

THE SUN IN SPLENDOUR

By Thomas Burke

PART V

The instalments of Mr. Burke's atmospheric novel which have been appearing in THE BOOKMAN have necessarily been greatly shortened to meet space requirements; but it has been the attempt of the editors to retain as much as is possible of the quality of this unusual and distinctive piece of highly organized prose.

THAT afternoon, when tea was done, Christopher took his cap and went out into the luminous dusk for more loafing. Eric had disappeared in one of his grouching moods; Father was keeping the bar; and Mother and Lois were engaged with occult matters in the kitchen. From the sleepy lights of the High Street he turned into Upper Street — a ravine of glittering windows and gleaming trams and buses. Above it the craggy peaks of the buildings were soothed by the darkening sky, and those shops that were frugal of their lights made mauve shadows among the exuberance of yellow. His mind was blank, and his feet moved without purpose. Hands and mouth were demonstrably busy with an orange, and thus engaged he sauntered past Collins's Music Hall, across the Green, past the Myddleton statue, and across to the Empire.

It was London's most expressive hour. The figure of the plowman homeward plodding his weary way has become associated in the popular mind as the perfect symbol of evening, as so many of man's activities on the land have become accepted as symbols of human institutions and festivals. But Christopher had never seen a plowman. He was pure London, and to his mind the spirit of recreation

after toil was expressed in terms of modern social phenomena. It was expressed by half past five at the "Angel", when companies of workers from factory and office came raying out to homes beyond the noise. Complex and weary minds seek simplicity in the common forms of expression of the past — in maypoles and wassailings and morris dances; the simple mind finds simplicity in the things of its own day that serve that day's purpose. The motor bus is neither more nor less beautiful than the coach; the fox trot band neither more nor less vulgar than the minstrels in the gallery; the tram conductor in his working clothes neither more nor less picturesque than the hind of the farm. Each is of its own time, and for its own times, wearing the clothes and the appointments fitting to its purpose, and effective only when employed upon that purpose. So this vast evening procession, through crashing traffic, from toil to recreation, is a feature entirely of these days; and, though different in form, was as moving to Christopher, in its figure of human endeavor and festival, as the vision of the solitary plowman against the sunset. It is London's ebb tide, when the human waves recede from the bays and inlets of the City into the ocean of

the suburbs, and it presents a spectacle unknown at any other time. One is in the presence of a terrible and beautiful thing: a crowd of millions of immortal souls throbbing to one impulse. Curious people take long journeys to see strange things in strange lands, when London every evening affords an event as full of passion and wonder as any Eastern occasion.

For an hour Christopher hung about this corner, staring, and trying to discover for himself what he felt about it. But he could get no further than a consciousness of being stirred by it. He was born to be solitary, and, like most solitaries, he loved the lights and the noise and the crowd; the surging rhythm of it and its mighty chords. And there was a spell in it; some misty emanation that wrought upon him those moments of vision into secret things that others know on hill tops or in forlorn valleys at midnight. The potent spell without which art cannot be.

He moved slowly through the metallic noise and the teasing odors of toast and grill and gravy, toward the City Road; and stopped suddenly outside Porter's Chop House. Through the oblongs of lemon and gold that gushed across the pavement went pale questing faces and hasting figures, and motionless among them, face thrust forward to the Chop House window, stood the long black figure of Mrs. Greenspan. Connie, looking at nothing, was at her side.

Connie at thirteen was markedly different from the open mouthed little thing that had crept to the door of "The Sun in Splendour"; and for some moments Christopher stood and watched her. She was still suffering under the rule of her aunt; her ginger curls were cut short, proving that Mrs. Greenspan was not doing well; but she

was no longer the shrinking waif. The mignon figure held dignity. The face was reposed and serious. The eyes that had looked upon the horror of Mrs. Greenspan, looked upon the world as though the world held no secrets from them. Two years back she had been a baby in socks; she was now a London girl of thirteen; and Christopher saw for the first time her grace and wisdom and gravity, and was shocked into diffidence. During those two years he had been so often with her that he had never seen her. Tonight, isolated under the lamp, and unaware of inspection, she was revealed; and as he watched her he had an ache to keep looking at her, and a mortifying knowledge that he could never again treat her with patronage or pity.

As he moved into the light she saw him and nodded. He came nearer, but slowly, because of Mrs. Greenspan. They spoke a greeting.

"Lo."

"Lo."

"We're having something new on Wednesday—two things we ain't tried before. You coming?"

Mrs. Greenspan, turning sadly away from the bazaar of chops and steaks and sirloins, caught them. "Eh? Eh? Who's having what?"

