

GATES OF PARNASSUS SWING TO STRUGGLING AUTHORS

For a Mere Matter of \$10 They May Now Bathe in the Inspiration of Laura Jean Libbey, Irv. Cobb, Chambers, McCutcheon and Other "Six Best Sellers" at the Authors League Social Branch



Laura Jean Libbey a fountain of inspiration for those who would write love stories.

and don't care about dress anyhow, being bluestockings. Laura Jean Libbey was a perfect dream in a low cut blue silk dress with a red rose at her breast and a rhinestone tiara in her elaborately curled and coiffured yellow hair, and Ellen Glasgow—but why enumerate? All the big women authors showed unmistakably, though not in too assertive a way, that their copy-right returns are coming right along; while the tall swete form of Winston Churchill, the rotund one of Rupert...



Charles Rann Kennedy was there with his best "God bless you" manner.

manuscripts some day? Without making any promises Mr. Williams came away from that reception leaving with the poor young authors, at least those of the gentler sex, the reputation of being a Perfect Love. As the evening wore on, and the party broke up into groups, and the sandwiches, cake and lemonade were passed around, much soulful conversation arose. Mr. Churchill, who dislikes the limelight, disappeared early and was discovered later lurking behind a curtain in the effort to escape from three poetry writers from Kalamazoo who wanted to know whether his hero in "A Far Country" was modelled on himself, as in the case of Dickens in "David Copperfield," or was just imaginary. Harvey J. O'Higgins went peering around as he always does, looking Bayard Veiller said, for detective, and Gertrude Atherton turned her back on the poor young authors and talked with Henry Sydney Harrison about women's clothes and what perfect frights they were nowadays, and how straight front corsets ruined the line of beauty. But one of the poor young authors made a bad faux pas with Mrs. Atherton early in the evening, being lately from a town where libraries were scarce and consequently not knowing about "Julia France" and the rest of Mrs. Atherton's works and having seen the famous author's name in an afternoon paper signed to an article praising a certain make of automobile, the poor young one took her for one of those women who do nothing but make a name for themselves by trying to converse with her along that line.



Irvin Cobb gives a struggling author his recipe for war stories.

THOSE who picture America's successful authors as a cold, reserved and haughty galaxy, wrapped in the superiority of their genius, dwelling apart on the heights of Parnassus and seeming to mingle with the humble throng of aspirants to literary fame are mistaken. It may have been so at one time, but the formation of a social branch by the Authors League of America, a branch anybody who has written anything that could be copyrighted and who has \$10 to pay the initiation fee can join and gain the right to attend the receptions and shake hands with Laura Jean Libbey and Theodore Roosevelt and Winston Churchill and to see cream in the same room with them—well, the formation of this branch proves that literary fame does not destroy the Americanism of the necessary, the eagle of democracy screams for all. Just how the social branch sprang into being is not recorded, but rumor has it that Irvin Cobb, or maybe it was Robert W. Chambers or George Barr McCutcheon, or anyway one of those Authors League members who sell their works not by the word but by the word and are not afraid to talk right up to the publisher who says, "oh, never mind art, end that story the way the public wants it," one of those stars buttoned Carolyn Wells and Mrs. Helen H. Woodruff and the Princess Troubetzkoy and the lovely Amelie Rives, and said to them: "See here, our gifts should not make us selfish. Too long have we kept our gatherings confined to our own circle, spending our brilliant bon mots, our profound philosophical observations upon one another. There are many eager young men and women who want some literary ability and a great deal of ambition. Think what it would mean to them to meet and mingle with us from time to time. Do not let us exclude these poor and struggling writers. Once upon a time some of us were poor and struggling, and when we are gone it will fall to some of them to carry on the sacred torch." Having suggested the plan, after the manner of men they went off and let the women do it. The women did. Ella Wheeler Wilcox and Hildegarde Hawthorne and Mrs. Woodruff and a score of others formed a social committee and set about the work of giving the parties that were to bring the big and little authors together. There has been by the way, some irrelevant comment on this in the press in the way of allusions to the ladies undrinking as a scheme to give the little literary fish a chance to meet the whales and so on. This has caused the social committee much grief, inasmuch as it brought to its members various letters written after this fashion: "I have read your little fish, I am only a hollow one, but I will not let your reception to be patronized by the Whales. Literary Politeness."

