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Oscar Wilde
Scrapbook

Vol. **11**

Glasgow Herald
Sept. 28, 1908

Northern Whig,

Sept. 19, 1908 Belfast

Birmingham Evening Dispatch
Oct. 12, 1908.

A PINERO GALLERY.

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Bank of Liverpool, 5 1/2% Phoenix Assurance, 52% United Irish, 48% Paris Bank, 60% Threlkell's Brewery, 48% 30c 4s 2s 5d 3s 9d 4s 10% Do. 7 p.c. 110% British South Africa Sbs. 17s 5d n 4 1/2 3d 4 1/2 South African Gold Trust Shares, 50n British Insular & Helaby Caples Ord., 6 1/2-52kd Transvaal Estate & Devel. Sbs., 12s 9d n 10 1/2 1/2

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Business Done	£19 0
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\$11.72 gold and 6.00z silver per ton. Directors regard the results obtained during the past year as very satisfactory, and look with confidence to the further development of the mine in depth.

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Planet, October 17, 1908.

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For the rest there was nothing of interest to the exception of an Italian youth, who might have been anything from a vendor of ice-cream to a titled poet, and who slept peacefully between the acts. The others were all either transparent blouses, the same that you see everywhere, summer and winter, on pier-head and in pit, or their male accompaniment, or persons obviously artistic and merely impetuous, these last being the genuine dramatic support of every serious gallery in Europe. Not far from me was one of them—himself perhaps the author of rejected masterpieces—with a face remarkably like the late Oscar Wilde, and at some distance on the other side an animated monologue was being delivered by a gentleman whose dress and accent suggested a subordinate position in an oil store, but who, so far as face was concerned, bore a striking likeness to one of the youngest and most distinguished of our professors. From the merriment of his circle he seemed to be a humorist, but from my seat I could only catch his intonation, not his remarks. Had I been sharing programmes and opera passes with my immediate neighbours I should have suffered myself to be drawn within his orbit. For herein lies the gallery's major charm. You are not crushed into a narrow numbered seat, and you may move about as you please. You may loil against the railings or repose against a side wall. You may view the stage and the house from many vantages, all of them pictorial. You may shift your seat to wherever the most brilliant conversationalist of the evening happens to be set. The spirit of the family and of aristocratic ease is pervasive, and for the time being all differences of class and intellect disappear. The gods are united, even as were the inhabitants of Olympus, by their sense of superiority to all that lies beneath their dizzy eyrie.

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DAILY TELEGRAPH,
MAUD ALLAN.

"MY LIFE AND DANCING."

By W. L. COURTNEY.

To mark the 250th consecutive performance of Miss Maud Allan at the Palace Theatre, a little book has been published by Messrs. Everett and Co., full of interesting detail, giving to the public the informal memories and reflections of the gifted lady who, without any manner of doubt, has danced herself into the affections of the London public. The mere external facts of her existence are not very important, and can easily be dismissed. Maud Allan was born in Canada, and transported thence to California. She then began her artistic training in Berlin; roamed for some time among the cities of Italy; made her first appearance just five years ago, at the Theatre Hall of the Royal Conservatoire of Music, Vienna; passed through various capitals, including Paris, and made her début in London on March 6, 1908. These are the mere details which tell us practically nothing. They might have been quite otherwise without making any difference to the subject of the memoir, and probably are more significant to Miss Maud Allan herself than to those who read her book. She has had, of course, her share of adventures and accidents by flood and field. Apparently she has been more than once bitten by dogs, and maltreated by horses, and once she was nearly run away with by the gipsies. That was when she was quite a child, on the journey from Canada to San Francisco. This is how she tells the story:

The train stopped at a wayside station, and most of the passengers alighted to obtain glimpses of the many Indians who haunted the place to sell their wares. I don't think my mother once thought of any danger to me, but suddenly she missed me, just as the train was pulling out of the station. There was a hurried search, but I was nowhere to be found. Instantly the conductor pulled back to the platform, and there, running off towards the woods with a glint of flaxen hair under her arm discernible beneath the edge of the red blanket, was an Indian squaw, with another red woman in her trail. My mother says that it was the vivid colour of my hair flying in the wind that attracted the attention of my friends. Of course, I was rescued immediately, and soon, babylike, I forgot my fear, and before we were half-way to our destination I was making free with my fellow-passengers, as brave as ever. But even to-day I can close my eyes and see the reddish-brown face bending over mine as the Indian woman whipped me up under her arm and started off.

EARLY INFLUENCES.

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There is nothing in the world so royal as she. She lies in rags before the threshold, ay, but there is none (she shouts), none in the house that can endure to look into her eyes.

