

THE SMART SET

Edited by
GEORGE JEAN NATHAN

and
H. L. MENCKEN

Manuscripts must be addressed, "Editors of THE SMART SET"

CONTENTS

VISTAS	Odell Shepard	281
WHEN FANCY LEAVES THE NARROW PATH (novelette)	Helen Jetmore Major	283
ANNUNCIATION	Witter Bynner	314
CAMERON'S CONCLUSION	P. F. Hervey	315
THE DANGEROUS INHERITANCE	Louise Winter	317
JEALOUSY	William Anderson	323
THE UPLIFTERS	Jacque Morgan	325
GRANDMOTHER	Helen Woljeska	332
LITTLE GIRL	Lee Pape	333
THE VICTORY	R. C. Whitford	338
THE GREATEST PAINTER IN THE WORLD	Lord Dunsany	339
THE MAN WHO WAITED	Lina S. Bernstein	341
FLIRT	Thomas Ransford	351
THE DESERT IS NOT FIFTH AVENUE	Marshall Hugh Irish	353
THE TWELFTH JUROR	Scammon Lockwood	359
THE WINDY SHOT (one-act play)	Edward Harold Conway	367
THE CAD	Harry Kemp	379
LOVE FOR ART'S SAKE	Paul Hervey Fox	386
CERTAINLY, IT CAN BE DONE!	John Sanborn	389
FELIX AND CARLOTTA	Edna Marion Hill	393
MOUNTAINS AND MOLEHILLS	Edwin C. Dickenson	398
A CAREFUL SURGEON	William Caine	401
THE MORAL DEFEAT	Alexander Harvey	407
A TALE OF LONDON	Lord Dunsany	411
THE FLIGHT	Maurice Samuel	413
AFTER LONG YEARS	Lucy Stone Terrill	418
LA VIE DES MINEURS (in the French)	Pol d'Ostrevent	421
WITH THE MINSTRELS OF THE MOMENT	George Jean Nathan	423
THE GRAND-STAND FLIRTS WITH THE BLEACHERS	H. L. Mencken	430
IN THE SHOPS OF THE SMART SET	Jeanne Judson	437

AND

HALF A HUNDRED BURLESQUES, EPIGRAMS, POEMS, SHORT SATIRES, ETC.

The entire contents of this magazine are protected by copyright and must not be reprinted
YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION \$3.00 SINGLE COPIES 25 CENTS

Issued by Smart Set Company, Inc., 456 Fourth Ave., New York, N. Y.
ELTINGE F. WARNER, Pres. and Treas. GEORGE JEAN NATHAN, Sec.

Entered at New York Post Office as second class mail matter

THE GREATEST PAINTER IN THE WORLD

By Lord Dunsany

THEY were speaking of art, two men in a railway-carriage. "Perhaps Frans Hals was the greatest painter there has ever been," said one.

And a shy-looking man who had not spoken, sitting opposite to me, snorted contemptuously.

"No, no," said the other man. "Velasquez."

And again the little man snorted to himself.

This sincere contempt for two great names and the man's silence seemed to me to betoken an original mind; a mere ignoramus would have had much to say. And when the others got out I tried to talk to him.

"Raphael," I said, "was the greatest painter that there has ever been," not so much expressing an opinion of my own (for how can one compare painters?), but in order to hear his opinion.

And he only answered me: "No, no, not Raphael."

"Giorgione, perhaps," I said.

"O no, no," he said.

"Rubens," I said.

"Out of the question," he answered.

I like to get at a man's point of view, the mere statement of an opinion is nothing, and as yet I was puzzled.

"What is it you dislike about these men?" I asked.

"I don't dislike them," he said, "but to say that any of them is the greatest painter in the world is absurd."

And at last I got him to speak.

"What is wrong with all these men," he said, "is their limitations. Take a

Rubens," he said, "one can tell it at a glance from Frans Hals. I—I hardly like to say so, but even I could tell the difference myself. If Rubens could have painted a Velasquez and a few pictures of the Florentine school even, he might have been a great artist, but he couldn't; he could only paint one kind of picture which one can tell at a glance. Then look at Raphael. . . ."

"But surely every artist . . ." I said.

"All these men have their limitations," he went on, "which stamps them as little men. Good enough in their own way but quite out of the running."

"And whom," I said, "do you consider the greatest artist that there has ever been?"

"Really," he said, "I think I would rather not say."

And the more I pressed the point the shyer he became, until I feared he would shut up altogether, and I had, as it were, to start all over again.

"Perhaps you paint a little yourself," I said.

"Yes," he said, "I paint."

"Then surely," I said, "you have a style of your own as every artist must."

"No," he said, "I don't think so. Nothing to recognize."

"But what kind of work do you do?" I said.

"I work for Sir Titian Tup," he said, "the Bond Street dealer."

"But what kind of picture?" I asked.

And then he pulled out of his pocket a printed form, a list of pictures sold that year by Sir Titian Tup.

"Twelve Raphaels," I read, "of the

later period when experience of the world's admitted sorrows had evidently ripened that artist's undoubted talents, technique warranted. One Giorgione, typical example of the work of that master. Two Michael Angelos, very artistic. Ten Velasquez, that really fashionable artist, possession of any of which may be said to render the fortunate buyer a social *sine qua non*. Six Titians, guaranteed, at once smart and instructive. Three Holbeins, highest grade quality. Forty-two Rubens; and so on and so on."

"Fetched an average," said my companion, "of twenty thousand pounds apiece."

"But what," I said, "have you to do with the pictures?"

"I paint them," he said. "I work for Sir Titian Tup."

I asked him how much money he got on each picture.

"They don't pay us by piecework there," he said. "I get ten shillings a day while I work for the firm, or I may keep my pictures for myself. That seemed fair but it soon taught me what my pictures were worth without the firm to back them. The public won't look at them if they're signed by an old master, and the dealers wouldn't guarantee them; so I used to work for the firm. Down in a cellar I always had to work. It's easy enough to do an old

master by daylight, especially if you only paint one kind all your life like Rubens and the rest of them—but I'd like to see any of them do it by electric light, as I used to do in my cellar.

"When I had finished a picture it used to go upstairs to the frame department to be framed in real plaster; then on to the signature department; and after that it was ready for the market."

"You say you used to work," I said. "May I ask if you have given up doing so?"

"I got the sack," he blurted out. "I got the sack for coming in one night after ten o'clock. They said I was honest and industrious but they had the reputation of the firm to consider and they couldn't have their employees keeping late hours."

"But never mind," I said, "you can still paint your pictures."

"No, no," he said hopelessly, "all the dealers know why I got the sack, and when the public know that they'll have nothing to do with me."

This was some months ago, and only to-day I read in a daily paper of old masters going for £23-2-0, eight guineas, fifteen guineas, and thirty-three pounds twelve. I suspect that Sir Titian has had to fall back on the old kind and they don't fetch the same price.