Well, as before remarked, the reception was largely attended. It was rather an ordeal getting in, because there was a butler person with a log voice at the door, who asked your name in a mysterious whisper and then, followed it, as it were, to the heights of Parnassus. Of course if you were Owen Johnson or Charles Rann Kennedy or Gertrude Atherton or somebody like that you didn't mind, but if you were Murtle Green from Detroit, Mich., and your poems had only appeared in the local papers as never never have given his valuable time to this social committee if he'd known it meant all this pink tea business, the benefit was mutual. While the poor young authors, Williams pointed out, would gain experience and encouragement by mingling with those at the top of the literary ladder, those at the top would gain by contact with the young, returning, troubling amateurs a certain enthusiasm, a new freshness, perhaps, of outlook. Mr. Williams was in his element, smiling on all the pretty girls and listening to their confidences about how they hoped to get their stories published some day, and how they thought his college stories perfectly adorable, and wouldn't he—it was a great deal to ask, but, oh, it would mean so much to them—would he, could he just glance at one of their



Winston Churchill discovered behind a curtain by three prominent poetesses from Kalamazoo.

There was also an Editor there holding a reception in a corner. After the poor young authors had been introduced to the reporter person and had asked her if she was allowed to write up the news she got herself they were introduced to the Editor, whom the poor young authors as a friendly one regarded with awe, though she was young and small to look at. Because as with a magazine writer, there is something about an Editor— Well, well, it was a nice evening. Charles Rann Kennedy, whose brilliant God bless you air attracted the poor young authors as a friendly one attracts the brass, had a circle of eager listeners around him till he had to tear himself away, and if he could not be so "The Servant in the House" once he told it a dozen times. Owen Webster disappointed his girl admirer because he insisted on chanting Hymns of Hate of President Wilson instead of talking about "The Christian" by Owen Johnson made up for that by looking at the pretty girl poor authors in a way that made them perfectly positive he'd put them in his very next "Salamander" novel. Helen B. Woodruff with her Dresden china beauty made the hearts of all the poor young authors go a-wooing just as they heard that she saved the proceeds of her books to found a blind school for poor children and help the blind and so forth they simply fell at her shrine in shoals. It was a nice evening, and when the big authors shook hands with the poor young authors at the end and assured them that they need never worry about their copyrights being stolen or displaced magazines refusing to pay for their stories and articles, because the league would protect them, the poor young authors went away, feeling that they were being warmly and kindly introduced to the Authors League of America by their friend.

CURRENT NEWS OF ART AND THE EXHIBITIONS

THE Knoedler exhibition of paintings by modern English artists, which opens to-morrow, will be certain to provide entertainment. Among the artists are Augustus John, William Orpen, William Strang, A. M. Evans, H. C. Marlowe, P. Wilson Steer, Charles Shannon, W. Nicholson, W. W. Russell, W. Rothstein, Charles Sims and James Fryde, who may surely be considered the elite of the contemporary English art world.

It is to be hoped that P. Wilson Steep will be adequately represented in it, for this painter, who is so highly esteemed by a certain group of writers in England, is but slightly known here. The "Western Wedding" by Orpen no doubt will be the feature of the exhibition, and may even stir up a controversy. There are likely to be some to take exception to the freedom with which the artist is mixing his peasants (or are they tinkers?) in the open air by the side of a roadside crucifix. For artists of the old school a special little scandal has been provided by the placement high in the air at one side of the composition of an indifferent spectator on horseback. I warn you, however, that THE Steep's chronicle is not in the least scandalized by it. It is an interesting work.

