

STARK YOUNG AND HIS DRAMATIC CRITICISM

By

Robert M. Lumianski

AN ABSTRACT

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies of Michigan
State College of Agriculture and Applied Science, in
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Approved _____

The general objective in this thesis is to place Stark Young in the whole milieu of the dramatic criticism of the early decades of the twentieth century in the United States. Since Mr. Young has been an educator, play director on Broadway, novelist, dramatist, and critic; since his interests have been very wide and varied; and since this dissertation touches upon all his interests, insofar as they have affected his dramatic criticism, the material has been arranged in four chapters.

I. His life and works. Young is a product of the "Old South" cultural tradition in Mississippi and was brought up in it. In tracing his career from his early childhood in Como to the publication of The Pavilion, we perceive how the noblesse oblige ideology has been inculcated in Young and how philosophically and psychologically this influenced his subsequent creative and critical activity.

II. The Man. An investigation of Young's philosophy of living, art, and education reveals that in philosophy, he is an idealist; in art, he is an aesthetic mystic; and in education he is a believer in the Thomas Aquinas doctrine of education of the whole man.

III. His dramatic criticism. Young has been the most serious of the American theatre critics of the past

generation. His approach to criticism was unique on Broadway. An analysis of the various kinds of dramatic critics who flourished in America yields four classes, namely, journalistic, stage, drama, and theatre-drama. Young is the sole theatre-drama critic. As evidenced by his periodical and newspaper articles, as well as his books, Young's method was that of the aesthetician whose major concern was to reveal the elements of art in theatre performance, and at the same time evaluate the literary worth of the play at hand.

IV. Actors and acting. Having a sympathetic understanding of the actor, he devoted much of his criticism to an investigation of the acting art. His numerous articles on the art of acting show that he is neither of the representational Stanislavsky school which advocates the actor must play as though there were no audience; nor is he a follower of the presentational school that presumes as with music, an audience is implicit in the art. He stresses only that the test must be based upon how well the actor creates the "idea" and how well the audience realizes it is art at which it is looking, and not nature.

In his genuine love for the theatre as an institution; his integrity as a critic and artist; and his ability as a thinker, Stark Young is the most profound theatre-drama critic of his generation.

The appendix contains an extensive bibliography of his works and works about him, which is as complete as the writer could make it.

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VITA

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INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It is difficult of course to assay the work of a critic who is still living, even though he has ceased critical activities. The years required for contemplation and meditation in establishing proper perspective have not as yet elapsed, so obviously any conclusion that may be reached must of necessity remain not entirely conclusive. However, an examination of Stark Young's contribution to American Letters (always allowing for adjustments that must be made in the light of subsequent studies) may prove not only rewarding, but in some respects help appreciably toward establishing a final estimate.

This study proposes to review Young's life and works, examine his attitudes (as exemplified in his works) toward life, art and education, investigate his techniques in his dramatic criticism, and try to estimate his position as critic in the whole hierarchy of theatre criticism.

To achieve this, the writer has had the assistance of a number of people, included among whom are his wife and members of his family. Professor Paul Bagwell, the chairman of the writer's department, gave encouragement and eased some of the pressures of committee work. Several colleagues in the Department of Communications Skills at Michigan State College gave freely of their advice and counsel. One colleague, Dr. Frederick Reeve, was kind

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Mr. Young himself was kind enough to read through the manuscript. He then invited the writer to visit with him for several days in New York, during which time he made suggestions that have been invaluable.

Mrs. Ruth Dow was more than kind to give up many of her home responsibilities in order to make time to type the finished copy. Besides typing, she did an exceedingly painstaking job of proof reading, for which the writer wishes to thank her.

And very important to the writer have been the help and encouragement received from Dr. Harry R. Hoppe of the

English Department, Michigan State College. His lively interest, his patient guidance, and his wise counsel as chairman of the writer's committee have speeded the completion of this work.

It is impossible, of course, to mention all of the individuals who in one way or another gave the writer assistance. That would take pages of credits and still would not be complete. So rather than try to list in detail all the names that come to mind, the writer wishes very simply to offer his appreciation to those mentioned above and those "behind the scenes," not mentioned, but very much there.

Chapter I

HIS LIFE AND WORKS

A biographical sketch and brief
consideration of all of Stark
Young's literary works

Chapter I

HIS LIFE AND WORKS

When Stark Young edited a volume of Sidney Lanier's poetry, he said in the preface that "a man's poetry is so much a part of himself and his life that nobody would ordinarily wish to divorce the two; we all feel that we gain a fuller entrance into the poet's work by knowing what kind of man he was in general and what his life was like. . . . and the more we know of him and of his life the better we can judge his achievement and even greater promise."¹ This seems to have been especially true of Young himself, for one has only to read this author's work casually to detect the nostalgia implicit in his tone and style. And a more careful investigation confirms the reader in his suspicion that he must first know something of Young's life before he can ever hope to understand the critic fully.

Stark Young, who has tried to contribute as art critic, book reviewer, dramatic critic, educator, essayist, lecturer, linguist, painter, playwright, play director, poet, and social philosopher, was born in Como, Mississippi, on October 11, 1881, the son of Alfred Alexander and Mary Stark Young.

He came of Scotch-Irish lineage,² Michael Cadet Young, his first American ancestor on his father's side,

having set out from England in 1705 to settle in the New World. There was nobility as well as adventure on this side of the family. "Michael, the younger son of Sir Francis Young, a colonel who fell at Blenheim in the year 1704, had been taken prisoner at the same battle, imprisoned in France, and from there had escaped to England and then emigrated to Isle of Wight County in Virginia."³

On the mother's side there were both nobility and culture. Grandfather Stephen Gilbert Stark, who was of the same family as the General Stark of Revolutionary War fame, moved South from Vermont. He built, owned, and presided over a college on College Street in Memphis⁴ and another at Holly Springs. When he married into the McGehee family in the South, he married into descendants of nobility. The first McGehee (according to Mr. Young and Burke's Peerage) occurred in Cromwell's time. When Cromwell won over Charles I, he punished the MacGregor, head of the MacGregor clan, by taking away his name. This same MacGregor had married the daughter of the Earl of Antrim who had headed the armies of Charles I. Along with other gentlemen, Pat MacGregor came to America, but without a name. So he took the name that finally became McGehee. It was by this side of the family that Young was most influenced, since after his mother's death he lived for some time in the home of his Uncle Hugh McGehee about whom he tells so many stories.

When Young's father, Alfred Alexander, was fourteen, he ran away from home to join the Confederate Army during the early months of the war. He was brought back, however, by the grandfather, with the promise that if he waited until he was sixteen, he would not only be allowed to join, but would be outfitted with a rifle, uniform, and horse, as well. He agreed and subsequently served two years in General Forrest's cavalry.⁵ Upon the conclusion of the war, Young's father attended the University of Mississippi and followed this by taking a medical degree at the University of Pennsylvania. He moved to Como, married and started a medical practice. It was in Como that Stark spent the early years of his life.⁶

The Como of Stark's early youth was a tree-shaded town of the Old South tradition; here life was primarily agrarian and seemingly completely unhurried; here the time-clock was not king; here was an area where it was not considered unusual for a railroad train to stop enroute in the middle of a field so that some of the lady passengers who wished to do so, might pick some blackberries;⁷ here the landed gentry of the pre-Civil War days were attempting to reweave the broken strands of their economic and cultural lives.

Unfortunately, time, minstrelsy, and vaudeville have beclouded the terms Old South and Old South Tradition in

such a haze of rose-colored romantic sentimentalism that, unless cautioned, the reader may easily stray far afield. In this regard, Rosser H. Taylor, professor of American history at the University of North Carolina, writing about the days before the war in South Carolina, explains the term Old South as a "way of life which attained crystallization in the ante-bellum South. The roots of this way of life spread far into the past; its finest fruits were displayed in the decades immediately preceding the War for Southern Independence." This way of life was not altogether static, but it resisted change and refused to conform to the ideology and practices of the industrial North. "The generality of the people. . . . of the entire South, shaped the view that the plantation civilization of the South was superior to the industrial civilization of the North in that the former conserved and perpetrated a way of life which ennobled the individual and lent stability to society." Although difficult to define exactly, there is little doubt that this ideology permeated human relationships and social values in the South. "One can exercise diligence, understand and describe the outward forms of life in the Old South, but so elusive are some of the elements which conditioned social usage as to leave the student, after prolonged search, somewhat perplexed."⁸

Traditionally the Old South concept tried to

idealize the graciousness of living. To the better type of planters the massing of a fortune was much less important than the art of living. The accent was on humanism as contrasted with the North's Puritanism; agrarianism as contrasted with the North's industrialism. The "gentry" developed from their cavalier forbears an "art of living more charming and colorful and at the same time more refined and elegant than has yet appeared elsewhere in this country."⁹

Even though it was in an atmosphere of Old South gentility, hospitality, courtesy, gallantry, generosity and warmth of spirit that Young spent the formative period of his life, already the New South influence was making itself felt. Henry Grady, editor of the Atlanta Constitution struck the keynote when in 1886 he addressed the New England Society in New York City; the subject, "The New South." By 1900 when Young was only nineteen, "the Old South was little more than a memory. Most of those who had remembered . . . its 'glories' had passed to the Glorious Beyond. Their places were being filled by modern 'go-getters' Imitation of Northern manners and customs had become the mode . . . even the best of its [the South's] old life and traditions must now give place to relentless nationalization."¹⁰

This Old South may have been a glorious memory to

some but it was also very much of a reality in the Young household. Throughout Stark's youth there was a long succession of kin ("cud'ns", uncles, aunts) who visited at his home. Some stayed only for days; others for months; but all left their indelible impression on the youth. Since each guest had his individual approach to the Old South philosophy, the youth was being regaled constantly with various anecdotes associated with past glories. However, all these stories were alike in one essential: they eulogized the spirit of noblesse oblige, a characteristic so striking in the pre-war South. In fact it was this early experience that kept Young from ever becoming Old South in the reactionary or illiberal sense. On the contrary, when the time came for him to take a stand, he made his position clear without equivocation. In In Memoriam not in Defense he advocated a change economically and industrially. He wanted to see a New South that could be characterized by "a spirit of helpfulness, a belief in the future, and a desire to take a fuller part in the life of the nation."¹¹ What he did protest was the passing of the spirit of noblesse oblige that saturated his youth.

It was from these relatives and especially from his father that he learned what constituted a profound generosity of spirit; a generosity that transcended the merely physical. For example, there was the case of the "pabula."

Upon occasion Dr. Young would visit a close friend and colleague named Dr. Yarborough. This same Dr. Yarborough had developed a philosophy of life that depended for its basic premise upon what he considered three kinds of pabula, namely, the physical, mental, and spiritual. He would expound his theory on any and every occasion. Whenever Dr. Young went to visit his friend and took Stark along with him, he would instruct the boy ahead of time to be sure to inquire of Dr. Yarborough about the "pabula." Dr. Young explained to Stark's Uncle Hugh why he wanted the boy to do this: "'I don't care about the pabulum or the pabula,' my father said, 'any more than I care about the sense of sin his Vermont grandfather talked about, but I do want him [Stark] to have a sense of deference to others and to try to give them pleasure, and this we are talking about is the kind of thing Dr. Yarborough always likes. So let him tell you about the pabula, son.'"¹²

At other times Stark would hear stories of his forebears such as the one about his grandfather who planted peach tree seed along the way as he rode about his own and his neighbors' plantations. He planted them so that travelers in the future might have shade and fruit refreshment while on their journey. "This was not so much a sentimental act on his part as it was a sense of the continuity of our life and a love of the land with its fruits

and blessings."¹³ Or, one might add, an action that originated in a profound generosity of the spirit.

The only male child, Young lived in Como until he was fourteen. Because of Mrs. Young's failing health, the family moved to Florida for two years.¹⁴ However, shortly after their return, she died at the age of thirty-two. Stark, who was completely devoted to his mother, was overwhelmed by the loss. It might be supposed that since he was so young at the time of her death, the sense of loss would soon have passed. But such was not the case. The bond of love and affection between the child and his mother had been profound. In fact, the loss affected him so penetratingly and lastingly, that from the time of her death when he had just turned eight, until he was almost twenty, he neither spoke to anyone about her, nor allowed others to speak of her in his presence.¹⁵

After the mother's death, Stark and his sister went to live with Aunt Julia and Uncle Hugh McGehee. His sister was sent away to a boarding school for young ladies at which Stark's aunts taught, and he, at the age of eight, began his formal elementary school education in Como.

Whether it was strictly an elementary school or a high school or both that Stark attended would be rather hard to say, since at that time in the South there seemed to be no very definite line of demarcation between the two.

From Young's descriptions, there was no difference in physical facilities. In this school, classes were held on the first floor of a rickety building that was known in the community as The Lodge. The second floor of The Lodge was a meeting place for the local Masons. By the time Young was twelve he was in "nine classes with as many subjects."¹⁶

He was spared corporal punishments because of the fact that Dr. Young made it known to the school authorities that his son was not to be man-handled or else he (the father) would horsewhip the offending teacher.

When Stark was fourteen, Dr. Young married again. Apparently the sense of loss that the lad had felt for his own mother was in no way mitigated by the appearance of a stepmother. In fact, the relations between the boy and his stepmother were not so successful as might have been hoped. He says of this new situation that "some kindness, no doubt, was intended at times, but there was the inevitable strain, without any softening affection to go with it, involved in such relationships as now arose -- the less said the better."¹⁷

Subsequently, the Young family moved to Oxford, Mississippi, the site of the state university. Here, he was sent to a Mrs. Lancaster's private school. This Virginia lady, now grown old and tired, was of a method and temper that frightened this young pupil; he was so

greatly haunted by nightmares that his father withdrew him. The only place left was a local Methodist college.¹⁸ Although it bore the name "college" it was nothing more than a secondary school and seminary for young ladies, though local male students might also attend. His stay at this seminary however was curtailed when a pig fell into the cistern of the school, was drowned, and left behind him a typhoid epidemic; the school was forced to close.¹⁹

Up to this point, as we have seen, Young's formal education had followed a pattern common enough in the provinces, and doubtless elsewhere, as often as not. So much so, in fact, as to leave a void of one kind or another. In some cases the author's reminiscing reveals satisfaction at this void. For example:

. . . Thanks to a pig there are certain of the larger high-school classics, mostly from our American New England, that I have never read yet. For example I have seen and heard those first few lines about the murmuring pines and the hemlocks - regarded in some quarters as Virgilian - but to this day have not gone through Evangeline, and have never done Hiawatha. Switching to the British Isles I should confess that I have read only a dozen or so lines, heroic or banal, from the Lady of the Lake. I have always regarded the matter as my being spared a kind of literary measles.²⁰

At other times his humility is great and he feels that ". . . a curious thing has resulted from that loose and uncontrolled procedure in my early school. It may well be that from that slap-dash beginning the feeling arises in

me of an inadequacy of all knowledge . . . I have behind my conscience the feeling that my knowledge is slight and slipping, a sense of grim ignorance sticks in my craw. I have far too little of the culture which is a heightening of our sense of the antiphonal radiance existing in all things among themselves."²¹

There is no reason to believe that this last statement is anything other than an expression of sincere humility and serious reaction against the slipshod methods of his early formal academic training and our academic training in general. As we shall see, his method of dramatic criticism proclaims it. Besides, at the time that these lines were published, he was turning seventy. He had had ample opportunity to survey himself.

To compensate for this early lack of formal training, there were the conversations that went on at home. The many relatives who were almost constant visitors discussed all manner of subjects dear to the Southern heart. In this way the youthful Young absorbed, through listening, much of the essence of this Old South ideology that has remained with him throughout his career. At worst, these somewhat Platonic symposia produced for Young a rambling, undirected, catch-as-catch-can type of informal education; at best, they implanted in him a respect for knowledge, perhaps otherwise unobtainable. And what is more important,

the warmth and simple dignity of these constant conversations instilled in Young a deep respect for the dignity of man. "A thing I realized then, and it still seems to me one of the chief things we used to know, is that men do not have to dilate on matters like honor, pride, courage, loyalty, and the endless ramifications of human morals and virtues; we can learn them even in a spelling class provided the teacher has in himself those qualities. . . . We knew that such things as love, loyalty, generosity, kindness, honesty had more meaning than abstractions like progress or reform or liberalism, so often mentioned nowadays."²² More meaning, no doubt, in the sense that they were closer, more part of a way of life, and more of a series of realities.

From his earliest youth, Young exhibited an interest in the peculiarities of words and their derivations. His father spent some time with him explaining etymologies, and it may well be that from this source the lad's subsequent interest in languages derived.²³

His reading was somewhat restricted since the library in his home was not well stocked. The burnings and general destruction of personal property during the Civil War had played havoc with the home libraries of the South. There were certainly various books in the house, talked about, read aloud and what not; and he could recite

passages from the Psalms before he had read any books at all. But he had read no books until he was eight years old and the reading was a story called Sick Jim, a "work" as sickly as its name. Possibly it was here that his distrust of the novel as an art form began. Although he later gained fame with the novel So Red The Rose, he never felt comfortable in that form and renounced it as his true métier.²⁴

His formal religious training was Protestant Wesleyan Methodist, as he sees it later on, with "its chaos of individual theory, ill informed convictions and personal reactions, self-assured if possible and aggressive if need be."²⁵ At Sunday School he was impressed when he asked his teacher at which point in time God gives a human being his soul. The teacher did not cavil; he informed the youth that there was disagreement on that point, namely, that some claimed it was at the time of conception, others, at the time of birth. Amidst all the round-about fuzziness, the straightforwardness of this answer impressed the youth tremendously.

However, his reactions to the church were not always so desirably impressive. Now and then his parents entertained an itinerant preacher at dinner. On one such occasion Stark, who couldn't have been more than ten at the time, displayed a potential ability with the sharp retort that is not altogether undesirable in a future drama critic.

The preacher, Mr. X, a Methodist, remarked that Stark would be a good-looking boy when his face grew up to his nose. Stark said then that Mr. X would be a good preacher when his manners grew up to his profession.²⁶

After the seminary closed there was a crisis in Young's education. Because there was no other secondary school in the immediate area, the question arose as to where the lad was to complete his preparation for college. So at the age of fifteen, partly because of the peculiarities of the circumstances, and partly through his father's influence, he was allowed to take the University of Mississippi entrance examinations. He records this in The Pavilion:

I fancy my father contrived it through friends at the University, and I was admitted at fifteen on a kind of probation, with two of the regular courses and the rest tutoring. I remember very little about it except that I had only two weeks for the Greek course, that I, having had a mild, brief exercise in Greek classes already, sat down to memorize the grammar to such an effect that in a class of sixty or more I came out fifth from the top, and was held up by the professor as an example to laggards, a gesture of his that led me to serve more as a freak than a model.²⁷

Thus, at an age when many youths were just completing their first year of secondary school, Stark Young, in 1896, entered the University of Mississippi at Oxford.

His undergraduate experience at the University was not uneventful. Although public performance seemed alien

to his sensitive temperament, when forced to participate, he proved himself more than adequate. For example, each year at the commencement exercises a prize was awarded for the best piece of student oratory for the year. At the end of his sophomore year, Young, upon his father's insistence, entered this oratorical contest. He won it, after dancing all night, with a recitation of "The Raven," the only piece that he knew by heart like that. But he never appeared in person to receive the medal that followed for this attainment. His father, who attended the exercises, accepted it for him. Dr. Young was angry at his son's lack of interest in the award and told him so in strong terms. He never knew that some years later in Europe, without the slightest qualm, Stark gave it in exchange for some Italian memento in silver.²⁸

Later in his collegiate career he received another prize, which he held in rather higher esteem. The Early English Text Society sent to the Department of English at the University several valuable volumes of reprints from Old and Middle English,²⁹ which were to be awarded to the student considered the best scholar in this field. These volumes included the Ageynbyte of Inwit, a title that intrigued the boy. With some modesty, Young makes the statement that the prize was awarded to him on the grounds that in the realm of the blind, the one-eyed is king; but it is

perhaps significant that this award he did not sell or exchange.

There were other honors that came to the young man. He had already started writing verse and getting it published in the college magazine. Some of the verse was inspired by a love affair that he was having at the time, a love affair of such intensity that the "sun and moon . . . seemed only accessories to it,"³⁰ but most of the verse was inspired by a natural leaning in the direction of art. His literary efforts finally resulted in his becoming editor-in-chief of the college annual. He was also active socially as a member of Sigma Chi fraternity.

He read very widely. For example, his spiritual and religious life was somewhat unanchored as a result of the sporadic training he had received in his childhood. Consequently, in an effort to solidify his thinking in this direction, he read through all the sacred books of India, in the four volumes of Max Muller's translations.

But most of all he received recognition for his scholarship. So high did he stand that his name was submitted as a possible Rhodes Scholar.³¹ At that time the appointments were made by the governor of the state rather than by competitive examination. Although representation to the governor was made in his behalf by Dr. Yarborough, (previously mentioned in connection with the "pabula"), he

was not granted the scholarship. Academically however, his years at the University proved very fruitful. His first year he was a quasi-freshman;³² but in 1901 at the age of twenty, five years after he entered, he was graduated magna cum laude with the degree of Bachelor of Arts.³³

Upon the successful completion of his undergraduate work at Mississippi, he asked that he might be allowed to take graduate work at Columbia University for a year.³⁴ Mr. Young informed me during a visit that there was no particular reason for preferring Columbia academically over Yale or Harvard or Princeton or some other equally important center of culture and learning. He simply wanted to live in New York City and partake of the "big city" opportunities offered there in art and letters and culture in general. The city was the magnet and his choice had nothing to do with any coterie of Southern writers who might or might not have been at Columbia at the time.

His father agreed to send him to Columbia, and with some financial help from two of his aunts who were school teachers, he enrolled at that institution. His undergraduate interests having been in the field of literature, he laid out a Master of Arts program in English.

Among the teachers in this department with whom he came in contact were Brander Matthews, W. P. Trent, and Joel Spingarn, all of whom were men of stature in their

respective fields.

Brander Matthews was at this time the first university professor of dramatic literature in the United States and as one of the founders of The Players^{club}, was a strong voice in the commercial theatre as well as dramatic literature. W. P. Trent, professor of English literature and a fellow Southerner from Virginia may have spurred the youth's interest in Southern literature. Trent had published the Life of William Gilmore Sims, Southern Statesmen of the Old Regime, and Robert E. Lee. And Joel Spingarn, only six years Young's senior and a follower of ~~Bernard~~^{Bene}detto Croce, the Italian aesthetician, was beginning to become the provocative force in criticism that later publications like The New Criticism and Creative Criticism made a reality. All of these men were especially considerate of the young graduate student and had a marked influence on him. "Professor Trent invited me from time to time to dine with him and his remarkable wife. . . . Dean Carpenter took me to dine at The Players where so many famous people seemed to be strolling about, and . . . Professor Spingarn was as generous."³⁵

He took Professor Trent's course in English poetry and read widely in Spenser and in the 19th century romantics. In fact, by the time he concluded the course he had read all of Spenser, Keats, Shelley, Byron, and Wordsworth.

In Professor Spingarn's course in Comparative Renaissance Literature, he prepared a lecture on Rabelais, and his other courses "wavered between philology and aesthetics."³⁶

But it was partly the influence of Brander Matthews and the Department of Drama that turned his attention seriously to the stage. Hitherto he seemed not to have been particularly interested in the drama. To be sure, as an undergraduate he had read widely in the Greek drama, but as far as the drama in performance was concerned, he had never seen a professionally produced play until he was seventeen. At that time he went to Memphis, Tennessee with his aunt to see Julia Marlowe perform in As You Like It.³⁷

One of the drama courses was taught by a Miss Sarah McGehee Isom who was Professor of Elocution. Miss Isom had studied under the same teachers as Modjeska, and it was said by one competent critic that she might have become a great tragic actress herself had not family difficulties interfered. As it was, Miss Isom taught at the University and inspired in her students a deep interest in the drama as performance. She had also taught at the University of Mississippi while Young was there. As her middle name indicated, she claimed some kinship with the McGehees and thus, kinship with Young. Although her course probably did not confirm Young in the theatre, it most certainly turned his attention seriously to it.

More significant perhaps than his actual course work at Columbia was the fact that a young instructor, whose name he does not mention, of Professor Matthews' department took a fancy to Young and guided him through the maze of New York's Bohemia. In this way Young became an habitué of art galleries, theatres, and art soirées; he mingled with the artistic as well as the academic intelligentsia. Every Saturday he would spend the whole day at the Metropolitan Museum examining in detail the works of art displayed. Oftentimes he would become so absorbed that he would forget to go for his noon meal. On one occasion some years later the director of a museum in London who had watched Young in his absorption, became interested enough in him to invite him to his home for dinner. This attendance at art museums became so much a part of his whole way of life, that later when he would go to Italy to visit, he would "go to the galleries the moment the doors opened and stay there all day."³⁸

As a result of these days at the Metropolitan, his technical perceptions of art and his response to it were profoundly stirred and dilated, so much so, that they became a habit of mind with him.³⁹ In his childhood he had wanted to take lessons in painting, but his father had sternly forbidden it. This refusal was not unusual since "the inherited Anglo-Saxon tradition did not favor a man's

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going into the arts."⁴⁰ In the circumscribed tradition of the South, the activities of the painter, musician, or poet were not considered manly.⁴¹ A graphic example of this is reflected by a character in Young's play, The Colonnade. Major Dandridge of the Old South tradition, in a patronizing tone that implies that the work of the artist is not to be taken seriously, says to his poet son John: "Writing will be a good diversion for you. We'll give you your grandfather's study."⁴²

The tempo of life in New York City was, of course, much faster than in Oxford, Mississippi, and it might have been supposed that the impressionable graduate student from the deep South would have lost his bearings. But such was not the case. He simply assured himself that if one has seen a cat in the weeds, he has seen a tiger in the woods,⁴³ and refused to be deterred from his study. His reading, inspired by Professor Trent's vast erudition, spread over a wide area. In fact, by the end of the year at Columbia, he had read so widely that Professor Trent agreed that to give him a written examination would be too perfunctory. Instead he invited Young in for a chat about his reading.⁴⁴

He was still a very young man when he completed his courses and thesis and was graduated in 1902 from Columbia University with the degree of Master of Arts.⁴⁵

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Through the efforts of Professor Trent, who was set to place him, Young was offered a teaching position at Kenyon College. However, he turned it down in favor of a military school in Water Valley, Mississippi. He did this because his father insisted upon having his son near him.

Since his college student career had ended in June, and his position at Water Valley did not start until fall, he accepted an interim place with The Brooklyn Standard-Union. He did not last more than a few weeks on that newspaper because as he writes, "I was not worth my salt, but was treated most kindly; I was then, as I am now, without any turn for things that make good or effective journalism either for reading or writing."⁴⁶

His next move was Coffee Branch,⁴⁷ a little settlement of five or six in the mountains near Canton, North Carolina. He had spent a summer there before with his family, at a boarding house run by a Miss Laura Smathers; so the place was not entirely strange to him. As a matter of fact, Miss Smathers took a very personal interest in him. He had written asking her to reduce the rent because he was so poor. She misunderstood his use of the word and presumed that he was "skinny." So she reduced the board from \$20 to \$19 and plied him with food and attention.

In May, he rented a log cabin, where he lived a hermit's life, before taking up his teaching responsibilities

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Whatever the cause, his retirement to Waldenish surroundings gave him an opportunity for solitude and an undisturbed association with the classics. He immersed himself in Spenser, Dante, Catullus, and Malory, in a setting that no doubt had an enormous effect upon his approach to art in nature and nature in art.⁴⁸ As we shall see later, this absorption with the romantic idealism of Malory and the King Arthur stories resulted in the creation of Guenevere, a verse drama.

His experience in the North Carolina mountains was not entirely without physical excitement. For example, at one time he had to hide from a mob. The North Carolina mountaineers were extremely suspicious of strangers from the city. Moonshine stills dotted the landscape and Young was suspected of being a Federal Revenue Agent. The mob advanced on his cabin, but nothing came of it. Young allayed their suspicions and made friends with them.

More significant than anything else in this "hermit" experience was the fact that Young was drenching himself in the glory of nature and making a profound emotional and intellectual association between it and literature. He was glad that he had with him the lines of Shakespeare, Dante, Spenser, and Milton. Only such lines compared favorably with the awe inspired in him by nature, for "In the midst

of the natural world like this the great art that was in books seemed only natural and right. Trivial writing might not have done so; for I have long noted as I did then, even in those bright days, that nothing so much shames any shallowness in a work of art as does the reality and force in nature."⁴⁹

He seems to have experienced here the ecstatic sense of the sublime in the presence of nature's overwhelming majesty; an experience not unlike that of Wordsworth, who had become one of his masters. For example, in The Prelude, Book II, line 170, Wordsworth relates how he reacted on one occasion in his youth to the impact of nature's beauties. He had been left alone to meditate after a tramp through the woods and a paddle on the lake:

then, the calm
And dead still water lay upon my mind
Even with a weight of pleasure, and the sky,
Never before so beautiful, sank down,
Into my heart, and held me like a dream!
Thus were my sympathies enlarged, and thus
Daily the common range of visible things
Grew dear to me; already I began
To love the sun.

Years later, in 1943, when Young gave his first one-man show of his paintings, his love for nature became especially marked in his art work. The critic who reviewed the exhibit remarked that Young's "solid, slightly impressionistic flower pieces indicated close study of the still-life masters by a man who loves nature as well as art."⁵⁰

In 1922 he expressed himself profoundly on the subject. Said he, "Beautiful moments in our experience in the world ought to shame lesser things in art; and beautiful moments in art ought to exact a noble distinction in the world; as both must exact or shame in the matter of our living. And there ought to be an identity existing among all those experiences that seem to satisfy us with their perfection, with a sort of infinite finality in them, that seem to dilate and complete the parts of our experience that they include."⁵¹

His feeling toward the sanctity of human dignity became more precisely defined; his idealism more solemnly dedicated. At a much later date, when asked why he did not re-create for his reading public these North Carolinans with whom he came in contact, he replied: "I had no technique to re-create such people truly. It was both their simplification and their intensification of life that made them what they were. The culture they had was of the heart in its thirst for kind holiness; the education, as we know it, that they had was nil; and it was clear that I could only stumble where they walked in light. Their thoughts and desires, however simple, went up in fiery chariots and were not lost."⁵² Over and over again in various places does Young dwell upon the same theme, the simple dignity of Man in the wealthy as well as the poor. He continually drives home the essence of the Old South philosophy of life and living. In The Colonnade, the son

John, who, drawn between his Old South allegiances and New South thinking is moved to say: "But I wonder sometimes if I can stand it . . . all this gentleness and fineness and this affection and good breeding. And not through education and intelligence, not that, but through love and simplicity of heart, so much understanding and such endless patience."⁵³

There is no doubt that Stark Young's experience in solitude in the log cabin in the mountains made a deep and lasting impression on his thinking and personality. If as he says in Guenevere, "Meditation is fair Solitude's True sister,"⁵⁴ then he had a great opportunity for both sisters to be together, in his life as a "hermit." And although Guenevere was not published until 1906, possibly its creation grew in part out of this meditation in solitude in the North Carolina mountains.

In the fall he started teaching at Water Valley. As was mentioned above, it was upon Dr. Young's insistence, that he accepted a position here. Water Valley was only fifteen miles from Oxford. The head of the Methodist College (Seminary for Ladies) which Young attended briefly and which closed because of typhoid, was the same person as the headmaster at Water Valley.

Young's service here was destined for short life. What happened is best explained by him: "I went to a military school in Water Valley headed by an evangelist. The

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name had been changed and nobody seems to remember to what. At any rate bills were not paid etcetera - the teachers quit, all but me who had never heard of closing or deserting - small pox appeared so we closed around the beginning of April."⁵⁵

Consequently, this afforded him an opportunity to do what for many years he had set his heart on doing, namely, seeing Europe and especially Italy, the source of all arts he so admired. So sternly had he set his sights in this direction that at one time in his youth when he almost drowned, his resistance was intensified by the realization that if he were to drown, he would never get to Italy. This idea constantly flashing before his mind's eye gave him the added strength for the last push up from the bottom.

So it was at this time, after the school had closed and he no longer had a position that he decided on Europe. With his small savings plus a \$100 loan he made his first trip abroad. This was the first of a long series of trips to Europe that he made each year until World War I. During this period he visited Italy no fewer than eighteen times.⁵⁶ His trips proved very fruitful in that he came in contact with many of the international figures who were eminent in literature, art, science, and world affairs. For example, on one of these European trips he was invited to the home of Lady Prothero in London. She was a patron of the arts

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whose husband was editor of The Fortnightly Review and in whose home he met many celebrities. "It was clear to me that all sorts of people frequented this house, poets, painters, lords and ladies, Indian rajahs, journalists, scholars and travelers . . . the conversation Mrs. Prothero led them into (was) worth hearing . . . Henry James was a close friend of hers and she went every morning to sit with him and read aloud to him."⁵⁷

At one time Young mentioned to Lady Prothero that he would like to know how one would begin on a study of James's novels. This inquiry was made by way of gallantry, since he knew she was one of James's most loyal admirers, and he (Young) thought such an inquiry would please her. Here were some of the fruits of the "pabula."

Young never really intended to start any serious study of the novelist. For one thing, he was not at this time especially drawn to the novel as an art form in which he might express himself best. And for another, he felt that many of the contemporary novels violated one of the basic rules of the literary art, namely, that "soul is form and doth the body make." Although this feeling did not apply to James's novels specifically, to Young the general run of novels is formless and without any "impulse or conviction strong enough to give any movement or style. A talkative goose . . . could write the general run of novels."⁵⁸

Mrs. Prothero relayed Young's inquiry to James.

Soon thereafter Young received a letter from the novelist in which the latter gave two sets of detailed instructions on how the "young Texan"⁵⁹ might go about the study.

Rye.

Sept. 14th, 1913.

This please, for the delightful young man from Texas, who shows such excellent dispositions. I only want to meet him half way, and I hope very much he won't think I didn't when I tell him that the following indications as to five of my productions (splendid number - I glory in the tribute of his appetite!) are all on the basis of the Scribner's (or Macmillan's) collective and revised and prefaced editions of my things, and that if he is not minded somehow to obtain access to that form of them, ignoring any others, he forfeits half, or much more than half of my confidence. So I thus amicably beseech him - ! I suggest to give him as alternatives these two slightly different lists:

1. Roderick Random.
2. The Portrait of a Lady.
3. The Princess of Casamassima.
4. The Wings of the Dove.
5. The Golden Bowl.

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1. The American.
 2. The Tragic Muse.
 3. The Wings of the Dove.
 4. The Ambassadors.
 5. The Golden Bowl.

The second list is, as it were, the more "advanced". And when it comes to the shorter tales the question is more difficult (for characteristic selection) and demands separate treatment. Come to me about that, dear young man from Texas, later on - you shall have your little tarts when you have eaten your beef and potatoes. Meanwhile receive this from your admirable friend Mrs. Prothero.

Henry James.⁶⁰

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But Young never wrote the study.

Through an introductory letter from Madison Cawein, a Kentucky poet friend, Young met Sir Edmund Gosse, the distinguished critic, who was at the time the librarian of the House of Lords. Sir Edmund gave a party to which Young was invited and at which the latter met many of the continent's leading artists and writers. On another occasion he obtained a letter of introduction from George Pierce Baker of Harvard and Yale, to Lady Gregory. At that time Lady Gregory's one-act plays were being performed with great acclaim by the Abbey Theatre Players.

Lady Gregory in turn gave Young introductions to other Irish literary and stage critics. She sent him for an evening to the home of an important painter, where he listened to W. B. Yeats read Tagore's unpublished poetry aloud in English, to the accompaniment of an occasional comment by Tagore. Thus it was that in part, at least, Young was confirmed in the theatre and dedicated himself to the life of art.

In 1904 he returned from his first trip abroad to resume teaching, this time at his alma mater, the University of Mississippi.⁶¹ The University has since honored Mr. Young by establishing a Stark Young Room in the library. This room houses all of Young's writings both in manuscript and print. Also in this room there is a large portrait of

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the critic painted by Abram Foote. Young himself has contributed several theatrical mementos, one of which was a tapestry given him by one of his favorite actresses, Doris Keane; another, the costume Mei Lan-Fang, the Chinese actor, wore in his first tragic role.

It was not, however, until 1906 that Young's creative efforts began to appear. That year saw the publication of a play and a volume of poems. Guenevere, a drama in blank verse, revealed clearly Young's basically idealistic orientation. In this treatment of the Arthur legend much is made of the King as a symbol of Truth, Wisdom, Beauty and all the other Christ-like virtues. There is an out-of-this-world mysticism about the literary treatment of Arthur that in a sense has become the label of the Young technique and style. One is made to feel in reading the play that Arthur is never concerned with the physical, material, mundane matters of this life. Rather, he is preoccupied with vaster regions undreamed of by ordinary mortals, and "hourly weigheth him, some cloudvast enterprise."⁶² When he looks at Guenevere, it is never in the physical sense, or the sense of sex, but instead "to him she is fair womanhood, the finer element, within the scheme, and not a woman."⁶³

This kind of romantic idealism that at times borders upon sentimentalism is the natural outgrowth, it would seem,

of Young's traditionally Southern upbringing. The when-knighthood-was-in-flower atmosphere, the exaggerated chivalry exhibited by those who practiced plantation life, the excessive gentility, the sovereignty of the emotions over the intellect, all of these fostered in Young a veneration for idealistic standards that transcended any more harshly realistic philosophy that he otherwise might have developed.

Added to this natural home background, he had steeped himself in Spenser and Malory. In The Pavilion he quotes from Malory at some length and demonstrates to what a large extent he had absorbed the idealistic approach therein contained. Furthermore, Wordsworth, Keats, Coleridge, and Shelley had been his constant companions while he was at Mississippi, Columbia, and the log cabin in North Carolina. To be sure Guenevere was a highly youthful work (he was only 25) but it served as something of a preview of the kind of artistry one could expect from the thinking and pen of this author.

The style was rather heavy, in keeping with the epic proportions of the subject and abounded in reflections on life and death. Guenevere yearns for death in sepulchral tones: "Nay, let me have sleep's sister black garbed death,"⁶⁴ says she, and nuns who attend her think that "Life is a restless sleep."⁶⁵ The knights alternately rail

against Man's fate and the inevitability of his destiny with lines like, "Would God had made us as we yearn/To be, or else had made us what we are/Without the yearning."⁶⁶ Or they get off statements that are saved from being platitudinous by the complete unselfconsciousness of the deliverer. Gawain says very calmly and matter-of-factly that "To lose a noble friend/Is like the loss of a dear life, is such/A loss; for a man's friends are his life."⁶⁷

His small volume of poems, published the same year (1906) under the title of the first poem, The Blind Man at the Window, showed a certain preciosity that was to develop very markedly later on. The influence of Keats's "Eve of St. Agnes," is unmistakable in the delicate etching of the style and form of some of the lines from the piece:

As when pale at the portal of her chamber
 Stood, waked right strangely by some dim portent,
 Mary, the mother of God, and watched the Angel
 Dawn from the gloom of the trees.⁶⁸

Even at this early stage in his literary development, Young seemed able to do that which he admired most in Dante. That is, "to express concisely the inexpressible (in this case the infinite glory of the Godhead) and to imply at the same time its inexpressibility."⁶⁹

He paid such close heed to Coleridge's ballad form and mystical style that Young's "The Ballad of the Bells of Boscastle" sounds almost like a breath from "The Ancient Mariner." Note the similarity of form, rhythm and tone:

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The captain glared, the seamen stared,
 The wind is on the waste
 The stars are dimmer one by one
 The pilot crosseth him in haste.

The captain smote his brawny chest,
 'Tis I that brought, quoth he,
 The bells from Fraunce, nor asked for help
 Christes moder dear, Marl.⁷⁰

There were other poems created during this period, namely "On a Disappointing Friendship," "Stanzas," and "The Alamo." However, they were not published until 1908, after Young had left the University of Mississippi.

