Nothing was what it seemed. The delicate filets of sole were rolled into artful horns-of-plenty, the plebeian sweet potato was whipped into frothy spirals of golden foam. All was carnival, dampened slightly by the petulant attitude of Professor Knagg of the Psychology Department who pushed away the last mentioned confection with the peevish observation that he "never ate yellow mounds unless he knew what they were."

Along more strictly æsthetic lines I have designed a Blue Dinner, beginning with Bluepoints and ending with blue berry pie. It is an exquisite meal. Everything in the menu is blue. It would not be quite fair to tell you how I make the meat blue, that is my secret. The fish of course, is obvious.

For a presidential reception, I have worked up a most appropriate buffet luncheon which is concluded by cabinet pudding and Washington pie. My religious dinner is also immensely popular at church conventions. It contains tasty arrangements of manna, locusts-and-honey and palm-leaf salad. Grace is said before and after each course, which gives every minister present a chance to have a good pray.

These are just a few of the things which may be done to make our most important meal really interesting. I might add that for mixed parties of a rather rough nature I discard all attempts to appeal to the intelligence of my guests. Instead I start them off with a few cocktails of my own invention called the Wilberforce Infuriator. They don't care what they eat after that; the dinner is always a very great success.



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