There is a wonderful scene between the sisters, Electra, who has no thought of her own happiness, and Chrysothemis, who wants to shake off the horrors of the house and have some of the ordinary joys of womanhood and motherhood.

ELECTRA.
May your children, when you have them, do so unto you as you unto our father.

[CHRYSTHEMIS cries out.]
Why do you cry? Get in. Your place is there. I hear a noise. Is it your wedding-feast? They set in order? I can hear them running. Why, the whole house is up. They are in birth pangs Or at a murder. They must be at a murder. When they have no dead body for a bed.

CHRYSTHEMIS.
Stop! That is past and over.

ELECTRA.
Past and over? They fall to some new matter there within. Do you think I don't know the sound when bodies are trilled upon the stairs, and there is whispering and wringing out of cloths that drop of blood?

[CHRYSTHEMIS.]
Sister, let us begone from here.

ELECTRA.
This time I will be by, and not as I was then. I am strong this time. I will cast myself upon her, wrest the axe out of her hand. Swing the axe over her—

CHRYSTHEMIS.
Go, hide yourself. Lest she should see you. Do not cross her path. To-day, she scatters death in every glance. She has been dreaming. [The noise of many people approaching comes nearer.] Go away from here. Go, they are coming through the corridor. They are coming by this way. She has been dreaming.

I know not what, I heard it from her women; I do not know, sister, if it is true: They say she has been dreaming of Orestes. And that she has been crying in her sleep As one cries out being strangled.

ELECTRA.
It is I.

I, that have sent him to her. From my breast I sent the dream to her. I lie and hear The feet of him who follows her. I hear His feet go through the room. I hear him lift The curtain of the bed; crying, she leaps forth. And he is after, and down the stairs Through vault and vault and vault the hunt goes on.

It is much darker now than night, and much darker and much more quiet than the grave. She pants and staggers in the darkness, yet He is still after her; he shakes the torch On this side and on that side of the axe. And I am like a hound upon her heels; And if she seeks a hole I spring upon her. Sideways, and so we drive her on and on Till a wall shuts upon us, and there, deep In that dense darkness (yet I see him there, A shadow, and his limbs and eyeballs) sits Our father, and he heeds not, yet it must be done; we drive her in before his feet. Then falls the axe.

The mother Clytemnestra, as she appears in the glare of the torches, sallow faced, dressed in scarlet, and covered with jewels, herself terrorized by the thought of impending doom, begs her daughter to give her a remedy for dreams. Electra tells her a riddle and then interprets it:

ELECTRA.
What blood must flow? Out of your neck, your neck When that is caught into the hunter's noose He catches you, yet only in the chase. Who offers up a sacrifice in sleep? He hunts you on, he drives you through the house; And if you turn to right, there stands the bed, And if you turn to left, there forms the bath Like blood; the darkness and the torches cast Black blood-red nets, the death-nets, over you.

The epileptic Electra is an epileptic to the end. When Clytemnestra and then Ægisthus have been killed by Orestes, she breaks into an incredible dance, as one bearing the burden of joy.

MAUD ALLAN.

"MY LIFE AND DANCING."

By W. L. COURTNEY.

To mark the 250th consecutive performance of Miss Maud Allan at the Palace Theatre, a little book has been published by Messrs. Everett and Co., full of interesting detail, giving to the public the informal memories and reflections of the gifted lady who, without any manner of doubt, has danced herself into the affections of the London public. The mere external facts of her existence are not very important, and can easily be dismissed. Maud Allan was born in Canada, and transported thence to California. She then began her artistic training in Berlin; roamed for some time among the cities of Italy; made her first appearance just five years ago, at the Theatre Hall of the Royal Conservatoire of Music, Vienna; passed through various capitals, including Paris, and made her débüt in London on March 6, 1908. These are the mere details which tell us practically nothing. They might have been quite otherwise without making any difference to the subject of the memoir, and probably are more significant to Miss Maud Allan herself than to those who read her book. She has had, of course, her share of adventures and accidents by flood and field. Apparently she has been more than once bitten by dogs, and maltreated by horses, and once she was nearly run away with by the gipsies. That was when she was quite a child, on the journey from Canada to San Francisco. This is how she tells the story:

The train stopped at a wayside station, and most of the passengers alighted to obtain glimpses of the many Indians who haunted the place to sell their wares. I don't think my mother once thought of any danger to me, but suddenly she missed me, just as the train was pulling out of the station. There was a hurried search, but I was nowhere to be found. Instantly the conductor pulled back to the platform, and there, running off towards the woods with a glint of flaxen hair under her arm discernible beneath the edge of the red blanket, was an Indian squaw, with another red woman in her trail. My mother says that it was the vivid colour of my hair flying in the wind that attracted the attention of my friends. Of course, I was rescued immediately, and soon, babylike, I forgot my fear, and before we were half-way to our destination I was making free with my fellow-passengers, as brave as ever. But even to-day I can close my eyes and see the reddish-brown face bending over mine as the Indian woman whipped me up under her arm and started off.