In 1907 Young accepted a position at the University of Texas as a Professor of English Literature, a position that he retained for seven years. During this time he edited an English Literature text⁷¹ and translated Regnard's play, Le Legataire Universel. He also had published a collection of seven one-act plays under the title Addio, Madretta and other Plays. Two of the plays in the collection, The Twilight Saint and Madretta were later, in 1918, produced at the dramatic school of Carnegie Institute.⁷²

In The Twilight Saint the writer exhibited a growth in and a continuation of, the type of idealistic romanticism he first displayed in Guenevere. In a medieval Italian background, the play presents Guido, a peasant poet. Guido is impatient with Fate, for Fate has given him no opportunity for the serenity he needs to compose his poetry. Lisetta, his wife, has long been bedridden

and requires his constant attention. Both are sad and at their wits' end; both are becoming increasingly bitter. But both are given renewed faith and courage by St. Francis of Assisi who appears briefly on the scene. This play, like Guenevere, is in blank verse and reveals a gentle optimism and appreciation of the dignity of Man that has since become the Young trademark in all of his criticism. He even goes so far as to give specific instructions to the director and actor as to how St. Francis is to be played: "The only instruction I would like to propose is that the actor of St. Francis keep him very simple, not get him moralizing and long faced."⁷³

At a later date Madretta, At the Shrine, and Addio were published together under the title Three One Act Plays. The three plays are love tragedies. Madretta, a lovely Creole wife, is about to leave her husband for another man; she discovers her mistake at the end. In At the Shrine (published first in the July 1919 issue of Theatre Arts) a priest is overcome by the apparent sincerity of a "lost woman" and with his blessing lets her marry his nephew. The "lost woman" becomes a virtuous woman. In Addio a crippled Italian organ grinder finds his long lost love, but gives her up so that she will not be saddled with a cripple.

So we see in these plays the emergence of Young as

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the romantic idealist. His characters search for Truth underlying life, but not with bitterness. It is a romantic realism seen always through rose-tinted glasses, the harshnesses of life softened almost to the point of nonexistence.⁷⁴

This period in his life is perhaps interesting to note especially because he turned with increased vigor to the drama in performance. It was at Texas that he became more solidly confirmed in the theatre. He threw himself wholeheartedly into the organization of a production group at the University, a group known as the Curtain Club. This effort proved successful in that it was the source of much of his later enthusiasm and inspiration in the theatre. He speaks with some pride of his play direction activities at Texas: "I have not mentioned the Curtain Club which I began in about 1908, at the University of Texas. All men. First we gave The Silent Woman, then afterward Moliere's The Miser, Goldoni's The Fan, The Two Angry Women of Abingdon, Le Legataire Universel of Regnard. Then I went to Amherst and the Curtain Club took in women and gave Galsworthy, Eugene O'Neill and what not."⁷⁵

While at Texas, besides his teaching and directing duties, he concerned himself with the establishing and editing of a periodical, The Texas Review. But after the publication of the first issue, he gave up this activity

for two reasons. He had accepted a position at Amherst College in Massachusetts, and consequently was leaving the Southwest; also, the activity had been foisted upon him by the college authorities and he felt that his forte was not magazine editing.⁷⁶ His interests had by now taken deep root in the theatre and his enthusiasms for The Texas Review, after the publication had been established, lapsed almost completely. Nevertheless, it is perhaps worth noting that subsequently the periodical turned into the Southwest Review and flourished.

In 1915, he moved to Amherst College. The circumstances of his move are worth relating. The summer before, Young had taught summer school at Dartmouth College. While he was there, he was interviewed by Dr. Alexander Meiklejohn, president of Amherst, for a position at the latter's institution. Young's name had been urged upon Meiklejohn by John Erskine of Columbia, one of Young's former teachers. When the position was first offered to him, Young refused; however, Meiklejohn followed Young to Texas, further to urge the position upon him. The latter finally accepted. Young was engaged as a full professor of English, after it had been agreed with Meiklejohn that he (Young) would never be pressured into getting a Ph.D. It was Young's position that he had no desire for a Ph.D. and would rather spend his time at more creative and less investigative activity.

For five years he served as a professor of English and continued his creative literary production, with short stories and poems for the current periodicals. For his achievements while at this college he was awarded an honorary membership in Phi Beta Kappa.

In the person of Meiklejohn, Young served under an educator with strong liberal leanings. Meiklejohn was one of the first college presidents who applauded and encouraged the pioneers of The New School for Social Research in New York. In a letter to The Nation he commented: "To the persons who lead the new enterprise, I doff my cap. They are courageous, highminded, generous scholars. They are determined that we shall have greater independence and thoroughness in our social studies. In order to secure these ends, many of these men are marching out of the older institutions. As one who is left behind, I am sorry to see them go, but glad to see them try their venture, glad to wish them good luck."⁷⁷

It was in 1920 while Young was still at Amherst that Meiklejohn published The Liberal College. Later several other studies reflecting the attitudes of the liberal were forthcoming. These included: Freedom and the College, 1923; The Experimental College, 1932; and Free Speech and its Relation to Government, 1948.

Young's interest in theatre became increasingly more

intensified both as critic and creator. For example, while at this institution he created for the children of Dr. Meiklejohn, a series of thirteen fairy plays that were meant to be read or acted by children, or produced by them with marionettes. These plays were later published under the title Sweet Times and the Blue Policeman, (1925). They tried to catch "Childish dreams and childhood terrors in an unsophisticated dramatic form."⁷⁸ Each took him about one half hour to write; so he told me.

Meanwhile as early as 1917 he had been contributing articles to The New Republic on theatre, art, culture, and his reactions to various areas in the United States and Europe. In these articles he demonstrated his ability to re-create human foibles, glowingly and sympathetically. It is true perhaps that at times he paraded his love of learning and scholarship obtrusively. For example, in The Three Fountains, a collection of travel vignettes from his magazine articles, in trying to compare and contrast points of view about culture between the Anglo-Saxon and Italian, Young reports a conversation between an Englishwoman and an Italian friend. In the chat, the Englishwoman quotes verbatim very casually from Baudelaire, Beranger, Rabelais, and Racine. The erudition, while perhaps a commendable characteristic, would seem in this case to be too obvious and too unreal.⁷⁹ But for the most part, as he does in

such pieces as "Texas Lights,"⁸⁰ "Dogfish,"⁸¹ and "Et Dona Ferentes,"⁸² he presents his people and situations with characteristic Stark Young romantic idealism. His love of classic beauty that sprang from his long steeping in the Greek, Italian and English classics, was making itself felt.

Other periodicals like The Dial, North American Review, and Theatre Arts were accepting his essays, especially those on theatre. The New Republic and Theatre Arts were so impressed with his ability, erudition, and insight into the theatre arts, that the former invited him to join the staff on a full time basis as theatre critic, and the latter to serve as contributing editor, a position that he retained until 1940.

At the time that Young was invited to join, The New Republic was already seven years old. The first issue had appeared on the stands November 7, 1914. This "journal of opinion which seeks to meet the challenge of a new time" was born because Mr. and Mrs. Willard Straight, wealthy, and living in China at the time, had read Herbert Croly's The Promise of American Life. This book, the author's first and best, impressed the Straights with its liberalism, idealism, and clear-sightedness. Particularly were they impressed with his inquiry into the possibilities that seemed to him to be available in the United States, after the turn of the century. The Straights were not alone in

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being impressed. Croly's insight into the need for political and economic reorganization, the better to realize a full and satisfactory life for the people, moved Walter Lippmann and later Felix Frankfurter to call him the first important political philosopher of the twentieth century.

When the Straights returned from the Far East, they immediately contacted Croly and offered to finance a magazine under his editorship. Croly accepted and gathered about him Walter Lippmann, Robert M. Lovett, Henry Soule, William Weyl, Francis Hackett and Philip Littel as co-editors. Together they published the first issue of The New Republic.

The policy of this new magazine would be to deal with ideas rather than facts. Its main difference from other magazines would be that it "would attempt to convert criticism into a positive agency of progressive democratic ascendancy."⁸³ It was intended to be anti-dogmatic, to create in readers "little insurrections in the realm of their opinions" and "prick and goad opinion into being more vigilant and hospitable, in considering its convictions more carefully."⁸⁴

Political philosopher that he was, Croly made his magazine dedicate itself to a liberalism that might be a great spiritual force. For it was his contention that mere practical reforms were no victories if the spiritual fiber

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was lacking. And The New Republic's accomplishment in helping to bring to fruition some of the practical reforms that it backed was by no means niggardly; to wit, woman suffrage, old age pensions, public development of water power sites, a national highway system, an injunction act, a labor relations act.

Two years after the first publication, Lippmann withdrew as a full-time editor and was replaced by Alvin S. Johnson. The addition of Johnson is significant to this discussion, since it was perhaps in part through his influence that Stark Young's earliest contributions (1917) to The New Republic were accepted. They had been colleagues at the University of Texas in 1908, Young as an English professor and Johnson as an economics professor. It is highly probable that they came in contact and found each other compatible spirits as liberals and pioneers; Young with his theatre venture (The Curtain Club) and Johnson with his somewhat maverick antics as demonstrated by the title of his first book, The Professor and the Petticoat.

Robert Morss Lovett, the distinguished critic and literateur, co-editor at this time of The New Republic was probably instrumental in getting Young a position with that periodical also. He was very likely acquainted with Young's work, since he (Lovett) was editor of The Dial when Young had "Cities and Seasons and Islands" published

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in that magazine in 1919.

Johnson remained as an associate editor of The New Republic only until 1923. By that time he had taken over, as director or president, the destinies of a newly established liberal graduate school in New York City, The New School for Social Research. More comment will be made about this when the chronicle gets to Young's tenure as lecturer at The New School.

The circumstances surrounding Young's joining Theatre Arts were somewhat different but no less interesting or significant. This publication was first established as a quarterly in Detroit in 1916, by Sheldon Cheney and several other free and pioneering spirits in the theatre world. A statement on one of the earlier pages of the first issue announcing the magazine's editorial policy is of particular significance. It lies very close to Young's point of view. "Theatre Arts Magazine is designed for the artist who approaches the theatre in the spirit of the arts and crafts movement, and for the theatregoer who is awake artistically and intellectually . . . It will cover the fields of all the arts of the theatre; or more accurately, it will cover all those contributive arts that are working toward that wider synthetic art of the theatre which is yet to be realized."⁸⁵

By July 1919 the publication had moved to New York

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City and added to its editorial staff, among others, Edith J. R. Isaacs. It was to this July 1919 issue of Theatre Arts that Young's first contribution was made, a one-act play named At the Shrine. Later, in April 1922 another one-act play named The Queen of Sheba appeared, followed in August of 1924 by his first full length play, The Colonnade.

By 1922 Edith J. R. Isaacs had become the editor and Young and Kenneth Macgowan were the associate editors. The name Kenneth Macgowan is important here since it was through this man that Young came in close contact with the Provincetown Players. Macgowan was the director of that group, following George Cram Cook and his wife Susan Glaspell, and very probably was instrumental in getting several of Young's plays produced. Macgowan was a co-producer for O'Neill's Welded when Young directed it on Broadway. Incidentally after a long and distinguished career as drama critic, Broadway and Hollywood director, Macgowan by 1952 had become head of the Department of Theatre Art at the University of California.

Ashley Dukes, the English dramatic critic, was added to the staff sometime later. The personnel remained the same for the next few years with the exception of the adding and dropping successively of Carl Carmer, John Mason Brown, and Rosemond Gilder. Except for one year away

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(while he was with The New York Times) Young remained with Theatre Arts as associate editor until 1941.

In 1920, Young's enthusiasm for teaching came to an end. He told me that he felt he had been giving of himself to students for a long enough time and that now it was time that he gave of himself to and for himself. Consequently, he took a half year's leave of absence in Europe, returned, and resigned his position at Amherst. He moved to New York, with no position in view, to free-lance. In 1921 he was invited to join The New Republic as a contributing editor. Croly had been impressed by Young's articles that had already appeared in The New Republic, so he wrote him making the offer. Young accepted.

He served with this periodical until 1924 in the role of critic-of-all-trades, doubling as book reviewer, art critic, drama critic, and commentator on world affairs. He wrote reviews of art exhibitions at the Anderson galleries, Wildenstein galleries, New Kunst gallery, Reinhardt galleries, and the Metropolitan Museum. The hours that he had put in at the latter, while still a graduate student at Columbia, now stood him in very good stead.

By the end of the first year with The New Republic he was finished serving his apprenticeship and launched himself into a type of play evaluation that in the end placed him at the top, as one of the most respected critics

in the profession.

He associated himself with the Provincetown Players who were directed by George Cram Cook and his wife Susan Glaspell and later Kenneth MacGowan. In that group he met a promising playwright, recognized his genius and helped to get him a hearing. The playwright's name was Eugene O'Neill. Young's subsequent laudatory reviews of O'Neill's plays had much to do with the latter's rise to fame.

For instance, in March 1922, his review of one of Eugene O'Neill's early efforts, The Hairy Ape, was masterful. He gave a skillful, serious and exacting, as well as detailed, account of the performance.⁸⁶ His style was already showing the effects of his careful attempt to put into words his intricate reasoning. He approached his task with the creative critical intelligence that possibly had been stirred by Professor Spingarn at Columbia.⁸⁷ He was laying the foundation for what he later became, namely, the critic's critic.

In 1923 he returned to directing. This time he directed on Broadway in Lenormand's The Failures.⁸⁸ The play was produced by the Theatre Guild in New York, November 19, 1923 with Dudley Digges, Jacob Ben-Ami, Winifred Lenihan, and Morris Carnovsky in the cast.⁸⁹ It ran for twenty-four performances.

Ludwig Lewisohn's review of the play was congratula-

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tory toward Young. "The directing of the production (The Failures) by Mr. Stark Young is very able. There is humanity; there is precision. I waited with some uneasiness for Scene 10, fearing that Mr. Young would have yielded to a touch of the fantastic. I was immediately reassured. His feet remained firmly on the earth, where one's feet belong."⁹⁰

The following year, 1924, he directed O'Neill's Welded, produced by Kenneth Macgowan, Robert Jones, and Eugene O'Neill in association with the Selwyns. The piece first appeared at the Thirty-ninth Street Theatre on March 17, 1924, with Doris Keane and Jacob Ben-Ami in the leading roles.⁹¹

Incidentally, as a matter of passing interest, Mr. Young held these actors in such high esteem that he later wrote several very searching and appreciative essays about their artistry. He did Ben-Ami the honor of offering him the part of Valdez, the leading role in his (Young's) play The Saint. And to Miss Keane he dedicated Immortal Shadows, his book on the theatre with: "To the memory of Doris Keane in Romance, where the effort and exhaustion of the artist went toward the projection of what only was beautiful, lyric, passionate and witty; so that she became not so much the elusive, remarkable darling of her public as their idol. She was as it were all music and security of outline, like

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As to the quality of directing in Welded, Lewisohn could not condone the weakness that he thought he saw. "Mr. Stark Young who directed Failures so admirably, failed here. For even this gritty dialogue with its constant flights into false and untimely eloquence might have been softened and made human by the simplest delivery, by subduing its artificial emphasis. Nothing of the kind is done . . . The direction is rhetorical."⁹³ Nathan in the American Mercury was also lukewarm. "The staging of the manuscript by Stark Young was satisfactory save in the matter of lighting."⁹⁴ Mr. Young informed me that, as director, the lighting was no direct responsibility of his anyway. The play ran for forty performances which was the number that had been contracted.

The same year he translated and directed Moliere's George Dandin on Broadway.⁹⁵ The play opened at the Provincetown Theatre, April 6, 1924, on the same bill with a dramatization of The Ancient Mariner, and remained for thirty-three performances. Lewisohn for The Nation found the translating "very fine felt" and the note Young inserted on the theatre programs "interesting and acute." (A diligent search through all available theatre files failed to turn up a copy of this program so that Young's

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note might be examined. A conversation with Young about the matter was not helpful since he has no record of such a note and does not remember ever having made one.) But as to the directing, Lewisohn was only lukewarm.⁹⁶

In 1924 he was called to The New York Times as drama critic. His tenure with the paper lasted only a year however. As he said of himself during an earlier and even shorter experience with The Brooklyn Standard Union, he was neither by temperament nor inclination suited to the requirements of newspaper reviewing. His evaluations and analyses presupposed too much wide and careful background knowledge on the part of the average newspaper reader. He had such high standards of thoroughness that he could not make himself write with the superficiality of newspaper copy. He had a "habit of making [the readers] feel uncomfortable. He did not write down to them. He used none of the reporter's tricks of easy interest, and he had a solemn way of refusing to limit his copy to news."⁹⁷

Young had become too much the theatre aesthetician ever to be satisfied with the superficial coverage given by the daily reviewer. He simply could not do the reporting job that satisfied the requirements of the newspaper.

His years of academic association with literature, as well as his years of devotion to the idea that theatre is a literate art within itself, militated against this.

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His strong belief that theatre as an art was to be separated from mere entertainment would not allow him to lower his aesthetic standards to the requirements of the daily newspaper. This irritated at least one New York Times reader so that he protested angrily: "Why do dramatic critics [in this case Young] persist in the tendency to make a hobby horse of a favorite word and ride it to death? . . . [I am] somewhat tired of his use of the term theatre in its abstract sense, . . . it would seem as if he cannot write a review without putting the saddle on this old nag and digging in the spurs."⁹⁸

One reader of The New Republic resented what he considered Young's verbose style and wanted to know if something couldn't be done to make him "talk sense and write English."⁹⁹ Justified or not, these remonstrances seemed to have little effect on Young's subsequent style. In 1931 when reviewing Raymond Massey's portrayal of Hamlet, the critic expressed disapproval of the actor's handling of the speech at Ophelia's grave. And he expressed this disapproval in a diction much too illusive and allusive for those less erudite than he (Young). "In the crocodile Ossa speech at the grave of Ophelia, the high point in the baroque excitement of the poet's style, following the native Gothicism of the gravediggers, Mr. Massey exhibited his inadequacy."¹⁰⁰

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Young's product was unusual among the journalistic critics, and this unusualness was not received with unmixed approval by all of them. They gave him credit for his seriousness and careful creation, but questioned the writing technique he used in his zealous espousal of the cause of theatre art. W. P. Eaton reminds his readers that "Young is not always free from a touch of the verbal cant which is the bane of too much modern literary criticism."¹⁰¹ Bailey remarks that the distinction with which he (Young) writes is so elaborate that the "plebes of this world cannot in the least understand what he is talking about,"¹⁰² and might well enjoy not understanding it.¹⁰³ Even the conservative critic of the staid London Times finds it too bad that Young has to use such a heavy style.¹⁰⁴ Nathan, whose statement time proved to be wrong, complained: "Where the call is for clear, direct plan and thought as . . . in the field of dramatic criticism, he [Young] is lost . . . In criticism in particular, is Young a mere composer of crossword puzzles."¹⁰⁵

However, his recognition as a critic with whom to be reckoned was becoming more and more firmly established, not only with the aestheticians but with the directors and producers as well. While with The New York Times he wrote a review of Max Reinhardt's production of The Miracle that gained a great deal of respect, at least from Reinhardt.¹⁰⁶

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The New York critics' reports were all "raves," but Young showed that he, as a minority of one, was not satisfied with the production aesthetically. In his review he proceeded to outline the how and why of it. It was only Young's evaluation that Reinhardt felt merited preserving.¹⁰⁷

This incident would not be especially worth recording except to underscore the slow but certain development of Young's careful and deliberate technique.

But more importantly, in 1924 he wrote his first full length play, The Colonnade. This he offered to the Provincetown Players for production, but as we shall see later in this discussion, they never produced it.

This play is a presentation of the conflict between Major Dandridge (the Old South) and his poet son John (the New South). It reaffirms Young's faith in the culture of the traditional Southern agrarian aristocracy and restates his allegiance to a South that is part of his very being. It looks forward to his attitude as expressed later in I'll Take My Stand. John, the poet in the play, embodies this allegiance, romantically, emotionally and mystically. In a scene with his wife Evelyn he exclaims: "But look at this night . . . What a night, my God, what a night! It's incredible. I always forget how beautiful it can be down here. I always know when it's like this that I love my own country best after all, my own South. Look at the

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moonlight over everything. You could read by it, couldn't you! Over the columns and the stones of the pavement. . . It's like a heart beating."¹⁰⁸

That is not all. In The Colonnade the author gives us a clue to his whole aesthetic, a philosophy of art that saturates all of his criticism. John, the poet, speaks of the kind of thing he hopes to write:

You see we've already the dumb gray of abandoned farms, city sweat shops, back alleys, ashbarrels and disease. That's no more real than anything else. I don't want to decide that one thing is the reality in life and another isn't. I'd like to find a medium that was not afraid of warmth, beauty, that let all this have its chance as well as the drab and dismal, that is comic or tragic as you please, but glows, sings, darkens, dulls, as life does. I mean a realism that is so real and so precisely true and close that it becomes poetic, gives back their dream to things. What I mean is that the great point in art is to keep the life going in it, no matter what theory you follow. Everything moving in the stream of all life, but seen too with its own particular life in it.¹⁰⁹

This character might easily have used the favorite Young expression, "an antiphonal radiance of all things among themselves by which their truth alone appears" and have come very close to expressing the basic Young theatre aesthetic. In this aesthetic one of the basic elements of his theory is, namely, "The spring of life that enters into art, the flood of gusto, and energy, the pulse and glow."¹¹⁰

The author became dissatisfied with the treatment his play was receiving from the Provincetown Players, so

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it was withdrawn from that production group. Later, however, "The Colonnade was done by the London Stage Society and had very fine notices from Walkley and other critics. Eugene O'Neill said it was American Chekhov, etc. Ashley Dukes said in his London review that it was the best American play that had been done in England. It was also done in Holland, I don't know at what theatre."¹¹¹

One of the London critics pointed out that it was not a good acting play. Instead of action which is required of good playing drama, there was only reaction and not easily recognizable subtlety. He remarked that the play was Chekhovian, a remark seconded by Eugene O'Neill; that it was a play of symbolism. In it the author makes the colonnade, at which the poet John Dandridge looks constantly, the symbol of freedom and escape from conformity. Stark Young, the artist and dreamer "has attempted a vision of reality which is not a question of facts but of mood, of artistic conception, diffuse and atmospheric in suggestion."¹¹²

A most interesting comment came from a London critic whose claim was that if the play was not a success it was not the fault of the play but of the audience. He insisted that since the play's dominant interest was atmosphere, it was up to the audience to surrender its spirit to the play, and that if the audience did not do this, surely the play

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and its author were not to be censured.¹¹³ The mountain must come to Mohammed. This sounds like praise indeed.

Also in 1924, his second major full length play The Saint opened at the Greenwich Village Theatre in New York on October 11.¹¹⁴ Briefly, the plot of the play concerns itself with the search for a solution to spiritual problems. Valdez, a Mexican-American cowboy, decides to enter a Roman Catholic seminary in a small town on the Texas-Mexican border. He hopes to find the answer by losing himself in the ritual of the Church, but instead falls in love with a carnival girl and leaves the seminary. In the carnival, he achieves stardom as an imitator of Charlie Chaplin. He loses himself in the part and for a time finds in art, contentment and an answer to his riddle. Because the girl is unfaithful to him, he becomes disillusioned and leaves the carnival. When he returns to the seminary, he discovers that life there is equally unsatisfying, so he finally returns to the plains. In range-rider solitude, he finds a measure of solace and security.

This play was produced by the Provincetown Players with Maria Ouspenskaya, the Russian actress, as Pigeons, the feminine character lead. Mr. Young wanted Ben-Ami, the talented Yiddish Theatre actor, for the male lead, but because the actor had other commitments Mr. Young was unable to get him. Leo Carillo, who later gained fame as a Holly-

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wood cowboy in innumerable "Westerns," did the part. Young himself was very much disgusted with the casting and thought that his play had no real chance on Broadway because of it.¹¹⁵

It was received by the Broadway critics with mixed reactions, ranging from sympathetic understanding to annoyance at Young's alleged ignorance of some of the basic production principles.

His own New York Times (he was their drama critic at the time, but of course did not review his own play) thought it "a play of lofty aim" but was disappointed that "it came to life only in flashes." This is an interesting comment since one of Young's rigid aesthetic criteria in his stage criticism is that the presentation "come alive."

Time was kind but negative. "Stark Young . . . is a critic of the theatre whose penetrating observation has long been a tonic to our stage. Much to the distress of his admirers, he has attempted to embody the rules and measure of his wisdom in the heart and beauty of a play. Mr. Young has built up the fabric of a well-made drama; he has strengthened it with a fancy thread of beauty; and he has wholly failed to fill it with the air of sound reality."¹¹⁶ Percy Hammond in The New York Herald Tribune was somewhat more than blunt and called it "neither art nor entertainment."

Nathan's comment was icy. He claimed that Young

possessed no genius; that he had not abided by the standards of excellence in the theatre art that he himself had set up in his theatre essays; that his play did not even come up to the level of other plays Young had already criticized destructively.¹¹⁷

One can understand the critics' and audience's puzzlement, for an atmosphere of nostalgia and mystical searching-and-never-finding pervades the play. One can feel in it the search for the Holy Grail being reenacted. This no doubt has resulted from Young's literary background in Malory and Spenser. It is a play that is "more subtle and poetic than the common run of such plays,"¹¹⁸ and more firmly than before confirms this author as an aesthetic mystic.¹¹⁹

This play also demonstrates something that Young insists upon in detail in his later discussion of acting in The Flower in Drama, where he affirms that dramatic literature can only come alive through another medium, the actor. "The Saint is . . . distinctly an actor's play for the theatre where the parts for their completion require filling in by the body and the mind of the player."¹²⁰

Young feels very strongly that the actor occupies the most important place in the whole sweep of the theatre aesthetic. As will be seen farther on in this discussion, he spends much time in his theatre books explaining in

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great detail the function of the actor and the responsibility, training and artistry required in acting. He goes so far in his critical reviews as to tell the actors what specifically they should do to raise their efforts from a mere performance to a work of art. For example when he reviewed Malvaloca, a Spanish play with Jane Cowl in the lead, he gave Miss Cowl some advice: "She needs to charge her body with what this woman is: to put this into her feet, her head, as it rises from her shoulders, her hands. She should then whiten the top of her voice and darken the bottom of it. . . Without all this and more, her part is only an elementary stage figure with a few poignant climaxes"¹²¹ and not a work of art. His insistence upon the importance of the actor as an artist rather than just a performer is particularly stressed in a statement like: "More than the designer who created the decor, or the dramatist who gave the play and the central theme, or the director who controlled and shaped the whole of the theatre work, the actors engage the audience; their mystery and power are felt most; they are the singers in the song."¹²²

Later in the discussion we will go more fully into the matter of the actor, but one cannot help noting how different Young's attitude is from George J. Nathan's. The latter classifies actors as parasites who are laid over the real art of the dramatist.¹²³

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But to return to Young as poet of the theatre. This poetic strain, this staring into the infinite, this searching after eternal and universal beauty was becoming more and more pronounced in all his writings. The short poems like "The Garden of Psyche," that in his early youth he had submitted to various periodicals, indicated this strongly. Behind it was the influence of the "romantics." In his more mature work the element of the mystical was becoming more striking; the probings into life's mysteries more profound and subtle. The plays, although not very successful commercially as stage fare, were achieving stature as literature and influencing deeply the author's later critical output. The almost metaphysical, out-of-this-worldishness of the early efforts was becoming more sophisticated and more symbolic. As one commentator observed: "Stark Young, who constructs his plays of color and sensation and folk legend, derives his materials not alone from the past but from the out-of-the-way places in which the color and the savor of life run more high than our cold zones. To these materials he has in At the Shrine, Madretta, The Saint, The Colonnade, applied symbols reminiscent of the earlier and purer practice of the stage."¹²⁴

It is not altogether clear what the commentator means by the "earlier and purer practices" but if the implication is that in Young's work there is a trend toward

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the symbolic, the ritualistic and the religious, one is inclined to agree. He is trying to "uncover the eternal aspirations which underlie the specific social content."¹²⁵

In 1925 after one year as The New York Times critic, "from the floodgates of journalism [he] paddled back to the millpond of The New Republic."¹²⁶ He enlarged his activity by returning to one of his first loves -- teaching. He was invited to give a series of lectures on theatre and allied arts at the New School for Social Research in New York City.

The New School was established in 1919 and counted among the nucleus of its moving spirits in its beginnings, James Harvey Robinson, Charles A. Beard and Thorstein Veblen. These men, liberals all, felt there was need for a school less circumscribed than the traditional college graduate school; that there was need for a school "providing persons of mature intelligence with facilities for instruction and research in the vital problems of contemporary life." The founders were very much concerned about the fact that many of the graduate schools were being shackled by academic requirements and administrative red tape. So The New School was set up on the basis of ninety per cent teaching and scientific investigation; ten per cent administration. There was no elaborate building set-up, since the school was to deal with mature students whose work could be accomplished in the already adequate college

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and public libraries of New York City. The faculty was to control the appointment and dismissal of teachers and also govern the educational policy. The plan was "a cooperative venture in non-authoritarian informal learning, the chief purpose of which is to discover the meaning of experience."

Unhampered intellectually or academically, without social, political or religious bias, The New School is an educational laboratory to which the factory or the clerical worker is as welcome as the lawyer, the physician, the teacher, the engineer, and the social worker, if he but bring the one necessary contribution -- intellectual interest. This institution fixes no entrance requirements, confers no degrees or credits toward degrees, and sets no examinations. As a result, the students come by the process of self selection which draws minds of a high level of attainment.¹²⁷

Herbert Croly, editor of The New Republic at the time, and liberal political philosopher that he was, backed the idea of the school in one particularly strong article.

The very fabric of civilization is endangered because the results of scientific research, of the pursuit of truth, is being used, not to set men and women free but to fasten upon them a more crushing bondage. The world needs consequently, truth seekers who are not indifferent to the uses to which their science is being put and social evangelists who are capable of adapting the results of scientific research to the needs of their own mission. If humanism is to triumph over . . . particularism . . . it must anticipate in the lives of its own promoters the beginning of that better cooperation between science and social purpose, between the intelligence and the will, which it hopes to spread throughout the world. Probably such cooperation will not go very far until it receives an impulse from the restoration of religion to a worthier

place in human life . . . In the meantime something can be done to anticipate by education, the birth of the new faith, and in this pedestrian job, schools of social research . . . could make an indispensable contribution.¹²⁶

The institution prospered in attendance; in the first seven years it had enrolled nearly ten thousand students. For the first few years it was run by a board composed of all of the teachers. In 1923, Dr. Alvin S. Johnson was called from The New Republic, where he had been an associate editor since 1919, to the Directorship of The New School.

It is fairly easy to trace, then, the series of events that culminated in Stark Young being invited to lecture at The New School. In 1908, Alvin Johnson and Stark Young were colleagues at the University of Texas; both were apparently liberal and compatible spirits. Johnson joined Croly's liberal weekly The New Republic in 1917 and undoubtedly had had a share in the accepting of Young's early articles in that periodical. Herbert Croly and his associate editors (including Johnson) because of their liberal educational philosophy had backed The New School at its inception. In 1925, after Johnson had been settled for some time as director of The New School, he invited Young to lecture there.

These lectures which lasted for three years, 1925-28, were so popular that they attracted more students than had

ever before attended classes at The New School. Although the course could probably have gone on indefinitely, Mr. Young, finding himself becoming less enthusiastic about giving it, withdrew from the school.

Also in 1925 appeared the first two of his five theatre books, The Flower in Drama and Glamour. Both are collections of essays on acting and theatre art that are modest in size but probably among the best contributions ever made to the understanding of these matters.¹²⁹ One critic goes so far as to say that this and another of Young's books together marked him as the "logical successor to Lamb and Lewes and Coquelin in the slim list of those who can write of acting."¹³⁰ The Flower in Drama is a series of fifteen separate essays, each of which treats some phase of the actor's art. The first essay, "Acting," goes into a very detailed consideration of the art of acting. Another essay treats of the work of the director and the use of the promptbook. One essay is an open letter to Charles Chaplin, the movie-comic-pantomimist, in which Young urges the movie star to go on to greater heights in his art. His analyses and the theories he expounds are creatively critical in that he is not content to tear down and leave the wreckage in his path. With great patience and sensitive imaginativeness he suggests changes to Chaplin, proposes additions and recommends eliminations.

He was a great admirer of Chaplin as an artist; so much, in fact, that he borrowed the Chaplin stage character for Valdez, the acting lead in The Saint.

The frontispiece quote in The Flower in Drama reads as follows: "If one aims only at the beautiful, the flower is sure to appear." This is an interesting line since it points in some measure to Young's arrival at a sort of aesthetic mysticism. He apparently had made a study of the Japanese Nō plays done by a 14th century Japanese playwright and painter named Seami. This same Seami had made a study of the acting in these plays, and evolved an aesthetic theory that "in imitation there should always be a tinge of the unlike." He felt that if imitation is pressed too far it becomes the reality and thus eliminates any possibility of giving an impression of likeness. But

If one aims only at the beautiful, the flower, as he [Seami] calls it, will be sure to appear. If for example, in the part of an old man the actor, merely because he has noticed that old men walk with bent backs and crooked knees and have shrunken frames, sets about to imitate these characteristics, he may indeed achieve an effect of decrepitude, but it will be at the expense of the flower. And if the flower be lacking there will be no beauty in the impersonation. What this actor should study, Seami says, is that effect of will without the corresponding capacity for action that shows in old age.¹³¹

The actor then would be able to give a performance that would present the "flower" in his artistic rendition of the old man.

Young develops this line of reasoning in some detail in the section entitled "Acting." He has no patience with the school of photographic realists in acting who believe that the actor has achieved the ultimate when he becomes the character he portrays; when Charles Laughton is no longer Charles Laughton but Henry VIII; or Helen Hayes is no longer Helen Hayes but Queen Victoria; or Joe Jefferson is no longer Joe Jefferson but Rip Van Winkle; or Duse is no longer Duse but Mrs. Alving. People who believe this is the epitome of the art might better go to a zoo, for there is nothing that acts more like an elephant than an elephant.¹³²

It was in The Flower in Drama that Young wrote essays in the form of open letters to Charles Chaplin and Eleanore Duse, complimenting the latter and advising the former. In each, there is a critical appraisal of the artist's talent that reveals Young as the creative critic who eschews "lively chit-chat about the stage, slangy diatribe or sophomoric enthusiasms. . . [in favor of] acute analysis, constructive comment, and ardent searching philosophy."¹³³

Montrose J. Moses suggested that the book exclusive of its worth in its own literary right, is important as a rallying point for those who are attempting to get under way a whole new movement in theatre appreciation. He thinks that with this book Young should be welcomed into

the fold "as one of the few who will help the new movement immeasurably by interesting his readers simply, and with no propaganda motive in reading a deeper appreciation of the finest things in art."¹³⁴

Glamour, his second book on theatre art, was published the same year, 1925, and was dedicated to his friend David Prall, professor of philosophy at the University of California and author of books and articles on aesthetics. Young's acquaintance with Prall's sister, Elizabeth, resulted in some interesting connections. During his annual visits to Oxford, Mississippi, to see his father, Young became interested in a fellow Oxfordian, sixteen years his junior, named William Faulkner. With his talent for assaying literary promise,¹³⁵ Young recognized in Faulkner a rich vein of literary gold. Forthwith he arranged to have him come to New York and obtained a job for him in the bookshop operated by Elizabeth Prall, David's sister. Shortly after, Miss Prall married Sherwood Anderson, and through Anderson, Faulkner was put in touch with "Horace Liverwright, who published Soldier's Pay and gave Faulkner the usual three book contract, his first contract with a publisher."¹³⁶

Glamour includes another essay on Eleanore Duse, the actress, written upon the occasion of her untimely death. Besides paying tribute to her as a performer, the

author lauds her as an artist and launches himself into further profound observations on the acting art. The third essay offers a critical analysis and appreciation of the work in America of the Moscow Art Theatre group. It may well be that this group kindled in Young the fire for later translations of Chekhov. Of all these essays probably the most interesting, critically speaking, is the one which presents a series of fictitious letters from dead actors of distinction to living actors of promise. For example, there is a letter from Rachel the French tragedienne to Pauline Lord in which she gives the latter some tips about "style", a very important word in the Young aesthetic. Garrick the Shakespere tragedian, advises John Barrymore on some details in the playing of Hamlet. Garrick tells Barrymore, "You have an admirable presence, but you are not mimetic; your pantomime could mean little in itself. Your body and your face are not eminently flexible and expressive."¹³⁷ Here again as he did in The Flower in Drama Young demonstrates his facility with creative criticism. He becomes himself the critical artist and explores the secret path between the creator (in this case, the actor) and his work.

"Sophocles' Guest," the last essay in this collection, is perhaps the most important since it seems to sum up the Young philosophy of life. More strongly here than

anywhere else up to this point are the strains of the mystic perceptible. What is God, then, to him but "an antiphonal radiance of all things among themselves, by which alone their truth appears?"¹³⁸ This expression

"antiphonal radiance", one of Young's favorites, can be found in at least ten different places in his writings.

Glamour like its predecessor is neither pedestrian nor popular; its appeal is to the literary mind and the connoisseur. It repeats in some cases almost verbatim some of the materials in The Flower in Drama, but whatever else it may or may not be it is never flippant, trivial, or cynical. Rather, it is fresh, sensitive, intellectual, profound and at times eloquent, demonstrating a facility with the phrase more usual in the literary critic than the dramatic critic; as, for example, when he describes the young man in "Sophocles' Guest" who has been shopping around for a suitable religion to accept. Says he of him, "of the soul's journalism he is a busy and well posted subscriber."¹³⁹ Who but a literary artist himself could couch so much "idea" in so neat and tight a package?

The following year, 1926, he continued his exploration of the theatre art with a textbook called Theatre Practice. This book goes into a great deal of specific detail about the techniques of acting, staging, play-writing, speaking, producing, costuming, directing, illusion,

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stage movement, realistic and poetic presentation, music, color, lights, audience, and all the other supplementary matters of the theatre.

Unlike The Flower in Drama this book does not have quite so strong a philosophical flavor. To be sure, it exhibits the same cultured, penetrating and constructive qualities underlying all of his considerations of the theatre arts, but for the most part it is designed as a practical handbook and textbook, complete with questions at the end of each chapter. In this book three ingredients are happily combined: Stark Young's years of college-level educational facility; his years of practical experience as playwright, director, producer, dramatic critic and writer about theatre arts; and his years of wisdom as a subtle and sensitive aesthetician.

As if this were not enough accomplishment above and beyond his regular theatre-review stint for The New Republic, he meanwhile turned to the writing of fiction; and in 1926 his first novel, Heaven Trees, was published. Heaven Trees pictures life on a Mississippi plantation about a hundred years before; as he says, "in the fifties." There is no plot, and whatever charm there is grows out of the simple dignity of the story and the integrity of the writer. There are no artifices or subterfuges. No one gets excited nor is there any excessive excitement. There

are only the endless comings and goings of fairly uninhibited kith and kin.

There is portrayed here an account of the traditional quiet Southern dignity, expansiveness, luxuriousness and culture of which Young himself was a product. Uncle George Clay owns the estate, "Heaven Trees," and Aunt Martha runs it. Throughout the book, the smooth placidity of this plantation existence is contrasted with the harsh turbulence of the North. When cousin Ellen from Vermont comes to visit, her Puritan reticence and economy of spirit serve to highlight the Southern graciousness of manner and ease of deportment. About her there is a New England tenseness and rigidity that Young describes very adequately: "Her gentle face, slightly pinched . . . was set on sloping shoulders of a body that was naturally pleasant but had been pushed by training into an odd sort of solemnity. I can see now the figure of her standing there in the parlor at 'Heaven Trees.' It was a body that seemed to imply moving joyously along in the manner of church suppers and taking its bacchanals on raspberry vinegar. She seemed a little book of sweet and gentle poetry that had been bound in buckram for a pew."¹⁴⁰

In a speech that gets to the very core of the matter, Uncle George makes crystal clear the difference in the basic philosophy of New England and the South:

Men of northern lands . . . seem to be soured by the discovery of truth. They seem displeased by any new revelations of the facts of the universe, displeased but stirred to think at once of changing something for the better. But everyone, he said, who lived under bright stars knew that to arrive at any truth is to add to your intellect one more harmony with the universe. Depth of thinking brought to Plato's soul . . . a melancholy beauty that would give John Knox the dumps. What made Plato more lonely and serene made John Knox want to knock all Edinburgh over the head.¹⁴¹

This was Young's first attempt at portraying the South in a novel, and also represents an experiment in a medium that he had not employed so far. It is romantic, idealistic, and even sentimental perhaps, in keeping with what one is led to expect from his Malory-Spenser-Wordsworth-Coleridge-Keats-Old South orientation. It is written with a realistic technique that made one Southerner say that the conversations of the characters made her homesick.¹⁴² Its greatest significance lies in the fact that it points toward his later triumphs in this type of regional portraiture.