Christopher looked up at her. "I said we was playing something new. At our place. I was asking if she was coming." He spoke boldly, but under her frosty gaze he lost his confident boyhood, and felt white and small. A faint quaver came into his voice. He was not afraid of anything she might do to him, but he was afraid of *her*. He could not properly defy her as he could have defied a street lout twice his size. She could do nothing to him; yet he was afraid of her, feeling that he was in the presence of some-

thing he didn't understand; something he ought not, for his soul's peace, to understand.

"If she's coming, eh? M-m-m-m. That depends if I let her. I've let her lots of times, ain't I, my love? Still, I think she can come. . . . 'Course, she'll have to pay for it. No rose without a slip. Can't expect to get into concerts without paying for admission — eh?" Her eyes went into reverie. "She knows I don't like her going, but she will keep on going. So . . . she'll have to pay for it. Eh, Connie, my duck?"

She made a thin pillar of black between them, and her words threw a shadow of shame upon the grace of young boy and girl. This veiled horror, coming upon Christopher's sudden perception of the growing up of his friend, turned him sick. Mrs. Greenspan grinned. She knew that both knew what she spoke of, and she turned to each burning face, grinning at the outrage.

"You—you—you're an old beast!"

She held her grin. Connie drew back into the shadow. "Tzee! Am I, dearie? Eh, there now. Nice little boy, you are, but I can see what you want. Nice boys want putting in their places. If you was my boy . . . M-m-m-m. I'd like to 'ave the managing of you for a week, my dear. 'Myes, I would. Eh? I'd give you a tonic or two. I'd teach you to be respectful."

He had a burst of battle. "Would you? Like to see you try it on. Dirty old beast! You wait. You won't have Connie much longer."

"Won't I, dearie? Reelly? Won't I? Eh, you'd all like to get 'old of 'er, wouldn't you? Eh, you're all trying to get 'er away from me. I know. I know all about it. Your precious father and a few others. But you won't,

duckie. You won't. She's *mine*. See?"

Christopher stared and wondered how she knew. Since Connie's first visit to "The Sun in Splendour", when she had told them of her life with her aunt, his mother had made suggestions, and his father had listened to them, and there had been tentative inquiries, semi official, among various authorities, and the inquiries were still moving. She saw his look and leered. "A-a-ah, little boy, you're not quite smart enough for me. None of you. See?"

"We *will* get her away though. My Dad's spoken to the Sergeant here, and he's spoken to the Cruelty people. Somebody'll be coming to see you 'fore long. You wait."

"Reelly, now? Then that settles it. Connie won't be coming round Wednesday. 'Cos she may not be here. See? And since you been so bad-mannered tonight I'll show 'er what I think of bad manners. See? Come here!" She grabbed Connie by the wrist. Her eyes fed on her. "Know what I'm going to do to 'er when I get 'er 'ome? Eh?" She bent down to his ear. "I'm going to —"

He cried at her, "Shut up! Shut up! Let 'er go! Stop it, you old beast!"

"Come here!" She grabbed at him. "I'm going to take 'er —"

"Stop it! Dirty old beast!" Connie's face was white with shame; Christopher's crimson with disgust and rage. Connie cried in misery, "Go away! Go away, Chris!" With a sudden wrench he broke away and ran.

Mrs. Scollard and Lois were laying the supper in the downstairs parlor of the "Sun". From the bar came the usual cacophony of glass and beer engine and coins and chatter. Upstairs raging hands were beating upon Mrs. Greenspan through the medium

of the piano and the fourteenth "Hungarian Rhapsody". David came in from the saloon bar, bringing with him a blare of noise which died as he closed the door. His wife looked up brightly. "Where d'you think Chris is going to play Thursday?"

"Eh? Oh, Queen's Hall, I suppose."

"Don't be silly. Somebody's engaged him to play?"

"Who? Landon Ronald?"

"Fathead. No, but somebody he met at his lesson. A friend of Mr. What's-his-name. He played to her there."

"Oh. I understand now. That makes it clear."

She flipped his neck as she passed his chair. "Well, from what he says Mr. de Florent says it might lead to a lot of things. You needn't be funny because the boy's got an invitation. It's Kensington somewhere. I fancy from what he says that she Takes People Up."

"Oh? Ah. I've heard of that sort before. And then the engine stops, and—"

"Be quiet. It might mean quite a lot for him. You never know. Anyway, he can go, I suppose?"

"Oh, he can go all right if he wants to. He's not fit to play anywhere yet, though. Wants another three years at it."

"Well, perhaps this lady might take him up and arrange that for him. Can't do anything anywhere without some influence behind you. Or money."