Richard Blossom Farley, who has had a great deal of success in Philadelphia, is making a first bid for New York attention with an exhibition of his paintings in the Arlington Galleries on Madison avenue. The work includes figure pieces, still life and sea views. It is in the latter mentioned genre that he attains most individuality. Mr. Farley has been a pupil of Whistler, Chase and Cecilia Beaux. One of the paintings, "The Daguerreotype," distinctly recalls the Whistler teaching, and the black dress of the lady who looks at the daguerreotype and the curtains at the back and the wall all suggest the soft, Japanese blacks that are so much admired in Whistler's "Moeder." Mr. Farley's own character began to reassert itself apparently after his return from the lessons, and "The Black Veil," a picture of a young woman on a park bench on the snow, is quite academic and of the sort that wins prizes in the local shows. In the surf and beach pictures, however, Mr. Farley forgets all about Whistler, Chase and Miss Beaux and is more original, though less prize winning. He has a curious fashion of painting these big canvases with an intimacy of tiny brush strokes that gives the effect of tenderness as well as of intense effort.

In the Macbeth Galleries there is a special exhibition of the work of Charles H. Davis, Paul Dougherty, Kenneth H. Miller, Chauncey F. Ryder

and William Sartain. One by Charles H. Davis seems unusual for him simply because it shows a close view of an attractive house seen through the trunks of tall trees. It is called "Summer Afternoon" and has the usual Davis palette, but one is so accustomed to the rolling hills blue on the canvas by this artist with floating clouds casting soft shadows upon them that the change of theme gives a sense of shock. Chauncey F. Ryder's "Stone Harbor, Cape Cod," is a highly finished and clever piece of brush work. "The Tomb of a Saint" by William Sartain is dramatic and imaginative without restricted lines. In the lower Macbeth gallery a collection of high fire porcelains by Adelaide Alsop Robineau of Syracuse, will remain on view during March. These porcelains, which achieved a success

at the recent Panama-Pacific exposition, are very distinct in form, quality of glaze and porcelain and ornament from any other of the products of native kilns. Certain vessels carry an intricate decoration made up of repeated motifs, of floral forms that suggest, but not too closely, the work of the Frochman-Lafitte. There is a quite evident challenge of French standards of workmanship also, from the point of view as porcelains. Among the artistic rarities now in the Noorian Gallery at Fifth avenue and Twenty-ninth street is a bronze of old date from the Henri IV. period of the most workmanship Mr. Noorian acquired the piece in Venice, where it was considered a specimen of point de Venise, but experts now attribute it to the Henri IV. period of France. The design is exceedingly well balanced and the skill of the needlework is astonishing. Another item of interest in the collection is an early Greek statuette of a Venus, the pose of which has a certain resemblance to the Venus de Milo. Mr. Noorian's Venus, however, has both of her arms and holds a mirror in one hand in which she studies her undeniable charms.

Willard Huntington Wright's soft answer to R. J. Coady's letter published in last Sunday's SUN failed to turn away the latter's wrath. Mr. Coady smites Mr. Wright's other cheek vigorously in the following reply: "The Forum Exhibition committee now claim that their position is a 'humble one,' yet this humbleness seems to be the only element in their makeup which is really modest and retiring. In their advance note to the public they claim adequate qualifications to pick and choose the very best of modern American art and to relocate the rest to the ash heap. They claim to give the public the first and only comprehensive idea of what is good in American art. They claim to guarantee that those 200 paintings have real permanent value. They claim to guarantee to the buyer that his purchases are secure. 'Now they either guarantee these things or they don't. If they do I want proof, not words. If they don't I intend to make them say so. 'At the first inquiry into the truth of their position they immediately become humbled and change their first statement from the very best examples to 'among the best examples.' To this I reply that the worst are usually 'among the best' and that word juggling does not help to sustain their contentions. 'I ask the committee why they did not consider the work of Michael