The statement above about his realistic technique might at first glance seem to be inconsistent with previous statements, namely, that he objects to realism in acting, and that he is a romantic. Let us say that Young objects to a technique so realistic that it outHerods Herod and leaves no opportunity for comparison and contrast with reality. As we shall see later, he disapproved the Broad-

way performance of Street Scene, because it relied too much on sheer type-casting and was accordingly too realistic for effectiveness as theatre art.

It is photographic realism to which he objects; a realism that has such an abundance of detail that the sheer weight of detail gets in the way of the idea. When this happens the poetic and the imaginative are destroyed and the product is no longer art. He was encouraged when he observed the absence of stark realism of detail in The Idiot; he was happy to see that it allowed for the emergence of idea.¹⁴³

He continued his sketches in another book named Encaustics, published the same year, 1926. In this book, however, the focus is not on the South. It is exactly what the title implies, namely, pictures of contemporary life and living whose colors are burned in. This time the author presents a collection that can only be described as caustic comment in encaustics. For example, he is distressed to observe from the overcrowded newsstands, the kinds of reading Americans are doing in the popular magazines; he is shocked at the emptiness of it all. He is not despairing or shrill about it, for that would be as silly as being cynical about the weather; however, he deplores the symptomatic vacuity that it represents. "If it were only barbaric, you might feel better; there is hope in bar-

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barism and beauty in it, as everyone admits. But this active and competent and shallow adequacy!"¹¹⁴⁴

These sketches that cover a geographical area ranging from New York to Texas to Italy are in a sense polemic. Though there is no bitterness, no despair, no holy zeal to save the world, in essence his effort is evangelistic. He is the devotee of culture, of art; and the apparent shallowness of 20th century living irks him.

He shudders at the worthlessness of the conversations he hears going on about him. Always direct address; never a profundity of any sort; never a generalization evolving from a series of deductions or inductions; never an abstraction; only a strange and elusive emptiness.

Quietly and with exquisite finesse he warns against the lowering of standards he sees about him. The prose style has a muted thunder suited to the intent and is not unlike that of George Santayana, whom Young admired.

From the time of his first trip to Europe in 1902, shortly after the Water Valley School closed, he had been making trips nearly every year, usually to Italy, which he loved most of all. Many of his stories involving character sketching had their locale in some Italian city or countryside. He familiarized himself completely with the language, mores, and tradition of the Italians, and thus became well equipped to translate some of their literature, which he did.

In 1927, he resumed his translating activity; this time it was Machiavelli's Mandragola, a very earthy five act comedy that deals with amatory and domestic intrigue involving the powers of the Mandragola plant.

But he did not neglect his role as the philosopher of the theatre arts, for also in 1927 he published The Theatre, the fourth of his five books on the theatre arts and dramatic criticism. This like his two previous efforts was a serious study of the theatre and its chief elements, the play, the director, the actors, the setting, and the audience. It added, however, only a very little to what he had said in its two predecessors. In fact much of it was verbatim repetition of portions of The Flower in Drama, Glamour, and Theatre Practice, but it did continue his investigations into techniques and source materials of the artist. It examined with authority practical problems of the director for which he was well qualified, for, as he said later, "I should mention that I myself have directed more than one play on Broadway and have seen many rehearsals otherwise; so I have some practical knowledge of the business of directing, the methods and problems and evidences of it."¹⁴⁵ It brought into play again his vast background in every element of the theatre. The treatment is thoughtful, discerning and illuminating. It hits upon some of the basics in theatre art and reflects its author's

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well-grounded fundamentals. More than anything else it establishes the notion that to Young "The play is the most important thing in the theatre,"¹⁴⁶ a matter for discussion later in this thesis.

In the next two years, he continued his portrayal of the South in its more attractive aspects. In 1928 appeared The Torches Flare, a story of the present day and the conflict of the Northern and Southern philosophies.

The plot is uncomplicated. Briefly, it tells the comparatively simple story of Lena Dandridge (the same Dandridge family of The Colonnade) from Mississippi who leaves her home in the South to go on the New York stage. She becomes a great hit but because of illness has to give it all up to return South. There is a love story; her lover follows her South but they finally break up. Young is very obviously Hal Boardman in this novel. As Boardman, he relates the story as it has come to him from the character who is "I."

It is in this knowingness that The Torches Flare realizes part of its significance. The book gives the author an opportunity to exhibit his knowledge of the Broadway theatrescene from both back and front stage. He takes his readers on a behind-the-scenes tour of the most arty of the Greenwich Village spots; he draws from his experience in the art salons, matinees and soirees of his

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Columbia University days; he brings to bear the insight and understanding wrought of many years as Broadway drama critic; he makes tense and piercing comment on art, society, and certain aspects of the meaning of sin.

But it is when the scene moves South that the author is at his best. He brings into play his talent, already demonstrated in Heaven Trees, for recreating serenity and joie de vivre inherent in the pre-bellum way of life in the South. The picture is real and moving and represents the second flagstone in the walk that leads ultimately to the consummate artistry of So Red The Rose.

In 1929 he laid the third major flagstone in this tree-shaded walk, with his novel River House. This represents a restatement of the thesis in The Colonnade, which is a plea for a better understanding of the mores of the Old South. It is in some places a verbatim transfer from the medium of the drama to the form of the novel. The situation is the same, the characters are the same, with very few exceptions, and the dialogue is the same. This is unusual. Although we have many cases of novels being turned into plays, we have very few examples in reverse. The plot is light, being concerned with a conflict of wills between a father, Major Dandridge, and his poet son John. This change from the form of the drama to that of the novel impressed one critic so strongly as to conclude that

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"Young's real province is fiction, [for] his ability as a creator is superior to his ability as a critic. For it is sensitivity that is his forte, not analysis."¹⁴⁷ For us this is an illuminating comment, as it testifies to the range of Young's creative talent. Combined with his powers for analysis it is this very creative power which makes him the ideal creative critic.

About this time he was also associated, though briefly, with the Southern Agrarians. For several years at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, there had been growing a strong urge among a number of Southern literary men to take up the torch for the Old South. This group, also known as the Nashville Fugitives, because their organ was The Fugitive, was made up of Allen Tate, Robert Penn Warren, Donald Davidson, John Crowe Ransome, and others. They were Southern agrarians who had been agitating a long time for a return to the traditional plantation economy of the South. In 1930, they joined literary forces to collaborate in a Manifesto against the economic determinism and industrial materialism of the North. The effort resulted in I'll Take My Stand.

Young was not a member of this Nashville group *per se*, but he was an intensely loyal Southerner, as all of his literary work had thus far indicated. Also he was a close friend of Allen Tate. It seemed, therefore, natural that

he should be invited to join with the "Fugitives" and contribute an essay named "Not in Memoriam, but in Defense." He was not especially sympathetic with the effort and other than contributing this one essay he "never had any dealings otherwise with the movement."¹⁴⁸

The essay defends traditionalism and provincialism in America and pleads for a return to the moral stature of Southern agrarian Victorianism. Note the phrase moral stature. He definitely does not want a literal return, but in keeping with his philosophy heretofore expressed in The Flower in Drama and his other books of dramatic criticism, he is pleading for the return of the "flower" or the worthwhile "core-essence." "If anything is clear, it is that we never can go back, and neither this essay nor any intelligent person that I know in the South desires a literal restoration of the Old Southern life, even if that were possible; dead days are gone, and if by some chance they should return, we should find them intolerable. But out of any epoch in civilization there may arise things worthwhile, that are the flowers of it."¹⁴⁹ His allegiance to the spirit of the more or less unreconstructed South has remained with him and is the theme implicit in what many consider his masterpiece, So Red the Rose.

Also in 1930 The Street of the Islands, a collection of vignettes about Italians and Mexicans, appeared. All of

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these snapshots and short stories had appeared before singly, in magazines. Collectively they reflected, like The Three Fountains of an earlier date, sidelights and variations on the theme: the Latin and Anglo-Saxon cultures clash when they meet.

It was at this time, 1930, that Henry Croly, editor of The New Republic, died, causing a re-alignment of the staff. The publication was now produced on a co-editor basis and Young was elevated to full co-editorship with Bruce Bliven, Robert Morss Lovett, George Soule, and Edmund Wilson.

Young took to lecturing in 1931 and "through the offices of the Westinghouse [Westinghouse Foundation] I made a series of lectures in Italy on certain aspects of American life, sometimes on our industrial America, sometimes on the cultural. The choice of the lecturer is left to the Institute of International Education, acting with the Italy American Society."¹⁵⁰ The circumstances surrounding his choice as the lecturer are not clear, but the fact that he had been an annual visitor to Italy for many years, an admirer of Italy and things Italian, undoubtedly had a great bearing upon his appointment.

At any rate, the lectures were delivered in Italian to Italians¹⁵¹ on four phases of American art, namely, The Theatre, Theatrical Décor, Fiction, and Architecture.

Copies of the lectures are unavailable since they were delivered from notes and were never published. The cities included in the tour were "Milan, Turin, Florence, Venice, Naples, Bologna, and Rome."¹⁵² Only in Rome did he give all four. Apparently both he and they were very well received as evidenced by packed houses and by the fact that the King of Italy awarded him the highest title in the Order of the Crown, Commendatore, for his achievement.¹⁵³

For the next three years there was a hiatus. Except for the articles in Theatre Arts and his regular contribution to The New Republic, nothing appeared. During this time he was working on a novel and in 1934 he achieved his greatest acclaim as a novelist with the publication of So Red the Rose. It received immediate popular approval. Two days after publication a second printing was required and it was first on the best-seller lists. By March 1935, it was still sixth on the best-seller list and was going into its eighteenth printing.¹⁵⁴ At the present writing it is still on Scribner's selling list and has been translated into Danish, French, German and Italian.

Critical applause did not lag behind the popular, for this novel and Heaven Trees before it were to serve as curtain raisers to the Civil War novels so conspicuous in the middle thirties.¹⁵⁵ Ellen Glasgow in The New York Herald Tribune hailed it as "the best and most completely

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realized novel of the Deep South in the Civil War that has yet been written . . . So Red the Rose has, in the true sense of that abused word, an epic quality."

In this novel, the fifth flagstone in his walk back down the path of time, Young takes his stand on the near perfection of life as expressed in the ante-bellum period in the South. "In a sense it is less of a novel than a series of descriptive essays of Mississippi life hung on the convenient framework of the McGehee family and its 'cud'ns'."¹⁵⁶ It depicts the Old South of the "before and after" Civil War days. As plot, its story about the McGehees of Montrose and the Bedfords of Portobello is less significant than its penetration into the spirit that informs the facts. There are a host of characters in the cast not the least of whom is Miss Mary Cherry. Her outspoken individualism and her unquestioned acceptance as a guest at various homes for short or long stays as the case may be, in a sense symbolize a way of life now not so common in the South but far from forgotten by Young.

The novel does not concern itself much with a depiction of the conditions surrounding the Civil War, per se. There is not much of the fighting or the depressing destruction which was its aftermath:

For the world which Stark Young re-created was, like that which Henry James re-created, filled with furniture, but it was not . . . the mere stage furniture, so carefully in-

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35-44	100	65	35	0
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55-64	100	45	55	0
65+	100	15	85	0

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stalled by historical novelists. It was rather a set of properties which united the present with the past and acknowledged its indebtedness, as the carvings and stained glass windows of medieval churches unite present with past in acknowledgement of eternal truths in religion. It all gave a sense of continuity and thus of security, reminded men that they belonged in the stream of history and that their lives had meaning only as they touched other lives.¹⁵⁷

As was true with Heaven Trees, The Torches Flame and River House, there is no galloping action in the novel, no stirring war gallantry, no medal winning or medal pinning. There are no romantic fireworks or Freudian sex evaluations. There is only the quiet portrayal of the dignity of man in the kind of society that Mr. Young admires, a society in which "people belong to something bigger than themselves -- to a community, to ancestors, to things that have meaning because they were built by loving hands."¹⁵⁸

The very fact that he gave slavery and states' rights such dispassionate treatment hampered Hollywood the following year when it made a picture from the novel. According to some viewers the cinema directors tried to insert the emotional unrest aroused by the conflicting ideologies of North and South, but even they were unsuccessful. Mark Van Doren, who at the time was reviewing films for The Nation, received an anonymous letter from a subscriber who urged him to protest against the picture on the grounds

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that it revived old passions. But, said Mr. Van Doren, "I cannot protest; I missed the passions."¹⁵⁹ What was true about the film was true about the book.

The characters might carry more conviction if occasionally they would sweat and show bursts of temper through their serenity, but such a presentation would be out of keeping with the romantic idealism of Young's whole training, education, experience and background. For he is the creative artist working sensitively in a medium that seeks to penetrate the somnolent, sometimes dull surface, to find the "flower."

One cannot help comparing at this point Young's and Faulkner's treatment of the South. John Arthos of the University of Michigan writing in Shenandoah sees much resemblance.

The question of genius apart, in values and ideas the difference between the writers, Faulkner and Stark Young, is not great. Both live intimately with the past of the South, and both accept the idea of its glory as in part the generous cultivation of sentiment and in part as courage. It is by their sense of kinship with the past, that both oppose the common enemy, commercialism. Faulkner most often expresses his criticism of the present age in portrayals of the invasion of sensitive souls by crass and ugly forces, where Stark Young is pretty much content to write something closer to history, to write "about" the invasion, or at least to keep the reserves of writing history and to forego the passionate release of fiction. Faulkner, of course, has the greater imaginative power, invention, the last persistence of endeavour, while Young's writ-

ing is reflective. The sense of dedication and mission in Faulkner is probably less articulated intellectually, and for a certain kind of artist that is, of course, a condition of his strength. 160

Feliciano, the last of the sextet of flagstones which comprise Young's shaded walk down into the garden of Old South memories, came out in 1935. Taking its name from one of the counties in Louisiana, it presents a series of portraits, character sketches, and anecdotes, some of which are laid in the Old South, some in Texas, and some in Italy. As was true with The Three Fountains and The Street of the Islands, each entry had appeared somewhere before in magazines published between 1928 and 1935.

Here, just as in his other treatments of the South, he refuses to look at the more unpalatable and uglier aspects. In a collection of this sort, the sentimentality is perhaps less apparent than in a full length novel. He has on the sun glasses, however, and is just as leisurely, gracious, urbane and idealistically romantic as in his previous effort. He refuses to look at the drab, or unkempt, or the untidy.

As he did in the earlier collections, he makes comparisons between the Anglo-Saxon and Italian culture and finds the former somewhat naive, unsophisticated, and unable to distinguish fine gradations or nuances. Sardonic with a fine tongue-in-cheek irony directed at the

Anglo-Saxon, he observes that: "The Italians have, alas, a tendency to condense nature or some natural effect to a phrase; which only shows their lack of profundity. They fire some notation of the natural world with passionate humanity; which only shows their classicism, their lack of botany, profundity, pantheism, and rapture. The poor things have noted the snail on the thorn, but failed to deduct from it that all's right with the world."¹⁶¹

For the next few years, in keeping with his earlier interest and experience in the academic teaching of literature, he busied himself with editing textbooks. In 1937 he published two of them; the first, Treasury of Life and Literature in four volumes as joint editor, with educators Lyman, Moore and Hill; the second, Southern Treasury of Life and Literature, as editor.

It was of course inevitable that Young, loyal Southerner that he was, should edit a volume of Southern literature. The selections in verse and prose range from William Byrd to Allen Tate, and are accompanied by short biographical notes about and lists of each author's work.

In his preface to the Southern Treasury, Young sounds a little like the apologist. While conceding that the South has brought very little great literature into being he defends this failure on the grounds that she spent herself in oratory; as for example with Clay, Calhoun, and

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Pinckney. However, he also intimates that the South is not alone in having produced very little great literature, for neither says he, has any other section of the country. New England, he believes, was luckier than the South in that she had a more concentrated presentation of her literature; she had what would now be called good press-agentry. He thinks nevertheless that her poetry was bad (so much so that he never read poems like "Hiawatha," and thus was spared "a sort of literary measles"); that it was poorly imitative of stale English models thought to be Virgilian. A little acidly and perhaps unwarrantedly he says that "for the purposes of literature a zest for life may conceivably go farther than a distinguished - if it is distinguished - taste in stale things."¹⁶²

The publication of these textbooks was followed by a return to translating. For a number of years, Young had interested himself in the Russian Theatre, its actors, its dramatists, and its contributing artists. As early as 1922 when he had just started with The New Republic any Russian play on Broadway was likely to receive particularly close attention from him in his reviews. To musical shows like "Chauve Souris," (See appendix A for "Chauve Souris" and "Two Follies") or plays like Dostoevsky's "Idiot," he would devote more than a single article. To Russian artists like the dancer Nijinski, he would give space whenever

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there was opportunity. For example, he wrote a preface for David Magriel's book, Nijinski.

The Moscow Art Theatre, its players and its plays were the subjects of several of his articles in The New Republic. The company spent a repertoire season at the Fifty-ninth Street Theatre in New York during January and February of 1923¹⁶³ and a second season at Jolson's Fifty-ninth Street Theatre in 1924.¹⁶⁴ Young's reviews of their work were highly appreciative and sympathetic. In one article, "The Moscow Art Theatre," he urged that American actors study closely and profit by the Russian representational techniques which "profess the intention of ignoring the presence of spectators and of producing an effect of life as life would be seen going on if the fourth wall of a room were removed; everyone knows by now the phrase 'spiritual realism' implying a selection among realistic details that can bring out the inmost spirit of the actual matter."¹⁶⁵

Suggesting that the American performer would do well to emulate the perfectionist efforts of the Russians, he commended the Russian actor's dedication to his art and was appreciative of the hard work the latter put into the perfecting of his techniques.

Especially did he find Chekhov a kindred and compatible spirit. A brief survey of his theatre essays will

show that about Chekhov and his work, Young presented articles in Theatre Arts and The New Republic such as "Two Follies," "Tea with Madame Tchekov," "Sea Gull," "Gulls and Chekhov," "Chekhov Theatre's First," "Three Sisters," and "Cherry Orchard." In fact Young had admired the Russian dramatist so much that it was not at all strange that he should be likened to him. Eugene O'Neill and a London critic in commenting on The Colonnade had called the play American Chekhov which would seem to indicate that there was enough similarity in technic, method and/or style to warrant such a comparison. So in 1938 Young turned his attention to translating Chekhov's The Sea Gull. It must be noted that one of the more interesting matters connected with this translating was the linguistic virtuosity displayed by Young in handling a language so different from the French, Italian, and Spanish that he had translated heretofore.

It was through the interest and encouragement of the actors Lynn Fontanne and Alfred Lunt that Young was able to complete the translation. "Those finally whom I must thank are Miss Fontanne and Mr. Lunt. Evidently they had talked for some time of doing The Sea Gull . . . and it was by their glowing invitation that I undertook to do The Sea Gull. It was by their recognition of the difference between a dead sentence and a live one that I felt encouraged to go

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on; and by their respect for the text as the author of a play has written it that I believed every word I might contrive for this translation to be important."¹⁶⁶

The Theatre Guild revival opened at The Shubert Theatre, March 28, 1938. Besides the Lunts there were in the cast such other fine artists as Sidney Greenstreet, Uta Hagen, and Margaret Webster, the Shakesperian adapter and director.¹⁶⁷ Although no popular success, since it lasted only forty-one performances, it proved to be something of a succes d'estime.

The published translation appeared in 1939 and with it a preface. In this, Young explained how he had had access to earlier works by seven different translators. But unlike them, and very much like himself, he had striven for a tone that would give unity to the whole. In keeping with his own philosophy of art, many times elsewhere expressed, "if one aims only at the beautiful, the flower is sure to appear," he captured the spiritual beauty inherent in the Chekhov lines, transcended the language barrier, and rendered the "flower." At least the critics applauded. Burns Mantle thought Young had achieved a great beauty of language in translation;¹⁶⁸ in fact he thought that it was the "clearest and most satisfying of all of the translations so far made of the great Russian dramas."¹⁶⁹ John Mason Brown saw in it "a great improvement on its predecessors in

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English.¹⁷⁰

In 1941 his translation of Chekhov's The Three Sisters was published by the Samuel French Company. However, this play with Young's translation was never performed on Broadway. Nor is there any available evidence that it was ever reviewed as a book. Consequently the critical estimate, at this point at least, must remain obscure.

For the next two years (besides his The New Republic stint) he turned his attention to painting. As was mentioned earlier in this sketch, in his youth he had asked that he might take lessons in this art, but had been refused permission by his father. Now, at the age of sixty, he taught himself to paint. For two years he worked at painting as a hobby and in 1943 gave a benefit one-man show for the Friends of Greece, Inc., a charitable organization.¹⁷¹ Interesting artistically and intellectually was the fact that the writer received critical acclaim as a painter. The critics saw in the painting of Stark Young, the aesthetic mysticism so prominent in his writing.

Stark Young, though a newcomer in the realm of exhibitions . . . has attained distinction elsewhere. . . . has been painting for only about two years; but working quite by himself, he has evolved a paint manner subtly adapted to the intimation of his thoughts and reveries. Several of the flower subjects are charmingly brushed. The imaginatively wrought fantasies, sometimes reminding a little of Greco, sometimes a little of Ryder, are irradiated with a re-



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vealing and yet eluding, an always haunting
and intensely personal mysticism.¹⁷²

In a personal conversation (December 1954) Mr. Young revealed to this writer that a number of his (Young's) paintings now hang in important art museums in the country.

From 1941, when he published his translation of The Three Sisters, until 1947, nothing came from Young's pen other than his regular contribution to The New Republic. However, all was not quiescent at the periodical's office. As a prelude to what was to come The New Republic was "streamlined" in 1946. A new editorial board was formed with Henry Wallace (one-time vice-president of the United States) as editor, and Michael Straight as publisher. Young, now sixty-five, was reduced to staff contributor. The publisher boasted that the new staff averaged only thirty-one years of age and would now "meet the challenge of a new time."¹⁷³

The Cherry Orchard, another Chekhov translation, appeared in 1947 and like The Three Sisters was published in soft cover by the Samuel French Company, dealers in play scripts and royalty agents for many American playwrights. Although no Broadway performance was ever given of either of Young's translations of The Three Sisters or The Cherry Orchard, there were a number of productions done by community theatres and other amateur groups.

The same year his love for the South exhibited it-



self again in his edition of the Selected Poems of Sidney Lanier. The volume was accompanied by a preface that defends vehemently the right for Southern poets to be heard. Young, along with Davidson, Warren, Tate, Ransome, and others of this school, feels very strongly that the regional literature of the South has been much overlooked, and uses this means of championing that literature. The interesting thing about this volume, however, is the kind of choices made as representative of Lanier. Young's selection of Lanier's pieces reflect the preciousness of his (Young's) own tastes and delicate artistry.

But this year is chiefly significant in that it marks another turning point in Mr. Young's life. In July 1947, after approximately twenty-two years with The New Republic, he resigned. Herbert Croly, the editor who had hired Young because he liked both him and his criticism, had died, and a new editorial policy under Bruce Bliven was being inaugurated. The accent apparently was to be on national and world political affairs, with a reduction of materials on art, culture, and literature. Accordingly, the space given to drama criticism and kindred art subjects was being drastically curtailed; and since the space being allotted Mr. Young's articles was becoming microscopic in his eyes, and way out of proportion to their importance as an expression of American life, he quit in protest: "After

the death of Herbert Croly, who as editor-in-chief of The New Republic had profound understanding of the place of all arts in our society and of the problems of critical writing, the editorial policy of the magazine gave less and less authority and concern to the arts in general, so with the proper urging my articles got shorter and shorter. I therefore resigned from The New Republic in July, 1947."¹⁷⁴ Or as he summed it up elsewhere, he withdrew because "conditions there seemed no longer either distinguished, sympathetic, or advantageous."¹⁷⁵

In 1948 he published Immortal Shadows, the fifth book in his theatre Pentateuch. This like its predecessors is theatre criticism at its analytical, philosophical, intellectual, and artistic best. The volume is a collection of sixty-five essays selected from Young's The New Republic and The New York Times reviews, representative of the late twenties and early thirties. Contained in this volume are many of the petals of the "flower" of Mr. Young's criticism.

Although the author announced that Immortal Shadows would be the last of his theatre writing,¹⁷⁶ this decision did not keep him from other forms of writing. His most recent production, The Pavilion, 1951, some sections of which he re-wrote as many as thirty times¹⁷⁷ is an autobiographical sketch that takes him through his graduate year at Columbia. The work is so painstaking that the author

claims that he had to "retire from life" for over two years in order to achieve in it just exactly the right "tone."¹⁷⁸ In The Pavilion we find him reliving his early years in the eighties and nineties in Mississippi. Most of the book is taken up with an account of his kinfolk, their gentleness and eccentricities, and reflects the author's philosophy of living, fashioned as it was from a luxurious, gracious, Old South background. It expresses the "essence" (a word that figures often in Young's vocabulary) from the "flower" of the Southern culture.

No resume of Young's literary and critical activity would be complete without mention of his contributions to the periodicals and newspapers, which to date number as follows: over one thousand newspaper and magazine articles; eight hundred to The New Republic; one hundred to The New York Times; and one hundred to various other periodicals including American Magazine of Art, Art Digest, Bookman, Century, Dial, Harper's, Independent, Nation, North American, Theatre Arts, Virginia Quarterly Review and Yale Review.

Since the publication of The Pavilion in 1951, nothing has come from the pen of this writer. Mr. Young has retired from active literary or critical activity, but he informed me during a recent (December 1954) visit with him in New York City, that he is now preparing more autobiography. He contemplates having his next autobiographical

sketch pick up where The Pavillion left off.

The art editor of Time commenting upon the worth of Young's painting once made the statement that "if his painting matches the quality of his dramatic criticism, it will be something."¹⁷⁹ By the same token, one might say that if the sequel to The Pavillion is as good as The Pavillion, it will also "be something."

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER I

Note: The following key to abbreviations will hold throughout the thesis.

American Mercury	Am Mercury
English Journal	Engl J
New Republic	New Repub
North American Review	No Am
19th Century	19th Cent
Saturday Evening Post	Sat Eve Post
Saturday Review of Literature	Sat R Lit
Virginia Quarterly Review	Va Q R
Yale Review	Yale R
Sewanee Review	Sewanee R

Footnotes not prefaced by the name of the author are to be considered as written by Stark Young.

- ¹ Stark Young, ed., Selected Poems of Sidney Lanier, (New York, 1947), p. vii.
- ² E. A. Alderman, ed., Library of Southern Literature, (Atlanta, 1908), vol. 13, p. 6065.
- ³ Stark Young, The Pavilion, (New York, 1951), p. 79.
- ⁴ Ibid., p. 64.
- ⁵ Ibid., p. 11.
- ⁶ "Stark Young," National Cyclopedia of American Biography, (New York, 1939), vol. F, p. 211.
- ⁷ The Pavilion, p. 72.
- ⁸ Rosser H. Taylor, Ante-Bellum South Carolina, (Chapel Hill, 1942), p. vii.
- ⁹ Ben Kendrick, The South Looks at its Past, (Chapel Hill, 1935), p. 6.
- ¹⁰ Ibid., p. 141.
- ¹¹ Holland Thompson, The New South, (New Haven, 1919), p. 1.
- ¹² The Pavilion, p. 56.
- ¹³ Ibid., p. 27.
- ¹⁴ Ibid., p. 92.

- ¹⁵Ibid., p. 19.
- ¹⁶"Chapters from a Book of Memories," Va Q R, 24 (October 1948), 568.
- ¹⁷The Pavilion, p. 89.
- ¹⁸Ibid., p. 124.
- ¹⁹"Stark Young," Scholastic, 25 (January 5, 1935), 9.
- ²⁰The Pavilion, p. 125.
- ²¹Ibid., p. 52.
- ²²Ibid., p. 115.
- ²³Ibid., p. 31.
- ²⁴Ibid., p. 130.
- ²⁵Ibid., p. 164.
- ²⁶Ibid., p. 48.
- ²⁷Ibid., p. 125.
- ²⁸Ibid., p. 90.
- ²⁹Ibid., p. 139.
- ³⁰Ibid., p. 162.



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- 170 John Mason Brown, Two on the Aisle, (New York, 1938), p. 91.

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- 171 "For Friends of Greece," The New York Times, (May 19, 1943), 28, col. 7.
- 172 "Local Shows," The New York Times, (May 23, 1943), sec. II, 10, col. 3.
- 173 "Editor's Note," New Repub, 115 (December 9, 1946), 778.
- 174 Immortal Shadows, p. vii.
- 175 Letter to R. M. Lumianski, June 24, 1954.
- 176 Immortal Shadows, p. vii.
- 177 J. K. Hutchens, "On an Author," New York Herald-Tribune Book Review, (September 30, 1951), p. 2.
- 178 Ibid.
- 179 "Stark Young, Painter," Time, 41, (June 14, 1943), 42.

Chapter II

THE MAN

A consideration of Young's philosophy
as it seems to be exhibited in his
published writings.

His philosophy of living

His philosophy of art

His philosophy of education

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Chapter II

THE MAN

The ingredients that go into the making of a philosophy of life, the ramifications involved in attempting to trace a man's thinking are obviously too complex to be covered casually in one chapter. An entire paper of course, could easily be devoted to this aspect of Stark Young's portrait and still the matter would probably not be covered exhaustively. However, it appears to me that a brief inquiry into Mr. Young's philosophy of life and living might be especially fruitful in enriching the biographical sketch already offered.

There are a number of ways in which this investigation might be accomplished most profitably; one of these is based on the assumption that if one examines a man's attitudes toward living, art, and education he is very likely to get a fairly dependable profile of his subject. In these three areas an individual may very well reveal some of his inmost characteristics and to understand these may be to understand the man. At any rate, it is upon the basis of this reasoning that the following is presented.

When in 1909 Young was penning his paean of praise to Psyche ("Garden of Psyche"), youthful effort though it may have been, he made a statement in blank verse that comes as close to striking the keynote of his philosophy as

anything he ever wrote. Said he to the goddess of Beauty:

Thou knowest I cannot set to little themes,
 Sprung though they be from out the common heart,
 True haply, but yet momentary gleams
 And often smacking of the mart.
 Busy me not with passions of a day,
 Give me to climb where Godlike rule hath sway,
 Give me to wrench the torch from their high might.¹

Young has not been able to "set to little themes," or busy himself "with passions of a day" throughout his literary life. He has tried "to wrench the torch from their high might" and in the opinion of some critics climbed so close to the "place where Godlike rule hath sway" that he disappeared from the sight of the plebeians of this world. Be that as it may, these lines symbolize Young's philosophy, for he is ever the seeker after the ideal, the perfect in art and man.

In the frontispiece of The Street of the Islands there is a statement that "every man is an island, and that, in the midst of these islands, runs the street of life."² This certainly sounds like the statement of a dreamer and poet, and even though it is a generalization that lacks specificity it would seem to establish the author as an individualist at heart. He does not intend to re-create the symbolism of "The Pilgrim's Progress;" what he wishes to say is that he is revolted by a world in which man is being made to be more and more anonymous and life is becoming more and more impersonal.

His best novels and sketches abound in characters who live by the code of individualism in the South. In fact the emphasis on individualism in So Red the Rose is most striking. Uncle Henry, one of the more interesting of the McGehee clan, felt that society had made too many demands upon his rugged individuality; so in protest he removed himself, a la Thoreau, to a cabin in the woods. Young himself, as we have seen, sought solitude in the North Carolina Mountains at one time.

The fabulous Mary Cherry, the perennial visitor at the homes of all her relatives, is symbolic of an individualism that Young admires. On occasion Miss Mary would assert herself by ordering all the cooks out of the kitchen, mixing up a batter, making some cakes, and then repairing to her room and eating them in solitude. On one occasion "At the Tait house, where she often had the guest room directly over the parlor, she had complained so of having to walk down the hall that a special door for her had been cut to open directly on to the head of the stair."³ On another occasion, the unreconstructed Mary, disliking the hymn that the congregation was singing, sang one of her own choosing and drowned out all the others with it. During the War between the States she refused to "stay put." She browbeat many a Union officer into letting her pass through the picket lines, and thereby carried to her Southern friends

many bits of food and vials of medicine hidden within the ample folds of her skirts. There were no limits to which some of Young's characters would not go to assert their individualism. For example, Uncle Miles McGehee maintained his own chair on a Mississippi River boat, so that when he journeyed down to Natchez there would be no doubt about who was occupying what chair. Childish as these matters may seem, they are cited here because they are symbolic and symptomatic of the pride of the individual, the code that each followed, a code to which Young would subscribe.

Yes, "every man is an island" and must remain an individual, to be free. He is an island in the sense that he is completely alone basically and dependent upon his own resources and devices, and also the solitude of his spirit. He cannot be fashioned by an industrial pattern and retain his freedom. There is a code, not a mold. Contained in this idea is a part of the kernel of the Young philosophy of life. As one critic has stated about the author's philosophy:

It is not what we are or do or have that makes us, but what we wish to be and do and have; it is not logic that determines courses, but the subtle imponderable falling out of things; it is not the energetic disposition to examine carefully and judge conscientiously that guarantees worth and destruction to many of us -- most of us simply have not brains enough for judgment; it is not that, then, but the disposition to act -- unreasonably and blindly if we must -- within a code, after a highly conceived pattern that it would be blasphemy to question.⁴

Young deplores the state of affairs in a materialistic society that allows success to be measured only in terms of "more gasoline, more food, more victrola records, [and] more motion."⁵ After a visit to Hollywood, the cinema capital, he returns to New York more disillusioned than ever. From his observation the prevailing attitude in most of the studios appeared to be "more automobiles, divorcing, big business, bathtubs, estates, speed, action and competition."⁶

All of this causes involuntary convulsions of the Young digestive tract, for he is an advocate of something quite different from this. Young feels sure that there is a destiny that shapes at least half our ends and he lets one of the characters in Guenevere say as much: "man's Will is half his destiny."⁷ Nevertheless, he contends that this destiny is very closely involved (as it should be, according to him) with ancestry, community, and matters of significance that have been built up by loving hands. His whole philosophy of living is based upon a sense of values deriving from a way of life rather than a class or a system. Although in So Red the Rose it might appear on the surface that he is defending the planter class of the Old South, he is in reality admiring a type of society in which people seem to belong to something that is bigger than themselves. He gives us evidence of this when he has

one of the McGehee elders give the following advice to his son who is departing to serve in the Confederate Army:

"You know how 'tis in our family. It's something to know that you were loved before you were born. . . . The way I've been obliged to see it is this: Our ideas and instincts work upon our memory of these people who have lived before us and so they take on some clarity of outline. It's not to our credit to think we began today and it's not to our glory to think we end today. All through time we keep coming in to the shore like waves -- like waves. You stick to your blood, son; there's a certain fierceness in blood that can bind you up with a long community of life."⁸

And no system, no arbitrary classification, no economic ranking can take the place of the security of tradition, in his scheme of things. The Negress of the Old South, whose background transcends all neatly pigeonholed systems, balks the efforts of the Northern White Feminist who attempts to make the Negress rise to the bait of equal rights for women. In one of the most delightful of Young's essays, a visiting Northern White Feminist expends much effort and breath in a futile attempt to make a Negress cook on a Southern plantation feel that she is not receiving her full share of womanly rights. The effort of course is fruitless, for the Feminist and the Negress simply do not speak the same language. The Feminist finally gives up with an air of complete defeat and comments resignedly to her host: "Do you know . . . it's difficult to know what's best for various kinds of people."⁹

There is just no common denominator since the guilelessness, the sentiment, and the courtliness of the Southern tradition cannot be understood too readily by the cold objectivity of New England's industrial materialism or any materialistic philosophy for that matter.

Young is the humanitarian. He is certainly his brother's keeper, but perhaps in a little different way from the commonly accepted method of humanitarianism. He realizes that "man's deviltry doth pass the devil"¹⁰ but applauds when he sees Man's humanity to Man in action. He observes in one of his sketches about Texas life how the old Negro Eph is treated. Old Eph once having been a "member" of a plantation family has become senile and nearly imbecile. His health has fallen on evil days. And what does his white "family" do for him? Instead of shutting him up in an institution,¹¹ they give him a place by himself, and a few animals to keep and order around.

Young disapproves heartily of a way of life that develops from industrialization and over-organization. "To each his own" might be his motto, i.e., reduce the bureaucratic centralization of philanthropy and make humanitarianism more locally human. In River House the gentle Aunt Rosa is delighted that people think so highly of her nephew John because he is so polite. She is also amazed that being polite should be looked upon by people as such

an unusual accomplishment, until she bethinks herself ironically that she read recently about some man who paid ten cents to a society to help him be kind to his mother.¹²

The social worker with the black notebook, the tailored suit and the cold unsympathetic eye would never, as an institution, receive Young's support.

Which does not mean, of course, that Young in his philosophy objects to social service per se. On the contrary, he urges the need for it and even advocates the use of the stage to represent social service in operation. In reviewing a WPA theatre project play he makes the statement that "to bring politics, causes, and local crises on to the stage as realities is a good thing, to get them close to the audience is even better."¹³ In fact he does not even object to propaganda on the stage. About Irwin Shaw's Bury the Dead, a diatribe against the waste and brutality of war, Young points out that "there can be no objection basically to art that is propaganda."¹⁴ But it is help that comes from the heart; help that carries with it not dollars alone but warmth and love as well that he advocates. He gives a heartwarming account of one of his Italian priest friends. The latter embarked upon the career of social worker in his own village of Siena in Italy. He organized a boys' club; collected for a swimming pool; reduced delinquency; albeit not without initial antagonism

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from parents.

And why the antagonism? Because the whole idea was contrary to the Italian ideology that makes much of family and tradition. As soon as the parents were reassured that this organized social work would not effect the family tradition per se, the antagonism disappeared.¹⁵ This is a very interesting account told by a sympathetic reporter who believes more than anything else in the family:

Is it not better that I should believe lies, believe in my family, desiring its luster for myself, shamed by its ideals and my own unworthiness, touched by the past of its affections and its standards, than to believe another special sort of American lie, such a one, for instance, as believes Mr. Henry Ford's opinion on art to be of any importance, merely because of his success with wheels in a mechanical system that makes men constantly dryer, more thwarted and less exercised, and Mr. Ford richer and richer?¹⁶

He rails against the preoccupation with knowing about things rather than knowing them; the lack of concern over the truth and too much concern over what people think.¹⁸ He is impatient with a society that fashions all of its members into one mold of Rotarians;¹⁹ who are bent upon "keeping as much like one another as they can;"²⁰ a society that builds thousands of miles of concrete sidewalks, only to find that they lead nowhere;²¹ achieves a faster mile than has ever been achieved before, and is unable to do anything with the achievement but go on to the next mile;²² or exploits our Christmas and Easter celebra-

tions into orgies of advertising and business enterprise.²³ Even the actor's art is prostituted by rank materialism which appraises values in terms of salaries, apartments, and suppers, and actors seem to imitate the techniques of department store salesmanship rather than study the rules of their art.²⁴

About all of these situations Young seems to be slightly bitter. The superficiality that the above matters represent would never fit in with his scheme of things. He has fixed standards in his philosophy of life and living that are too profoundly rooted in classic disciplines, ever to be satisfied with the brittle, staccato "ballyhoo" that he hears about him. He cannot be a party to it. When he hears the talk of American tourists returning from Europe, the same tourists who have missed the grandeur of the Gothic cathedrals, the paintings, the statues, the spiritual and artistic culture of the centuries, he is further revolted. These tourists have seen only the garbage on the wharves and missed the beauty in the human soul.²⁵

That Young is something of a mystic and dreamer, there can be little doubt. He once wrote the present writer that "life in spite of the sharp realism of its detail, has always seemed to me a dream."²⁶ This appears to be true not only of his writing but also of his painting. When he gave his second show at the Rehn galleries the art

reviewer noted this. Said he of Young's paintings: "His skies are wonderful; his flowers fragrant and spectral. Now and then the two themes will be brought into mysterious confluence, and he becomes openly the mystic -- just as he is at all times the poet of imaginative nuances."²⁷

As playwright, novelist, and drama critic, he has been described by Walter P. Eaton as an "aesthetic mystic,"²⁸ because he has such a great passion for values that are intangible. One can start with his very first plays, 1906, and trace the ripple of his mysticism to its final growth into huge waves. As early as Guenevere one can feel throughout the blank verse, a mystical something that is implicit in the very tone of the lines. Here for example is the good King Arthur commenting on the mystery of life:

Tis a poor weary foolish world where we
Blow in like wind, ruled by dark outer forces,
That floods the hollows and the low places here
On our globe, and lo! is gone again.²⁹

On the surface this appears to be cynicism or at best pessimism, but fundamentally it is an expression of an awareness of outer forces too awesome and too mystical to contemplate. Later in 1912 when his first group of one-act plays appeared, we find more of this preoccupation with the mystical. In The Twilight Saint whatever trace of suspected pessimism there might have been in earlier plays has gone from the characters and the mysticism has become more benign. Guido, the poet, and his invalid wife Marietta

are strengthened and reborn by St. Francis of Assisi's
blank verse assurance that,

There is a life larger than life, that dwells
Invisible from all, whose lack alone
Is death. There in the soul the stars may rise,
And at even the gentle thoughts return
To flock the quiet pastimes of the mind.³⁰

He progresses to a more atmospheric mysticism in a
later one-act play, The Queen of Sheba. Here in a Gothic
and Keatsian setting, the poet searches through the vagaries
of dementia and finds that it has its mystery too. In a
Gothic monastery a nun and a medieval doctor observe the
peculiar posturings and blank verse speeches of two elderly
people who have lost their minds. One believes himself
King Solomon and the other fancies herself the Queen of
Sheba. Neither is violently insane. Rather, each seems
to have a gentle melancholy and vacuity.