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There is a wonderful scene between the sisters, Electra, who has no thought of her own happiness, and Chrysothème, who wants to shake off the horrors of the house and have some of the ordinary joys of womanhood and motherhood.

ELECTRA.

May your children, when you have them, do
So unto you as you unto our father.

[CHRYSOTHEME *cries out*.

Why do you cry? Get in. Your place is there.
I hear a noise. Is it your wedding-feast
They set in order? I can hear them running.
Why, the whole house is up. They are in birth pangs
Or at a murder. They must be at a murder
When they have no dead body for a bed.

CHRYSOTHEME.

Stop! That is past and over.

ELECTRA.

Past and over?

They fall to some new matter there within.
Do you think I don't know the sound when bodies
Are trilled upon the stairs, and there is whispering
And wringing out of cloths that drop of blood?

CHRYSOTHEME.

Sister, let us begone from here.

ELECTRA.

This time

I will be by, and not as I was then.
I am strong this time. I will cast myself
Upon her, wrest the axe out of her hand
Swing the axe over her—

CHRYSOTHEME.

Go, hide yourself.

Lest she should see you. Do not cross her path
To-day. She scatters death in every glance.
She has been dreaming.

[*The noise of many people approaching comes nearer*].

Go away from here.

Go, they are coming through the corridor.

They are coming by this way. She has been dream-
ing.

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I do not know, sister, if it is true;

They say she has been dreaming of Orestes.

And that she has been crying in her sleep

As one cries out being strangled.

ELECTRA.

It is I.

I, that have sent him to her. From my breast

I sent the dream to her. I lie and hear

The feet of him who follows her. I hear

His feet go through the room, I hear him lift

The curtain of the bed; crying, she leaps forth,

And he is after; and down the stairs

Through vault and vault and vault the hunt goes
on.

It is much darker now than night, and much

Darker and much more quiet than the grave;

She pants and staggers in the darkness, yet

He is still after her; he shakes the torch

On this side and on that side of the axe.

And I am like a hound upon her heels;

And if she seeks a hole I spring upon her

Sideways, and so we drive her on and on

Till a wall shuts upon us, and there, deep

In that dense darkness (yet I see him there,

A shadow, and his limbs and eyeballs) sits

Our father, and he heeds not, yet it must

Be done; we drive her in before his feet,

Then falls the axe.

The mother Clytemnestra, as she appears in the glare of the torches, sallow faced, dressed in scarlet, and covered with jewels, herself terrorized by the thought of impending doom, begs her daughter to give her a remedy for dreams. Electra tells her a riddle and then interprets it:

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When that is caught into the hunter's noose

He catches you, yet only in the chase,

Who offers up a sacrifice in sleep?

He hunts you on, he drives you through the house;

And if you turn to right, there stands the bed,

And if you turn to left, there forms the bath

Like blood; the darkness and the torches cast

Black blood-red nets, the death-nets, over you!

The epileptic Electra is an epileptic to the end. When Clytemnestra and then Ægisthus have been killed by Orestes, she breaks

breaking a burden of sorrow, and one bearing the burden of joy.

WHERE ENGLISH TASTE PREVAILS.

HUNGARIAN "ANGLOMANIA."

BUDAPEST, August 16.

"English spoken" may be seen in numerous shop-windows in Budapest—though in some cases I fear the qualification is confined to the shop-window. This little card is not merely a trap to catch English visitors whose knowledge of foreign tongues is limited to an inefficient German or a still more inefficient French phrase-book—a kind of "German-and-French-while-you-wait": it is far more, it is a diploma, a testimony of being *à la mode*. For to be English is, in Hungary—at least, at present—to be fashionable.

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"THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY."

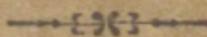
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From **THE ATHENÆUM,**
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that are scraping over the floor, the entire room seems to oscillate like a picture on the wall than toil-thinned, who, except for her low brow, has the face of a madonnina clasps both her hands in those of a young man who is well in the clutches of tuberculosis. Facing each other with clasped hands outstretched, they draw together until their bodies touch. Their wearied, expressionless faces brighten and in a sudden ecstasy they swing into a wild, strange, flinging dance that crowds six beats into the three of the waltz. Around and around whirl the two sense-starved souls, drinking the room, heedless of the crowd about them, for the moment their fill. The transforming touch of dance music is upon them and they are beyond the world.