Brenner, George Coker, Geteroux and a number of others? And if they did consider them why did they reject them?' They knew of this work. 'In the description of the qualities that place those 200 paintings among the best' I find that drawing is absent, and is consequently unimportant to that inherent beauty for which all great painters strive. 'My question in reference to J. G. Brown and Kenyon Cox has been ignored yet Mr. Brown was honest, serious and sincere, so is Mr. Cox, and so are we. 'My question as to American art seems to have gone completely over the heads of these students, investigators and thinkers of American art. They are blind to the great things that are going on around them. They are blind to the big spirit here that has grown out of the soil and through the race and has already expressed itself in terms of art that rank with the great European epochs. It is just such committees that have prevented American contributions to art. 'If there is only a superficial and not a basic difference between modern American art and modern European art, why turn public attention from the really good examples of modern European art, since that is to be the first and only comprehensive exhibition whose aim is to 'create an appreciation of art?' 'The public wants to know these things, and wants to know why. 'They say that they guarantee these 200 paintings as works of art in a higher or lower degree, so far as honest expert opinion can guarantee anything, and it is obviously impossible to guarantee anything which as yet does not exist. Puzzle picture—find the guarantee. 'I ask these gentlemen, Do they guarantee anything? What do they guarantee? How do they guarantee it? In what do they make the buyer feel secure? and how?'

The present group at the Mac Dowell Club is a collection of thirteen artists, most of whom have frequently exhibited in New York. A name that is unfamiliar, however, Alexis Manly, is added to the paintings that have the most promise. The exhibition upon the whole is rather better than the average of recent Mac Dowell Club shows, but upon touring the rooms each time I looked with particular interest at a canvas the catalogue would assure me that the painting was by Mr. Manly. Mr. Manly is not sensational, but he is individual, and that is why his modest pictures stand out. He is impressionistic, and not always the same. His agreeable color and a feeling for design. Presumably a young man, his work may be considered to have promise.

James Wetland has painted a young lady in black and white standing by some white birches and a river that looks like a design for a "Jugend" cover. Leonard Towles' "Carnaval" is a mid in bright red and white with swags down, might serve a similar purpose, and there are several portraits by Amelia Saint Gaudens, dashing landscapes by Zama Steeds and satirical essays by Theodosia Barnston. The Henry Bonhardt Galleries continue to exhibit the recent work of Francis Peers Troubetzkoy and a group of interesting primitives. Prince Troubetzkoy's portraits are well known in New York and the present group will have the success of those previously seen here. The most striking work in the collection is a portrait of the Princess Marie Troubetzkoy, which is a most striking character analysis, and besides has cleverness of treatment and color. Feminine softness and elegance are not difficult to this artist and none of his sitters has had attributes of that sort neglected. Mrs. William Allen poses in brown, a fashion that matches her brown police dog. Mrs. Robert Meade Parker is in white with a black background by way of dramatic contrast, and the much portrayed Mrs. Leonard Prince Troubetzkoy's portraits are

It is not generally known that Frederick Altman, a nephew of the late Benjamin Altman, collector of famous uncle in an enthusiastic manner, and is ambitious as a collector himself. His tastes run to the classical, he already owns a number of superb Greek vases, and his present collection includes medallions by Cimabue, Cosmèlin and Lorenzo di Fredi. He has passed approximately thirty thousand dollars of Mr. Benjamin and Frederick's attractive religious pieces, including two panels of early saints, the "St. Peter" and "St. Paul." The pride of his collection is a work that is attributed to Leonardo's Vinci and which has received the modern title of "Adieu," a group of female figures. A "Descent from the Cross" when acquired by Mr. Altman was purchased as the work of Simon de Vos, a pupil of Peter Paul Rubens, born in 1603, and whose "Resurrection" is in Antwerp Cathedral, but since coming into his present owner's possession certain amateur artists, including Mr. Altman himself, have come to believe it the work of Rubens himself. There are also a Gaius and a landscape with much public interest. Salvator Rosa, a "Transfiguration" of copper by the Flemish painter Frans Hals and a number of modern masterpieces. Water colors and oils by Philip Boss fill the little Tribune gallery on Fort-street with their light color and different shades. That is, they will be different from the medallions. On the other hand, the artist's will prefer Mr. Boss's work as academic. H. Kevorkian is showing a number of the collection of Russian and other early sculptures and bronzes, including which he acquired in New York. He is now in his new gallery on Third-street, Mr. Kevorkian has been conducting explorations into the art of the East and the pieces in his exhibition are ones that he rescued from the ash-



"The Descent from the Cross." Attributed to Rubens. In the Frederick Altman Collection.



Portrait of Miss Clara J. Gordon, by Wilford S. Conrow. In the National Academy.