The tone is sombre and the verse has a muted melody
of sadness. There is the groping into the mystery of mad-
ness, an insatiable groping that intensifies the mysticism.
The doctor can stand watching the two patients no longer,
for his observation of the case is affecting him emotional-
ly. "I have watched until I have no more strength. I will
go now, and it is time, for this sickness spreads into my
soul. I cannot keep in my science, nor take this as mere
madness, when there is so much beauty and sorrow and glory."³¹

Young's mysticism progressed to its highest flowering

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in The Saint where he finally finds an outlet for the expression of those feelings about eternity, infinity, and the vastness of the world of spirit, beauty, and truth around us. It is a feeling about these matters that millions of people everywhere share, but which no one, even the greatest of the world's poets, has yet adequately and successfully put into words. Young, too, fails in his probe, but with that we are not immediately concerned here. What we are concerned with, is the outlet for his mysticism. In The Saint, Valdez watches the religious processions and finds there his inspiration. He submerges himself in the mystery of the lighted candles, the flambeaux in the streets and the ritual at the altar. Through Valdez, Young uses the only outlet he knows - ritual. In fact, "had he been born in some other place and time he might have found contentment in endless repetition of the complicated 'offices' of some monastic order, but cast as he has been upon the modern world he cannot be naïve enough to accept any one ritual as complete or absolute and it is accordingly the idea behind all ritual which fascinates him."³²

One might presume from all the discussion that has gone on before that Young has no sense of humor. On the contrary, he has an excellent one. For example, he gleefully relates the story of his Aunt Elizabeth, who insisted upon wearing hoop skirts long after they were out of fashion.

Consequently, she suffered "some discomfort" once when a small pig became lodged under her skirt and jumped about wildly. The ludicrous picture that Young draws of Aunt Elizabeth bouncing about with a wildly hysterical pig under her skirts is boisterously laugh-provoking.³³

He tells a droll story about Dr. Clay, one of his ancestors who was an alcoholic. The good doctor who was called out one evening when he was quite drunk, found his patient, an elderly lady, reclining in an old-fashioned four poster bed. As he reached for her wrist to take her pulse, he missed completely and, to break his fall, wrapped *himself* around one of the posts. In so doing he caught his own *right* wrist with his left hand. He remained in this position and started counting his own pulse. When he concluded the count, he turned to the lady and said, "There's nothing in the world wrong with you, Madame, except you're thoroughly intoxicated."³⁴

In the same tongue-in-cheek vein, he recounts Uncle George's remark that his wife, who was a New Englander and possessed of a Puritan conscience, used that conscience, not to prevent the performance of unvirtuous acts, but rather, to keep herself from having any fun in doing them.³⁵

This sense of the comic extends to his dramatic criticism as well. He tells, for example, the story of Grasso, the actor, who received a rousing ovation for his

playing of a death scene. When the audience would not stop applauding, the actor got up from the floor where he had lain dead and played the scene all over again.³⁶ In his review of a performance of the Gilbert and Sullivan "Patience," Young discussed the matter of the music versus the words, and concluded that cutting down on the music to accent the words would be like taking "Dr. Arne's song³⁷ of 'My mother bids me bind my hair,' and playing it on a comb to bring out the hair."³⁸ Anyway, says he, people are never too concerned about the words in either comic or serious opera. Why, even Caruso once scratched himself on a pin that was sticking out of Geraldine Farrar's costume and promptly changed the words O Suava Fancuilla of the Italian aria that he was singing, to O Spilla Grudele (Oh Cruel Pin).. The audience, apparently neither understanding nor caring about the words, gave him just as much applause as he would have received had he sung the right words.³⁹

The same kind of thing happened with Sarah Bernhardt at one time. Young relates the incident with a twinkle in his eye. "And once I heard Sarah Bernhardt in Tosca standing over Scarpia's body, when she had stabbed him, break into invective against the scenery. A piece of the wings had swung on its hinges and flapped against her; cette colonne va tomber she declaimed, in a rasping voice of hate and revenge, her eyes on her dead enemy, 'this column is

going to fall, these damned carpenters haven't got any sense."40

To sum up completely the many facets of Young's philosophy of living as revealed through his writings and through personal conversations would take more time than we need to spend here. But briefly we may say that he believes in living within a code, a code fashioned from a tradition. And tradition he thinks has a place in a way of life. This does not mean that he subscribes to the idea of ancestor worship, but rather, that he has a respect for the accumulation of knowledge, noblesse oblige, culture, and generosity of spirit that started as a ripple in the early colonial South and grew to a wave. Although he has no immediate family of his own (he never married) he is the champion of the family as the modus operandi of tradition. Family in the broader sense of the word looms large in his experience as a shaper of attitudes and character and as a purveyor of culture. The reader may recall how much stress was placed upon this aspect of Young's early life in the biographical sketch.

Young is an individualist whose very gorge rises at how completely the false standards of materialism and industrialism have robbed the 20th century American of his individualism.

Young's sense of humor is precious and sardonic. It

could be no other way for as an aesthetic mystic he stands away from and above the little ones of this world and as an humanitarian he is bitter about the destructive inroads that materialistic standards have foisted upon this society.

His philosophy of art refers invariably to Plato's premise about art being a general name signifying something is where something was not before. It is upon this premise that Young's aesthetic rests. On one occasion when discussing acting he notes that acting is not an art until it portrays not only what it has to portray in its own terms but "adds to it [the portrayal] something that was not there before."⁴¹ Or in another connection when discussing the décor in the production of The Birthday of the Infants, he states that for the result to be art "an element must be there that was not there before. It must be incredibly translated into something else; it must be the same and not the same, like the moon in water, by a certain nameless difference born anew."⁴² Stated in other terms "art is a form of translation by which one thing is expressed in terms of another,"⁴³ or a way of "creating in one section of living, an experience we have in another."⁴⁴ Whenever creation in art occurs, a species of chain reaction is set up, for "art indeed can be thought of as a restatement of an experience in one part of life in terms of another part of life."⁴⁵ The musician puts his creation into sound.

The architect hears the sound and translates it into mass and textures; the lover, into poetry; the painter, into line and color; the sculptor into planes and elevations; the dancer into movements, and so on. Thus the creation by a nameless something is "ever born anew."

What must the poet or the artist do then to create a work of art? Is it enough to imitate Nature? Is it enough to photograph? In terms of Young's aesthetic, this would not be enough. "It must be incredibly translated into something else." That is, mere translation is only photography, but an "incredible" translation is something else again. It imbues the subject with a magnetism, a glow, and an "antiphonal radiance" that far transcends mere translation. To use an expression that he employs quite often, it makes the matter being treated by art "come alive." This coming alive may even involve a restatement of the material "a translation into living terms so that its truth may stay alive."⁴⁶ Young follows this reasoning when he refers to John Mason Brown's Two on the Aisle:

When it comes to today's dramatic criticism and the restatement in our terms of the original meaning, or quality, in terms of the people involved, we could scarcely find a better example than in Mr. John Mason Brown's brilliant article on "L'Aiglon and Miss Le Gallienne" . . . In such an article the richly charged phrases convey the tone and character that within its own epoch Rostand intended his play to have, but at the same time we are made aware of the transformations that have gone on with time,

changes from French into English, France to America, and of the problems, ever renewed, of production.⁴⁷

In reviewing a Broadway production of Macbeth, Young makes the point that part of the eternality-of-truth in this play is dependent upon the response to it. And in order for this response to remain alive there must be a restatement of it in the living terms of each generation. If Macbeth were to be given in Elizabethan style, it might be of interest archaeologically but it would be "far from profound truth; a mere dead fact. . . . The vitality of Macbeth, the shadow, the fire of it, its great single line, are not securely and comfortably ours by mere inheritance; they are alive only through the pressing life and new wonder and invention and singleness that we can put into its performance."⁴⁸

Furthermore, to go on with this line of thought, every work of art that is worthy of being so called must contain within itself life, not necessarily consisting "in action of strenuosity but in a pressing inner force, a kind of pressure from a center outward."⁴⁹ In short, a life that defies suppression.

To be sure, "art can spring only out of natural happy satisfactions of some life light or dark, comic or tragic,"⁵⁰ and it must have its basis in Nature.⁵¹ However, as he points out in connection with acting, Nature herself

was never art. An actor who merely feels the role will not necessarily be an artist. He will have to supplement his mental, physical, and spiritual talents with technique, in order to become the consummate artist. Young does not hold with those who subscribe to the volition theory, that there need be only a "will" and a "feel" for great art to result.⁵²

Much more than that is needed. Close attention to detail on the part of the artist is an indispensable requirement. Young illustrates this belief time and again in his reviews of plays. In one review he pointed out that an actress by the mere placing of her feet, established the insensitiveness and mediocrity of the character she was trying to portray.⁵³ For Young, this would be the difference between creating a world of art and simply giving a performance. In the case of the "acting" in Dinner at Eight he found the actors were so typecast that no acting resulted, only performing.⁵⁴ He finds this to be true of all art, namely, that great artists are very much aware of the importance of detail. There is a difference between a run-of-the-mill painter and a real painter; the difference being that the former will paint anything from Washington Crossing the Delaware to The Old Swimmin' Hole in Peoria without a moment's hesitation; whereas the latter is so aware of the need for technique and attention to detail in rendering "the flower," that he "trembles before the mere

character of human hands and the problem of their conversion [through detail] into the unity that is his style."⁵⁵

And as to style, this is a matter of importance also in the Young aesthetic. Since it is part of the emotion expressed, the style in which a thing is written or spoken must be understood. Otherwise the receiver cannot get the full impact of the work of art. So important does he rate style, that he re-wrote parts of The Pavilion thirty times in order to get the proper tone and "by tone I mean style!"⁵⁶

After doing any extended reading in Young, one perceives that his style is sometimes extremely involved and "worked over." It is true that in his journalistic writing he, like many of his colleagues, often falls into a "critics' jargon" that becomes prolix and tedious. He uses repetitiously, expressions like "art is long and life is short," "all life," "all art," "all nature," "dilates," "music is the ideal of all the arts," "in the realm of the blind, the one-eyed is king," "the foolish man going through life as a spoon through soup, without perceiving its savour," "the defect of the excellence," "the least ugly daughter is the family beauty," "con amore," "it has a rightness," and so forth.

Nevertheless in his more serious and ambitious pieces he is a careful, skillful, and exacting writer; and is sometimes so painstaking in his effort to be thorough

that his style becomes heavily Victorian. His review of O'Neill's Hairy Ape falls into this category. The encomium is done laboriously and is a most conscientious estimate of the production.⁵⁷ He lavishes the same care on his theatre reviewing that Ruskin does on architecture.

Young is even more concerned about form than he is about style. In his aesthetic, form ranks high. He subscribes to the Neo Platonic Spenser premise that "soul is form and doth the body make." This is not surprising since he had been nourished on generous helpings of Spenser.

Form for him is the unifying principle in all art and nature. In one essay he chooses three different works of art, a painting, a drawing, and a model for a stage set of Dante's Divine Comedy. With these examples he tries to show how each is an entity while still related to the other; how each is basically related to all experience; and more especially how form is the unifying principle that relates all art to our whole existence.⁵⁸

He heartily commends Susan Glaspell for the experimental aspect of her play The Verge, because it experiments with new forms. He is impatient with those who are forever "prattling about new forms in the theatre and then fighting any attempt at new material . . . we shall never have new forms without having first the new matter of which the soul at length becomes the form."⁵⁹

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In another place he takes Bernard Shaw to task. He reviews Shaw's Back to Methuselah and berates the dramatist because he seems to hold form in such low regard:

And there is another thing that Shaw has never seemed to know, which is this: great form in art is not a showing off, a strutting rodomontade of puffed up vanity and nonsense; it is on the contrary, the natural and inevitable result of carrying the quality of a thing to its ultimate essence. Great form in art is a consummation and immortalizing of the matter. It is the duty that the soul feels under the highest excitement to render this excitement in terms of its last perfection and almost abstract finality. Form in art is nothing to be shy about, or to mistrust as a kind of exhibitionism. It is natural and inevitable wherever life is driven to perpetuate itself and separate what it wills to be its incorruptible and pristine part from the incidental and corruptible.⁶⁰

Thus we come to a consideration of Young as the aesthetic mystic, who believes that art "provokes the sense of imagination and wonder, and supplies that reminder of the strange and unguessed in life."⁶¹ The "strange and unguessed in life." This, like "antiphonal radiance" is as much a key idea in the Young aesthetic as the Lady of the Lake's arm, clothed in white samite, "mystic, wonderful," is a key phrase in the Idylls of the King. There is the same concept of unspoiled childlike wonder, awe, and naïveté implicit in both. It is innocently, unsophisticatedly beautiful. In Tennyson, according to some, it becomes overemotional and syrupy. In Young, however, even though he believes "there is no more reason to doubt the

value of emotional experience than of the so-called intellectual,"⁶² it is protected from such a fate by a fine intellectual grasp.

The strain of mysticism is very evident in some of Young's work, as has been pointed out elsewhere in this discussion. It is even more pronounced in his definition of the poetic:

In life for instance we have particular moments of deep feeling, say, or suspense. We do not separate these, hold them compartmentally off to themselves. What happens is a gradual heightening, and intensification of our beings. The pulse concentrates its stroke, it is quicker or it seems almost suspended; but its existence is deepened and made more compulsive. The body increases its life, it moves toward more complete unity. The mind is charged with a vaster region in which it dilates and seems to breathe a wider air. The whole of us, mind, body, spirit, is driven toward a simplification, a oneness. We draw more easily and luminously a radiance from ourselves . . . and that is what the poetic is in our existence.⁶³

Having a sense of wonder provoked to an antiphonal radiance generated by the play of all things one upon the other,⁶⁴ sounds like an echo from the philosophy apparent in William Blake's brightly burning tiger, where the artist's presentation of the tiger is more deeply like the tiger than the tiger can itself ever be. In any event, it seems to have the same kind of complex and ephemeral intangibility; the same kind of inscrutable evanescence and expressive inexpressibility; the same kind of out-of-this-

worldishness, while being within-this-world; the same kind of unreality within reality that Blake attempted.

It would seem that we have here a strangely inconsistent combination. Confessedly, Young is a champion of the Greeks and their classic disciplines. Yet, very obviously he is not of a kidney with the Dryden-Swift-Pope school. Young follows Reason all right, but not the reason of the cold zones; or of the coldly scientific, or the objectively precise. Rather, it seems to be the reason of the enigmatic, the mystic, the religieux. Guenevere, the queen in the play of the same name states the case effectively when she says:

. . . Reason speaks to reason
But unto heart only the heart can speak.⁶⁵

One of his Roman Catholic priest characters expresses the concept for Young fairly succinctly with: "I tend to follow Reason; and to me Reason is the kind of imagination that perceives the relation to one another of all things, how they check or support one another, the relation, signor, of all things in our world about us and in our world of time."⁶⁶

This is basically a romantic concept that Young follows closely. Sometimes for him, art is a mystic thing that stands apart. In a sense it is the ars gratia artis concept. There are times when he thinks art should not and cannot embroil itself in serious worldly problems or time-

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liness. It should concern itself only with that "nourishment on which our imaginations live."⁶⁷ Thus, in an article defending Synge's play, Playboy of the Western World against charges of paganism, Young points out how great works of art finally come to be looked upon for what they are, namely, materials acted upon by a mystical alliance of "mind, body and spirit toward a simplification, a oneness."⁶⁸ For him such works are neither polemic, evangelical, nor socially reformatory. They have no message. They are simply "antiphonal radiances" and should be appreciated as such. As evidence of how this comes to be finally with great works of art he points to Milton's Paradise Lost. He notes how the impact of this piece was so strong for one generation that it was looked upon, not as a work of art, but rather, as part of the Bible, as are Deuteronomy or Exodus or the Gospels. The following generation disliked the theology contained therein, so Paradise Lost was neglected. Finally, the poem came to be read as a work of art, just as Homer is, without dogma.⁶⁹

On the other hand, on occasion Young can adopt a point of view quite contrary to that of the pure mystic. He advocates a this-world mysticism. He thinks it is "high time that people in the theatre learned to look more for heightened and mystical veracity . . . for a something through which the shock and pressure of our invisible living

impregnates with itself the outer substance of life, as the light of day impregnates with itself the outer substance of life."⁷⁰ It is the function of art to express society; "its necessity is to distil and shape . . . what there is to shape and distil, outwardly to achieve the definity of order and the mystery of form for what was hitherto wandering or in solution; and inwardly like the evening star, in its immortal and intense suspension, to bring us back to the knees of life."⁷¹

If one were to attempt to restate in capsule form Young's aesthetic, he would most certainly have to begin with the Platonic premise that art is a general name indicating something is where something was not before. In Young's text, all art is a re-expression that acts after the nature of a chain reaction. The artist finds his materials in Nature (which is not Art) and acts upon Her with form, style and technique so that the materials "come alive." And if the artist is an aesthetic mystic, as is Young, his aesthetic, like Young's, will rest upon a foundation of the "antiphonal radiance" drawn from their own parts, of all things.

Because of the fact that Young has achieved fame as critic and artist one is likely to forget the fact that he started as an educator. For sixteen years he taught at three different colleges, and for a number of years he was

lecturer at another. He was held in high esteem by students and colleagues alike and his opinions in education were respected. Apparently the United States government felt his opinions in this field were worthy also, for in a New Republic article, Young refers to the fact that he served on a Federal education commission.⁷² Exactly what this commission did or what its function was is not altogether clear. In a personal conversation, Mr. Young indicated that he cannot remember the details. And the matter does not warrant an exhaustive search through government files. It is enough to note that he served on such a committee.

On the premise then, that the character of a man may well be reflected in his attitudes toward education, an examination of Young on this score may be revealing.

Young's ideas on the subject were fashioned from a combination of early home influences and college training that made his point of view strictly non urban, agrarian, and intensely Old South Southern. He had been nurtured among people who valued close family ties, and realized most of their social and cultural satisfactions from these ties. The ingredients that nourished his thinking he describes succinctly in The Pavilion (p. 112):

It consisted not so much in what usually is called education and informed studies, as it did in personalities and the general principles that were accepted by them out of life

as it was, and that were to be lived by. Partly by inheritance and partly by the way we live our people came into an interest in human beings that was not so much psychological or analytical as it was personal, secret, open and bright with what is living; the closeness and carefree downrightness of their talk had in it what Yeats calls "the gay exaggeration of equals;" there was about it a certain plainness with the earth, as it were a plainness that had left in me, and has still left a limited patience and flat unbelief as to the pseudo-intellectual palaver of the drawing rooms in a great city.

This "plainness," this "simplicity," this that involves the simple dignity of man, is basic in Young's philosophy. He expresses it in different ways in different places, but fundamentally the argument is always the same. In the "uncut diamond" state, the human being has about him a fineness, a genuineness, a gentility, and a naïveté that Young respects. He admires these characteristics in Mr. Wallace, his unspoiled Texas farmer friend, about whom he writes an article. Mr. Wallace "had a sort of refinement, he is clean like a fine animal, fresh hearted as a boy. His intelligence is active and simple and sharp. His passions are strong and genuine, and they are kept to an open and wholesome proportion and temperance by his relation to the world about him. His relation to men, the soil and the natural earth is evenly distributed on account of the way he lives."⁷³

Young's pre-college training was "spotty" and by his own admission the training that he received at the Univer-

sity of Mississippi was far from thorough or complete. He defends it partially on the grounds that it was based on the humanities, especially the classics. In fact, he makes more than a defense, he makes a plea for the return to what he considers the more authentic values to be found in the classics and the "Great Books."

His faith in, his admiration of, and his profound respect for the dignity, restraint, and simplicity of the Greek and Roman classics stem from the traditional (strictly unvocational) Old South upbringing that he had both at home and in college. Even after college, while living alone in a cabin in the North Carolina mountains, he steeped himself in the originals of these classics, and later came to the conclusion, after many years of teaching on the college level, that here was part of the core-curriculum upon which his basic college system might rest.

He stresses the fact that "what small bits of ideas and knowledge I received were filled with some vague passion and ambition; our conception of education was at least larger than ourselves; it did not deride, but on the contrary denied nothing in the splendor of the dead who had gone before us; it rested on something lofty and remote . . . that was honorable and high like Hamlet's soliloquies or Plutarch's Lives or General Lee."⁷⁵

At his own University of Mississippi, Young finds

grave flaws in the educational philosophy and psychology behind it all. Looking back at these courses in Greek and Latin that he had there, he concludes that they were planned not "as insights into living or exercises in the delight that lies in store for us in poetry, but rather, as if we were all being prepared to be professors of Latin or Greek."⁷⁶ In other words, to Young, the individual has the right to expect that higher education will supply spiritual, intellectual, and human long-term values quite aside from the vocational. The universal verities are not to be found in the training of human adding machines.

Even though the training at his University was less thorough than he feels it should have been, he contends that it was deeper and more solid than what he might have received at one of the great Eastern Universities. There, the training might have been a little more over-organized and better labelled; it might "without any significant regard to social tradition or profound continuity in a way of life, have been more informative and obligatory;"⁷⁷ the information disseminated might have been more accurate and better disciplined; but there would have been less of the "human" touch.⁷⁸ In short, the more "advanced" Eastern schools would not have inculcated with any profundity, a way of life or a significant social tradition, a matter which to Young is of prime importance.

He would also claim for his University and many other universities in the South that they were doing what they were doing with an excellent purpose. Their system, says he, is simply a means of combatting the attitude of industrialism, and making a distinction between the spreading of culture and the constant yammer about equipment and the election of trustees from the ranks of the National Association of Manufacturers.

The vigor with which the materialists have taken over higher education has more than distressed Stark Young. He was, however, encouraged on one occasion:

I shall never forget the encouragement with which I saw for the first time that some of the dormitory doors at the University of Virginia needed paint, so sick was I at the bangup varnishing, rebuilding, plumbing, endowing, in some of the large Northern institutions.

If they learn little at these Virginia Halls, it is doubtless as much as they would learn at the other and they at least escape the poison of the success idea that almost every building is sure to show, the belief that mechanical surface and the outer powers of money are the prime things in living.⁷⁹

Wherever he expresses himself specifically on the subject (and he does in a number of places as the following will show) he is antagonistic toward some of the college professors, the persons that he considers are higher education's high priests. He has no quarrel with the profession per se, only some of its exponents, like Professor

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Stomach hangs plumply cut, not fat but soft and loose like his face. He looks pleased with himself. Plainly he is one of those self made men in academic life who take very seriously their rise in the world. . . . You can look at him and see that he has no interest in the world, no passionate devotions or dark fits of despair, or elevation; he is not studious, not active, not meditative, not keen. . . . He makes a living - a sort of living - at the University. But he probably potters around in his brain very much as he does in the mild stewardship of his backyard.⁸⁰

When he describes a professor as a "platitude at prayer,"⁸¹ or accuses him of dealing out curious platitudes, absorbable only by sensitive college students,⁸² or likens him to a captain who has sailed all around the world but never in it, he demonstrates his impatience with those who would relegate an academic college education to mere theory and exercises. He wants the whole man trained, so that life can be faced, not just thought profoundly about.⁸³ Young is fond of the expression "come alive." He likes to see a line of poetry come alive, or a line in a play or a piece of philosophy. And it is the professor's responsibility to make that happen.

Nothing irks Young more than the downright obliviousness manifested by professors, in the social significance of the subjects they teach. Particularly is he concerned with the fact that the future of the land may very easily become dependent upon higher education and its professors.⁸⁴ And

unfortunately the professors, he thinks, are too willing to sit tight and vegetate. Anyone who has the temerity to try to be creative in his approach to the subject matter or the method of teaching it, is likely to be dubbed a radical and fired from his college teaching job because of the "too advanced" ideas he is allegedly planting in the minds of the students.⁸⁵ It is difficult to say how directly autobiographical an author's references are, since in a sense everything that an author writes is likely to be tinged with his own experience. In this case, one can only observe that in every article that touches on the subject, the characters and situations occur at institutions in Mississippi, Texas, New York or a "small New England College." The reader will recall that Young taught or was a student at the University of Mississippi, University of Texas, Columbia, and Amherst College (a "small New England College").

Whether the following were real people with whom Young came in contact as colleagues or whether, as is more likely, they are composites possessing all of the characteristics Young dislikes most in college teachers, is not very important. But it is interesting to observe how he vents his spleen on some of the fraternity. He is not given to the excessive use of sarcasm, nor does he ever use it simply for its own sake. However, when he does use it, his words

go straight to the heart of the matter. He makes certain that he is "seeing the point" a caption that he uses for some of his critical essays. Observe, if you will, one unflattering description that he supplies: "He became an assistant in a University, one of the young professors of literature who combine teaching with trying to write, until they are either exploded out of one or the other, or else get the dry rot in both."⁸⁶ Young, at least in part, joined The New Republic in order to escape what he considered the "dry rot."

He certainly seems to have a healthy disrespect for some of his colleagues' minds. Says he of one: "I knew even then that his mind was permanently adolescent; it would make him a good college teacher for the first few years."⁸⁷ Not all of them however are doomed to the dry rot or short term success. Some of them will achieve a footnote immortality as did Simmons who "went most successfully through a Middle Western College and became at length a professor. He is now a psychologist of standing, hated and admired by his academic competitors, invited to read papers at conventions, and frequently referred to in footnotes."⁸⁸

It is almost impossible, quoting out of context, to render the withering scorn contained in the above quoted lines. "Hated and admired by his competitors!" This very

probably reflects Young's irritation with the bureaucratic hierarchy of backbiting from which, according to him in "Return of the Teacher,"⁸⁹ college teaching suffers. His attitude may be somewhat biased on the subject. Young explained to me in a personal interview on one occasion, that he felt he had been the victim of such jealousies while at Amherst.

Having disposed of some of his teacher friends Young feels free to develop an opinion as to what has brought about this state of affairs. There is too much specialization and this again entails, as above, a discussion of the teacher problem. There needs to be a return to a more general education program. Too much effort is expended on administrative detail. Teachers have become exalted bookkeepers. There is an over-concentration of effort on the coldly objective type of scholarship that divorces the body of education from its soul and spirit. "With the smaller men it has too often served as an excuse for low grade mechanics and mere union labor. It has helped separate the teacher from the student's complete interests."⁹⁰

An Italian priest, one of the characters in Feliciano (collection of vignettes) makes a statement that bears upon and explains the matter very interestingly. The priest had been explaining about the complexity of life to one of his colleagues: "I tore a leaf in pieces and begged him to re-

flect how with all these parts of it we yet had not the leaf. The leaf had, therefore, not been the mere sum of these parts, something had been present which was its character or soul and which now had fled. . . .⁹¹ In just such fashion have the directing and compartmentalizing in education killed the soul of learning. The students have not only been separated from the teachers but alienated as well. In the mad search after specialization, the teachers have become more and more limited in their range and scope of learning. "There is obviously less demand, then, for good breeding, sophistication, and sympathy in the teacher, for the Aristotelian virtues; for Aquinas's wholeness, harmony and radiance; in short for a man."⁹² Rather, the demand, as was mentioned above, is for cold objectivity, devoid of any humanness or humaneness, where the teacher finds himself between two lines of fire. If he is too profoundly erudite, he is accused of lack of spirit; if he shows any animation or life, he is, naturally, not very scholarly.⁹³

Young's strictures are not confined to the calibre of undergraduate teaching. He can turn quite acid about the fact that dinner at any faculty club might let one meet many admirable men, but it might also reveal that "a fool . . . may become a professor because of the discovery of some use of MID in Anglo-Saxon;"⁹⁴ or Young can wax quite ironically flippant about his own adventures in the vineyard:

In the end I was assigned for my Master's Thesis the academic and sterile subject of James Montgomery, once Poet Laureate, of England and so banal a versifier of the Scriptures that it took me a great deal of Keats and Spenser to wash out the taste of him. The best I can say of the learned assignment is what the old colored man said of the bootleg whiskey they tried out on him: it was just right; if it had been any better they would not have given it to me, and if it had been any worse it would have killed me.⁹⁵

What then would be the author's solution to what he considers the muddled aims, the exhorting grades, the rules, degrees, and prizes that he says the colleges use to keep things going? What then would be his suggestion for re-turning the colleges and universities to the life of the mind and the life of human thought?

The answer of the Young philosophy of education is: exercise greater selectivity; reduce the number of entrants to a chosen few and make it understood that higher education is suited to a small number only. He makes this point in "Not in Memoriam, but in Defense," with the following lines:

Then I should add, the resounding education in the richer parts of the United States is already by many observers admitted to be most futile, and that I should like to hope that a return to confidence will lead the South to turn toward the general idea that education of the university sort, not professional or technical, is suited to a small number only.

This at present un-American idea of education may spread if in our schools and uni-

versities a less democratic, mobbed and imitative course of things should come to be . . . [For the present status seems to represent] . . . an adolescent mentality and prosperous innocence of what culture may mean.⁹⁷

Is this heretic? Un-American? Undemocratic? Not really at all; for he is not attempting to set up an aristocratic caste system. He merely wishes to render unto Caesar what is Caesar's, to train those who warrant training. .

He subscribes to the European theory that higher education (at least in the Humanities; and without the Humanities there is no education, he would contend) is for the few. He is opposed to the democratic principle of equal opportunity for all in higher education. He recognizes the statement in the Declaration of Independence concerning equality of birth, but doubts its reality. "For the verve and gusto of popular life there must always be among a people where all are born equal, a prize for those who, out of respect for the Constitution, if nothing else, were born equal but overcame it."⁹⁷ Mass education to him is abhorrent just as mass anything would be. This is not rooted in an intellectual snobbery, but in a profound belief that the greatest good for humanity, for a culture, for a way of life, for a tradition can come only by returning the colleges to those who have a sincere respect and love for learning.

And, as to the teachers, he would have men in the college classrooms who by training and inclination are more than mere regurgitators of content material. He wants men who are dedicated to a sacred profession; men who have an insight into their subject matter far above and beyond the mere call of pedagogy; men who have a profound respect for their own calling and the materials with which they work. They must be more than "footnote" scholars or specialists; rather, they must be men with vision who see below the hard surface of materialism. They must be men of faith who believe in the destiny of their profession and the high responsibilities attached thereto. Is this, then, perfectionism and idealism? The answer is yes, for this is indeed characteristic of all of Stark Young's thinking and writing. He is an idealist; he is a perfectionist.

Obviously all of the complexities that go into the makeup of a man's philosophy of life have not been touched upon in this discussion but it would seem that enough has been covered to reach the following general conclusions:

Young is an optimist at heart and a staunch believer in the innate goodness of man. The word "dignity" ranks high in Young's vocabulary. He is a stern opponent of the coldly and barbarously mechanistic philosophy that evolves from worship at the shrine of the machine and "success." This he deplores, as does O'Neill in his play Dynamo. He

has no patience with the ideology that grows from the concentrated devotion to material things. He is the humanist and the humanitarian, while at the same time he is the devotee of culture and the dreamer.

Aside from the traits of character that seem to show through his writing, one is impressed by personal association with Mr. Young with his immense sincerity. To have withstood the onslaughts of cynical Broadway and to have emerged comparatively unscathed is in itself something of a major accomplishment. But to have been able to preserve a fresh and unjaded attitude toward life and living and toward his fellow man is a triumph indeed. Young has remained to this day what he calls "country Southern," which is another term in his vocabulary for true humility. Said he once, of his work: "I who know the smallness of my voice . . . wonder if any words of mine could matter much . . ."

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FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER II

Footnotes not prefaced by the name of the author are to be considered as written by Stark Young.

- ¹ Stark Young, "The Garden of Psyche," Forum, 42 (1909), 175.
- ² Stark Young, The Street of the Islands, (New York, 1930), frontispiece.
- ³ The Pavilion, p. 7.
- ⁴ John D. Wade, "Two Souths," Va Q R, 10 (October 1934), 616.
- ⁵ The Flower in Drama, p. 51.
- ⁶ Ibid., p. 70.
- ⁷ Guenevere, p. 44.
- ⁸ Henry S. Commager, "The South that was Swept Away," Scholastic, 57 (November 29, 1950), 12.
- ⁹ "The New," New Repub, 31 (August 16, 1922), 333.
- ¹⁰ Guenevere, p. 28.
- ¹¹ Pelliciana, p. 60.
- ¹² Stark Young, River House, (New York, 1929), p. 19.
- ¹³ "Expressionistic," New Repub, 86 (April, 1936), 225.
- ¹⁴ "The Great Doom's Image," New Repub, 87 (May 13, 1936), 21.
- ¹⁵ "Modernism in Siena," New Repub, 24 (September 1, 1920), 19.
- ¹⁶ I'll Take My Stand, p. 351.

- ¹⁸Ibid., p. 354.
- ¹⁹River House, p. 243.
- ²⁰Glamour, p. 151.
- ²¹I'll Take My Stand, p. 335.
- ²²Ibid., p. 356.
- ²³Feliciano, p. 207.
- ²⁴Glamour, p. 152.
- ²⁵"Bruised Patriots," New Repub, 23 (August 18, 1920), 331.
- ²⁶Letter to R. M. Lumianski, January 29, 1954.
- ²⁷Edward A. Jewel, "An Annual History," The New York Times, (November 18, 1945), sec. II, 7, col. 4.
- ²⁸W. P. Eaton, "The Saint," New York Herald-Tribune Book Review, (October 4, 1925), p. 5.
- ²⁹Guenevere, p. 31.
- ³⁰Stark Young, Addio, Madretta, and Other Plays, (Chicago, 1912), p. 79.
- ³¹Stark Young, "Queen of Sheba," Theatre Arts, 6 (April 1922), 154.
- ³²Joseph Wood Krutch, "Drama," Nation, 119 (October 29, 1924), 474.

- ³³The Pavilion, p. 106.
- ³⁴Heaven Trees, p. 44.
- ³⁵Ibid., p. 9.
- ³⁶"Marginal Notes," New Repub, 87 (July 8, 1936), 272.
- ³⁷In a letter dated January, 1955, Young noted that he, Young, had made an error, and that the name should be Haydn not Arne.
- ³⁸"Patience," The New York Times, February 1, 1925, sec. VII, 1, col. 2.
- ³⁹Immortal Shadows, p. 151.
- ⁴⁰"Billet Doux," Theatre Arts, 13 (October 1929), 735.
- ⁴¹The Flower in Drama, p. 10.
- ⁴²Immortal Shadows, p. 4.
- ⁴³Stark Young, Theatre Practice, (New York, 1926), p. 1.
- ⁴⁴"Orchestral Drama," New Repub, 55 (May 23, 1928), 19.
- ⁴⁵The Theatre, p. 42.
- ⁴⁶"Macbeth," New Repub, 38 (April 2, 1924), 153.
- ⁴⁷"Characters," New Repub, 97 (November 16, 1938), 45.

- 48 "Macbeth," New Repub, 38 (April 2, 1924), 153.
- 49 "The Mould of Form," New Repub, 33 (January 3, 1923), 149.
- 50 "Two Follies," New Repub, 33 (November 29, 1922), 21.
- 51 "Back to Creation," New Repub, 30 (March 15, 1922), 80.
- 52 The Flower in Drama, p. 16.
- 53 "An Actress and a Dramatist," New Repub, 60 (November 6, 1929), 324.
- 54 "Dinner at Eight," New Repub, 72 (November 9, 1932), 356.
- 55 "Street Scene," New Repub, 57 (January 30, 1929), 296.
- 56 J. K. Hutchens, "On an Author," New York Herald Tribune Book Review, (September 30, 1951), p. 2.
- 57 "Hairy Ape," New Repub, 30 (March 22, 1922), 112.
- 58 "The Mould of Form," New Repub, 33 (January 3, 1923), 149.
- 59 "After the Play," New Repub, 29 (December 7, 1921), 47.
- 60 "Back to Creation," New Repub, 30 (March 15, 1922), 80.
- 61 "After the Play," New Repub, 29 (December 7, 1921), 47.
- 62 "Sad Photograph," New Repub, 32 (October 18, 1922), 189.
- 63 The Flower in Drama, p. 119.

- ⁶⁴"Social Science and Culture," New Repub, 16 (August 17, 1918), 68.
- ⁶⁵Guenevere, p. 43.
- ⁶⁶Stark Young, The Three Fountains, (New York, 1924), p. 57.
- ⁶⁷"After the Play," New Repub, 27 (June 22, 1921), 117.
- ⁶⁸The Flower in Drama, p. 119.
- ⁶⁹"After the Play," New Repub, 27 (June 22, 1921), 117.
- ⁷⁰"Dostoevsky's Idiot," New Repub, 30 (April 26, 1922), 255.
- ⁷¹A Southern Treasury of Life and Literature, p. viii.
- ⁷²"Citizen Tom," New Repub, 33 (December 27, 1922), 124.
- ⁷³"Texas Lights," New Repub, 31 (August 9, 1922), 308.
- ⁷⁴As was mentioned earlier in this study, a pig drowned in the school well, polluted the drinking water, caused typhoid, and closed the seminary.
- ⁷⁵The Pavilion, p. 158.
- ⁷⁶Ibid., p. 148.
- ⁷⁷Ibid., p. 156.
- ⁷⁸Ibid.
- ⁷⁹I'll Take My Stand, p. 339.

- 80 "Texas Lights," New Repub, 31 (August 9, 1922), 306.
- 81 "Citizen Tom," New Repub, 33 (December 27, 1922), 124.
- 82 Feliciansana, p. 113.
- 83 "Henry's Art Course," New Repub, 31 (May 31, 1922), 18.
- 84 "Chapters from a Book of Memories," Va Q R, 24 (October 1948), 572.
- 85 "My Aunt Lavinia," New Repub, 70 (February 17, 1932), 17.
- 86 "Mates and Sublimates," New Repub, 45 (February 3, 1926), 17.
- 87 "Chapters From a Book of Memories," Va Q R, 24 (April 1948), 222.
- 88 "Thalia's Behaviour," New Repub, 33 (February 7, 1923), 284.
- 89 "Return of the Teacher," The Nation, 107 (September 7, 1918), 251.
- 90 Ibid.
- 91 Feliciansana, p. 212.
- 92 "Return of the Teacher," 251.
- 93 "A Farewell to Arms," New Repub, 64 (October 8, 1929), 208.
- 94 "Return of the Teacher," 251.

⁹⁵The Pavilion, p. 168.

⁹⁶I'll Take My Stand, p. 339.

⁹⁷"Pulitzer Prize Emotions," New Repub, 79 (May 30, 1934), 76.

⁹⁸"Stark Young, Painter," Time, 41 (June 14, 1943), 42.