There is dancing of every form and degree from that of the old devotee of the hall to the hesitating, abashed steps of the number of them marked with consumption colorless, indoor faces, with a startling, pitiful extravagance of gaudy clothing covering stunted, hollow-chested bodies! What But what a travesty of youth! What a teens, and many of the little girls not over twelve or thirteen.

The hall is cold and the air, packed with the odor of sweating, unwashed humans and of dust, is fairly thick to the taste. The music, violin and piano, is bad, but it has the insidious rhythm of the dance tune and catches the heart with the old quick ecstasy of motion. And the dancers! All of them young, none of them beyond their middle twenties, most of them in their teens, and many of the little girls not over twelve or thirteen.

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Illustrations by **C. Falls**

*"Then turning to my love I said,
The dead are dancing with the dead,
The dust is whirling with the dust."*

*"But she, she heard the violin,
And left my side, and entered in:
Love passed into the house of Lust."*

*"Then suddenly the tune went false,
The dancers wearied of the waltz,
The shadows ceased to wheel and whirl."*

*"And down the long and silvered street,
The dawn with silver-sandaled feet,
Crept like a frightened girl."*

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At its best the dance is an unpolluted ecstasy. But let man turn his evil brain to trafficking in it, making profit by it, developing its sensual appeal, and the dance and its music forms one of the saddest of human spectacles.

The dancing academy is the product of congested living, for it is obvious that its existence depends on the patronage of a large population. Wherever the congestion is worst there has the dance hall reached its worst development. In every American city where the population is large enough to insure two points, sufficient patronage and sufficient public indifference to its evils, there the academy flourishes. In only two sections of such cities are the

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There are two great classes of the dancing academies; those where only soft drinks are found and those where intoxicating drinks are sold. In the Jewish sections there is no liquor sold in the halls. The boys and girls who frequent these places have no money to spend on drink, even were they of a drinking class, which they are not. Most of them are of the type which by the utmost physical effort by day are able to scrape together enough to pay for a hole in the wall in which to crawl by night. They are street bred and sweatshop educated. Mentally, they are stunted. Physically, they are labor aged. They are ignorant and unprotected. Labor aged and ignorant, they are lured by the light and warmth and intoxicating touch of music from the cold and dark without, from homes which are merely evil-smelling rooms,

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2



John Zugg Lindaark, Esq.,

351 Clinton Street,

Brooklyn, N. Y.

OCTOBER 28, 1923
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"I Shall Remember."

Sir,—The lines which your correspondent "Italia" inquires about occur in a poem called "Erotion," by Swinburne, first published in "Poems and Ballads" in 1866. The lines are frequently quoted, and still more frequently misquoted, in "In Memoriam" notices; but a reference to the poem itself will show how very inappropriate they are for this purpose. Swinburne's own *apologia* for the poem (which is stated to have been written for a drawing by Simeon Solomon, the Pre-Raphaelite painter) will be found in "The Dark Blue," a magazine published at Oxford in July, 1871.

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[E. G. S. Aubyn (Kingsbridge, S. Dev. Lover of Quotations, S.W.11), J. A. Westrup (Albany Mansions, S.W.11), J. B. S. Lewis (Woodford College, Oxford), J. B. S. Lewis (Woodford Essex), Jenny Wren (Queen's Gate Gardens Howard) (Littlehampton) also reply to this

"SALOME" AT THE CHATELET
Morning Post IN PARIS.

14 JUN 1911

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

PARIS, June 13.
The Répétition Générale of Oscar Wilde's drama, "Salome," with incidental music by Glazounow, took place at the Châtelet Theatre to-night. M. de Max, who took the part of Herod, and Madame Ida Rubinstein, who played Salome, appeared to have totally different conceptions of the piece, and the audience was not a little mystified by the extraordinary contrast between their manners. M. de Max evidently regarded Salome as the parody of a melodrama; his tone and gestures were clothed in that exaggerated sublimity which so often touches the ridiculous, and which removes the action from the realm of reality even more effectively than the tragic mask and buskin of the ancient Athenians. This note was struck at the opening of the piece by the soldiers, who pronounced in awe-struck whispers such unimportant remarks as "Je ne sais pas," and dwelt on them tragically, as though they were the answer to the riddle of the Sphinx.

M. de Max's melodrama produced its full comic effect when it came into contrast with the homely commonsense of Herodias, a part that was well played by Madame de Feh. Madame de Feh treated the piece as a comedy of the sublime, and

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The names of the competitors and the decision of the judges have been withheld so far, and will not be announced until next week; but in the majority of cases it requires no great skill to discover the paternity—in many cases it would be more correct to say the maternity—of the designs. Indeed, the women artists come out with flying colours, and though they are not responsible for the three designs that stand out high above the rest—No. 66, which surely must have met with the unanimous approval of the judges, and Nos. 15 and 16 (both by the same artist)—at least four of their number reveal a

Of Dr. James's stories the most gruesome (though not the best) is that entitled "Castles in the Air," the tale of a man bewitched who reads in the opposite window-corner of a tramcar strange advertisements which are not there, who is handed by shadowy person handbills which other shadowy persons snatch from him just as he reads the word "fear," who reaches under the pillow for his watch at night and feels instead a hair, who awakes in "The Theatre Maddoch" the gobweby ghost in "The Theatre Maddoch" the true nature of wall

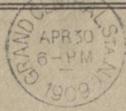
which a series of people insisted on passing a night; and each of them in the morning was found kneeling in a corner, and had just time to say, "I've seen it," and died. Then there was the man who heard a noise in the passage at night, opened his door, and saw someone crawling towards him on all fours with his eye hanging out on his cheek. Then room where a man was found dead in bed with a horseshoe mark on his forehead, and the floor under the bed was covered with marks of horseshoes also: I don't know why. Also there was the lady who, on looking her bed room door in a strange house, heard a thin voice among the bed curtains say, "Now we're shut in for the night."

C. S. Meillard

18,

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M. de Max's melodrama produced its full comic effect when it came into contrast with the homely common sense of Herodias, a part that was well played by Madame de Fehll. Madame de Fehll treated the piece as a parody of the sublime, and plunged the audience with the greatest gusto into the bathos of a conjugal squabble after M. de Max had been bearing them aloft towards those non-existent regions where the word "foreboding" becomes an obsession, and where the actors shiver with cold or are consumed with fever for supernatural reasons quite unconnected with temperature.

Unfortunately, Madame Rubinstein took the part of Salomé absolutely seriously, and endeavoured to play it realistically: she endeavoured to be tragic while everyone else was parodying melodrama. Her diction, though less startling than it was, left much to be desired, but her silences were eloquent with an eloquence that belongs to the plastic arts rather than to the stage. While Herod was alternately ranting bravely and telling home-truths to his wife Salomé sat motionless, her face turned to the wall in an attitude that was marvelously expressive of the despair of despised passion. In the dance of the Seven Veils Madame Rubinstein was graceful and languorous, with something of the treacherous living serpents and coiled themselves about her in bewildering sinuous folds. But the dance would have been more effective had it been less complicated, and it did not seem to have been quite sufficiently rehearsed.

The scenery and costumes, designed by M. Léon Bakst, were extremely effective, and the colour scheme was daring and successful. Why, however, the moon of blood was exaggerated to at least tenfold its size is a mystery, since it ceased to resemble a celestial body at all, and profane spectators compared it to a Dutch cheese. It was no doubt difficult to devise a moon that could be compared to "une femme morte," "une princesse qui a des pieds comme des petites colombes blanches," and "une femme ivre et hystérique," but M. Bakst might perhaps have found inspiration in Herodias' remark, "La lune ressemble à la lune." C'est tout. In any case it was surely unnecessary for it to undergo first a partial and then an annular eclipse at moments when the action had no need for these surprises. M. Glazounow's music was not particularly pleasing, but it was sufficiently weird to produce the required effect.

75
b. S. Meillard
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AND
STREET, HOLBORN CIRCUS,
E.C.

The Observer.
125, Strand, S.W.
Issue dated..... 10 Dec 1911

ART & ARTISTS.
CHELSEA TOWN HALL
DECORATION.

All minor exhibitions, even those of Mr. Augustus John's recent paintings and drawings at the Chenil Gallery in Chelsea, and of the "Camden Town Group" at the Carfax Gallery, must stand back this week, when the highly important competition for the decoration of Chelsea Town Hall claims first attention. The scheme, which has so far resulted in the exhibition of designs by Chelsea artists, that will be on view at the Town Hall during the course of next week, was originated by Mr. Christopher Head, late Mayor of the Borough, whose generous donation, together with those made by Earl Cadogan, Mr. E. J. Horniman and Mr. St. John Hornby, provided for the execution of the first four panels. In a leaflet issued in connection with this exhibition it is stated that, "Mr. Head having invited the collaboration of the Chelsea Artists' Club in realising his project, it was decided that a comprehensive scheme for the decoration of the hall should be entrusted to three judges selected by the club, and that a competition under the auspices of the club should be thrown open to all Chelsea artists, it being felt that the heterogeneous result achieved in most of the decorations in London was due partly to the absence of a controlling scheme, and that the choice of the artists and subjects should not be left to individual patronage only." The judges chosen were Messrs. J. S. Sargent, P. Wilson Steer and E. A. Rickards—artists all who may be depended upon for the soundness of their judgment, although it is subject to considerable doubt whether the available material will yield a homogeneous scheme of decoration.