Chapter III

HIS DRAMATIC CRITICISM

Definitions

Types of critics

Qualifications of theatre-drama critics

The theatre-drama critic

The play

Theatre art

The reviews

Chapter III

HIS DRAMATIC CRITICISM

After having read hundreds of Young's theatre reviews, as well as his books devoted to theatre and drama criticism, this writer has come to several conclusions about Young's organization, content, and completeness of treatment. Among other things, he follows something of a formula in his reviews, just as many of his colleagues do; that is, the pattern, the technique and the mechanics of organization will be the same regardless of the play. He spends more time with the consideration of acting than any other one thing; he dislikes reviewing inferior plays and when he does, as Mrs. Isaacs, editor of Theatre Arts says, his writing becomes inferior.¹ Young himself has said upon occasion in regard to the worth of a work of art that "if you amount to nothing, in the end your art amounts to nothing."² By the same token, a play that amounts to nothing will invariably get a review from Young that amounts to the same.

Therefore it would seem that a better estimate of this critic can be made from a selection of reviews of superior plays rather than from his reviews of mediocre or poor dramas. This does not mean, of course, that interpretation and evaluation have been confined to these few reviews alone. On the contrary, the present writer has used everything that he felt was necessary to make the

study as complete as possible. Examples have been winnowed from all of the author's works, but it should be noted here that the choices for the next two chapters were carefully limited.

The essays selected have been the reviews of Pulitzer Prize Plays, New York Drama Critics' Circle Award Plays, Eugene O'Neill Plays, and several Shakesperian Revivals. Also chosen were miscellaneous plays that involved outstanding companies or actors (Abbey Theatre Players, Old Vic Players, Moscow Art Theatre Players, Mei Lan Fang, etc.).

The assumptions in the choice of the Pulitzer and Critics' Award Plays is that they must have been among the more worthy of the season's productions, else why would they have been accorded the honor of a prize? The O'Neill plays were singled out because by general assent, he is the greatest dramatist this nation has yet engendered. The reasons for the selection of the Shakesperian plays produced by great companies and involving fine actors are obvious enough.

Consequently one assumes (in keeping with Young's edict that the play must amount to something if the criticism is to amount to anything) that prize winning plays, or plays written by great writers or plays acted in by great artists, will evoke noteworthy criticism. The reader is reminded to bear that in mind when observing the examples of criticism offered in the next two chapters.

Dramatic criticism in a broad sense has existed probably, ever since there has been drama. And this, roughly, may date back to 3000 B.C., when, it is said, the Egyptian actor I-kher-nefert "reviewed" his own production of a Passion Play of Osiris. The Greeks developed theory in 384 B.C. when Aristotle produced his Poetics; hundreds of years later, Dryden examined this theory in his Essay on Dramatic Poesie and Defence thereof. In fact, dramatic criticism, until recently, has been within everyone's province and was never confined to the few. Philosophers, scholars, and others who have written on the subject have numbered in the thousands and their output has been prolific.

However, the professional dramatic critic, in the sense that he is an individual who is hired by a specific agency to do the job of reporting and evaluating theatre performances, is a comparatively new arrival of the latter part of the 19th century. Because of the nature of his work, he has emerged in the 20th century, invested with some degree of glamour, not, seemingly, possessed by other kinds of critics. He is thrown intimately into association with the magnetic figures of the stage, art, music, and literary world. He deals with an art that is a combination of many arts. And his origin as a professional is not too precisely known. It is held by some that this type of critic was born in England in Fop's Corner. It was here

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that the "critics" of the Restoration Theatre passed judgment orally, immediately after the play. This occurred oftentimes in the hearing of both audience and performers. It may well be that from this humble beginning has evolved our present exalted panjandrum of Broadway.

At any rate, regardless of how this kind of drama critic may have come into being, the fact is that with the rapid rise of newspaper and magazine production in the middle of the 19th century, he was becoming more and more firmly established. And by the turn of the century in England, France and America, he had arrived as a recognized institution.

As early as 1836, Jules Janin as professional critic was contributing a piece on current theatre every Monday in the Paris Journal des Debats. He continued to do this for forty years and upon his demise, Francois Lemaitre continued the critical column. In 1850, Saint Beuve was doing the same every Monday for The Constitutionnel and by 1867, Francisque Sarcey was the theatre critic for a rival paper Le Temps.

In England, although Hazlitt, Hunt and Lamb had contributed occasional reviews of contemporary dramatic productions to the periodicals, no "professional" critic appears to have been operating until 1867 when Joseph Knight performed in this capacity for the Athenaeum in London. From 1872 when Clement Scott started with the Daily Tele-

graph, and 1878 when the distinguished William Archer started with Figaro, there followed a regular line of professional critics for the newspapers and periodicals.

Thomas Grein served on the Sunday Times, Bernard Shaw on the Saturday Review, James Agate for the Manchester Guardian, Samuel Littlewood for The Morning Post, Alfred Walkley for The Times, and most recently, Ashley Dukes for the Illustrated London News.

Concurrently in America, William Winter, in 1865, served as professional critic with The New York Tribune. He was the counterpart in America of the English Clement Scott. Each fought with equal vigor the introduction of Ibsen into England and America respectively. To be sure, as early as 1840, Edgar Allen Poe as staff member of the New York Mirror and editor of The Broadway Journal had contributed articles on the stage. It is also true that in the eighties and nineties Howells, Twain, Garland and James interested themselves in the theatre and drama to the extent that they had written feelingly of it. But generally, until the end of the nineties, the theatre was treated in the public press as an amusement, and came under that heading wherever it was handled at all. So lightly was the theatre as an institution taken that one leading actress of the day (Modjeska, the Polish actress, performing in America) was moved to protest bitterly. A review of a performance of Julius Caesar in which she had starred was

placed in the public press under the heading Amusements. And what was most galling to this artist was that the "review" appeared immediately below a report of a show that featured trained monkeys.³

William Winter did what he could to raise the professional theatre critic to a position that might be taken more seriously, but it was not until the appearance of James Huneker that the theatre critic came into his own. Huneker came to The New York Sun in 1900 at which time the genus periodical and newspaper critic had its real start in America. Before him, the reporter who reviewed the theatre events for the paper might also have been the same one who reported the baseball games and the local dogshows. But Huneker with his wide interests in art and his special interest in dramatic events, changed all this. He made the evaluation of Broadway stage offerings his major business.

Possessed of an extremely ebullient personality, he was a man whose tastes roved impressionistically up and down the whole scale of high to low arts (he was a gourmet who could and did write pages about the "jolt" he received from various kinds of new and exotic foods). His was a richly baroque charm, completely uninhibited and florid. It was he, according to Mencken, who released American stage criticism from its sentimentality and stupidity. It was he certainly, from whom many of the present Broadway critics sprang.

Since William Winter's and James Huneker's time, a host of Broadway reviewers have come and gone. In the passing of time, the position of professional theatre critic has become more and more highly specialized and respected. The critic's work has become, perhaps, more exacting and thus the critic has had to possess qualifications that are more demanding. He must be a serious worker in the theatre art. He must be a creative artist, as well as an appreciator, evaluator, and judge. Increasingly he has had to resist the blandishments and pressures of the advertisers and showmen whose only interest in the theatre is commercial. And these pressures at one time were so strong that editors for the New York dailies did not hesitate to dictate to the critics how the reviews were to be written. The editors cared little, seemingly, for their critics' integrity; the concern was mainly, amount of advertising space.

Consequently, in the first fifty years of the 20th century Broadway critics have reached a stature previously not enjoyed. Such men as Ludwig Lewisohn, for many years critic for The Nation, and Joseph Wood Krutch, Lewisohn's successor for The Nation, labored hard and long in the vineyard. Names like John Erskine, William Lyon Phelps, Burns Mantle, and Brander Matthews were becoming more prominently associated with Broadway theatre criticism than ever before. Critics like Percy Hammond for The New York Herald-Tribune, Alexander Woolcott for The New York Times,

Robert Benchley for The New Yorker, Theodore Dreiser for The New York Post were being succeeded by others like George Jean Nathan for The American Mercury, Vanity Fair, Newsweek (and several other periodicals), John Mason Brown for The Saturday Review and Brooks Atkinson for The New York Times. And one of the most serious of the newcomers of course was Mr. Stark Young for The New Republic and Theatre Arts.

It would seem that an examination of the Young method of criticism might best be started by clarifying two matters. We should know exactly what preparation a critic of the Young calibre must have and what specifically constitutes dramatic criticism. And in order to do that successfully we must distinguish among the various types of critics and the concepts underlying their functions. Since the terms that will be used are often employed loosely and interchangeably, we shall for the purposes of clarity make somewhat arbitrary distinctions among them. Our distinctions, to be explained more fully hereafter, will be: journalistic dramatic critic, theatre or stage critic, and drama critic.

Taking first the least exalted, the journalistic dramatic critic, we may say that he is mainly involved in reporting an event. Following a kind of formula, he attempts to give an objective account of what happened; and because his daily review of a play's opening results from a "contact of mind with mind at the moment of critical

judgment"⁴ (that is, he has to make an "on-the-spot" judgment), and also because he must meet a newspaper deadline,⁵ the reporter has no time for philosophizing about content, style, sociological significance, or artistic attributes. At any rate his approach is likely to be quite different from that of the periodical critic "where the news side of the theatre is not the same as it must be in a daily paper."⁶ Young says that the newspaper reviewer is less likely to be railed against because he "may for the nonce stick to sheer news, to be or not to be followed later on as of a Sabbath article, by more abstract lucubrations."⁷ Thus he is more likely to resort to the formula of recording audience reaction and presenting a summary of the plot. As one observer says, "A daily reviewer tries to do two things. He attempts to describe what happened during the play he is writing about, thus conveying information to the readers. He tries to report upon his own response to these things, thus providing guidance to those among his readers who have found by experiment that they are apt to enjoy or be stimulated by the things that amuse or arouse him."⁸

Thus, within the limits of this definition, he is a journalistic dramatic critic. Many of the current Broadway newspaper critics who are members of the New York Drama Critics' Circle may well fit into this category since their background is "newspaper work rather than academic scholar-

ship."⁹

The theatre or stage critic, the category into which fall many of the periodical critics like John Mason Brown, Joseph Wood Krutch, Montrose J. Moses, and George Jean Nathan, may offer an evaluation based upon the success with which the play concerned measures up to the physical exigencies involved in production. He is "supposed to follow matters through somewhat further and to invite a different consideration,"¹⁰ than is expected of newspaper coverage. The theatre critic sees the play in terms of acting, directing, décor, voice, tempo, stage setting, music, mechanics, and atmosphere. He appraises the play's force and worth in terms of the emotional and artistic results that accrue from a combination of these elements; he examines carefully the heightened theatricality that occurs when dramatic literary materials pass through other media, namely, the stage and the actor.

His considerations are most often confined to the immediate aesthetic response to the play in performance. For him, the actual visual presentation may be the thing, not necessarily the play. However, it should be noted that for Young, drama criticism involves more than the visual alone. It involves "the visual response and the abstract response within the visual."¹¹

The theatre critic is, of course, not completely di-

forced from the newspaper critic in method and technique, but the fact that the former is not so pressed for meeting a deadline makes a very great difference. Only a critic who writes for a weekly or a monthly, or who free-lances, has time to come up with "a critical essay on an event in the theatre as distinguished in method and writing as Stark Young's reviews."¹²

The drama critic, on the other hand, is involved primarily in literary evaluation. Besides being a reviewer for a newspaper or periodical, he is a free-lance writer on drama. His method is essentially scholarly and investigative; his approach, intellectual. In this category are critics like Eric Bentley, Joseph W. Krutch, Arthur H. Quinn, Barrett H. Clark, William L. Phelps, Brander Matthews, Ludwig Lewisohn, and Walter P. Eaton. To some of this type of critic, production may be merely incidental (oftentimes even annoying) and only the worthy printed play is given the analytical treatment that would be lavished upon any other literary product.

The drama critic's examination may be psychological, philosophical, aesthetic, sociological, or historical, for he is interested in drama in the broader sense as a reflection or expression of an age, a culture, a tradition, or a milieu. To the drama critic an individual play in performance may be of little significance; it is the drama-

tist, the trend, the type, or the style that is important. The stage itself is only a minor interruption.

For example, Spingarn says specifically that the physical theatre is not of very great significance and is only a comparatively unimportant one of the many facets and influences that have combined to result in the literature of the drama;¹³ that the literature of drama is a creative art which springs from the brain of the playwright and is not just a result of the demands of the playhouse and actors;¹⁴ and that the concept of drama in terms of physical theatre evolves from a sixteenth century notion that plays are intended only for stages. He further contends that any drama critic of stature would never consider transferring his interest from drama to the physical theatre any more than a lover would study the "'laws of love' and the 'conditions of love' instead of his lady's beauty and his own soul."¹⁵

An interesting sidelight that demonstrates how drama critics are sometimes both uninformed and not especially interested in theatre, is contained in Young's report of how one Pulitzer prize play was selected.

In due time years later I was to serve with Professor John Erskine of Columbia, and Professor William Lyon Phelps of Yale as chairman on the Pulitzer Prize Committee. . . . We met two or three times over a good bottle of red wine and talked matters over. For divers reasons Professor Phelps appeared to go to the theatre very little

anymore, if at all, and Professor Erskine, for all his gifts as an essayist, poet, and novelist, seemed to be, so far as the theatre goes, an innocent. As a journalist reviewer I was obliged to see most of the plays that came along, and thus it was that I was the only member of the committee who could rightly have any opinion at all. I remember in one case that I proposed The Old Maid, a play by Zoe Akins, based on a story of Mrs. Wharton's, and that one of my fellows on the committee . . . was obliged to go out and see it, so that we might have two at least out of the three votes and thus a majority.¹⁶

Incidentally, Brander Matthews, even though he is essentially a drama critic, would differ very radically from this point of view, for to him "to judge a play by reading it, is like judging a painting by a photograph."¹⁷ As we shall see further on in this discussion Nathan and Young as well as Matthews depart from Spingarn in this matter.

These categories, of course, are artificial distinctions. Probably no critic, of whatever type, stays strictly within the confines of the above set of definitions. Young, for example, while critic for The New York Times, even though hampered by the limitations of time and space involved in daily reviewing, was able to surmount this barrier and approach his reviewing with a seriousness that far transcended mere reporting. (Parenthetically, we might note here that perhaps these very limitations prompted the critic to move back to the relatively calm waters of peri-

odical reviewing, a place where the urgency of deadlines is less pronounced. For the one year that he stayed with The New York Times he gave his readers much more than a cold report of what he saw.)¹⁸

Another critic who does more than a newspaper reviewer's job is the present New York Times critic, Brooks Atkinson.

Young is fundamentally a theatre critic, but his vast erudition complemented by his years of rich academic experience as Professor of English at various institutions of higher learning, establish him as drama critic as well. Only very seldom is he a journalistic dramatic critic in the sense of being a mere reporter. Occasionally, while with The New York Times, he had to resort to this, but he usually rectified the shortcoming by an extended discussion in a Sunday edition. So for the purposes of this discussion we will use a combination category, theatre-drama critic, when referring to Young and his work, and in our next section attempt to examine some of the qualifications that a theatre-drama critic should possess.

George Jean Nathan puts the theatre-drama critic's qualifications high. He claims that,

to write a single piece of living, first rate criticism of a first rate play, a man must have within his grasp the sweep of all the literatures and all the traditions of all the stages of the world. This one piece of first rate criticism must auto-

matically be builded upon what remain of the man's findings from all the first rate criticism that has gone before, and it must, if it would survive, be superior to such prevenient criticism. Anyone may copy Brunetière and die the next day unknown. To live on, one must improve on him and advance him. [Or re-express him, perhaps, as Spingarn has suggested in Creative Criticism?]

Dramatic criticism, unlike dramatic composition, demands without exception a knowledge of all drama, all human nature . . . The writing of a Romeo and Juliet requires a very great genius; but the writing of a criticism of a Romeo and Juliet that shall endure as the play endures requires clearly a greater genius still . . . Dryden by his own confession, found his critical Essay of Dramatic Poesie a vastly more difficult labor than his drama All For Love.¹⁹

These are qualifications that are possessed only by a few, but agreed upon by many. It would appear then that the critic must be something more than a privileged press agent with a glib flow of language. He must be an historian, an artist and a philosopher. In other words, being a mere newspaper journeyman is not enough.

Mr. Young would undoubtedly agree that a critic must have the above qualifications as a minimum essential. Being the strong advocate of the theatre that he is, he would endorse the Nathan premise. For Young is more often than not distressed by the lack of theatre erudition on the part of his colleagues. "If most of our so-called dramatic criticism has nothing to do with theatre art at all . . . we should strive to remember that most of the dramatic

critics so-called have never seen much theatre worth seeing and never heard of any theatre aesthetics. We are lucky if the critic is even literate."²⁰

To a scholar-artist like Young, the critic must have the talents and the genius of the creator. His criticism must be creative criticism or it is nothing. That is, it must possess that heightening and radiance that places it as a work of art on its own. The critic must be able to do more than judge and give a grade; he must be independent of the artist or art he is judging, for "fine criticism has the same use for the artist that the queen bee has for the male who will fertilize her. The artist, like the male bee, is a necessary instrument, and nothing more."²¹

This is a qualification that he would impose on any critic, especially one of the theatre or drama. He finds this element of creativeness praiseworthy in the work of Nathan. Such a critic as Nathan "may be taken as an intellectual foetus in this throbbing body of response . . . In recording himself he thus records a sort of theatrical biography not of himself but of the thing to which he contributes an element."²²

The critic must possess a highly developed perception and sensitivity. He must be able to "see into the life of things". One commentator claims that "the critics to whom we should be able to look for more significant

judgment, a criterion of a period in art risen from art's vast store of experience and far reaching tradition, write about the literature of the theatre, about personalities that flicker and die out; and they write pages of observations that not only indicate a relapse of imagination but also leave a feeling that they know nothing of life but a photographic reality."²³ It is because Young alone among all the theatre-drama critics possesses a quality of poetic imagination in his criticism as opposed to a photographic reality, that Edward Hussey in reviewing Young's Glamour is encouraged with the whole state of theatre and drama criticism in America.

George Jean Nathan divorces truth and beauty completely and claims that "Truth and Beauty . . . are often strangers."²⁴ Says he, the business of art is beauty; the business of criticism, to state facts, evaluate them, and pass judgment. Yet in Young we have an individual who creates and seeks after beauty, while at the same time he states and examines facts. How reconcile the two functions?

To reconcile this seeming paradox we must fall back on Young's idea of a something within a something. That is, just as the theatre is concerned with the "visual response and the abstract response within the visual," so must the critic possess qualifications that allow him to be the artist while being the stater of facts, judge and

evaluator. Such are the qualifications of the creative critic. Young makes specific recommendations in this regard where theatre-drama critics are concerned. He says, "it could be said moreover that the critic has a certain obligation toward the creative. In sum, if he makes objections or points, he should have some decent or useful suggestions to present . . . A certain test of the critic, then, may lie in his ability to suggest practical, theatrical solutions for his random points."²⁵

Without any question Young himself follows this principle. In review after review he tells actors, directors, costumers, stage technicians what he believes they can do to improve their art. For example, to choose only a few illustrations, when he reviewed Margaret Webster's production of Othello which appeared at the Shubert Theatre on October 19, 1943, with Paul Robeson as Othello, his suggestions to the actor are "practical solutions for his [Young's] random points."

Mr. Robeson, a singer of distinction, still lacks for this role the ultimate requirement, which is the fine tragic style. By virtue of true feeling and soul he has its equivalent at times; and then he is moving and deep. There are two things that I would suggest. One is that he recast, as it were, his first speeches in the play and a number of others later on where he is too aggressive vocally, has too much projection of the tone, gives us the wearing sense of an over-worked diaphragm where only the relaxation of dignity and strength are required . . .

The other suggestion I would give Mr. Robeson has to do with style, the elusive matter of stage bearing, so important in this part, as his acting often shows. In the scenes of despair he crumples up into a defeat far too domestic, gentle and moving though it may be. He must discover a style, remote but equally pathetic, for these moments.²⁶

Although deeply impressed by the portrayal of the Negro heaven in The Green Pastures, he nevertheless made suggestions for the improvement of the production. He recommended that there be heavier Negro voices for the singing and that the choice of spirituals be less apropos. The music, to him, sounded too much like a choir doing an oratorio. There is too much exploding and bursting into song, says he in effect; the rendition is too pat, too technically correct. He thought that in the choice of music at least, the play would achieve greater art, more of the childlike, simple dignity of the Negro, more of the mystical beauty and truth for which it ^Rstrove, if there were a different selection of spirituals. "There are many spirituals with Jesus as the theme, and a simple effect of these Negroes bursting into one of them, childlike, apropos only by the roundabout course of the heart, emotionally appropriate but not so obviously so, would be far truer to the racial material and much more disarming and moving."²⁷

He applauded the Emlyn Williams production of The Corn is Green and rejoiced in the wit, tenderness, nobility

and superb "presence" of Ethel Barrymore in the leading role of Miss Moffat, the schoolteacher. But he nonetheless hesitated not at all in his capacity as critic to make a creative suggestion to Miss Barrymore, "solutions for his random points." "I would suggest one thing. If in Act I this bold-minded and surprising . . . personage [Miss Moffat] could have more of the wit and edge and spirits that come so easily to Miss Barrymore, the play's more intense and serious requirements later on would gain by it."²⁸

The Theatre Guild production of Shaw's Caesar and Cleopatra received an accolade from Young, together with a piece of advice as to how the setting might be improved. "The moon in the Sphinx scene at the Guild can rise as Shaw meant it to do, revealing the huge form as it sits looking forever across the sands; the music of Memnon can be made to count more overwhelmingly as the voice of the night, of time and of the world -- these are as much the drama as the characters speaking there . . . And most of all . . . the whole performance can be more joyous and inclusive, more alive with the indescribable and mysterious brightness of life and art."²⁹

And finally, Young feels, it becomes the concern of the critic to equip himself so that he may be prepared to develop whatever criteria are necessary. These criteria must not be imposed from without, but they must come from

within. The first rate critic must have the ability to "perceive the characteristic quality underlying a work of art. He abstracts this characteristic from whatever embodiments of it may be apparent; he carries it to some ideal completion, and then judges the work of art by this ideal, by the extent to which this complete realization of its idea is achieved. Where the critic can do this, he transcends individual accidents of mere choice. And no small part of his cultivation will derive from his training in the perception of and the acquaintance with many characteristic qualities."³⁰

Young himself possesses these qualifications of which he speaks, and is constantly being "prompted by his own first rate sensibility."³¹ As a matter of fact, it is partly because of this that he is not a particularly aggressive critic. Rather, much of his work is sheer appreciation and he becomes the artist-critic or the creative critic.

Brooks Atkinson the erudite New York Times critic is liberal in his attitude about a critic's qualifications. He cannot stomach the dogma that has grown up about this profession; he is especially rebellious against the "I-know-more-about-it-than-you-do school of critical judgment, since he feels there are no absolute standards in art.

On principle I do not subscribe to the pusillanious notion that some people know

what is good in art and others do not. There are no final authorities - least of all those who come to regard themselves as such. For there are no such absolute standards in art save the ultimate one that cannot be defined, because, like God, it goes deeper than articulate human experience. But some opinions are more valid than others. I respect the opinions of interesting people who bring to the appreciation of art the same sanity, vigor, and independence that they apply to their personal lives. Some people are more alive than others and what they think is accordingly vital and illuminating.³²

St. John Irvine, as theatre critic, railing against those who would set up arbitrary qualifications for professional critics, speaks out against some of those things that one suspects Stark Young would advocate. "Is the Critics' Circle to turn itself into an academy wherein apprentice critics will be taught what Aristotle said about the drama so that they may say it too?"³³ Possibly Young would like to have it so. At any rate he places much store by the Aristotelian precepts.

Thus we may say generally that Young's required qualifications for a theatre-drama critic would be: that he be widely read (possibly well grounded in the Greeks) and free from parochialism as far as world literatures are concerned; that he have keen perceptive sensitivity and sensibility; that he have taste, originality, culture, experience in the theatre, and, of course, intelligence of a high order.

It becomes necessary to try to define theatre-drama

critic. And this is somewhat difficult to do, to be sure. Perhaps it cannot be done successfully at all. However, the attempt must be made, and it would seem that to define the critic and his work in terms of the nature of the work involved might be the best approach.

First, speaking in generalities, the theatre-drama critic is an individual who knows why he likes what he likes and is articulate enough to make others become enthusiastic about his choices. He is interested in and has a knowledge of human living; he takes part in and expresses clearly for them, the intellectual lives about him. It is his function to "define, help form, and help organize the contemporary sensibilities and make conscious the standards in it . . . It is not his function to offer us coherent systems of philosophy, coherent theories of the nature of language, or even ideological systems . . ." ³⁴

The above is true of all critics; but the critic of the theatre art has a specialized knowledge of the technique of his field which makes him different from other critics. He bases his judgment of a play upon its technical virtuosity, its characterizations, its power to entertain. Its humor and its pathos, the quality of its dialogue, as well as its more intrinsic values, are also examined closely. By intrinsic values is meant its plot structure, its use of idea or propaganda and its relation

to other works dealing with the same theme. This critic would also be concerned about the play's originality and its credibility.³⁵

At the same time, the nature of his work places restrictions upon him unfelt by other types of critics. For example, he is different from the literary critic who "is a gentleman seated before his fireside. . . a book in his hand. He reads and receives an impression which is purely his own. If he is tired he puts down the book and picks it up another time. When there is something he does not understand, he turns the page. The dramatic critic is a gentleman who has dined hurriedly, arrived at the theatre a little bit out of breath³⁶ to take his seat with the other critics and who is unconsciously a little impressed with what is happening around him."³⁷ In other words, the literary critic gets an impression when he reads the piece of literature, that is peculiarly his own. He may in quietude return to the printed page to refresh his imagination or his memory as often as he wishes. The theatre-drama critic has this recourse only in part. Even though he be a weekly, monthly or freelance reviewer with no deadline hanging over his head, he still cannot restore the illusion that the play in performance has produced. The décor, the acting, the voice, the music and all the other contributing arts have gone. All that remains of the il-

lusion are shadows; immortal perhaps, as Young says, but nonetheless, shadows.

Perhaps the best explanation of what a theatre-drama critic is, may be obtained from observing what the latter does. It is his job, says Young, to try to comprehend what the playwright is trying to do. Ethically and aesthetically he is bound to do this. He must "observe, analyze, strive to dilate his means of vision and patiently and generously to enlarge the avenues of his perception and response . . . After he has done his best at this, he will then make a synthesis of all he has been able to gather, and will try to gauge by that the extent to which the dramatist has achieved what he aimed to do."³⁸ To achieve this the critic must have complete freedom, unhampered and unfettered by precedent or custom, unbound by rules, but rather, aided by both.

Which is not to imply that Young abides by no "rules," and objects to all of them. On the contrary, he has his own strong convictions and theories about criticism. This is the "springboard of many of his enthusiasms and detestations."³⁹ These enthusiasms and detestations are born of much serious thought and much scholarly investigation. His standards which are high are founded on the "rules" laid down in the classics. However, he, like Nathan, believes in "rules" not commandments. When it comes to theatre-

drama criticism, he is a liberal and no believer in immutability as far as theatre-drama criticism is concerned.

But he has his limits. He would not, for example, go so far as St. John Irvine who would banish all fixed laws of art. The latter contends that anyone can be a critic if there are fixed laws. It would be automatic. Just match the work of art to the laws. "If the regulations insist that a play shall be in four neatly made acts, and that action not dialogue shall be of the first and only importance, then clearly the critic is right who denies that Mr. Shaw is a dramatist. Have we not heard learned men say so, proving their point with a wealth of quotations from eminent authorities? Yet Mr. Shaw exists and his plays are performed."⁴¹

Young is not quite the firebrand of the Irvine school. He is more the conservative, "white-tower" devotee of culture whose ideas are fashioned by his unusual reading sources (Hindu, Japanese, Russian, etc.). To be sure, like Irvine who claims that he never read a book on critical principles in his life,⁴² Young is not an extensive reader of criticism or books about it either.⁴³ But this does not mean that he feels the critic can afford to reject this large and substantial body of literature and refuse to be guided by any of it. Nor does it mean that he depends solely upon his own personal taste, individual preference, or

private response either. On the contrary, he leans, and he feels that important theatre-drama critics should lean heavily on the classics.

According to Young, besides making an audience for himself, which is only incidental, the critic should make an audience for the theatre:

the best thing a critic can do is to point out or proclaim qualities in a work of art or elements of merit. His readers who have insight will go on past him, for they will perceive the ideal implied in the qualities and elements pointed out, and from their own syntheses they will project something consummate in its own kind by which the work will be measured.

In this way the habit already so strong in men's minds of abstracting for themselves ideals of things from an experience with them and so getting a measure of projection in kind, may be encouraged and strengthened by the critic. And the critic's achievement and the achievements of his readers may at least help to increase the amount of culture that ought to arise from the presence of the theatre in society. . . . And culture is the process of perceiving the light that shines from one thing upon another; the antiphonal radiance, existing in all things among themselves.⁴⁴

So much by way of defining the theatre-drama critic.

Let us now turn to the matter of the "play" and its meaning in Young's aesthetic. An understanding of this may go a long way toward making more comprehensible, the methods Young employs in his reviews.

First, we will consider the "play" in the theatre sense. In 1926, in discussing the weaknesses of a play

named The Strange Prince, an adaptation of Dostolevsky's Idiot, Young defined a play as "a piece of literature about a section of life written in such a way that it will go over the footlights in such a way that what it has to say, it can say in the theatre. That is the sole test. If it can do this, it is a play."⁴⁵ It may, to be sure, be a bad play, but if it can do the above, it is a play.

In another place Young says that if a piece of literature can be written in such a way that it will go over the footlights, it will be a play. This is especially interesting because it concurs with Nathan whose personality and attitude toward the "art of the night" are considerably different from Young's. Nathan is the flashily brilliant but flippant scoffer who speaks of a play like Barrie's Peter Pan as "the triumph of sugar over diabetes;" whereas Young is the more deliberate, the more dignified, the more careful, the more serious, and the more intellectually profound aesthetician. But on the subject of what makes a play, there is agreement, for Nathan says that "good drama is anything that interests an intelligently emotional group of persons assembled in an illuminated hall."⁴⁶

It is interesting that both men in making their definition carefully overlook the outdoor drama. Illuminated hall? Illuminated by what? The footlights in Young, or the sun in Euripedes? Which need not be construed to

mean that Young was not aware of the outdoor drama. In fact in another connection in an article on The Voice in the Theatre, he notes specifically that "in the theatre of Dionysos the lighting was that of the sun."⁴⁷

In 1927, Young repeated verbatim in a Bookman article his definition of a play which he had made earlier in a New Republic article (vol. 49, p. 136) and expanded it by saying that the dramatist's efforts result in a play only insofar as the main idea is expressed in theatre terms.⁴⁸ Everyone knows fairly well what these theatre terms are, as differentiated, let us say, from drama or literary terms. There are the physical aspects of the stage; there is space and distance from the audience; there is the optical illusion, the media of voice and live actors, and audience response. It is through such media that a piece of dramatic literature finds form and so, to use a favorite Young expression, may "come alive."

Furthermore, if it is a good play, it must "be a piece of writing in which the idea has found a theatrical body for itself."⁴⁹ Young lays a great deal of store by the importance of "idea" in the theatre art. He claims that this art can come to its most perfect fruition only when the "idea" is completely and sincerely expressed.⁵⁰ One of Young's chief complaints about the journalistic dramatic critic is that the latter too often "finds" ideas in productions that are rubbish, and have no ideas. He

scolds David Belasco in reviewing his production of Laugh Clown Laugh because the latter is too superficial. It is all surface veneer with no body, and the playwright's essential idea is entirely missed.

You rarely, if ever, find Mr. Belasco going to the bottom of a scene -- much less a play -- to discover what is its essential shape and meaning. With all his pains, his training, his advertised research he is apt to give you everything but one thing -- the point. In this Laugh Clown Laugh, for example the first and central point of the play is the glowing center of life that the clown is. Through him life is to be set forth, alive, a quivering comic mask over the shadow of passion and simple dreams . . . But in this production those elements are expedited, fuddled, jigged, detailed, animated, without ever finding a significant base.⁵¹

No matter how important the idea however, unless it has adequate and suitable theatrical expression, the result will not be a good play. For example, a professor of sociology might write lines that would cause the actors to tear out their hair and the result might be a poor play. But Bernard Shaw might write lines on sociology, as he often has, and make them glow with a heightened theatricality, and "antiphonal radiance" so that the result becomes all theatre and we have a good play. On the other hand, it is equally true according to Young, that a poor idea, no matter how well placed in a theatrical body will result in a poor play.

Young believes very strongly that the function of a

play is not only to underscore the forces that are in human nature, but also to dilate and reveal the very meaning of life. Thus, theatre without "idea" is for Young repugnant and less than nothing.⁵² It was because the Broadway theatre in 1933 was so lacking in "idea" that Young was depressed about the whole state of the American theatre. In an essay praising the play Run Little Chillun for its literate and adult subtlety of idea, he points out what there is about it that makes it both a significant and at the same time a good play. A worthwhile play such as this, he informs us, must "dare the technical limits of the theatre form, extend the imagination, enrich the language medium or send the spectator home with the sense of power, creation, music, or simple intensity of rich change within him."⁵³ Such plays are unfortunately unusual in the American repertory. And when they are performed they are likely to receive a lukewarm reception from the audience. In his review of an Othello production he suggests that several difficulties have to be overcome from the start. Not the least of these is the fact that Othello requires a cerebral response to which we are unaccustomed. "Democratic principle combined with business methods has led us steadily into the easier and easier, the trashier and trashier, any way you turn."⁵⁴

Here on the subject of "idea" in the theatre or in

the play, Nathan and Young part company. For Nathan, the theatre is a place for entertainment and the exercise of the emotions, not the intellect. To prove his point, Nathan takes a number of what he considers the world's best plays including Electra, Oedipus, Hamlet and Lear and shows how each lives because of its emotion, not its thought.⁵⁵ The theatre, says he, is no place for profound ideas. Its very nature would seem to militate against this. Even Shakespeare would have put an audience to sleep with a theme like the influence of John Dewey on Progressive Education. It is best equipped to handle "such easy speculations and second hand quasi-philosophies as Andrejev's on the burden of religion, as Dunsany's on fate, as Brioux's on heredity and Galsworthy's on social economics."⁵⁶ He tries to discourage playwrights from writing anything with profundity. He claims that "a present trouble with American drama is that too many of its authors are trying to write ideas instead of plays."⁵⁷

No two critics could be at more opposite poles in this matter than Young and Nathan. Not only does Young advocate "idea" in theatre, he is upset because the lack of "idea" is forcing the theatre to drift toward what he calls barbarism. "We have almost no social point of view, and it is only to be expected that in this same year of grace [that was 1930] we should have no tragic drama . . .

no social comedy in which the life depicted is significantly seen against any scale of ideas or conception of society."⁵⁸ Thus does Young deplore what Nathan accepts uncomplainingly.

On the subject of theatre compared to printed drama (literature) Young is something of a fence straddler. He is not sure that any distinction can be made or that one even needs to be made; and so he is not certain which, if either, is the more significant. Partly because so many of our good plays, the Elizabethans', Dryden's, Congreve's have been traditionally in the printed form; and partly because the more modern and serious Ibsen influence has relied heavily upon the printed play for the dramatic effect, Young is inclined at times to award the banner of greater importance to the written play.

Although his heart is seriously with the theatre, his mind is with literature. Obviously he cannot reject the literature idea since part of the theatre's art is the art of the word. He admits that the dramatist (the literature maker) is the most important element in the eternal theatre; that is, the theatre that outlasts a generation and goes from era to era being reinterpreted in terms of the new era.⁵⁹ The "word" has a high place of honor in his hierarchy of theatre elements. "In some curious way, the word can seem the test of the whole. The word is the

blood. Not the vitality, not the energy, necessarily, but the warm current flowing throughout."⁶⁰ When Young came to review the production of Eugene O'Neill's The Fountain, he found its major weakness to be the lack of the poetic, the exalted, or the majestic in the writing. The theme, the search after eternality (Ponce de Leon and the Fountain of Youth) was exalted enough, but the writing, Young thought, was not equal to the theme. And he notes "the value of written dialogue, which it cannot be forgotten is of all the elements that go to make up the art of the theatre, the most engaging, the most permanent, immediate and binding."⁶¹

But conversely it can also be true that too fine or too lengthy an arrangement of words can keep a play from being good theatre. Young does not object too strenuously to this. He merely points out that it happens, and when it does, the talent demonstrated is already poetic and literary even if the play doesn't realize its full power theatrical-ly.⁶² This happens, as has already been mentioned, in closet drama, but it can also happen in regular Broadway drama. Young found this to be especially true of one of E. E. Cummings's plays named Him. Young was reviewing it for The New Republic and although he seemed to like the play he made this interesting statement about its greatest weakness: "But art is long and life is short and the

length of a passage is implicit in it. And length in the theatre is not the same as in the art of words. This ought to be obvious. Those scenes between Me and Him are often beautiful in the writing, but they are too long. The stage adds the person, voice, gesture, to the words, which in literature would be all."⁶³

On the subject of the library or closet drama and the divorcing of the printed from acted play, Nathan and Young are again in agreement. They both depart from Spingarn, who, as was noted earlier does not place any special significance on a play's possibilities in terms of stage projection. To Spingarn production has negligible, if any, real significance. It is too evanescent. Not so with Young and Nathan. With Young, the mere fact that such a thing as closet drama exists does not reduce the importance of theatre.

To judge a play, written or published, as literature is to mess up the whole question. There is no such thing as a play that is sheer literature. We may speak of literature cast in dramatic form. Or we may speak of the literary aspect, a quality of a play by which we mean certain elements that exist independent of its stage performance. Some most reliable things have been written in play form that were not even intended for the theatre; but that does not change the principle. Swinburne's "Atalanta in Calydon" will serve as an example. On the other hand if we take such a piece as Eugene O'Neill's "The Emperor Jones" it exists only faintly as literature; taken so, it is at best a mere strong short story. Nine-tenths of its force and

suggestion of actuality must lie within its stage presentation and expression. As theatre, the argument would fall, accordingly against Swinburne, as literature against O'Neill, and no harm done.

* * *

This . . . is only another way of saying that as the theatre art approaches a full life of its own, its contributing elements -- drama, acting, directing, and so on -- are with more difficulty isolated and seen each in its own self. And yet the aim and practice in making these distinctions are among the chief needs and signs of any theatre knowledge.⁶⁴

Young would be among the first to agree that there are plays whose very nature militate against successful production. He finds this to be true especially with revivals of late Elizabethan drama. When John Webster's The Duchess of Malfi was done at the Ethel Barrymore on October 15, 1946, Young found it unimpressive as stage fare.

Even in this new form the play did not . . . come off as living theatre. Its best efforts were the famous purple patches that scholars have hit the public over the head with and poets have swooned over . . . Such passages, doubtless, came off rather furiously in their epoch . . . But George Rylands, the director, . . . has left many elements in it very mild for our consumption. The Duchess of Malfi has been almost suspiciously dear to the hearts of professors and graduate students, who are apt to whip up this drama from heated passages rather than from its presentation on the stage. Seeing Webster's play thus, in the theatre flesh as it were, more or less confirms an old impression of mine that it is a drama, often high in import and power, that belongs, for us at least,

to the printed page⁶⁵ rather than to the stage of a theatre.

In fact Young goes so far as to insist that because a piece of writing is dramatic it need not necessarily be good for the stage. Specifically he finds this to be true of some of Hemingway. In discussing the production of the novelist's play The Fifth Column, Young makes the point that, "nearly everyone at times reading some book of Mr. Hemingway's must have noticed its dramatic quality and felt that it would make good theatre. There is not space to go into the discussion, but only to note that a thing's being highly dramatic does not necessarily mean that it is to that degree theatric. It may in fact be dramatic without being even possible for the stage at all."⁶⁶

And conversely, plays that are not plays at all can under certain deft handling become theatrically perfect. Young finds Noel Coward a master of this kind of dramatic presentation. The critic finds Hands Across the Sea one of the one-act pieces in Noel Coward's Tonight at Eight-Thirty such a play.

This little piece is perfection itself, and in a way has been created strictly within the theatre. It is one of those happy things born from a dramatic germ, grown into a shining life on the stage, built up during rehearsals, impossible to record anywhere save there in the place it comes to life. A small acquaintance with the problems of staging a scene will tell anybody what a triumph this is, what patience, fun, freedom and resource went to its development.