It appears that each panel is to be allotted to a different artist, the subjects and scale of the figures being embodied in the conditions for the competition. The panels are to be representative of the men and women celebrated in Chelsea History, the four subjects being:—(1) The great Artists; (2) the famous Writers; (3) leaders of Religion, the genius of Science and the art of Music; and (4) Kings and Queens, Soldiers and Statesmen. It so happens that practically all the designs which are worthy of serious consideration and which could be combined into a scheme of some unity belong to groups 1 and 2. Among them will be found the works of artists who understand the essentials of mural decoration, whilst the designs submitted for the other two panels suggest, almost without exception, the mummery of fancy dress ball processions or are conceived in a manner that renders them unsuitable for the purpose. Whilst admitting the high merit of the designs submitted by some half-dozen competitors, one cannot but confess to a sense of disappointment at the comparative failure of Chelsea to live up to its reputation as the chief centre of English art. Too many of the designs are downright bad, not only as decorations, but even if judged from the standard of the ordinary historical or "imaginative" Academy picture; and nearly all—even the best—are timid or commonplace in conception. Where there is daring, as in one or two designs that lean towards post-impressionism, the daring is not supported by competent craftsmanship.

The names of the competitors and the decision of the judges have been withheld so far, and will not be announced until next week; but in the majority of cases it requires no great skill to discover the paternity—in many cases it would be more correct to say the maternity—of the designs. Indeed, the women artists come out with flying colours, and though they are not responsible for the three designs that stand out high above the rest—No. 66, which surely must have met with the unanimous approval of the judges, and Nos. 15 and 16 (both by the same artist)—at least four of their number reveal a sounder knowledge of the true nature of wall decoration than most of their male rivals. One of these four has already achieved considerable reputation for her splendid frescoes executed in a provincial school building. Her design (No. 46) is steeped in the best Florentine and Roman tradition, without being at all slavishly imitative. Unfortunately, the linear rhythm of this design is destroyed by the obtrusiveness of a heavy mandorla breaking into the architectural lines. Nos. 56 and 57 are by another lady who knows what wall decoration should be, but whose knowledge is not accompanied by imagination or by a sense of design. Yet another competitor, who is responsible for No. 24, has learnt and assimilated the lesson of Veronese and other Venetians; but the colour is too heavy, the design too massive for a wall decoration.

At the extreme end of the room, on the left, are two other striking designs, which I suspect to be the work of women painters; but I have no record of their numbers, though one can easily be recognised by the strange puce colour of the dress of a figure in the centre of the composition, the other by a certain ruggedness of handling and sunny brilliance of colour. No. 37, in which Fraulein von Derr, the impersonator of Sumurun, is seen dancing in the scantiest attire before Carlyle, Whistler, Wilde and other Chelsea celebrities, is one of the best "pictures" in this exhibition, but the full scale cartoon for one of the figures and this accomplished artist's known academic style justify a certain doubt as to his ability to adapt himself to the exigencies of mural decoration. Much the same may be said of No. 50, with its humorous treatment of Oscar Wilde smelling a long-stalked arum lily. This, surely, is not the work of a Chelsea, but rather of a Kensington, artist? No. 31 has the distinction of being most puzzling and unintelligible design. On the left on the ground are some naked, writhing Michelangelesque athletes. Close to them, but wholly disconnected and unaware of their presence, Oscar Wilde and others, turning their backs to the athletes, are assisting at what looks uncommonly like a ceremony of betrothal or wedding between Mrs. Browning and Carlyle, whilst through the air an allegorical figure swoops down upon the athletes. On the whole, there is in these designs a regrettable tendency towards anecdotal illustration and a lack of that monumental architectonic weight and balance which distinguishes not only the mural paintings of the great Italians, but also of such moderns as Puvis de Chavannes.

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from issue dated..... 10..... 1911

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CHELSEA TOWN HALL
DECORATION.

All minor exhibitions, even those of Mr. Augustus John's recent paintings and drawings at the Chenil Gallery in Chelsea, and of the "Camden Town Group" at the Carfax Gallery, must stand back this week, when the highly important competition for the decoration of Chelsea Town Hall claims first attention. The scheme, which has so far resulted in the exhibition of designs by Chelsea artists, that will be on view at the Town Hall during the course of next week, was originated by Mr. Christopher Head, late Mayor of the Borough, whose generous donation, together with those made by Earl Cadogan, Mr. E. J. Horniman and Mr. St. John Hooyby, provided for the execution of the first four panels. In a leaflet issued in connection with this exhibition it is stated that, "Mr. Head having invited the collaboration of the Chelsea Arts Club in realising his project, it was decided that a comprehensive scheme for the decoration of the hall should be entrusted to three judges selected by the club, and that a competition under the auspices of the club should be thrown open to all Chelsea artists, it being felt that the heterogeneous result achieved in most of the decorations in London was due partly to the absence of a controlling scheme, and that the choice of the artists and subjects should not be left to individual patronage only." The judges chosen were Messrs. J. S. Sargent, P. Wilson Steer and E. A. Rickards—artists all who may be depended upon for the soundness of their judgment, although it is subject to considerable doubt whether the available material will yield a homogeneous scheme of decoration.