There is no way of writing down what a glitter ensues, a flowing rhythm of wit in stage terms, of lines, business, ensemble, give and take. This is Mr. Coward's field. It illustrates the security with which he can always count on revues, facile ideas, and a great variety of theatre devices.⁶⁷

For Nathan, drama loses if it remains only printed, because "to say that the reading imagination of the average cultured man is superior in power of suggestion and depiction to the imagination of the theatre is idiotically to say that the reading imagination of every average cultured man is superior in these powers to the combined imaginations of Gordon Craig, Max Reinhardt, and Eleanora Duse operating jointly on the same play."⁶⁸

And so we come to the last of the terms that need defining when one attempts to place Young in the hierarchy of critics and criticism. Thus far, we have tried to clarify, in connexion with Young's writing the terms: journalistic dramatic critic, theatre critic, drama critic, theatre-drama critic and "play." Now we come to "theatre art."

Shortly before the close of the Elizabethan period, the English stage as a serious art form began to decline. There were no established theatres outside of the cities, so attendance was confined to those who lived in that area. With the Puritan ban on theatre performance, this art fell into discard. Up until the middle of the nineteenth cen-

tury, when English critics like Hazlitt, Lamb and Lewes, and French critics like Sarcey, Coquelin and Talma interested themselves and their readers with serious treatments of drama in performance, any discussion of drama would invariably be limited to the printed play. So Young theorizes in the prefaces to one of his books, that from this set of circumstances over which the stage had no control, the theatre as a serious and distinct art fell into disrepute and decay.

Spingarn in his milestone-ish Creative Criticism made the judgment and found in favor of the printed drama. In a long essay on the matter, he accords to the theatre a place not as a separate and segregate art within itself, but a place as an unwanted stepchild appendage to the printed drama. To such a point of view, Young as champion of a theatre art would never agree.

He believes that the theatre art is a composite of all the arts involved in production. It concerns itself not alone with any one of these: the writing, the acting, the setting, the directing, the music, the lighting, the timing; but rather, with all of these. Each one of these items is an art within itself and each contributes of itself to the more inclusive (and at the same time elusive) overall medium -- the theatre art.

It must not be assumed however, that this art is

merely a combination of literature, actors, settings, recitation, movement and sound. It is to be sure, all of these, but it emerges as a distinct and separate entity, beset by its own problems. In his appraisal of O'Neill's The Hairy Ape, Young makes his critical evaluation on the basis of the fact that "we must begin at the very start and say over again that the art of the theatre is a separate and distinct art in itself."⁶⁹

The combination, synchronization, and synthesization of the various arts that result in theatre art are not easily achieved. Each contributing art must complete the whole and there must be a unifying characteristic that gives the whole, life; else there is no creation.

Always about the theatre art there is that baffling elusiveness that almost defies definition in the word medium. There is inherent in this art that peculiar personal magnetism that a particular actress like Duse or Bernhardt has about her and which she brings to her role. There is that inexpressibly heightened theatricality that develops from the occasion and the actor-audience rapport. These considerations, so elusive in theatre art, Young points out:

The terms of the art of the theatre are the play, the audience, the actors, the lights, and setting, all combined, all used to express what is to be expressed. Theatricality is the heightening that comes upon the material when we successfully express it in these terms. Every work in the theatre, when it is really theatre, has theatricality.

In so far as it has not theatricality it is not theatre, however admirable it may be as literature, morality, or social science. All significant plays, Hamlet, Tartuffe, Candida . . . have this theatricality and are alive by it.⁷⁰

In many of the hundreds of reviews of Broadway productions that Young wrote over a period of twenty-five years, he made much of productions that even partially achieved this almost mystical alliance. In four particular productions which will be used here as examples, he found this subtle combining and merging of the arts masterfully achieved.

In The Birthday of the Infanta, a one-act play translated from the Spanish and performed on February 12, 1922 at the Manhattan Opera House, he takes Robert E. Jones' setting and makes his point. The setting involved a good deal of architecture and Young said of it:

Nowhere in Spain have I seen buildings like these. But I have seen in Spain that character of sterility, of color and mass. I have seen that barbaric and cruel barrenness of sheer walls emerge, though any amount of rococo and baroque or plateresque ornamentation had been superficially laid on to soften the aspect of it . . . The important thing to be said here is that this is not architecture in Spain or anywhere else, but a translation of architecture into theatre terms.

The same is true in a region more difficult perhaps, and certainly more elusive: the costumes . . . were not particularly interesting as reproductions of Spanish fashions toward the end of the seventeenth Century. I have seen much better copies

than they were or tried to be . . . These costumes . . . were distinguished because they were . . . seen superbly in terms of the theatre. They would suffer heavily . . . if taken out of their present employment. They are inseparable from the whole, and in themselves they are moving and exciting.⁷¹

Young was a great admirer of Stanislavsky's Moscow Art Theatre. Nevertheless in general, he was unimpressed by that group's second visit. However, as ardent Chekhov student and translator of three of his plays, he was tremendously impressed with the company's production of The Cherry Orchard and The Sea Gull. He found in these productions "that rarest of events in the theatre anywhere, the combination of acting, producing, and dramatic writing, one proceeding from another, and all illuminating one idea."⁷²

He wrote a glowing account of The Dybbuk, a Yiddish play done by the Habima Theatre of Moscow at the Mansfield Theatre, December 13, 1926, in the original classical Hebrew. He didn't feel that he understood the play very well for it contained religious, ritualistic and racial overtones and undertones too foreign to his background. But he was impressed more strongly than ever with the unity of all the theatre media expressed in this production. In regard to setting and makeup he says, "But the dim, clay colored walls, the naked, drab architectural shapes, and above all the extraordinary use of light are completely one

with the whole idea. The very stylized make-ups, carried to the point of violent mask patterns at times -- noses painted white on one side, black on the other, triangles in blue or green or black on the foreheads and so on -- are of a piece, as a whole, with this effect of a dream dreamed by a race for a thousand years, and fiercely and tenderly kept."⁷³

By the same token, Young objects when the setting and décor do not carry the intrinsic power that ultimately blends with the theme the playwright is attempting. In Lee Simonson's set for O'Neill's Dynamo, the critic found exact photographic realism but nothing of the essence of the playwright's theme. The alliance was not achieved.

In the last act the scene in the hydro-electric plant may be . . . like that known to the dramatist near Ridgefield, Connecticut, but, though devised with admirable craft, it merely presents an actuality that makes the worshipping hero more obsessed and lacking in significance -- giving up the world and the flesh for that familiar engine that sits there to the left of the stage is a trifle hard to swallow or be interested in. By what distortion, what drawing, what alteration of reality into emotional meaning, this powerhouse scene might have been converted into the abyss against which this soul plays out its lost struggle towards God, is not so much a matter for the critic's suggestion as the designer's creation. It is his place to discover in that mechanical scene, the one line, the shadow, the light, the mass, the restatement that will express the dramatic moment that evolves within it.⁷⁴

7

Thus equipped with an insight into the Young attitudes toward theatre and his definitions of theatre terms, we may now turn to a consideration of his reviews.

An examination of hundreds of the Young reviews of Broadway plays indicates that the pattern of the essays follows a kind of formula throughout. Each is about fifteen hundred words, except where the critic launches himself into pamphlet-dimension encomia, as he does with several O'Neill plays. Each includes an examination in varying proportions, of the following: the plot, the author, the writing, the acting, and the producing. The proportionate amount of attention each of these items receives, depends somewhat upon the importance, type, author, and occasion of the play. In all of the reviews of the O'Neill plays, a large proportion of the space is spent with an evaluation of O'Neill as an artist and genius.

In reviews of such plays as The Hairy Ape, Strange Interlude, Days Without End, and Mourning Becomes Electra, he drew out his most eulogistic adjectives and congratulated O'Neill generously on the latter's pioneering spirit, his inventiveness, and his daring experimentation with new stage forms. Particularly did Young outdo himself in the critical evaluation of Mourning Becomes Electra, since that essay appeared to be much longer than most of his other theatre reviews. And that includes his paeans to The Moscow

Art Theatre, Mei Lan-Fang, Duse, Bernhardt, Chekhov, and Charles Chaplin.

Practically all of the essays include a resumé of the plot. This is to be expected for two reasons. First, Young is a classical scholar and bases many of his critical and aesthetic precepts on the Greeks. Young tells us that Aristotle considers the plot of first-rank importance as far as the dramatic elements are concerned. He tells us also that Aristotle considers plot the most expressive and the most difficult of the dramatic elements.⁷⁵ Therefore, Young gives the consideration of plot, a place of prominence in his reviews. Second, just as a matter of standing procedure, he believes that "a review, as such, requires first a brief account . . . of the story."⁷⁶ Strangely enough though, he seems apologetic when he gives a summary of the plot. He tells us, in judging a George Kelly play, that he is only giving us the plot so that he can make some points about it;⁷⁷ points such as showing how much the play depends upon the plot, or how the meaning of the scenes may be better understood by a knowledge of the plot.

In The Great God Brown the experimental use of masks to reveal the character's inner self or other self (that is the self that cannot be seen or that may be distorted) is so innovative as a stage device, that Young does not wish to spend very much time with the plot. He con-

siders it subordinate to the other elements and indicates that any account of it must be a mere travesty. But this does not keep him from trying to give a full account of it, travesty or not.⁷⁸ The same is true of his treatment of Paul Green's House of Connelly. A section outlining the plot is followed by a sentence indicating that the outline is necessarily "a mere travesty on a play whose best virtues lie not in the story but in the characters and the lines they are given to speak."⁷⁹

This pattern of seeming to apologize for giving the plot and then going ahead with it in great detail, maintains regularly in his hundreds of reviews. The importance of such accounts differs in different reviews. The intensity ranges widely. On one occasion it may be a casual "it hardly needs telling," when speaking of Katherine Cornell's starring vehicle, The Letter, by Somerset Maugham.⁸⁰ On another occasion, as in Thy Will Be Done, with Duse,⁸¹ the plot may be given in great detail, so that the critic may have an opportunity to evaluate the actress's conception of the role she plays.

The apologetic statement is varied, depending upon the importance of the playwright and the significance of the play. In Mourning Becomes Electra, he gives a comprehensive and detailed resumé of the plot. But he doesn't, in this case, think it detailed enough. In fact he thinks

it rather bare, giving no more than "a scant indication of . . . the . . . meaning of the scenes."⁸²

When in his opinion the story is such an intrinsically artistic part of the play that the very life of the play rests upon it, he spends no time beating about the bush. He simply tells the reader, as he does in Journey's End, that it "is necessary to set down at such length the story . . . because so much of the play's credit and effect lies in the story."⁸³

On the other hand, at times he spends very little actual wordage on plot. He says instead that the values are so carefully interwoven with the other dramatic elements that separation of plot and play are well nigh impossible. At these times, his inner eye sees far beyond the surface features of the story being unfolded. Mystic, poet, and creative critic that he is, he sees into the more profound nuances implied. This happened when he reported on his reaction to the Habima⁸⁴ Players of Moscow. They had presented The Dybbuk at the Mansfield, December 13, 1926, in the original Hebrew. Young's sensitivities were so deeply moved by the production, that he rated it the finest thing that had been done on Broadway since the Moscow Art Theatre's The Cherry Orchard of several years before. The play is semi-religious and Young confessed that due to his lack of Hebrew background, he could not

understand completely the more ritualistic plot elements. So he told very little of the story. Instead, he indicated that the author, Ansky, had "inwoven [into the story] the ecstasy of a race, all the shadowy origin of its passion, its faith, its primitive mysticism and confusion and strength."⁸⁵

The second portion of the review is invariably devoted to a discussion of the writer and the writing. Here again, the length varies with the importance of the playwright and the significance of the play. If the dramatist involved is among the moderns (Ibsen, Shaw, O'Neill), the critic will spend more time with the writer and writing than he does with any other one phase of the review.

Young himself has read widely in dramatic literature. He is thoroughly conversant with the classical, Shakesperian, Restoration, Victorian, and twentieth century periods in drama. He also is well acquainted with the French, Italian, Spanish, and Russian drama. And because of this, he lays much greater store by the printed version of a play than do many other critics. He uses the published play as a back-drop from which he can launch his discussion of the performed version. Interested as he is in theatre art per se, he is still not content with an evaluation based solely upon performance. Nor can he tolerate theatre writing that does not adhere to the same

high standards observed in good book writing. Once in a 1922 article⁸⁶ and again five years later,⁸⁷ he makes an almost identical statement about how strange it is that intelligent people are willing to accept "stuff" in theatre writing that they would never tolerate in a book. If the writer of writing has not come up to the standard for stage writing that Young has set, the latter does not hesitate to wield the mace. He was willing to admit that in Somerset Maugham's The Letter there was a certain amount of effectiveness in the way the dramatic situation was developed. "Otherwise, [however], Mr. Maugham's script is mostly trash."⁸⁸

If the play happens to be a translation from the classics or from the modern foreign languages (Italian, Spanish, French), he will comment at length on the new version. Or if it happens to be a play whose plot and dramatic elements are based upon classical themes, as is Mourning Becomes Electra, he expands the review and devotes most of it to an historical and literary examination.

Sometimes the comment is designed to "damn with faint praise," and at other times it is outspokenly destructive. He was impressed by Katherine Cornell's personal magnetism in her production of Antigone, but as to the writing in the translation, he was less enthusiastic. "Here she [Cornell] is presenting an American version of a

French version of a Greek version, of something that is at least worth talking about."⁸⁹ He thought the Gilbert Murray translation used for Margaret Webster's production of Euripides' The Trojan Women was a very poor choice. And he also disapproved of Dame Whitty's interpretation of the Hecuba role. But he did not condemn the production entirely. What he said was: "I would not, however, advise people to stay away from the production. I would say rather that those who know nothing of Greek drama may get more idea of what it was, and those who know something, [Young falls very much into this group] more idea of what it wasn't."⁹⁰ When he comes to Maxwell Anderson's The Wingless Victory, he is so irritated with its weakness as literature, that he says he would not even review it, were it not for Anderson's achievements in his other plays. After beating it unmercifully to a pulp, he delivers the final tour de force of critical destruction with "It sounds like [the writing in the play] a Stephen Philips version of an Arthur Symons translation of an decadent German versifying of a lax translation of Euripides."⁹¹

If, on the one hand, it so happens that Young is unfamiliar with the printed version of a play, he will read it before he makes his analysis of production. Only, however, if the production is significant enough to warrant it. When the Theatre Guild opened its 1944 season with

Ethel Barrymore in Embezzled Heaven, a stage version of a Franz Werfel novel, there was a case in point. In his review, the critic indicates that had the stage presentation been more distinguished, he would have felt obligated to read the novel before making his estimate.⁹² This does not mean that he automatically ranks the play in terms of its success in another medium. Far from it. But he does like to make comparisons. He found Tetheroh's Wild Birds more profound as a printed play than as a production.⁹³ In considering the Theatre Guild's production of Dostoevsky's The Brothers Karamazov, he intimated in his appraisal that he had the novel before him, but the play must stand as a separate entity.⁹⁴

If, on the other hand, he feels that the production is impressive enough, or a better understanding of its point can be gained by re-reading, he will do that, too. Sometimes the re-reading is brought about because he is seeing a revival of a play and wishes to weigh his present responses against those of an earlier period. This happened, for example, when he was considering Bernard Shaw's Heart-break House in revival by the Mercury Theatre Players, Orson Wells directing. He was sufficiently concerned to re-read the play, including its long preface, before constructing his review.⁹⁵ And as a result, the essay emerged as a comparison and contrast of Shaw and Chekhov.

Judging the play on its merits as a product of a dramatist's genius also helps to clarify the issues as to acting interpretation. When Ethel Barrymore was doing The Kingdom of God, a translation from the Spanish of Sierra, Young objected to the way she railed and ranted in her role. It seemed to him that she would have been more impressive under-projecting her voice rather than over-projecting as she was doing. With this criticism in mind he turned to Sierra's text to verify his suspicions and discovered that the dramatist specifically directed "speaking quietly."⁹⁶

The poetic vision implicit in the words of Paul Green's In Abraham's Bosom is not lost on Young. He reads the text, sees the production, and feels he has been present at a "full passionate story told by a poet."⁹⁷ When he reads Shaw's lines in Saint Joan, he feels the sharp intellectual impact; an impact that is reflected in full measure in his (Young's) review of the Guild production.⁹⁸ He is quick to applaud when he discovers in the playwriting, as he does in Brief Moment, an adultness and state of mind that are mature.⁹⁹

An excerpt from Young's critical evaluation of Dynamo will serve here to indicate the length to which the critic may go in his reviews, to accord the writer his due. The quote is long but justified in the sense that it brings into bold relief the importance Young attached to a dis-

cussion of the writer and writing.

I have often thought, seeing his plays, that despite his great theatrical gifts, Eugene O'Neill's talent has two aspects not strictly theatrical that have contributed as much as anything else to his wide reputation.

One of these is the character of lyric feeling behind all that he writes. Strange Interlude¹⁵ in its earlier scenes, and in its last scenes banal and something short in taste, and Dynamo may be concerned at certain times with profound and eternal human problems and at others with what is adolescent, trite and over familiar; but it remains true nevertheless, that the feeling behind everything is close and genuine and personal. It arises from the author's own turmoil and emotional necessity, and has about it the urgency of his needs. From this cause it happens in Dynamo, as it did in Desire Under the Elms, that we feel the presence of two elements: the play proceeds, with whatever agreement or tedium it arouses in us as we hear it, but meanwhile, alongside this agreement or boredom, there runs this personal lyricism, the sense of some individual poignancy whose stress and pressure has involved these scenes. This in itself is moving and endearing; it stirs in us the impulse to defend Eugene O'Neill, and to respond to feeling that in himself is moving even though it turns out to be unequal and half baked. It happens therefore, that even when we are not at all touched by the feeling itself or the idea presented, we are stabbed to our depths by the importance of this feeling to him, and we are all his, not because of what he says, but because saying it meant so much to him.

* * *

The writing of this new play of Eugene O'Neill's is divided between a certain close realism on the one hand or at least a poetic accuracy -- gained partly through the use of lengthy asides -- and on the other, a typicality by which the characters

and the events are not individual but are shown moving on type lines and wearing thereby the pattern of incident.¹⁰⁰

Then he goes on for another page extolling and analyzing the virtues of O'Neill and his writing.

As can be seen then, the writer and writing are extremely important matters to Young. Consequently the review, both as a matter of pattern and a matter of interest to the critic, always contains adequate consideration of the literary aspect of the play.

The section in the review dedicated to the production, which includes the décor, lighting, costuming, and directing, occurs in the order of its importance as a major element in the play. Generally speaking, Young thinks "the décor is far behind the play and the acting as an expressive medium in the theatre."¹⁰¹ In a classical or Shakesperian play where the call is for the more formal and stylized, the ingenuity of the individual creative artist or designer will receive detailed analysis. Incidentally, the American artists in this field that Young seems to hold in highest regard are Robert E. Jones, Lee Simonson, and Norman Bel Geddes; the Englishman, Gordon Craig. But to return -- if, as in Elmer Rice's Street Scene, photographic realism is overly photographic, a note will be made to that effect also. If the décor, instead of being overly photographic, has just enough realism to be authentic and yet allows the

observer to be aware that he is looking at art, not nature or reality, Young is satisfied. He noted this condition especially in a Norman Bel Geddes set for a play named Arabesque. He (Young) had been in some of the Arab towns that are portrayed and was startled by their authenticity on the stage. But authenticity alone is not enough, for "there should be a constant sense that you are looking at art not at nature . . . [the scenes] are essentially Arabic but not that either; they vary from resemblance and reproduction to abstraction and complete freedom."¹⁰²

When estimating the worth and significance of production matters Young writes with assurance. His criticism takes on the same "rightness" that he finds in many stage sets. The criticism becomes historically valuable because it gives the reader a complete (almost photographic) picture of first reactions to innovations that the décor might represent. Especially with O'Neill, in The Hairy Ape, Strange Interlude, and Mourning Becomes Electra, the reviews undertook to examine painstakingly the décor and technical novelties such as double length of play, asides, masks, and so forth. Young constantly has his eye out for the essential dramatic element in the settings. With him, this is quite as important as the action in the play and in some cases may be more important. For example, he was particularly disappointed in the dramatization of Pearl Buck's

The Good Earth. "Except for the rich red-lighted bed on which poor O-lan died, the settings contributed nothing to the dramatic needs of the play. The make-ups varied; some of them are entirely independent of China; some, . . . needed only a candle inside them to be ready for Halloween."¹⁰³

The Guild's production of Shaw's Caesar and Cleopatra also came in for some comment in this direction. Young thought the performance needed a great deal of polishing and that the sets in several scenes were not doing adequately the job for which they were designed. "The marking that Shaw brings out of the cosmos to the drama of the human lives there on the stage can be more strongly underscored. There is that supper scene, for example, where the passions and ambitions, the petulances and jealousies and hot, passing beauty and splendor and meanness of the characters' lines are seen against the great forms that their race has evolved architecturally, and against their racial immortality expressed in sculptured stone, and in the midst of the Egypt where the world seems to reveal itself so splendidly . . . All these are dramatic elements as much as the action is."¹⁰⁴

Shakesperian plays are likely to receive a lavish treatment as far as production is concerned. On the whole, the critic found John Barrymore's portrayal of Hamlet, intelligent and praiseworthy. He thought the Hopkins' pro-

duction of it important. But it was toward Robert Edmond Jones that he directed the real kudos. He found the designer's work especially princely and austere, in keeping with the whole spirit of the play. Particularly was he pleased because the décor had no "clutter of costumes or elaborate variations in apartments, but instead a central rhythm of images, of light and shade innate to the dramatic moment."¹⁰⁵ It is indicative of this critic's method that he looks always for the dramatic element in the setting that is inherent to the play. In this production he feels that the designer has found and reproduced that intangible, but at the same time essential, quality.

When this happens, he is generous in his praise. We see Young, the poet, mystic and creative critic extolling the virtues of the artist-designer in terms of the literary art. The Orson Welles' production of Marlowe's Dr. Faustus moved him to such an ecstasy. Said he of Feder's (the designer) décor: "The settings appear, through the means of light, to be some chiaroscuro of the cosmic. They seem some concentration in space. It is as if we dealt here with that Topos-nous of the Gnostics, 'space-mind,' the agent between Creation and creator."¹⁰⁶ But when it does not happen, he is quick to note the fact. The Chekhov Theatre Players did a version of Twelfth Night that drew jeers from the reviewer because of the décor.

He complained, "There are no scenery shifts but merely bits like the prison walls, or chairs, draperies or gates indicated by chords, all changed by screens in various satiny colors manipulated by apprentices to various degrees of music. The effect as décor is of an idle and worn-out invention and the result an impression of distracting contrivance, superfluous and much too lively as well as wasteful."¹⁰⁷

Too often, he thinks, the designer does nothing but "dress up" the Shakesperian scene, with all kinds of Elizabethan "authenticity." The play then becomes, perhaps, acceptable archaeology, but poor Shakespere, poor drama, and poorer theatre. Oftentimes it is not even fine archaeology, as was usually true with the Sir Henry Irving and Augustin Daly Shakespere productions. They were "cut, rearranged, filled with lantern parties, meticulous and shoddy antiquarianism, mouthed, star-struck, mussed over with draper's goods."¹⁰⁸

Young would prefer to underaccent the "clutter." In 1922 when he was commenting on a "modern dress" Hamlet he pointed out that there were two extremely important advantages to having such a Hamlet. For one thing, "the intrusion of splurging . . . costumes . . . is stripped away;" and for another, "the surviving elements in the drama . . . are more keenly exposed."¹⁰⁹ It is all a

matter of relativity as to how far the producer should go with attempting to reproduce originals. Young seems not always to be consistent. In Maurice Evans' Hamlet he could not resist the remark that the Renaissance language coming from actors wearing 1938 coiffures was somewhat ruinous to the illusion.¹¹⁰ In the main, however, the matter of décor is important in his theatre criticism. He is simply insistent that the décor not become something in its own right. He wishes it fused and made part of the unity of arts combined in the theatre. When it is anything more than this, it is to be deplored and avoided.

On the subject of archaeology and Shakespere, Belasco's production of The Merchant of Venice with David Warfield came in for its share of notice. To the critic, the experience at this performance was interesting as would be going to a museum to see copies of Titian, Tintoretto and Veronese. But as to authenticity or significant art or an exposition of the essential dramatic moment involved in the play, he thought it might all be taken with the proverbial grain of salt.¹¹¹

Costuming must have a "rightness" or the play is hindered. It must be more than an external display, a circus parade. It must have an intrinsic value that furthers the central theme. In Romeo and Juliet he carries the criticism of the significance of and symbolism in what

Juliet wears, to a very great extent. About Jane Cowl's Juliet he says: "Her gown is too loose and easy, a tighter and more formal effect in the cutting would help enact the dramatic idea that this girl is imprisoned within the family patterns and the feudal conceptions that go along with them."¹¹² In one production of Macbeth using Gordon Craig sets, Lady Macbeth's costume was, in his opinion, so out of keeping with the general tenor and milieu of the play, that his evaluation reduced the costume to an absurdity. "The costumes were of old style Lohengrin tradition, not bad on Christmas cards in the Victorian manner, but astonishing in front of Craigish settings. They hit bottom in Lady Macbeth, who wore for the murder scene a black afternoon affair, up-to-date in figure and showing beneath it a stretch of light stockings and high-heeled satin shoes, and for the banquet scene a sort of Madame Jeritza Madison Avenue effect that was quite beyond words. [And he did not mean words of applause, either]. Even if the settings had come off, these costumes would have muddled the issue."¹¹³ He found the same thing to be true of Florence Reed's Paulina gown in The Tempest. He thought it might have come directly from Fifty-seventh Street.¹¹⁴ To repeat, then, the décor needs to be at the same distance from reality that both the acting and writing are.

From the early days of his tenure as drama-theatre

critic with The New Republic, Young showed a keen interest in foreign companies visiting in America. On one occasion he wrote an essay in the form of an open letter urging Eleanor Duse to come here with her Italian company. When the Russian Moscow Art Theatre Players, the Chekhov Players, the Mei Lan-Fang Chinese Players, and the Abbey Theatre Irish Players, came to the United States, he greeted them with a ringing welcome.

This was true also with the Old Vic Players from London. But his sense of hospitality and good-neighborliness did not dull his sense of what was acceptable and the opposite. From a production point of view the Laurence Olivier-Old Vic Company failed to impress Young favorably in the Shakespere series. When he comes to their classical productions he is outspokenly scornful. Oedipus Rex was a debacle and much of it was caused by the costuming.

The costumes . . . are a part of the debacle. They are many and varied . . . But these costumes were made with so little fundamental conception of costume cutting that they were largely without either historical or . . . dramatic value. They were also for the most part badly worn, not carried with any style at all by the wearers. Most of the wigs had no style or expertness, and the same was true of the make-ups . . . Mr. Olivier looked more like a bad Roman coin of the late Republic than an Attic hero of the Cumaeen Zeus, the convention of the Periclean theatre. Mr. Olivier further complicated matters by his costume . . . ~~which~~ ^{was} too youthful and too trivial. It is entirely out of key with the large type treatment in Sophocles of character, ideas

and events. In all this . . . I am talking about style as implying the significant relation between the thought and the outward, or visual, expression of it.¹¹⁵

The point is, as it always is with Young when he is defining art in the Platonic manner that "costumes become the art of the theatre when clothes are translated into something which they were not before, and have added to them something that was not there before."¹¹⁶

If an actor in a Sophoclean tragedy is given a costume and wants to learn to wear it, he can study the nature of the period and the essential quality that underlies Sophocles' conception. Character, events, emotional reactions are here seen in large and typical outlines, universal and stately, and are never particularized into individual detail or realistic and subjective minutiae. The reading of the verse exhibits the stately and simplified scale of recitation suited to such drama. The movements of the actor's body, of his hands and arms and head, his stride and his carriage, have the general and nobly chosen and simplified style that the whole conception of the play requires. Having discerned these qualities in the play and achieved them in the acting, the actor must recognize that they are inherent in the costumes as well, and are to be carried into the wearing them. Let him think of the Greek marbles, of that land, with its sure, final outlines . . . He must keep clear like that the lines of his costume, lines flowing singly or in complex rhythms upon the mass of it. A quick movement or a nervous carriage, a sudden individual impetuosity of gesture, deny the very character of the costume and through that begin the loss of the dramatic effect.¹¹⁷

It is a platitude in the Young production aesthetic,

that there be a unifying element throughout and that the décor be at the same distance from reality as the nature of the play requires. So when he sees a classically formal stage setting for a play like Street Scene, or a realistic production technique in an Oedipus Rex, he is moved to protest. The point is, that production is so basically and intrinsically a part of the theatre art, Young cannot resist either protesting or congratulating as the case requires. In any event, the décor is likely to receive more than ample coverage in his reviews.

Although Young devotes a good portion of his critical review to the actors and acting, not very much time will be spent here with that aspect. It is of such importance in the Young theatre-drama criticism that a separate section must be devoted to it. In this present section, a more general examination of what is covered in the reviews will be attempted.

Again, as with the other items, the statement must be made that the length and comprehensiveness of the consideration given the acting will depend upon the importance of the play or playwright as compared with the art and magnetism of the acting and actors. When he deals with a Duse vehicle the actress is likely to receive more attention; when he deals with an O'Neill play, the playwright. This statement is a generality, since on occasion when con-

sidering Duse in an Ibsen play, the critic will give equal attention to the playwright. One suspects that a devotee of culture like Young considers Ibsen's somewhat brutal let's-get-directly-to-the-point, no-beating-about-the-bush technique, nothing short of barbaric. So he devotes quite a bit of time to airing this attitude when he comes to an Ibsen play. This, at the expense of criticizing the acting.

In every review Young weighs the actor and the acting in terms of the "inner necessity." He admires and applauds technical competence in the actor. But in keeping with his feeling about the acting art, he expects more than surface perfection. The actor's portrayal must come from an inner emotional stimulus that transcends mere glitter and personal magnetism. Although John Barrymore's Hamlet drew words of praise from the critic, the latter was still not completely satisfied.

The inner limitations of Mr. John Barrymore's Hamlet are both less tangible and less amenable perhaps. They are in the direction of the poetic and human. With time, meditation and repetition it will gain in these respects, no doubt; but it needs now more warmth, more abundance in all reactions, more dilation of spirit. It takes too much for granted, makes Hamlet too easy to understand, and so lacks mystery and scope. It needs a larger inner tumult, more of a cerebral and passionate ecstasy pressing against the outward restraint of the whole pattern. It needs more of the sense of the ungovernable vitality, more complex subtlety and power. It needs more tenderness and . . . more generosity.¹¹⁸

Among his favorite and most respected actor-artists, past and present (included among whom are Mounet-Sully, Bernhardt, Grasso, Doris Keane, Ouspenskaya, Chaplin, Greenstreet, the Lunts, the Barrymores, Cornell, Ben-Ami, Dudley Digges) Eleanora Duse comes in for some of the most detailed and devoted treatment.

When he speaks of Duse, it is with awe and bated breath. Since he was instrumental in getting her to make an American tour, he reviewed her performances to the hilt when she did come.

Young has always contended that the actor "may carry the idea farther than the dramatist himself had ever conceived it,"¹¹⁹ and it is notable that Young finds Duse doing that very thing. "She enlarges the meaning and quality of the play until it goes beyond anything the author had imagined."¹²⁰ He is impressed by her technical excellence in ghosts and expresses himself enthusiastically: "The variety of Duse's reading, the tone, the pressure, the ictus, the vitality of it; the stillness with which she could imbue the quieter pauses in the emotion; the marvels of rhythm that are brought to the lines; the scale of values for which she sorted and unified the many reactions in thought and feeling; and finally the continuity of motion that she gave to her presence on the stage were almost past belief."¹²¹ However, he admits that she is not a supreme

craftsman in the sense of being an actor's actor, as Velasquez was the painter's painter, or Spenser the poet's poet. She is not the kind of skilled performer in whose craftsmanship one can delight for its own sake. Rather, she suggests to him "a state of music which must have come from a long love and study of that art. And most of all you will see that such a gradation of emphasis throughout the play [Cosi-Sia -- Thy Will Be Done] and so fine and so elusive but unforgettable a comprehension of the entire meaning of the character and theme could come only from a remarkable ability and association with culture and ideas, combined with a poetic and reflective nature, with a courage of mind, and finally, with something throughout the personality, quiet and taken for granted, a kind of untouched and unstressed and constant spiritual audacity."¹²²

He does not accord this kind of praise to Helen Hayes. On the contrary, he relegates her to the realm of the prosy, unpoetically imaginative, uncomplex, bourgeoisie of the acting profession. He considers her a polished performer who is not an artist. When he was attempting to define "actor," (The Flower in Drama, p. 5), he indicated that if the actor "has no distinction of his own, a man [or woman, of course] may, in a sense, be an actor and not an artist." He observed Miss Hayes in the title role of Harriet (pseudo-history about Harriet Beecher Stowe) and

thought her a "sturdy, highly honorable player, capable only of sensible style and without any great imaginative scope or boldness."¹²³ Such an actress would never receive high praise from a critic like Young whose heart and soul and sympathies are primarily with the poet of the theatre.

When the artist's performance seems to defy adequate critical analysis, Young has to content himself with the kind of statements that he used for Pauline Lord in Ethan Frome. He found her art so baffling and elusive that he has to say: "By what process it is in Miss Lord's portrayal, that her opening of a door and standing there . . . can begin our entrance into a region that we cannot explain, nor predict technically, nobody can say. Her performance has a miraculous humility, a subtle variety and gradation and shy power that are indescribable."¹²⁴ Young is also baffled by Ethel Barrymore in Embezzled Heaven (a play based on a novel by Franz Werfel) when he observes that "she possesses some grand elusive quality of her own. She is unique and special, not as a performer but as a personage on our stage."¹²⁵

He reaches the height of this kind of bafflement in analysis when he writes his encomium to Laurette Taylor in Tennessee Williams's The Glass Menagerie.

What Miss Laurette Taylor does with these matters can be at least partially imagined if you know the quality of her special gift. This, even after just seeing the play, is

almost impossible to convey with anything like the full wonderful truth. Hers is naturalistic acting of the most profound, spontaneous, unbroken continuity and moving life. There is an inexplicable rightness, moment by moment, phrase by phrase, endlessly varied in the transitions. Technique, which is always composed of skill and instinct working together, is in this case so overlaid with warmth, tenderness and wit that any analysis is completely baffled. Only a trained theatre eye and ear can tell what is happening, and then only at times. Miss Laurette Taylor is capable of a performance so right and perfect that you do not even think of it as a great performance. I do not mean to go into a kind of Seidlitz hysterics, to make my point about what she does with the role in The Glass Menagerie, I merely say that it has a characteristic of seeming beyond any contrivance and of a sort of changing rhythm of translucence rarely to be seen in the theatre.¹²⁶

Young was a great admirer of the Yiddish Theatre actor, Jacob Ben-Ami. He had had many contacts with this player, included among which were his disappointment in not being able to have Ben-Ami for the lead in The Saint. He had directed the actor on Broadway in Lenormand's The Failures and also in O'Neill's Welded. He had written several essays concerning Ben-Ami's talents. In these he accorded him the same kind of praise he had given Duse and later Pauline Lord, Ethel Barrymore, and Laurette Taylor. He found in Ben-Ami's acting, that same kind of poetic translucence and luminosity that rendered analyses of the others so baffling. He called Ben-Ami's art, "not so much of a structure as . . . a transparency through which shines

the light of the truth alive within it."¹²⁷

Young was, to be sure, a serious and sincere worker in the theatre art, but even he could not escape some of the hardness, the pseudo-sophisticated cynicism of Broadway. He rubbed elbows with the newspaper people and felt the pressure of the "big time" so that eventually some of the Southern gentility (so much a part of his writing personality) began to rub off. An examination of the reviews shows Young to be extremely able at hurling the verbal machete. The hurly-burly of Broadway robbed him of some of his sympathetic patience with other workers in the theatre -- especially the actors. So at times he joined the school of brickbat throwers and lay about him with a will.

When he reviewed the Spanish play Field of Ermine by Benavente, with Frances Starr and Charles Derwent in the leads, he dismissed them with: "Miss Frances Starr . . . has a method that is enough to kill any scene . . . Mr. Charles Derwent strikes you as only a means of enunciating final syllables."¹²⁸ In another play, Young thought that the leading actor, George Hassell did the "most to thwart [the author's] play of its right stage effect."¹²⁹ At damning with faint praise, Young is a past master. He admires the actress, Madame Sorel's "divinely callous" performance in Camille, but he cannot refrain from re-

marking that she "is the most delightful example I have ever known of empty competence. I have never seen so much expression that expressed nothing."¹³⁰ Or with supreme irony he applauds an actor in The Late George Apley, the adaptation of Marquand's book about Boston's Beacon Streeters by commenting: "It could even be said that his very lack of talent was an aid to the stuck and inexpressive emotional nature implied in this role."¹³¹ In 1918 he reviewed The Patriot, Ashley Dukes' adaptation from the German play by Neuman. It should be noted that Dukes, the English drama critic, was at this time Young's colleague as an associate editor of Theatre Arts and, as such, possibly came in for more than the ordinary amount of sympathetic treatment. But even this did not keep him from commenting sourly on the one female role in the piece: "Miss Titheradge did something less than nothing with it."¹³²

Young was never one to hold the English theatre in very high esteem. In several articles he assures Americans that they need not borrow from the English for their drama, since the English are too disinterested in drama anyway.¹³³ He insists that the Englishman "lives in a society whose essential quality passes more easily into arts like literature or religion than into the art of the theatre."¹³⁴ So when he reviews an English company's production of Galsworthy's Loyalties, he has nothing but scorn for some

of the acting. He remarks that "the sofa in the last act did quite as much acting as the lady in fainting on it."¹³⁵

These examples of Young's virtuosity as a "flame thrower" could be compounded many times. From 1922 to 1928 he poured the vitriol undiluted. In 1922 he disapproved heartily of Bernard Shaw's Back to Methuselah as stage fare, and found one of the actors in it especially objectionable. Of Dennis King who played the part of Cain in the early Biblical creation scenes he says: ". . . so impossible that one wishes him [King's Cain] in Abel's shoes or out on the hills with Enoch."¹³⁶ By 1938 his sarcasm had reached a new "high" and he demolished a whole Macbeth company with one stroke. "The two murderers of Mr. Bernard Savage and Mr. Harold Thomas seemed to me excellent performances. Their one fault lay in not killing more of the cast."¹³⁷

As we have seen, Young is not an ordinary run-of-the-mill critic whose light shines only briefly in terms of his own stylistic talents. He is more than a newspaper reviewer, for he has standards that stride into an aesthetic far from Times Square. He sets up and satisfies qualifications that place him apart as a theatre-drama critic. His examinations delve into the aspects of drama that involve several of the theatre arts; his discussions include a consideration of the play as literature; and his critical

essays are concerned with practical production evaluations.

Although the reviews follow a pattern which is concerned with plot, playwright, production and acting, an investigation of acting and actors is his major effort. Consequently this discussion will move to a more comprehensive examination of Young's activity in this field.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER III

Footnotes not prefaced by the name of the author are to be considered as written by Stark Young.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER III

- ¹Edith J. R. Isaacs, "Theatre of Stark Young," Theatre Arts, 26 (April, 1942), 257.
- ²The Flower in Drama, p. 15.
- ³Helena Modjeska, "Endowed Theatres and the American Stage," Forum, 14 (November, 1892), 338.
- ⁴"The World and the Theatre," Theatre Arts, 14 (February, 1930), 96.
- ⁵The Broadway newspaper critic, according to several Broadway critics that I have read, may leave the theatre shortly before the final curtain (11:15, perhaps), rush to his office, pound out his review and by 1 A.M. have it on the street with the early edition.
- ⁶"Three and One," New Repub, 104 (April 21, 1941), 533.
- ⁷"Cherry Orchard," New Repub, 110 (February 7, 1944), 180.
- ⁸"Failing Plays and the Critics," Theatre Arts, 25 (November, 1921), 777.
- ⁹Lewis Nichols, "Nine Cold Men of Broadway," The New York Times Magazine, (November 16, 1947), 50.
- ¹⁰"Cherry Orchard," New Repub, 110 (February 7, 1944), 180.
- ¹¹"Color Organ and the Theatre," New Repub, 29 (January 18, 1922), 225.
- ¹²"The Critics Say," Theatre Arts, 16 (January, 1932), 72.

- ¹³Joel E. Spingarn, Creative Criticism, (New York, 1925), p. 92.
- ¹⁴Ibid., p. 53.
- ¹⁵Ibid., p. 96.
- ¹⁶The Pavilion, p. 139.
- ¹⁷Brander Matthews, "Undramatic Criticism," No Am, 214 (July 1921), 113.
- ¹⁸Ward Morehouse, Matinee Tomorrow, (New York, 1949), p. 40.
- ¹⁹George Jean Nathan, The Popular Theatre, (New York, 1918), p. 93.
- ²⁰"A Must Handbook," New Repub, 111 (November 6, 1944), 596.
- ²¹"The Flower in Drama," No Am, 217 (April, 1923), 556.
- ²²"Tale of Critics," New Repub, 81 (December 5, 1934), 106.
- ²³Edward Hussey, "Stark Young," No Am, 221 (1925), 763.
- ²⁴George Jean Nathan, The Critic and the Drama, (New York, 1922), p. 7.
- ²⁵"Stage Traffic," New Repub, 105 (December 8, 1941), 762.
- ²⁶"Othello," New Repub, 109 (November 1, 1943), 622.
- ²⁷"The Green Pastures," New Repub, 62 (May 19, 1930), 28.

- 28 "The Corn is Green," New Repub, 103 (December 9, 1940), 789.
- 29 Immortal Shadows, p. 60.
- 30 "Seeing the Point," Theatre Arts, 8 (June 1924), 397.
- 31 Eric Bentley, "American Theatre Critic," Kenyon Review, 12 (Winter, 1950), 138.
- 32 Brooks Atkinson, "Credo of a Critic," Sat R Lit, 32 (August 6, 1944), 136.
- 33 St. John Irvine, "These Critics," Literary Digest, 94 (July 2, 1927), 27.
- 34 William V. O'Connor, "A Short View of the New Criticism," Engl J, 38 (November 1949), 489.
- 35 Bernard Sobel, The Theatre Handbook, (New York, 1940), p. 637.
- 36 And sometimes without other things besides breath. Lucius Beebe, in a book about theatre personalities, First Nights, gives an entertaining account of one critic who arrived at the theatre faultlessly attired in top hat, white tie and tails, but completely innocent of shoes and socks.
- 37 "The World and the Theatre," Theatre Arts, 14 (February 1930), 96.
- 38 "Theatre Liberty," New Repub, 104 (February 24, 1941), 276.
- 39 John Mason Brown, Upstage, (New York, 1928), p. 15.
- 40 George Jean Nathan, Art of the Night, (New York, 1928), p. 15.

- ⁴¹"These Critics," Literary Digest, 94 (July 2, 1927), 27.
- ⁴²Ibid.
- ⁴³Letter to R. M. Lumianski, June 24, 1954.
- ⁴⁴The Flower in Drama, p. 80.
- ⁴⁵"Prince and the Pirate," New Repub, 49 (December 22, 1926), 136.
- ⁴⁶Nathan, The Critic and the Drama, p. 33.
- ⁴⁷The Flower in Drama, p. 91.
- ⁴⁸"When is it a Play?" Bookman, 65 (June 1927), 423.
- ⁴⁹"As to Revival of Plays," Bookman, 65 (July 1927), 539.
- ⁵⁰The Theatre, p. 18.
- ⁵¹"Belascosity," New Repub, 37 (December 19, 1923), 94.
- ⁵²"Censoring," The New York Times, (February 24, 1925), 18, col. 7.
- ⁵³"Theatre Notes," New Repub, 74 (April 12, 1933), 244.
- ⁵⁴"Othello," New Repub, 109 (November 1, 1943), 621.
- ⁵⁵Nathan, The Critic and the Drama, p. 35.

- ⁵⁶George Jean Nathan, Comedians All, (New York, 1919), p. 117.
- ⁵⁷George Jean Nathan, The Intimate Notebooks, (New York, 1932), p. 153.
- ⁵⁸"To Wait and See," New Repub, 61 (January 8, 1930), 197.
- ⁵⁹The Theatre, p. 15.
- ⁶⁰"New Playwright's Theatre," New Repub, 53 (December 21, 1927), 139.
- ⁶¹"The New O'Neill Play," New Repub, 45 (December 30, 1925), 160.
- ⁶²"Playwrights and Cases," New Repub, 54 (May 16, 1928), 382.
- ⁶³"Him," New Repub, 54 (May 2, 1928), 325.
- ⁶⁴"Theatre Total," New Repub, 83 (May 22, 1935), 50.
- ⁶⁵Immortal Shadows, p. 275.
- ⁶⁶"Mr. Tone and Mr. Hemingway," New Repub, 102 (March 25, 1940), 408.
- ⁶⁷"Around Eight-Thirty," New Repub, 89 (December 16, 1936), 217.
- ⁶⁸Nathan, The Critic and the Drama, p. 69.
- ⁶⁹"Hairy Ape," New Repub, 30 (March 22, 1922), 112.

- ⁷⁰"Theatrical Wings," The New York Times, (February 22, 1925), sec. VII, 1, col. 2.
- ⁷¹Immortal Shadows, p. 3.
- ⁷²Glamour, p. 56.
- ⁷³Immortal Shadows, p. 69.
- ⁷⁴"Dynamo," New Repub, 58 (February 27, 1929), 44.
- ⁷⁵The Theatre, p. 49.
- ⁷⁶Immortal Shadows, p. 159.
- ⁷⁷"An Actress and a Dramatist," New Repub, 60 (November 6, 1929), 323.
- ⁷⁸Immortal Shadows, p. 62.
- ⁷⁹Ibid., p. 128.
- ⁸⁰"Miss Katherine Cornell," New Repub, 52 (October 12, 1927), 207.
- ⁸¹"Thy Will Be Done," New Repub, 106 (February 2, 1942), 147.
- ⁸²"Eugene O'Neill's New Play," New Repub, 68 (November 11, 1931), 352.
- ⁸³"Journey's End," New Repub, 58 (April 10, 1929), 225.

- ⁸⁴The word "Habima" in Hebrew means, roughly, pulpit. More inclusively the word indicates the area in the synagogue immediately in front of the altar. It is here that much of the Jewish religious ritual is carried on. The Habima Players' repertory consisted to a great extent of plays of a semi-religious and semi-ritualistic nature. Thus the name Habima Players.
- ⁸⁵Immortal Shadows, p. 69.
- ⁸⁶"Rouge et Noir," New Repub, 30 (April 12, 1922), 198.
- ⁸⁷"Clemence Dane's New Play," New Repub, 52 (October 12, 1927), 207.
- ⁸⁸"Miss Katherine Cornell," New Repub, 52 (October 12, 1927), 207.
- ⁸⁹"Antigone," New Repub, 114 (March 4, 1946), 317.
- ⁹⁰"Three and One," New Repub, 104 (April 21, 1941), 534.
- ⁹¹"The Wingless Victory," New Repub, 89 (February 3, 1937), 411.
- ⁹²"So Divine an Air," New Repub, 111 (November 13, 1944), 625.
- ⁹³"Reconsiderations," The New York Times, (April 26, 1925), sec. VIII, 1, col. 2.
- ⁹⁴Immortal Shadows, p. 80.
- ⁹⁵"Heartbreak House," New Repub, 95 (June 8, 1938), 130.

- ⁹⁶"The Kingdom of God," New Repub, 57 (January 16, 1929), 245.
- ⁹⁷"In Abraham's Bosom," New Repub, 50 (March 2, 1927), 46.
- ⁹⁸"Saint Joan," New Repub, 37 (January 16, 1924), 205.
- ⁹⁹"Two Events," New Repub, 69 (February 3, 1932), 321.
- ¹⁰⁰"Dynamo," New Repub, 58 (February 27, 1929), 43.
- ¹⁰¹The Theatre, v. 18.
- ¹⁰²"The Geddes Production," New Repub, 44 (November 11, 1925), 305.
- ¹⁰³"King James in Chinatown," New Repub, 72 (November 2, 1932), 330.
- ¹⁰⁴Immortal Shadows, p. 59.
- ¹⁰⁵Ibid., p. 13.
- ¹⁰⁶"Noctis Equi," New Repub, 90 (February 17, 1937), 46.
- ¹⁰⁷Immortal Shadows, p. 219.
- ¹⁰⁸"Forward and Backward," New Repub, 30 (May 10, 1922), 316.
- ¹⁰⁹"Hamlet in Modern Dress," New Repub, 45 (November 25, 1925), 17.
- ¹¹⁰"Hamlet," New Repub, 96 (November 2, 1938), 361

- 111 Immortal Shadows, p. 43.
- 112 "It is the Lark," New Repub, 33 (February 14, 1923), 321.
- 113 "Macbeth," New Repub, 57 (December 5, 1928), 68.
- 114 "The Tempest," New Repub, 112 (February 12, 1945), 227.
- 115 Immortal Shadows, p. 267.
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- 118 Immortal Shadows, p. 287.
- 119 The Flower in Drama, p. 35.
- 120 "Duse's Ibsen," New Repub, 36 (November 14, 1923), 309.
- 121 Ibid.
- 122 Immortal Shadows, p. 35.
- 123 "A Gentle Mrs. Stowe," New Repub, 108 (March 22, 1943), 381.
- 124 "Miss Lord's Day," New Repub, 86 (February 26, 1936), 78.
- 125 "So Divine an Air," New Repub, 111 (November 13, 1944), 625.

- ¹²⁶"The Glass Menagerie," New Repub, 112 (April 16, 1945), 505.
- ¹²⁷The Flower in Drama, p. 45.
- ¹²⁸Immortal Shadows, p. 169.
- ¹²⁹"Wild Men," New Repub, 52 (September 28, 1927), 148.
- ¹³⁰Immortal Shadows, p. 67.
- ¹³¹"Boston Limited," New Repub, 111 (December 11, 1944), 798.
- ¹³²"As the Weeks Pass," New Repub, 54 (February 22, 1928), 18.
- ¹³³"The Apron String in our Theatre," No Am Review, 216 (December 1922), 833.
- ¹³⁴The Flower in Drama, p. 28.
- ¹³⁵"Loyalties," New Repub, 32 (November 8, 1922), 277.
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Chapter IV

ACTORS AND ACTING

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Young's contribution to stage criticism is somewhat unusual in that he, among all the contemporary Broadway critics, has taken acting most seriously and written most searchingly about it as an art. In the opinion of many who are qualified to judge, Young has no peer in this department. In fact not since the time of Hazlitt, Lamb, and Lewes in the 19th century in England and Coquelin in France, has any qualified critic written so profoundly of acting. While Young was still a practising critic, it was said of him that he "is without question the finest critic of acting at work in America today."¹ Eric Bentley, the present critic for The New Republic, remarked that Young "was perhaps the only one who in any distinguished way, did write about acting and design with the skill that a first rate literary critic lavishes on poetry."² John Mason Brown, admirer and fellow critic, in his book Upstage makes the same point about Young. Brown finds that when writing of acting, Young surpasses all contemporary critics in making clear the problems inherent in that art.³ And Edward Hussey in the North American Review commented about Young: "His is a lonely if powerful voice raised in the interest of acting as a craft based on technique, and

whose analysis not only penetrates to the fundamentals but also establishes the relationship of acting to music, to the rhythm of speech, to the realities of the theatre, and to the history and spirit of the play."⁴

It may be that Young's lively interest in, as well as his keen insight into, the problems of acting as an art, stemmed from his early experiences with The Curtain Club. As was mentioned earlier in this discussion, while he was a professor of English at the University of Texas (1907-1915) he organized a theatre group on the campus. With this venture he became involved in acting, directing, designing, staging, and all the other matters associated with the active production of drama.

After he joined The New Republic in 1921, his contributions concerned themselves most often with the question: what is involved in acting, As he affirmed when he reviewed The Hairy Ape in 1922, "The truth is we have not yet decided what acting is exactly; how much it can be directly imitative, how much stylized, or how much the actual visual pressure of the human beings that convey it interrupts and complicates this art as compared to others."⁵ Accordingly, he examined this subject vigorously. There followed a steady flow of articles about the acting art contributed not only to The New Republic but to Bookman and Theatre Arts. And by the time this flow had culminated

in his five books on the theatre; The Flower in Drama, Theatre, Theatre Practice, Glamour and Immortal Shadows, a period covering a span from 1921 to 1948, and he had directed several times on Broadway, Mr. Young had taken a stand. In his books he developed a philosophy of the acting art more detailed perhaps than anything that had been offered before.

These books, as has been said before, are made up of a compilation of the best of his theatre-drama criticisms. He begins to develop his theory in the first essay; "Acting," in The Flower in Drama and continues in Theatre Practice with "Illusion in Acting." In the first place, says he, in effect, one is surprised, when he examines this subject seriously as a literary historian to find that there has been very little written on it. The little that has been written deals primarily with the personal distinction or magnetism of a particular actor rather than acting as an art. Not that Young underrates the importance of this personal magnetism; rather, he thinks that "personality implies some sort of human quality raised to the nth. The player's vitality becomes magnetic and to a degree contagious, at the same moment engaging us and creating itself within us."⁶ Much misunderstanding, however, arises because many people confuse the personal magnetism of the individual actor with the art that he employs. This mag-

netism may be one of the materials with which the artist works, but it is only that and no more. In fact, it is possible for an actor to possess these attributes of magnetism and still not be an artist if he has not mastered the techniques of his craft. But the writers on acting seem to forget a matter that Young feels is most important, namely, that acting deals with more than personality, for this art, like all other arts, is a craft and has certain fundamentals. Young admired the Lunts in Idiot's Delight because their "conception of acting is vibrant and delicious. They remind us that this acting art is not mere personal exhibition."⁷

In the second place, he contends, it is unfortunate that criticism suffers because everyone presumes that he can judge acting. Intelligent observers who would fear to rush in to other arts, do not hesitate for a moment to pontificate about acting. Why? Because in other arts the layman is not very well acquainted with the medium. In acting, however, the medium is the actor's body. Since this is a medium within easy reach, the layman who ordinarily would defer to the experts in other arts, fancies himself competent in this area. It is Young's contention that acting is highly complex, and that it is ridiculous to presume that the average member of an intelligent audience is equipped to make a judgment simply because he is moved

by the actor's effect upon him. It is true that the layman may react more quickly and more positively to acting than to any other art. But this need have no particular significance. It is also true that anyone may respond to a particularly tender caress, which does not mean that he understands biology.⁸

There are too many otherwise intelligent viewers, he goes on, who make the mistake of thinking that all the actor has to do is to reproduce actuality or reality. This, thinks Young, is only a childish desire for illusion and deception that brings us to nonsense in art. Young follows a 14th century Japanese actor-artist named Seami who contended that in imitation there should be "a tinge of the unlike."⁹ Those who feel they are paying an actor the highest compliment possible by saying he is the character he plays are guilty of a "monkey's delight in front of a mirror," and might better go to a circus. There is nothing quite so much like a trained bear as a trained bear.

Young contends that acting, like all other arts, is concerned with the business of translating materials from one medium to another, adding material in translation and coming up finally with something that was not there before. This is a principle in aesthetics that he borrowed from Plato, and, good classicist that he is, by which he stands. By his definition, "acting is a business of translating

into the terms of human beings their minds and bodies and voices, certain matter taken either from life direct or from drama of thought and action and appearance that has been created out of life. The completeness of acting as art depends upon the completeness of the translation it makes into its own terms."¹⁰

Because of the differences of opinion as to what constitutes the art in acting, several schools of thought have risen, two among which are the representational and the presentational. The first school presumes that the actor pays no attention to the audience; that he plays within four walls, as it were, and the audience is allowed to look on with one wall removed. This is the school that was sponsored by Stanislavsky and his Moscow Art Theatre, a school reported upon in careful detail by Young, but not entirely approved by him.

Everyone knows that their method is the representational, which professes the intention of ignoring the presence of spectators and of producing an effect of life as life would be seen going on if the fourth wall of a room were removed; everyone knows by now the phrase "spiritual realism," implying a selection among realistic details that can bring out the inmost spirit of the actual matter. And everyone knows about the exhaustive search for right particulars, the last perfection of illusion in make-up; the spirit of the group working together under Stanislavsky; the common training that makes it possible to exchange roles among the actors; and the sincerity of approach to the meaning of the dramatist.¹¹

Young can understand and perhaps applaud the industry "the infinite pains, shadings, poignancy and color"¹² involved in this kind of representation. These Moscow Art Theatre players "can act not only one scene or one play, but, through humility and long labor at learning the technique of their art, they are equally competent throughout many parts. They represent a group of sincere artists, created by their art, rich by their intense living in it, and sure of all art's importance and duration. They are artists that have been working together thoroughly and through many years, in an organization and under a distinguished and sympathetic leader, and for a devoted public. And, most significant of all, they possess a racial or popular life from which they can draw their belief and idea."¹³

However, he does not for the most part lean toward this kind of theory in acting. The Moscow Art Theatre's production of Tolstoy's Tsar Fyodor left him unmoved and indifferent because he would like the

style of the acting to achieve not the studied naturalness that we take daily as the ways of men, but the form, the magic of distance and scope, the conscious arrangement, the artifice and logic, that would create in my mind the idea. And with jewels and arms and clothes I can see the merely correct history of them in museums if I choose; what I want on the stage is these things translated into stage terms, restated with that lustre and relief . . . that would make them art. . . The effort and theory of making the past as natural as if it were the present seems

to me only a deficiency in cultural perspective.¹⁴

Nor can Young sanction the blind following of the Russian method in an American drama. Close attention to technique he thinks is very important but not at the expense of something else that is more important. Morris Carnovsky playing in Paul Green's The House of Connelly came under this censure. "Mr. Morris Carnovsky as the uncle gave a performance that was technically very careful and sincere, but was neither pathetic nor aristocratic, both essential to his drama. I can only say that the better it got the worse it was, the more tedious, platitudinous and maddeningly deliberate. This reflective cud-chewing in the supposed Stanislavsky method is anything but Southern . . . For violent inner confusion it substitutes only what is external; and it presents only what is relaxed mediocrity where what is needed is a lyric vagueness and defeatism."¹⁵

On the other hand, the presentational school is very much concerned with the audience; for the actor of this school shares with the audience his idea of the role, and makes the audience conscious always that they are looking at art, not nature. Young leans toward this school. Although "the actor while he is on the stage, belongs to the audience not to himself,"¹⁶ the actor must nevertheless always remain himself. He never becomes the part that he acts or there would be no art. He is himself in every part.

His objective is not to deceive, but to create another kind of truth by adding to nature "that lustre and relief that would make it art."¹⁷ The greatness of the acting will be proportionate to the greatness of the actor's self; that is, the greatness of the power to create in keeping with needs of the particular case. Luster and a heightened antiphonal radiance must have been added, so that the actor is carried away. "Good players give pleasure by their strong power and good sense: the great genius will always realize the feelings of the character and be transported beyond himself."¹⁸ *This* is exemplified in the actor Dudley Digges' portrayal of Harry in O'Neill's The Iceman Cometh. "His Harry was on a different plane from every other to be seen on the stage at the Martin Beck. It was exact, with the exactness that belongs to all fine art; and full of the constant surprise that appears in all first rate art whatever, as it does in whatever is alive in our life. It was beautiful, luminous, filled with the witty and the poetic together mingled."¹⁹

Even if the actor has the volition, the emotion, the technique, and the inspiration, he still cannot succeed as an artist unless he has an idea for each part he approaches. He cannot play any part directly from nature, especially when he has no eyes with which to see nature. The part must be translated from its actual position in nature, to

the actor's idea of its position. "Even a Mr. Tom Jones acting himself on the stage would have to project on the stage his own notion of himself and his relation to the rest of the play. Even in such a case the actor cannot play from nature . . . He is Mr. Jones, but the Mr. Jones projected into his acting is another matter. . ."20 If the actor is an artist he must translate "incredibly," scaling his translation in terms of the nature of the role. So strongly does Young feel about the matter that although he complimented Philip Merivale as Washington in Maxwell Anderson's Valley Forge, he noted that "Washington himself in the role would surely be all wrong. It would not be his fault and not too much the play's fault. Such are the ways of history, life and art."21

Unfortunately, to circumvent the need for a painstakingly developed technique, producers in their impatience and carelessness too often avoid requiring artistry in their actors. Instead, they typecast. They try to make the real-life Tom Jones, the stage Tom Jones. That is, they place in a part an actor whose physical externals fit the role to be played. The actor who is paralyzed, plays the paralytic; the Negro plays the Negro, and so forth. This sort of casting makes Young impatient. In fact, it offends him to the core, as contrary to one of his most profoundly believed-in theories of art. Says he, "the

question of the relation of art to reality is the greatest of all questions in regard to art. It parallels . . . the relation of the spirit to the body, or to go the other way round, the relation of the passing to permanent, of the casual in the moment to the flower in it."²² He wants a theatre that exhibits something more than mere photography; he wants acting that is more than casually external. Realism in his scheme of things never should consist in copying the outside of things. Rather, it is the responsibility of the realistic actor-artist to "see more completely what [the character he is playing] is and means and then choose details that will reveal to us what he has seen in his man."²³

When he reviewed the production of Daniel Reed's dramatization of Julia Peterkin's novel, Scarlet Sister Mary he came to the point quickly. The Negro actors in the play were doing the parts of Negroes. Although he found Reed's casting of Miss Peterkin's novel into the form of drama acceptable, he disapproved heartily of the idea of having Negro actors in the parts. This was on the grounds that the artistic effect was partially destroyed by too much reliance upon type.

Often when I see Negro players on the stage and afterward when I hear people saying that they are great actors, I think of Seami, who said five hundred years ago in Japan, that children and dogs should not be allowed on the stage, they destroy the

artistic effect. He was speaking for a theatre of greater purity and abstraction than the modern theatre . . . but what he said was right enough in aesthetic principle . . . it is better art . . . [to] have white players acting Negro characters than to have a Negro playing a Negro as in The Emperor Jones . . . This is type casting with a vengeance, and the blindest must see what type casting has done to the acting in our theatre.²⁴

If it were not for the fact that Young makes it clear the kind of theatre of abstraction about which Seami spoke is quite different from the modern American theatre, it would be easy enough to turn this line of reasoning into a reductio ad absurdum, of course. Conversely, we may ask, should white men's parts be done by Negroes, as was true in the case of actor Mr. Canada Lee, a Negro, when he did the role of Bosola, the white villain in Webster's Duchess of Malfi?²⁵ Or should female parts be done by males, as was true in the plays in which Mei Lan-Fang the Chinese male actor performed, to great acclaim, the roles of women?²⁶

In his consideration of the matter, he deplores the fact that, as demonstrated in the production of Pearl Buck's The Good Earth, "our acting has arrived at a realistic method . . . which amounts in most cases to the actors acting very little but themselves or letting the play act them."²⁷ If the objective of the actor in The Good Earth is to make us see the actors only as Chinese, it brings

us to nothing.

If the actor does not seem Chinese to us, we resent it, which takes away from the play's effect. If the actor seems Chinese, we are struck with the resemblance, and the more apt is his performance to run into mere impersonation. The more he resembles and the more he impersonates (merely) a Chinaman, the more he distracts us from the play or the scene in hand. In that case the better he is the worse he gets. If the whole company of actors were indistinguishable from Chinamen -- which would never happen -- the artistic plane of the event would be very low; for we must know to a due and artistic extent that they are actors acting Chinamen. Thus it is, as we see at the Guild, that realism can bring us to an impasse.²⁸

The weakness that results from complete reliance upon typecasting is the reduction of acting from an art to mere representation of externality, since there is no tinge of the unlike. It was for this very reason that Young saw the acting in Elmer Rice's Street Scene as entertaining, but rubbish, as art.

For the most part the company at the Playhouse is made up of people who fit the characters ready-made. An Italian plays an Italian, a Jewess, a Jewess, and so on. In the hurry and pressure of things there is little time to discover or train actors, perhaps, and perhaps the need for actuality in this particular piece led the casting toward these readymade types. The result is that in Street Scene there is a good deal of entertainment that comes from watching these actual people as we might see them on Ninth Avenue, but very little interest in watching them as actors. They are mostly neither bad nor good. Their resemblances are better than their acting, and they themselves seem more convincing than what they

say. As a minor by-product of the perplexity induced by such a situation, I have no idea whether the player written down as Mr. James M. Qualen, whose janitor, Olsen, seems to me the best performance of the evening, is only a Nordic of that ilk, chosen for his type, or is a capital actor.²⁹

The critic strikes a blow against complete photographic realism to the exclusion of all else in the acting art, whenever the opportunity offers. "Nobody," says he, "requires Freudian data in fairy tales. Nobody wants pores bored in the skin of the Venus de Milo to make her better art."³⁰ "Which," he inquires, when he reviews The Last Mile, "is more sophisticated and grown up; to need to see the horse standing on the stage or merely to suggest him with the movement of a decorative whip, and go on with the matter of the play?"³¹

When in 1932 The Group Theatre sent out a questionnaire to various distinguished people of the theatre asking an opinion as to how American actors compare with those of other countries, Young answered that we have too much typecasting.³² However, lest there be any question about his position, it should be made very clear again that it is the excessive use of and the complete dependence upon this "short cut" that he deplores. In a letter dated December 18, 1954, he says, "Be sure when you speak of typecasting to get it straight as far as I am concerned. I do not object to typecasting in itself. The whole issue hangs on

the extent to which the actor relies on the type instead of using the type as material from which to build the character."³³ For when the actor had the talent and genius to combine the inner spark with the outer physical likeness, Young was never niggardly in his praise. Rather, he did not hesitate to pull out all the stops. He approved of one of the Richard II performances he attended and especially the work of one actor.

Mr. Augustin Duncan's John of Gaunt has all the magnificence and reality that is best set down as indescribable. In the death scene with the famous lines to England . . . Mr. Duncan created a basic effect of actuality, combined with an inmost splendor of style, that could nowhere else on our stage be even approached. I am recording here for, I trust, more than a momentary reading, one of the handful of great intervals in our theatre's long dearth: a reading and soul so grand, so compelling and, in the midst of our current trash, so infrequent and so unwanted, that even to convey it is mere musing in a fool's paradise.³⁴

Thus it is that the truth of an actor's performance is dependent upon imaginative insight, not upon copying the outside of things. His must be a conscious comment upon himself as well as the part that he plays. In him, through the miracle of his genius, the flaming brilliance of his imagination, the consummation of his technique, there must be concentrated and gathered up, all the imaginative potential and inspiration inherent in his role. In this way the actor evolves as an artist. The Italian actor Grasso dem-

onstrated the use of this kind of imaginative insight when he was playing the hero in Mala Gloria. During the course of the play he

comes home from prison and a bandit's life to find that his wife has betrayed him for the young son of the house where she is employed as a maid. He kills her and departs again. What Grasso did when he acted the role was to kill the woman and then, instead of going straight out of the room, to turn on the young man, to turn madly, pause, catch his hand on the boy's head, kiss his brow suddenly, and spin him blindly from ~~him~~ as you might treat a child who without knowing it has ruined your life. That was great imaginative acting; it left us with a sense of the entire content of the moment; it spread through infinite reaches of human significance.³⁵

Mr. Young has an eye and an ear for the inspired and imaginative in acting. Whenever he sees it he remarks upon it forcefully. Haidee Wright played Queen Elizabeth in Clemence Dane's play named Will Shakespeare, and Young was quick to see the artistry of her playing.

Miss Wright's qualities are, first, wit - a happy, swift recognition of points as they rise - and then style - an unfailing personal distinction in the expression of her idea. She sits there looking like a [portrait] of the great Queen and yet not like it either. She rather makes herself, her manner and her gown, a re-creation, fresh and in terms of her own art of acting, of Queen Elizabeth's portrait. She appears to give us not something imitative so much as witty inspiration. With this comes . . . a kind of gorgeousness of mind and humor that piques and astonishes and thrills us; and a mingling of Renaissance pride and caprice and intellectual audacity, and

splendor of humanity, that lifts the scene out of itself into a great era. We are moved constantly by the breath of fine poetry that fills now and again her lines and always her delivery of them . . . And through this Miss Wright leads us into a deep pathos, at once poignant and lofty; and gives us a sense finally of what she is most bent on creating in the scene: the beauty, solitude and fatality of great natures.³⁶

It is not alone on the plane of the intensely dramatic or tragic that the actor's art must shine. In the presentation of the lighter aspects of life, the actor-artist must also be a conscious comment on himself, on the role he plays, and on society. He must have the power to inject and project a sly, perhaps, ironic comment on the character that he is building. In this way he allows the audience to delight in the quick wit of his sparkling contrasts and similarities. He allows them to see the ludicrousness of his characterization against a background of reality. For example, when Young reports on the sly wit of the popular English comedienne, Beatrice Lillie, in a musical named Oh Please! he is not sure "whether the player thinks much, applies her images and absurd inventions of movement and phrasing to philosophic ideas or comments on life or merely goes by a teaming instinct." But he is sure that however this art is come by, "it can include a whole irony out of life, as the circle on the face of a watch can include and describe the sun."³⁷

This is why the movie comedian Charlie Chaplin is looked upon by Young as such a great artist. His (Chaplin's) work on the screen exemplifies everything that the critic meant when he said, "the difference between what is acting and what is not acting . . . consists in the conscious comment and projection that the actor gives to every movement that he portrays."³⁸ There is little doubt about Chaplin's comment and projection, but a great deal more than doubt in Young's mind about the usual Hollywood acting in the silent screen days, circa 1923.

I had seen the actor led into a scene, directed by the director to act for a minute, half a minute, three minutes, told what to do, photographed in that blinding light pushed close up to his eyes, and then directed off the scene. And presently another bit, and so on all day, bits, odds and ends, scraps, patches, the whole studio lounging with players ready to go on for their moments and to be wound off by the camera in the blast of light; a shipwreck here, a medieval castle there, here an apartment with a real clock and curtains, there a desert island with palms, in this corner a great ballroom built at absurd expense, in that corner a lady in prison . . . behind a yard of bars, waiting for the camera man, and now doing a jig as she waits, holding on to bars. How any effects of acting at all can come out of this is a wonder. And it is easy to see how any artist would degenerate under such intervals . . . cut off from any profound mood, half idle, half acting, half individual, half directed; and most of the matter to be acted, rot and more rot and rot again, with only a touch now or then of the divine human thing that emerges in spite of all from the humanity of the people themselves or from the miracle that is glimpsed in the human

life portrayed, however foolish the intention of the whole may be.³⁹

It is important that more attention be paid to the acting art, for the fortunes of acting and drama are inseparable. The kind of drama that we are likely to have is dependent upon the kind of actor-artists who are available to act it; and conversely, the calibre of acting we are likely to have will depend upon the grade of plays to be had.⁴⁰ To be sure, no good playwright will necessarily stop writing good plays simply because there are no artists among the actors to perform them. But even good playwrights are less likely to be inspired.

And since acting is, after all, the real body of the theatre (regardless of all the mechanical and technical perfections of décor, lighting, sound effects, and so forth) the direction that the play itself will take depends to a great extent upon the degree of artistry of the artist-actor. The latter has it in his power to warp, misdirect, pervert or in general wreck the dramatist's essential idea, if he so desires.

This appeared to be true in the case of Pirandello's Right You Are If You Think You Are. Young considered the production "passable," but he could not approve of what was wrought by the actor who had the lead.

The whole interpretation of the play, however, is thwarted by Mr. Reginald Mason . . . to whom is allotted the all important

role in which the dramatist himself speaks.

* * *

Mr. Mason seems to have the impression that Pirandello was writing to give archness a chance. The most pointed remarks, remarks most necessary to the play's idea and progress, he delivers as if he were the whimsical uncle of an English country house. His hesitancies, sly humors and coquetries, of theory and whim, as when, for example he speaks Laudisi's lines to his own image or self in the mirror, appear to make some of the audience laugh, but they blur the sting of the thought, shift the intellectual basis of the play, and ~~to~~ turn into a smiling moment what is not so much comic or personal as it is exhilarating or ideal. Such a performance as Mr. Mason's is a deplorable intrusion into the clarity and precision of Pirandello.⁴¹

In considering another Pirandello play, Henry IV, Young thinks that Korff, the leading actor, weakens the whole drama by his method of playing. Korff has "too little precision and style for the part; and not enough intellectual excitement and ideal poignancy. And the very last moment of the play he loses entirely by the rise that he uses in his voice and by the kind of crying tumult that he creates. Pirandello's idea cannot appear in such terms as Mr. Korff's. Pirandello is concerned first and last with a condition of life, an idea, embodied in a magnificent personage, not with personal ills and Gothic pities."⁴²

"What persuades actors from doing what the dramatist wants and definitely prescribes is one of the mysteries of the stage art,"⁴³ says Young, when he accuses the otherwise

impeccable Ethel Barrymore of having changed one of the main points in Sirra's The Kingdom of God by her playing.

On the other hand the actor-artist may carry the essential idea far beyond what some talented author intended. "The wise author in the case of many a play, will know that good actors may project from it and into it some things at least that he has not imagined, things that will carry it a long way further than it might have gone as he himself foresaw it in the production."⁴⁴ The Italian actress Eleanora Duse did this same kind of thing when she played in Ibsen's Lady from the Sea. Young remarked about her performance:

With that illumination and conception, so outside the scope and statement of the play, as Ibsen understood or stated it, that Duse brings to the theme of his drama, the whole is lifted into poetry. She has done to it what would have happened at the hands of a great poet. She has thrown light upon it, dilated it, discovered in it what is most significant and essential, and given to the whole of it an existence of its own. She has discovered for it a right relation of the concrete to the ideal, of the phenomenon, the accident, to the permanent, the essential. And she has created for this idea a form that is inseparable from it.⁴⁵

As to the world's actors, Young places the Russian, Yiddish, and Italian in his first rank. He feels that they have more depth than any of the others. The English are stiff and too loath to let themselves unfreeze. Their performances are likely to lack sparkle and theatricality,

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for they live within a society that is congenitally reserved. Furthermore, they have a tendency to treat as the Bible any classic that they may play. Forbes-Robertson, Gielgud, Olivier, approach Hamlet as though it were sacred. So much so that they are more likely than not to shift the whole intellectual basis of the play as well as the character. The result: good Olivier, perhaps, but no Shakespere. The French have style, especially in light comedy, unmatched by any nationality, while the German actors are able best to render profoundly "the turgid soul." Our own American actors, forwarded as they are by the same kind of publicity used for forwarding face creams and automobiles (the "star" system) possess a liveliness, a vitality, a certain flair for jazziness unmatched by actors of any other country. But unfortunately, American actors have no "school." They depend too much upon acclaim as individual personages rather than artists who have been trained in a particular "school" of art. Americans, like the English, seem to dislike the premeditated in the acting art. They strive to make their art look artless, and presume that they have arrived, when no outward trace of their artistry is present. The result falls far short of the naturalism the Italians achieve. Rather, it negates the function of acting for which Young stands.

And in the end, when all is said, humanity is but a microcosm; and we merely per-

ceive little sets of relationships that we call the universe. In this little universe of ours we are turning always toward some manifestation of our life in the person of some figure in it, some fellow vehicle and exemplar of living. The function of acting is to express in terms of a human body some vibrant region of this life of ours; to set before our eyes some epitome of man's vitality; to add to the character and event some element of abstraction that goes beyond and above them, something of that pure and separable element that arises from every artistic expression. For one of the finest ends of acting is to weave an abstract pattern, some pattern of idea, something approaching pure design in its ideality. This makes a kind of truth in itself. It can exist apart from its immediate implication; and may remain with us as beautiful even when the precise moment that conveyed it fades, as the soul might remember the noble harmony of the lines in some forgotten scene. This is the object of all art, to create in reality abstraction and in abstraction reality; to complete, in sum, our living for us. It is this that gives to art something of the quality of a dream, the fear for its possibility, the urgency of its desire. And it is this in art that makes life follow it.⁴⁶

It is clear then that for this critic the acting art must be a reincarnation or an evolution. The actor makes his essential idea grow and the consummateness of his artistry is commensurate only with his ability to achieve a kind of evolution. The actor achieves the ultimate in his art only when, as with Eleanore Duse, the body has no existence apart from the idea the artist is attempting to realize in this role; or when he demonstrates a "hint of some ungovernable scope of feeling and thought and image [which is] a kind of cosmic discovery."

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER IV

Footnotes not prefaced by the name of the author are to be considered as written by Stark Young.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER IV

- ¹Phyllis Hartnoll, Oxford Companion to the Theatre, (Oxford, 1951), p. 852.
- ²Eric Bentley, "Tribute to Stark Young," Theatre Arts, 31 (November 1947), 1.
- ³John Mason Brown, Upstage, (New York, 1930), 245.
- ⁴Edward Hussey, "Stark Young," North American, 221 (1925), 763.
- ⁵"The Hairy Ape," New Repub, 30 (March 22, 1922), 112.
- ⁶"In Praise of Four," The New York Times, (June 28, 1925), sec. VIII, 1, col. 1.
- ⁷"Idiot's Delight," New Repub, 86 (April 8, 1936), 253.
- ⁸Theatre Practice, p. 3.
- ⁹The Flower in Drama, p. 138.
- ¹⁰"Acting," Theatre Arts, 6 (October 1922), 276.
- ¹¹Immortal Shadows, p. 16.
- ¹²"Journey's End," New Repub, 58 (April 12, 1929), 225.
- ¹³Immortal Shadows, p. 19.
- ¹⁴Ibid.

- 15 "The Shadow of Wings," New Repub, 68 (October 14, 1931), 234.
- 16 The Saint, p. 14.
- 17 The Flower in Drama, p. 13.
- 18 Glamour, p. 135.
- 19 "The Iceman Cometh," New Repub, 115 (October 12, 1946), 517.
- 20 "Actor," Bookman, 65 (August 1927), 628.
- 21 "Valley Forge," New Repub, ⁶⁷81 (December 26, 1934), 196.
- 22 "Mei Lan-Fang," New Repub, (March 5, 1930), 74.
- 23 "Mr. Hopkins' Deluge," New Repub, 30 (March 8, 1922), 51.
- 24 "Scarlet Sister," New Repub, 65 (December 10, 1930), 101.
- 25 Immortal Shadows, p. 277.
- 26 "Mei Lan-Fang," New Repub, 62 (March 5, 1930), 74.
- 27 "King James in Chinatown," New Repub, 72 (November 2, 1932), 330.
- 28 Ibid.
- 29 "Street Scene," New Repub, 57 (January 30, 1929), 296.

- ³⁰"Four Legs To a Horse," The New York Times, (September 14, 1924), sec. VIII, 1, col. 1.
- ³¹"Shall We Have the Horse?" New Repub, 62 (March 26, 1930), 153.
- ³²"A New Group Would Like To Know," The New York Times, (April 10, 1932), sec. VIII, 3, col. 1.
- ³³Letter to R. M. Lumianski, December 18, 1954.
- ³⁴"Richard II," New Repub, 90 (February 24, 1937), 74.
- ³⁵The Flower in Drama, p. 21.
- ³⁶Immortal Shadows, p. 23.
- ³⁷"Beatrice Lillie," New Repub, 50 (March 30, 1927), 169.
- ³⁸"Roles and Acting," New Repub, 57 (January 2, 1929), 192.
- ³⁹The Flower in Drama, p. 65.
- ⁴⁰"Fall and Rise, Theatre Notes," New Repub, 69 (December 16, 1931), 135.
- ⁴¹Immortal Shadows, p. 85.
- ⁴²Ibid., p. 49.
- ⁴³"The Kingdom of God," New Repub, 57 (January 16, 1929), 245.
- ⁴⁴"Theatre Total," New Repub, 83 (May 22, 1935), 50.

⁴⁵"Duse's Ibsen," New Repub, 36 (November 14, 1923), 309.

⁴⁶The Flower in Drama, p. 38.

Chapter V

CONCLUSION

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When Millett in his Contemporary American Authors complained that American theatre criticism in the 20th century was vacuous and sank, for the most part, to the level of mere journalese, he may well have been completely correct -- except for the presence of Stark Young. In thus omitting him, Millett either made a deliberate oversight or considered Young's strength lay in novel writing rather than theatre-drama criticism. Whatever may be Millett's attitude about the matter, it is my conclusion, reached as a result of this study, that Young's presence among the Broadway critical fraternity of the 20's, 30's, and 40's raised theatrical criticism to an artistic, cultural, and intellectual level it otherwise would not have enjoyed.