It appears that each panel is to be allotted to a different artist, the subjects and scale of the figures being embodied in the conditions for the competition. The panels are to be representative of the men and women celebrated in Chelsea History, the four subjects being:—(1) The great Artists; (2) the famous Writers; (3) leaders of Religion, the genius of Science and the art of Music; and (4) Kings and Queens, Soldiers and Statesmen. It so happens that practically all the designs which are worthy of serious consideration and which could be combined into a scheme of some unity belong to groups 1 and 2. Among them will be found the works of artists who understand the essentials of mural decoration, whilst the designs submitted for the other two panels suggest, almost without exception, the mummery of fancy dress ball processions or are conceived in a manner that renders them unsuitable for the purpose. Whilst admitting the high merit of the designs submitted by some half-dozen competitors, one cannot but confess to a sense of disappointment at the comparative failure of Chelsea to live up to its reputation as the chief centre of English art. Too many of the designs are downright bad, not only as decorations, but even if judged from the standard of the ordinary historical or "imaginative" Academy picture; and nearly all—even the best—are timid or commonplace in conception. Where there is daring, as in one or two designs that lean towards post-impressionism, the daring is not supported by competent craftsmanship.

The names of the competitors and the decision of the judges have been withheld so far, and will not be announced until next week; but in the majority of cases it requires no great skill to discover the paternity—in many cases it would be more correct to say the maternity—of the designs. Indeed, the women artists come out with flying colours, and though they are not responsible for the three designs that stand out high above the rest—Nos. 66, which surely must have met with the unanimous approval of the judges, and Nos. 15 and 16 (both by the same artist)—at least four of their number reveal a sounder knowledge of the true nature of wall-decoration than most of their male rivals. One of these four has already achieved considerable reputation for her splendid frescoes executed in a provincial school building. Her design (No. 46) is steeped in the best Florentine and Romanesque tradition, without being at all slavishly imitative. Unfortunately, the linear rhythm of this design is destroyed by the obtuseness of a heavy mandorla breaking into the architectural lines. Nos. 56 and 57 are by another lady who knows what wall-decoration should be, but whose knowledge is not accompanied by imagination or by a sense of design. Yet another competitor, who is responsible for No. 24, has learnt and assimilated the lesson of Veronese and other Venetians; but the colour is too heavy, the design too massive for a wall-decoration.

At the extreme end of the room, on the left, are two other striking designs, which I suspect to be the work of women painters; but I have no record of their numbers, though one can easily be recognised by the strange purple colour of the dress of a figure in the centre of the composition, the other by a certain ruggedness of handling and sunny brilliance of colour. No. 37, in which Fraulein von Derp, the impersonator of Sumurun, is seen dancing in the scantiest attire before Carlyle, Whistler, Wilde and other Chelsea celebrities, is one of the best "pictures" in this exhibition, but the full scale cartoon for one of the figures and this accomplished artist's known academic style justify a certain doubt as to his ability to adapt himself to the exigencies of mural-decoration. Much the same may be said of No. 50, with its humorous treatment of Oscar Wilde smelling a long-stalked arum lily. This, surely, is not the work of a Chelsea, but rather of a Kensington, artist? No. 31 has the distinction of being most puzzling and unintelligible design. On the left on the ground are some naked, writhing Michelangelesque athletes. Close to them, but wholly disconnected and unaware of their presence, Oscar Wilde and others, turning their backs to the athletes, are assisting at what looks uncommonly like a ceremony of betrothal or wedding between Mrs. Browning and Carlyle, whilst through the air an allegorical figure swoops down upon the athletes. On the whole, there is in these designs a regrettable tendency towards anecdotal illustration and a lack of that monumental architectonic weight and balance which distinguishes not only the mural paintings of the great Italians, but also of such moderns as Puvion de Chavannes.