As a theatre-drama critic Young was the perfect listener and spectator who always heard the playwright out patiently. He looked always for what was behind the play and was moved by that, rather than by the performance merely. Having seen and heard, he reflected and fashioned his review with infinite pains. Because his standard of scholarship and art and intellectual integrity were high, and because he strove always to extract the kernel, the result would sometimes be tortuous or obscure. But also at times the clarity of the insight could strike the reader

into an admiration not untouched with awe.

Whatever else good or ill may be said of his critical work, anyone who reads his material realizes immediately its seriousness, its dignity, its sincerity, and its high level of quality and purpose. Young's particular contribution to the theatre springs from his devoted attempt to explain the aesthetic principles that appear behind the art of acting. In his five books on theatre, he exhibits an understanding of the stage and its problems that is poetic as well as practical. His analyses of various actors and their performances (Duse, Bernhardt, Mei Lan-Fang, Chaplin, Chaliapin, Grasso, and others) have a capacity for "Seeing the Point" -- to use a title that frequently appears in his reviews -- that demonstrates a perceptive sensitivity not easily equalled. Far from reporting his own impressions only of a performance, as do so many of his colleagues, he strove to explain the craft, the technique, the imaginative creativity, the artistry, the poetry, and all the other contributive matters that go into the making of the various stage arts. His is a preciousness that is very like that of Seami the Japanese actor whom he admired.

Right or wrong, Mr. Young always had his own point of view, uninfluenced by other critics, actors, or impresarios. When he gave his opinion, there were few of his colleagues, except perhaps George Jean Nathan, who

would try to refute it. All were very much aware of the stuff of which Young was made and the calibre of individual against whom they were pitting themselves. He once made the statement that "people who give up their own land too readily need careful weighing exactly as those who are so with their convictions."¹ This statement was made in another connexion, of course, but as much as anything else that he ever said, it represents his attitude toward both art and life. His convictions are sacred to him and not given up easily. He came from a type of society that valued this depth of character, valued it, perhaps, above all else. For example, when he resigned his position at Amherst College and decided to free-lance in New York, he did it because he had certain deeply entrenched convictions. After fifteen years of teaching, these convictions seemed to be in conflict with the attitudes expressed by various boards of trustees. Young did not cavil, nor did he change his convictions; he just changed his profession when he was nearly forty.

Later in his career when he resigned his position with The New Republic, he did so because he felt that the magazine was violating a conviction that he held very profoundly, namely, that art is one of the most important considerations in life; that it is one of the most civilizing forces in our society. When The New Republic curtailed

its efforts in this direction, Young, feeling that the periodical was no longer either "distinguished" or doing its part toward the cultivation of the tastes of our people, withdrew. He assured me at one time in a letter that the publisher had urged him to remain, but feeling the way he (Young) felt, there was nothing else that he could do honorably, or at least so it seemed to him.

As one can easily discern by even casual reading of his works, the "way of life" from which he came had its inevitable effect upon his thinking, and finally upon his writing, both fictional and critical. His particular kind of aristocratic background (the aristocracy of the mind and the spirit) had lofty standards, high morals, noble ideals, and strong convictions. So it followed, that his criticism had the same.

As to his loyalty and devotion to the theatre art, there can be no question. While he was a Broadway critic it was constant and unswerving where benefits to the theatre as an institution were concerned. Nor was his vision ever limited or blurred by the small matters contingent upon the production of this play or that. Always in his scheme of things the theatre was an institution, deserving of her country as much of honor and consideration as her country's literature. He was never satisfied for the theatre to be nothing more than a diversion, or a

luxury, or a business. What he wanted for it was that it become "a portion of that passionate mythology that a country's art must be."²

If it be true, as John Mason Brown reports, that when Young wrote for The New York Times, the reader would feel involuntarily like curling his little finger as one does over a fragile teacup, it is also true that in what he wrote he had something worth saying. His reviews were not mere chit-chat, backstage gossip about reigning personalities, or attempts to call attention to the critic's own facility with the bon mot or the coup de grace. He was never flippant or trivial or cynical. Rather, his reviews were opportunities offered the reader to travel with Young "the secret path between the creator and his work."³

It is true that Young's style seems to be so exalted at times that even those tutored in his aesthetics may very easily be lost. It is also true that the exalted level is sometimes sustained too long for some of us who are more earthbound than he. John Mason Brown has called Young's writing emotionalized thought, and well he might. One feels the warmth, the sensitivity, the sincerity, the mysticism, and the idealism as he reads. Young tries so conscientiously and so concentratedly to deliver the spiritual and artistic core of the matter with which he

happens to be dealing, that oftentimes the result is either too rarified or too involved.

His style, obscure as it sometimes appears to be, gives his writings an intuitive perception and beauty that make the result poetic in its own right. It should be read for its own music as much as for what it says. He explores the nuance in the acting art and translates from one art, acting, to another medium, the art of words, and adds to it in such a way that the truth and beauty of his product fuse into a new and separate creation. He is a creative critic in the sense that he investigates the fine shadings of the spectrum lying between black and white, and immerses himself in the myriad complexities and vagaries, let us say, of the theatre art, and emerges partly through style the poet and philosopher of the stage.

Although I cannot agree entirely with one periodical's extravagant estimate of Young, namely, that his "theatre reviews are probably the last writing of their kind,"⁴ I must conclude that Young's theatre-drama criticism is certainly, as John Mason Brown suggests, the "flower" of the criticism of his period.

Footnotes for Conclusion

Footnotes for Conclusion

¹I'll Take My Stand, p. 345.

²"Theatre 1932, New York." Va Q R, 9 (April 1923), 262

³"The Book of the Month," No Am R, 217 (April 1923), 558

⁴"Farewell Appearance," Time, 52 (December 13, 1948), 69

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"Billet Doux," (October 1929), 735-45	13
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"Failing Plays and the Critics," (November 1921), 277-90	25

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- "Farewell Appearance," Time, 52 (December 13, 1948), 69
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APPENDIX A

I. Published Works by Stark Young

A. Books

B. Articles

II. Materials About Stark Young

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Poems

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"Aunt Becky and Mr. Bowers,"	63 (June 11, 1930), 97-99
"Aristophanes' Babyhood,"	63 (June 18, 1930), 127
"Admonition to the Pocahontases,"	63 (July 9, 1930), 208-09
"History of the Immortals,"	63 (July 16, 1930), 234-35
"With H. C.,"	63 (July 16, 1930), 268-70
"Paul Robeson, Negro,"	63 (August 6, 1930), 345-46
"Alaric at the Walls of Rome,"	63 (August 13, 1930), 369-70
"Thanks to a Pig,"	64 (August 30, 1930), 16-17
"Younger Mask,"	64 (September 3, 1930), 71-72
"Fergusons and Democracy,"	64 (September 10, 1930), 93-94
"Romance and Romance,"	64 (September 17, 1930), 127-28
"Serious Start,"	64 (September 24, 1930), 152-53
"In Two Flats,"	64 (October 1, 1930), 178-80
"Farewell to Dramatizations,"	64 (October 8, 1930), 208-09
"Solid South,"	64 (October 29, 1930), 298-300
"Mexican Exposition,"	64 (November 5, 1930), 321-22
"Roar China,"	64 (November 12, 1930), 349-50
"Elizabeth,"	65 (November 19, 1930), 17-19
"Curtain Call,"	65 (November 26, 1930), 47-48
"Seasonable Notes,"	65 (December 3, 1930), 72-73
"Scarlet Sister,"	65 (December 10, 1930), 101-02
"Madame Povla Frijsh,"	65 (December 17, 1930), 138-39
"Revue and Revolution,"	65 (December 24, 1930), 165-67
"Mac and the Theatre,"	65 (December 31, 1930), 192-93
"Background with Figures,"	65 (January 17, 1931), 219-20
"No Culture but the Opera,"	65 (January 14, 1931), 246-47
"Schools for Artists,"	65 (January 21, 1931), 273-74
"Philip Goes Forth,"	65 (January 28, 1931), 301-02
"Fellow Passengers,"	66 (April 22, 1931), 275-76
"Little Asides,"	66 (March 4, 1931), 74-75
"Acting by the Yard,"	66 (May 6, 1931), 329-30
"Pulitzer Prize Awards, 1931,"	67 (May 20, 1931), 2-4
"Tragic Mask at Capua,"	67 (May 20, 1931), 17-19
"Indicative Portraits,"	67 (May 27, 1931), 44-46

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"Success Story,"	72 (October 12, 1932), 233-35
"Ellen Terry Again,"	72 (October 26, 1932), 287-89
"King James in Chinatown,"	72 (November 2, 1932), 330-31
"Dinner at Eight,"	72 (November 9, 1932), 355-57
"Title to be Announced,"	73 (November 16, 1932), 16-17
"American Don Quixote,"	73 (November 23, 1932), 46-47
"Dear Jane,"	73 (November 30, 1932), 72-73
"Largely Mr. Lederer,"	73 (December 7, 1932), 99-100
"Miss Graham and Mademoiselle,"	73 (December 14, 1932), 127-29
"Mr. Lewis' Uncle Billy,"	73 (December 21, 1932), 160-62
"Without Embarrassment,"	73 (December 28, 1932), 188-89
"Dames aux Camelias,"	73 (January 4, 1933), 214-16
"Sorrows Sharp Sustaining,"	73 (January 18, 1933), 268-69
"Good Hope Notes,"	73 (January 25, 1933), 294-96
"On ne Badine Pas Avec L'amour,"	73 (February 1, 1933), 323-25
"We the People; Evensong,"	74 (February 15, 1933), 18-20
"Loin du Bal,"	74 (February 22, 1933), 45-47
"Retrospective Exhibition,"	74 (March 1, 1933), 67-70
"Moments of Miracle,"	74 (March 1, 1933), 71-73
"Blessed Be,"	74 (March 22, 1933), 159-60
"Invisible and Visible,"	74 (March 8, 1933), 101-03
"Theatre Note,"	74 (April 12, 1933), 244-45
"Gabriel's Horn,"	74 (April 19, 1933), 280-81
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"Mr. Beckhard's Fourth,"	74 (May 10, 1933), 365-66
"Little Ol' Boy,"	75 (May 17, 1933), 18-19
"Sur le Lac,"	75 (May 24, 1933), 46-47
"Prefaces to Distinction,"	75 (June 7, 1933), 101-02
"Missed Connections,"	75 (June 14, 1933), 126-27
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"Age Cannot Quite Wither,"	75 (July 12, 1933), 235-36
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"Grandis, Elegans, Venusta,"	76 (August 30, 1933), 72-74
"For Master Rion,"	76 (September 6, 1933), 100-01
"Sphinx Without a Secret,"	76 (September 13, 1933), 128-29
"Tufted Trees,"	76 (September 20, 1933), 155-57
"Angels Bowed to Gaze,"	76 (September 27, 1933), 185-86
"Uncle Tom's Measure,"	76 (October 4, 1933), 212-13
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"Variegated Hits,"	76 (October 11, 1933), 279-80
"Causeries,"	76 (October 25, 1933), 307-08
"Poetry of Defense,"	76 (November 1, 1933), 334-36
"Moliere Kindergarten,"	76 (November 8, 1933), 364-66
"Cort Laurels,"	77 (November 15, 1933), 17-19
"Joos and Lifar,"	77 (November 22, 1933), 46-48
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"Lady Blessington,"	77 (January 10, 1934), 252-53
"Miss Katherine Hepburn,"	77 (January 17, 1934), 281-82
"Days Without End,"	77 (January 24, 1934), 312-13
"Venture by Mr. Chappell,"	77 (February 7, 1934), 368-69
"Joyous Season,"	78 (February 14, 1934), 21-22
"Transatlantic Minority,"	78 (February 21, 1934), 50-51
"Faith and Tosh,"	78 (February 28, 1934), 78-79
"One Moment Alit,"	78 (March 7, 1934), 105-106
"Three Serious Plays,"	78 (March 14, 1934), 134-35
"Might It Be Mountains,"	78 (April 11, 1934), 246-47
"Moor Born,"	78 (April 18, 1934), 275-76
"Nijinsky and Madame,"	78 (May 2, 1934), 341-42
"Stevedore,"	78 (May 9, 1934), 367-68
"Pulitzer Awards,"	79 (May 16, 1934), 79-80
"Texas Lights,"	79 (June 27, 1934), 183-84
"Two Slavery Books,"	79 (May 23, 1934), 48-50
"Pulitzer Prize Emotions,"	79 (May 30, 1934), 76-77
"Texas Lights,"	80 (September 19, 1934), 160-61
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"Canal Americana,"	81 (November 14, 1934), 21-22
"Two Roles,"	81 (November 28, 1934), 78-80
"Tale of Critics,"	81 (December 5, 1934), 106-07
"Seasonal Notes,"	81 (December 12, 1934), 131-32
"Two New Plays,"	81 (December 19, 1934), 169-70
"Valley Forge,"	81 (December 26, 1934), 196-97
"Congratulations,"	81 (January 2, 1935), 223-24
"Katherine Cornell's Juliet,"	81 (January 9, 1935), 252-53
"It Droppeth as,"	81 (January 23, 1935), 308-09
"Merry England,"	81 (January 30, 1935), 336-37
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"Mother Broadway,"	82 (February 20, 1935), 49-50
"Spanish Plays,"	82 (February 27, 1935), 78-79
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"Old Maid,"	82 (March 20, 1935), 162-63
"Awake and Whistle,"	82 (March 13, 1935), 134-35
"Virgilian Ladies,"	82 (March 27, 1935), 187-88
"As Panics Go,"	82 (April 3, 1935), 217-18
"Lefty and Nazi,"	82 (April 10, 1935), 247-48
"Of Blackest Midnight Born,"	82 (April 17, 1935), 289-90
"If Only,"	82 (April 24, 1935), 316-17
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"Mountain People,"	83 (July 31, 1935), 338-39
"Kind Hearts are More,"	83 (August 7, 1935), 364-65
"White Chimneys,"	84 (August 14, 1935), 22-23
"James Lane Allen,"	84 (August 28, 1935), 78-79
"Brussels Carpet,"	84 (September 18, 1935), 162-63
"Convertible Top,"	84 (September 25, 1935), 190-91
"Wayward Glamour,"	84 (October 16, 1935), 274-75
"Soft Speech,"	84 (October 9, 1935), 247-48
"No More War, Yes?"	84 (October 23, 1935), 302-03
"Opera Blues,"	84 (October 30, 1935), 338-39
"Poetic Chances,"	84 (November 6, 1935), 365-66
"Dead End,"	85 (November 13, 1935), 21-49
"Historical Dramatical,"	85 (November 27, 1935), 77-78
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"Workers in General,"	85 (December 18, 1935), 175-76
"Quite Worth Your Thought,"	85 (December 25, 1935), 202-03
"New Ibsen,"	85 (January 1, 1936), 230-31
"Preface to Medium,"	85 (January 8, 1936), 357-58
"Regina Humana,"	85 (January 15, 1936), 286-87
"Miss Lord's Day,"	86 (February 26, 1936), 78-79
"End of Summer,"	86 (March 11, 1936), 141-42
"Mr. Collins and Johnny,"	86 (December 9, 1936), 179-80
"McClintics' Shaw,"	86 (March 25, 1936), 198-99
"Government and Guild,"	86 (April 8, 1936), 253-54
"Great Doom's Image,"	87 (May 13, 1936), 21-22
"Important Variety,"	87 (June 17, 1936), 180-81
"Marginal Notes,"	87 (July 8, 1936), 272-73
"We Didn't Get to Pick, etc.,"	88 (September 16, 1936), 160-61
"Ballads in Mississippi,"	88 (September 23, 1936), 186-87
"Reflected Glory,"	88 (October 7, 1936), 257-58
"Literates,"	88 (October 21, 1936), 314-15
"Hamlet,"	88 (October 28, 1936), 355-56
"Booth Adelphi,"	89 (November 4, 1936), 50-51
"Sweet River,"	89 (November 18, 1936), 78-79
"Hamlets,"	89 (November 26, 1936), 116-17
"To Madame Frijsh,"	89 (December 2, 1936), 146-47
"Around Eight-thirty,"	89 (December 16, 1936), 217-18
"Moral Fountain,"	89 (December 24, 1936), 245-46
"Social Drama,"	89 (December 30, 1936), 273-74
"Preparing Actors,"	89 (January 20, 1937), 359-60
"Othello,"	89 (January 27, 1937), 385-86
"High Tor,"	89 (February 3, 1937), 411-12
"Eternal Reinhardt,"	90 (February 10, 1937), 19-20
"Noctis Equi,"	90 (February 17, 1937), 46-47

II. ARTICLES IN THE NEW REPUBLIC MAGAZINE (Continued)

"Richard II,"	90 (February 24, 1937), 74-75
"Fourth Theatre Guild,"	90 (March 3, 1937), 111-12
"Near the Water,"	90 (March 10, 1937), 139-40
"Left, Right and Wrong,"	90 (March 17, 1937), 166-67
"Pleasant Passage,"	90 (March 24, 1937), 210-11
"When He Said Euripedes,"	90 (March 31, 1937), 239-40
"Not a Review,"	90 (April 7, 1937), 263-64
"Best American Play,"	90 (April 14, 1937), 295-96
"Candida, Candida, Candida!"	90 (April 21, 1937), 322-23
"Les Neiges d'antan,"	90 (April 28, 1937), 358-59
"That's Latitude,"	90 (May 5, 1937), 385-86
"Museum of Costume Art,"	91 (May 12, 1937), 17-18
"Massa's in Cold, Cold, Ground,"	91 (May 19, 1937), 46-47
"Perhaps Another Year,"	91 (May 26, 1937), 74-75
"Censorship,"	91 (June 2, 1937), 101-02
"Dear Mr. Wilson,"	91 (June 9, 1937), 130-31
"Formal Master, Fundamental Sources,"	91 (June 16, 1937), 158-59
"First Convention,"	91 (June 23, 1937), 189-90
"Divided We Stand,"	91 (July 7, 1937), 251-52
"Burlesque Needs,"	91 (August 4, 1937), 363-64
"Definitive Webster,"	92 (August 18, 1937), 47-48
"Commentary Pleasures,"	92 (August 25, 1937), 76-77
"Vista,"	92 (September 15, 1937), 157-59
"Bandits in a Landscape,"	92 (September 22-29, 1937), 188-215
"Mr. Fonda and Importations,"	92 (October 13, 1937), 270-71
"Star Hitched,"	92 (October 20, 1937), 302-03
"Guito and Susan,"	92 (October 27, 1937), 342-43
"Coming to Carry Me Home,"	92 (November 3, 1937), 372-73
"Two Critics and a Journal,"	93 (November 10, 1937), 16-17
"Gods, Golden Lads and Girls,"	93 (November 17, 1937), 44-45
"Egypt and Arden,"	93 (November 24, 1937), 75-76
"Three Stage Versions,"	93 (December 1, 1937), 101-02
"Slightly Ghosts,"	93 (December 8, 1937), 131-32
"Two From the Novel,"	93 (December 15, 1937), 170-71
"Winter Garden and Siege,"	93 (December 22, 1937), 198-99
"Bache Collection,"	93 (January 5, 1938), 255-56
"New Year's Crow,"	93 (January 12, 1938), 283-84
"Mercury and London,"	93 (January 19, 1938), 310-11
"New Doll's House,"	93 (January 26, 1938), 338-39
"Dreams from Rome,"	93 (February 2, 1938), 366-67
"Things Hoped For,"	94 (February 16, 1938), 45-46
"Place and Time,"	94 (February 23, 1938), 74-75
"Mr. Miller's Importations,"	94 (March 2, 1938), 101-02

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"Theatre Guild Fore and Aft,"	94	(March 9, 1938), 132-33
"Surprising Confirmations,"	94	(March 16, 1938), 164-65
"To Keep the Wind Away,"	94	(March 23, 1938), 194-95
"His Art in Life,"	94	(March 30, 1938), 222-23
"Plays and Problems,"	94	(April 13, 1938), 305-06
"Sea Gull,"	94	(April 20, 1938), 332-33
"Drama Critics Circle Awards,"	94	(May 4, 1938), 396-97
"Heartbreak Houses,"	95	(June 8, 1938), 130-31
"Impass on Parnassus,"	96	(September 28, 1938), 214-15
"Season Opens,"	96	(October 12, 1938), 271-72
"Photographies,"	96	(October 19, 1938), 306-07
"Biography and Theatre,"	96	(October 26, 1938), 334-35
"Whole Tragical Historie,"	96	(November 2, 1938), 361-62
"Lincoln and Huston,"	97	(November 9, 1938), 18-19
"Characters,"	97	(November 16, 1938), 45-46
"Stage and Book,"	97	(November 30, 1938), 100-01
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"Rockets Old and New,"	97	(December 14, 1938), 173-74
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"Wreathed Horn,"	97	(January 25, 1939), 342-43
"Phaidon Press El Greco,"	98	(March 15, 1939), 166-67
"Ring Around the Roses,"	100	(September 20, 1939), 189-90
"Love Among the Ruins,"	100	(September 27, 1939), 215-16
"Masterpieces,"	100	(October 26, 1939), 340-41
"New and Old,"	100	(November 1, 1939), 368-69
"Chekhov Theatre's First,"	101	(November 15, 1939), 114-15
"New Abundance,"	101	(November 29, 1939), 169-70
"Full of the Moon,"	101	(December 13, 1939), 230-31
"Two New Failures,"	102	(March 18, 1940), 377-78
"Mr. Tone and Mr. Hemingway,"	102	(April 8, 1940), 473-74
"New Lilion,"	102	(April 8, 1940), 473-74
"Presentations,"	102	(April 20, 1940), 576-77
"Imagine,"	102	(May 6, 1940), 611-12
"Starry Night,"	102	(May 13, 1940), 641-42
"Upsy-daisy,"	102	(June 3, 1940), 760-61
"Vissi d'Amore,"	102	(June 10, 1940), 793-94
"Savo Solor,"	103	(August 26, 1940), 277-78
"Broadway in Revue,"	103	(October 14, 1940), 526-27
"First Century Problems,"	103	(October 21, 1940), 557-58
"Our America,"	103	(November 11, 1940), 661-62
"Or What You Will,"	103	(December 2, 1940), 755-56
"Day Must Come,"	103	(December 9, 1940), 789-90
"Three Flights,"	104	(January 20, 1941), 84-85
"Enjoyment of Murder,"	104	(January 27, 1941), 116-17
"For the Greek Relief,"	104	(February 3, 1941), 147-48
"At the Two Theatres,"	104	(February 10, 1941), 179-80
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"Motley to the View,"	104	(March 10, 1941), 340-41
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"Book Basis,"	104	(April 7, 1941), 468-69
"Watch on the Rhine,"	104	(April 14, 1941), 498-99
"Three and One,"	104	(April 21, 1941), 432-33
"Critics in a Circle,"	104	(May 5, 1941), 632-33
"Saroyan Directing, Note,"	104	(May 12, 1941), 664-65
"Their Heart Belongs to Dada,"	105	(September 15, 1941), 339-40
"Village Green and Town Red,"	105	(September 22, 1941), 373-74
"War Winnings,"	105	(September 29, 1941), 404-05
"Theatre Song,"	105	(October 13, 1941), 477-78
"Palace Stairs Overstuffed,"	105	(October 20, 1941), 507-08
"Regrettable,"	105	(November 10, 1941), 621-22
"Bird Thou Never Wert,"	105	(November 24, 1941), 701-02
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"Not in Our Stars,"	105	(December 15, 1941), 828-29
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"For Barbara O'Neil,"	106	(March 9, 1942), 332-33
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"Priorities at That,"	106	(March 30, 1942), 430-31
"Serious Images,"	106	(May 11, 1942), 638-39
"Distinction and Theatre,"	107	(August 24, 1942), 227-28
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"Bosh Bombs,"	107	(September 28, 1942), 381-82
"Hello Out There,"	107	(October 12, 1942), 466-67
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"American Patriots,"	108	(February 15, 1943), 211-12
"Fair Enough,"	108	(February 22, 1943), 254-55
"Fresh Matters,"	108	(March 1, 1943), 283-84
"Gentle Mrs. Stowe,"	108	(March 22, 1943), 381-82
"Brief Candle,"	108	(April 12, 1943), 476-77
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"Good Anti-Nazi Theatre,"	108	(May 10, 1943), 637-38
"Jus Divinum,"	108	(May 17, 1943), 669-70
"John Anderson,"	109	(August 2, 1943), 140-41
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"Beautiful Apologia,"	109 (October 25, 1943), 588-91
"Othello,"	109 (November 1, 1943), 621-22
"Digges and Anderson,"	110 (January 31, 1944), 148-49
"Cherry Orchard,"	110 (February 14, 1944), 180-81, 211
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"Enter Madame Pitoeff,"	110 (April 3, 1944), 470-71
"Assorted Flavors,"	110 (April 17, 1944), 532-33
"Behind the Beyond,"	110 (May 1, 1944), 604-5
"Trojan House,"	110 (May 8, 1944), 629-30
"Anna Lucasta,"	111 (September 18, 1944), 339-40
"Little Women,"	111 (October 23, 1944), 521-22
"Must Handbook,"	111 (November 6, 1944), 595-96
"So Divine An Air,"	111 (November 13, 1944), 625-26
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"Life is a Dream,"	112 (February 26, 1945), 295-96
"Fancy Romp,"	112 (March 26, 1945), 421-22
"Varieties of Legend,"	112 (April 2, 1945), 447-48
"Marvelous Task,"	112 (April 9, 1945), 477-78
"Glass Menagerie,"	112 (April 16, 1945), 505-06
"Robert E. Jones,"	112 (April 23, 1945), 556-57
"Oklahoma's Little Sister,"	112 (May 7, 1945), 644-45
"Martha Graham,"	112 (June 4, 1945), 790-91
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"Book on Diego Rivera,"	61	(January 15, 1930), 223-24
"Notes on the Havemeyer Paintings,"	63	(May 21, 1930), 18-19
"Ambassador in Art,"	70	(April 6, 1932), 206-08
"Mostly About Drawing,"	71	(June 29, 1932), 181-82
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"Problem of Art Criticism,"	74	(April 5, 1933), 215-17
"Toward a Theatre Art,"	77	(January 3, 1934), 224-26
"International Exhibition,"	77	(January 31, 1934), 339-40
"Italian Painting, Two Centuries,"	79	(August 8, 1934), 347-48
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"Art and Decision,"	91	(July 21, 1937), 307-08
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"Conscience,"	(September 12, 1924), 19, col.3
"Realism in the Theatre,"	(September 14, 1924), VIII, 1, col.1

III. ARTICLES IN THE NEW YORK TIMES (continued)

"Schemers,"	(September 16, 1924), 27, col.1
"Greenwich Village Follies,"	(September 17, 1924), 16, col.1
"My Son,"	(September 18, 1924), 18, col.2
"What Price Glory,"	(September 21, 1924), VII, 1, col.1
"Hassan, Lazybones,"	(September 23, 1924), 23, col.1
"Grounds for Divorce,"	(September 24, 1924), 20, col.1
"Minick,"	(September 25, 1924), 20, col.1
"Little Angel,"	(September 29, 1924), 10, col.3
"That Awful Mrs. Eaton,"	(September 30, 1924), 27, col.1
"Bewitched,"	(October 2, 1924), 26, col.3
"Stage Settings,"	(October 5, 1924), VIII, 1, col.1
"Acting,"	(October 5, 1924), VIII, 1, col.1
"Bewitched,"	(October 5, 1924), VIII, 1, col.1
"Little Angel,"	(October 5, 1924), VIII, 1, col.1
"Great Music,"	(October 6, 1924), 24, col.1
"Fake,"	(October 7, 1924), 26, col.3
"Red Falcon,"	(October 8, 1924), 22, col.1
"Crime, etc.,"	(October 10, 1924), 22, col.2
"In His Arms,"	(October 14, 1924), 23, col.1
"Guardaman,"	(October 14, 1924), 23, col.1
"Firebrand,"	(October 16, 1924), 33, col.1
"Letter from Gilbert Miller,"	(October 18, 1924), 14, col.6
"Eldridge,"	(October 19, 1924), VIII, 1, col.2
"Comment,"	(October 19, 1924), VIII, 1, col.1
"Theatre Guild,"	(October 19, 1924), VIII, 1, col.1
"L'Aiglon,"	(October 21, 1924), 21, col.1
"Tiger Cats,"	(October 22, 1924), 19, col.1
"Reply to Letter,"	(October 26, 1924), VII, 1, col.2
"Theatre,"	(November 2, 1924), VII, 2, col.8
"Naked,"	(November 2, 1924), VII, 1, col.1
"Madame Sams-Gene,"	(November 4, 1924), 30, col.1
"Second Mrs. Tanqueray,"	(November 9, 1924), VIII, 1, col.1
"Miracle,"	(November 9, 1924), VIII, 1, col.1
"Cherry Lane Players, etc.,"	(November 9, 1924), VIII, 1, col.2
"Homme Qui Assassina,"	(November 11, 1924), 20, col.1
"Procureur Hallers,"	(November 13, 1924), 18, col.1
"L'Homme et ses Fantones,"	(November 14, 1924), 16, col.1
"Odeon Theatre,"	(November 16, 1924), VIII, 1, col.1
"War of the World,"	(November 23, 1924), VIII, 1, col.1
"Odeon Theatre,"	(November 23, 1924), VIII, 1, col.1
"Feter Pan,"	(November 7, 1924), 16, col.2
"Produced in Washing- ton,"	(November 30, 1924), VIII, 1, col.1

III. ARTICLES IN THE NEW YORK TIMES (continued)

"They Knew What They Wanted,"	(November 30, 1924), VIII, 1, col.2
"Close Harmony,"	(December 2, 1924), 23, col.1
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"Badges,"	(December 4, 1924), 25, col.1
"Little Clay Cart,"	(December 6, 1924), 13, col.3
"Little Clay Cart,"	(December 14, 1924), VIII, 3, col.1
"Candida,"	(December 21, 1924), VII, 1, col.1
"Youngest,"	(December 23, 1924), 17, col.1
"Yushny's Seeniaya Ptitzza,"	(December 29, 1924), 11, col.1
"Old English,"	(December 24, 1924), 11, col.2
"Habitual Husband,"	(December 25, 1924), 27, col.3
"Bully,"	(December 26, 1924), 18, col.1
"Lady Be Good, etc.,"	(December 28, 1924), VII, 1, col.1
"Carnival,"	(December 30, 1924), 15, col.1
"Carnival,"	(January 4, 1925), VII, 1, col.1
"Jack in the Pulpit,"	(January 7, 1925), 33, col.1
"Loss O Laughter,"	(January 9, 1925), 13, col.2
"Processional,"	(January 13, 1925), 17, col.1
"Isabel,"	(January 14, 1925), 19, col.1
"Othello,"	(January 18, 1925), VII, 1, col.1
"Beyond,"	(January 4, 1925), VII, 1, col.1
"Depths,"	(January 28, 1925), 15, col.3
"Patience,"	(February 1, 1925), VII, 1, col.2
"Is Zat So,"	(February 1, 1925), VII, 1, col.1
"Show Off,"	(February 15, 1925), VII, 1, col.1
"Exiles,"	(February 20, 1925), 20, col.2
"The Dove, Art Ex- plaining, etc.,"	(February 22, 1925), VII, 1, col.1
"Anadre,"	(February 24, 1925), 17, col.1
"Censoring,"	(February 24, 1925), 18, col.7
"Wild Duck,"	(February 25, 1925), 16, col.4
"Wild Duck,"	(March 1, 1925), VII, 1, col.1
"Starlight,"	(March 4, 1925), 17, col.2
"Pierrot the Prodigal,"	(March 7, 1925), 8, col.1
"Starlight,"	(March 8, 1925), VII, 1, col.1
"Puppets,"	(March 10, 1925), 19, col.1
"Art and the Theatre,"	(March 15, 1925), VIII, 1, col.1
"Devil Within,"	(March 17, 1925), 19, col.4
"Love for Love,"	(April 1, 1925), 21, col.2
"Dunce Boy,"	(April 4, 1925), 20, col.2
"Pelles and Melisande,"	(April 5, 1925), IX, 1, col.1
"Sapphire Ring,"	(April 16, 1925), 25, col.2
"Theatre Guild's New Theatre, etc.,"	(April 19, 1925), IX, 1, col.1
"Candida,"	(April 26, 1925), VIII, 1, col.1
"Kai Khosru,"	(April 27, 1925), 14, col. 2

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- "Politics and Dramatist," (May, 1925), VIII, 1, col.1
 "Realistic School of Acting," (May 10, 1925), VIII, 1, col.1
 "Mature Actresses," (May 24, 1925), VIII, 1, col.1
 "Historical Theatrical Data," (May 31, 1925), VIII, 1, col.1
 "Weber and Fields," (June 7, 1925), VIII, 1, col.1
 "Menaechmi," (June 9, 1925), 16, col.2
 "Princess Charlotte Elizabeth of Batavia," (June 14, 1925), VIII, 1, col.1
 "Censorship," (June 21, 1925), VIII, 1, col.1
 "Templeton, etc.," (June 28, 1925), VIII, 1, col.1
 "Group Theatre Questionnaire," (April 10, 1932), VIII, 3, col.3
 "Feature Article on the South," (January 17, 1937), VIII, 4, col.1
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 "Good Friday," 213 (April, 1918), 518-23
 "Providence in Florence," 213 (May, 1921), 656-62
 "Mental Goodness," 214 (July, 1921), 76-82
 "Culture at Dinner," 214 (October, 1921), 547-53
 "Country Gods," 215 (January, 1922), 56-63

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"Moliere: Comedian of Society,"	215 (February, 1922), 241-48
"Dionysos' Garland,"	215 (May, 1922), 683-91
"Consciences,"	216 (November, 1922), 673-80
"Apron String in our Theatre,"	216 (December, 1922), 833-42
"Civilization and the French Theatre,"	217 (January, 1923), 56-64
"Many Gods,"	217 (March, 1923), 343-52
"Flower in Drama,"	217 (April, 1923), 555-60
"Two Walks,"	217 (June, 1923), 799-807
"Country Matters,"	218 (September, 1923), 369-75
"Duse,"	218 (December, 1923), 776-84
"Sophocles' Guest,"	219 (February, 1924), 219-29
"Garland of Dioysos," 1923-1924	219 (June, 1924), 874-82
"Ora Pro Nobis,"	220 (December, 1924), 310-18
	221 (1925), 763-65
"Sunday Races,"	223 (September, 1926), 521-30
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"Acting,"	6 (October, 1922), 276-90
"Sources in Art,"	7 (April, 1923), 145-52
"Ideas in Art,"	7 (October, 1923), 275-83
"Illusion in Acting,"	8 (February, 1924), 98-102
"Promptbook,"	8 (March, 1924), 159-65
"Seeing the Point,"	8 (June, 1924), 389-98
"Art of Directing,"	9 (April, 1925), 227-44
	9 (1925), 417-19
"On Wearing Costumes,"	10 (February, 1926), 88-98
"Footnotes on Acting,"	10 (October, 1926), 667-73
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"Billets Doux,"	13 (October, 1929), 735-45
	14 (May, 1930), 409-18
	15 (May, 1931), 385-92
	16 (April, 1932), 307-15
"Shakespeare and the Venetians,"	14 (January, 1930), 34-48
"Mei Lan-Fang,"	14 (April, 1930), 295-308

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in Italy," Theatre Arts, 15 (October, 1931), 825-35
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(Con.)," 16 (October, 1932), 816-26
- "Sacred and Pro-
fane Love," 16 (November, 1932), 895-904
- "Note on Salome of
the Metropolitan," 18 (March, 1934), 206-11
- "Reading Lesson," 18 (May, 1934), 354-57
- "Gulls and Chekhov," 22 (October, 1938), 736-42
- "Sluse about Duse," 23 (April, 1939), 279-88
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the Critics," 25 (November, 1941), 777-79
- "Painting and the
Theatre," 31 (September, 1947), 20-24
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APPENDIX B

Pulitzer Prize Plays

New York Drama Critics' Award Plays

Eugene O'Neill Plays

Miscellaneous Performances

I

PULITZER PRIZE PLAYS

Play	Author	Award for	Theatre and	Date of first production in New York
They Knew What They Wanted	Sidney Howard	1925	Garrick	Nov. 24, 1924
Craig's Wife	George Kelly	1926	Morosco	Oct. 12, 1925
In Abraham's Bosom	Paul Green	1927	Province- town	Dec. 30, 1926
Strange Inter- lude	Eugene O'Neill	1928	Guild	Jan. 31, 1928
Street Scene	Elmer Rice	1929	Playhouse	Jan. 10, 1929
The Green Pas- tures	M. Connelly	1930	Mansfield	Feb. 26, 1930
Men in White	S. Kingsley	1934	Broadhurst	Sept. 6, 1933
*The Old Maid	Zoe Akins	1935	Empire	Jan. 7, 1935
Idiot's Delight	R. Sherwood	1936	Shubert	Mar. 24, 1936
You Can't Take It With You	Kauffman and Hart	1937	Booth	Dec. 14, 1936
Our Town	T. Wilder	1938	Miller	Feb. 4, 1938
Abe Lincoln in Illinois	R. Sherwood	1939	Plymouth	Oct. 15, 1938
*The Time of Your Life	Wm. Saroyan	1940	Booth	Oct. 25, 1939
There Shall Be No Night	R. Sherwood	1941	Alvin	Apr. 29, 1940
The Skin of Our Teeth	T. Wilder	1943	Plymouth	Nov. 18, 1942
Harvey	Mary Chase	1945	48th St.	Nov. 1, 1944
State of the Union	Crouse and Lindsay	1946	Hudson	Nov. 14, 1945

*Also Circle Award Winners

II

NEW YORK DRAMA CRITICS' CIRCLE AWARDS

Play	Author	Award for	Theatre and Date of first production in New York	
Winterset	M. Anderson	1936	Martin Beck	Sept. 25, 1935
High Tor	M. Anderson	1937	Martin Beck	Jan. 9, 1937
Shadow and Substance	Paul Carroll	1938	Golden	Jan. 26, 1938
The Corn is Green	Emlyn Williams	1941	National	Nov. 26, 1940
The Watch on the Rhine	L. Hellman	1941	Martin Beck	Apr. 1, 1941
The Patriots	S. Kingsley	1943	National	Jan. 29, 1943
The Glass Menagerie	T. Williams	1945	Playhouse	Mar. 31, 1945

III

EUGENE O'NEILL PLAYS

Play	Theatre and Date of first pro- duction in New York	
The Hairy Ape	Provincetown	Mar. 9, 1922
The Fountain	Greenwich Village	Dec. 10, 1925
The Great God Brown	Greenwich Village	Feb. 10, 1926
Marco Millions	Guild	Jan. 9, 1928
Strange Interlude	Golden	Jan. 30, 1928
Dynamo	Martin Beck	Feb. 11, 1929
Mourning Becomes Electra	Guild	Oct. 26, 1931
Ah Wilderness	Guild	Oct. 2, 1933

III

EUGENE O'NEILL PLAYS (concluded)

Play	Theatre	Date of first production in New York
Days Without End	Miller	Jan. 8, 1934
The Iceman Cometh	Martin Beck	Oct. 9, 1946

IV

MISCELLANEOUS PLAYS

Play	Author	Theatre	Date of first production in New York
The Verge	S.Glaspell	Provincetown	Nov. 14, 1921
The Little Clay Cart	Hindu Drama	Neighborhood	Dec. 5, 1924
Mei Lan-Fang	Chinese Actor	59th Street	Feb. 17, 1930
House of Connolly	Paul Green	Martin Beck	Oct. 11, 1931

APPENDIX C

CHRONOLOGY

CHRONOLOGY

Born in Como, Mississippi October 11, 1881
 Attended public school until age of 15
 Entered University of Mississippi as Quasi-Freshman . . 1896
 Awarded A.B. at Mississippi 1901
 Awarded M.A. in English at Columbia University. . . . 1902
 Began publishing poetry, essays, etc. 1906
 English Professor, University of Mississippi. . . 1904-1907
 English Professor, University of Texas. 1907-1915
 Founded The Texas Review. 1915
 English Professor, Amherst College. 1915-1920
 Editorial Staff of The New Republic 1921-1924
 Editorial Staff of Theatre Arts 1921-1940
 Drama Critic, The New York Times. . . . July 1924-July 1925
 Drama Critic, The New Republic. 1925-1947
 Lecturer, New School for Social Research. 1925-1928
 Westinghouse Lecturer in Italy. 1931
 Resigned from The New Republic. July 1947