of the eminent men of his day, and they are extremely pleasant reading, as they are sufficiently intimate to make you feel the unceremonial presence of the writer, and yet not so intimate that you feel, as it is impossible not to feel in reading some letters, that you are encroaching upon private and sacred ground. They strike the happy medium; in the same way, the gentleman in Miss Austen's novel liked his gruel thin, but not too thin. In 1843, Leigh Hunt was writing to him about a volume of Allingham's poetry; they met in 1847, when Hunt was sixty-three, and Allingham twenty-three, and Hunt, in 1855, is signing himself—rather characteristically—"Affettuosissimamente, L. H." About the same time that Allingham met Leigh Hunt he wrote to Emerson during Emerson's second visit to England, and there are two interesting letters from the great man, in one of which he mentions "Mr. Thoreau, a stoic among the muses, whose prose poem of Concord and Merrimack Rivers I fear has never reached Ireland,"—for Allingham was still a Customs officer in Donegal at that time. And in 1856 A. H. Clough writes to him: "I had a line from Emerson the other day introducing a friend—a Mr. Henry James—who is staying here and whom I rather like. I scarcely hope to hear from him ever, except upon this sort of provocation." "A Mr. Henry James, whom I rather like," sounds quaintly to ears on whom that name has now a very different effect. Clough apparently had no suspicion then that Henry James would become the great man he now is.

There are letters from Thackeray and George Eliot and Dickens, for Allingham left Ireland, and in spite of Carlyle's dissuasion took up the literary life. At first he was sub-editor of "Fraser's Magazine," and eventually he was made its editor. One of the most interesting letters is from Jane Carlyle, also written in 1856, in which, in her witty, incisive way, she gives a delightful picture of John Ruskin. "Claret and buttermilk 'till one don't know which is which! But what could be expected from a man who goes to sleep with, every night, a different Turner's picture on a chair opposite his bed that 'he may have something beautiful to look at on first opening his eyes of a morning' (so his mother told me). . . . He is amiable and gay and full of hope and faith in—one doesn't know exactly what—but, of course, he does." She goes on to describe their visits to Denmark Hill, and remarks with what, in view of after events, gains poignant irony:—"I returned each time more satisfied that Mrs. Ruskin must have been hard to please. One feels, always, one could manage other women's husbands so much better than they do—and so much better than one manages one's own husband!"

There are letters, too, from Burne-Jones, with delightful sketch-signatures, facsimiles of which are reproduced; in one he writes: "My Dear,—Come and stay with us. I want to see you and jaw about things—the garden is full pleasant. Gabriel has a wombat—he has written about it to this effect,—

Oh! How the family affections combat
Within my breast! Each hour throws a bomb at
My burning soul—neither from owl or from bat
Can peace be gained, until I clasp my wombat.

And I am your affectionate Ned."

The book is crammed with good things, as how should a book not be which contains, beside those already mentioned, letters from such people as the Brownings, D. G. Rossetti, Sir Francis Galton, William Barnes, Richard Jeffries, William Morris, Landor and many others?

GHOST STORIES.

MORE GHOST STORIES OF AN ANTIQUARY. By Montague Rhodes James, Litt.D. (Arnold.) 6s.
SCOTTISH GHOST STORIES. By Elliott O'Donnell. (Kegan Paul.) 3s. 6d. net.

Dr. James hopes in his Preface that the book will "serve to amuse some readers at the Christmastime that is coming." "Amuse" is hardly the word. He must have a good nerve and a strong sense of humour who, reading these tales at a midnight of the dying year, can conjure up any but the unquietest of cackinnations, or can help locking hastily over his shoulder lest some grisly, black thing should leap on him at the noise out of the shadows. Perhaps there is nothing quite so uncanny this time as the ghost of the previous volume which made itself a form and embodiment out of the bedclothes; but the "School Story" reaches a high level for its reticence and simplicity: nothing but two lines of a boy's Latin exercise, a scared master, and, thirty years later, two skeletons found clasped together at the bottom of a well. By the way, is Dr. James right in his catalogue of the "stock" school ghost stories?—

"First there was the house with a room in which a series of people insisted on passing a night; and each of them in the morning was found kneeling in a corner, and had just time to say 'I've seen it,' and died. . . . Then there was the man who heard a noise in the passage at night, opened his door, and saw someone crawling towards him on all fours with his eye hanging out on his cheek. Then there was besides—let me think. Yes! the room where a man was found dead in bed with a horseshoe mark on his forehead, and the floor under the bed was covered with marks of horseshoes also: I don't know why. Also there was the lady who, on locking her bed room door in a strange house, heard a thin voice among the bed curtains say, 'Now we're shut in for the night.'"

Of Dr. James's stories the most gruesome (though not the best) is that entitled "Castan the Kunes," the tale of a man bewitched who reads in the opposite window-corner of a tramcar strange advertisements which are not there, who is handed by shadowy person handbills which other shadowy persons snatch from him just as he reads the word of fear, who reaches under the pillow for his watch at night and feels instead a hair mouth with teeth. There is an unpleasant cobwebby ghost in "The Tractate Middoth" th