"I know. I know. Well, we'll see what happens."

At this remark Lois gave a long high laugh. Mrs. Scollard looked at her. "Lois!" She was subdued. They sat to supper. The noise in the bar rose. They discussed the Thursday afternoon affair. Lois laughed. Chris-

topher ate stolidly and stared through the window of bottle glass whose formation caused every cart and every figure seen through it to take a sudden ride on a switchback. Eric sat hunched and silent, with an expression of foreboding; so withdrawn from them that he might have been in Birmingham.

That night, Mrs. Scollard, having debated the affair with bright anticipations, felt a sudden twinge of dismay. At first she had made a sanguine leap and had seen it as the beginning of Christopher's Getting On. This Getting On had always presented itself to her mind as a procession, with herself as dowager. Now, at the first active hint of it, came the thought—would she be in it? Would his Getting On mean an enriching of her life or a devastation? She knew the answer. She had always vaguely recognized that at some time she would have to lose him. If he were going to Get On he would have to live away from them. He couldn't be expected to stay in a place like the "Sun", or to bring there some of the people he would get to know. He'd be going out to smart places and meeting serious people and All That. A son, she knew, wasn't like a daughter. As he grew up he would become more and more of a stranger to her: indeed, there was already much of him of which she knew nothing. She had cruised and cruised around him, but never could she get inland. Men were men. That was a fact she had always known, and now the application of it was making her miserable. She told herself that she had always foreseen it. She told herself that it was perfectly natural that he should break away. You couldn't, she told herself, expect him to . . .

But somehow herself was no longer a calm and sensible creature. Herself was a block of marble chiseled with

words: "You're going to lose him. He's going up and he won't be your boy much longer." And all that night, because her son had been asked to take his violin to a house in Kensington, she lay awake. Repeatedly she told herself to stop being a fool and go to sleep; but she was talking to something without ears. Toward rising time she did doze, and was awakened to a world whose purpose seemed to be the torment of mothers.

At seven o'clock a small white figure crept down the passage to the door of the front bedroom, and knocked. "Mu-u-um! Da-a-ad!"

A muffled voice answered him with, "Waaa? Woh-wan? Waa-st?"

"It's me. Chris. It's—it's—"

Then, more clearly: "Well, come in, then, and say what you got to say. What is it?"

He went in and stood before the big bed and the ruffled figures of his parents. He looked at them in their un-parent-like state with the air of one violating a sanctity. "This!"

"Well, what *is* it, boy? What *is* it?"

"I found this on Eric's bed."

"Eh? What? Found what? Don't stand there like a fool. Give it here. And go and dress yourself."

He handed up a slip of paper, and stole away. The two white stout figures scrambled up from the pillow and read it together:

"Tell them I'm fed up. I don't want Australia and I'm not going to a training ship. I'm off on my own. I'll write to you and come and see you when I feel like it but if they try to find me or put anybody on to me I won't come back at all. Eric."

Mrs. Scollard made fumbling noises. "I don't understand. What's it mean? Where's he say he's gone? Does he mean he's gone away? But why

should he . . . Where could he . . . How'll he get on? . . . What'll you do about it? We can't let him . . ."

David turned the note over and turned it back and read it again. "M. He's gone all right. He's not the fellow to do this sort of thing for a joke. He's gone all right. Question is—where? I'll speak to the Sergeant. If it's that Arthur Negretti . . ."

She sat upright then. She looked at David, and though she wanted to be calm herself, she was hurt by his casual air. She meant to say something keenly expressive, but all she said was: "Oh, I say! Not really! He hasn't really run away?" That was all. For the rest of the day she said not a word about it; but her cakes wouldn't rise and she forgot to put salt in the vegetables.

On Thursday Christopher went to Mrs. Silvernigh's "bijou" home in Kensington, and had his first sight of the barren land of the half intellectuals and of Nice People and of the sham grace that lures the impressionable away from beauty. During the journey to Victoria Road, by way of Wigmore Street, Park Lane, and Knightsbridge—his first taxi ride—de Florent said things. Obscure things.

"Oompish people", he said. "You know. Oompish. Sticky. Eh?"

It seemed that Christopher was expected to say something, but he had nothing to say. De Florent did not wait for him.

"Yes. Oompish. She collects 'em."

"Collects what?"

"Oomps. You'll see 'em there. Told you the other day. Any Oomp that's knocking about—she finds it. Pins it on cardboard and exhibits it." Then, with the coarseness that did not "go" with grey hair or maestri: "She's a ripsnorter, she is."

"A ripsnorter? I thought she was very nice."

"Eh?" He seemed surprised to discover that he had company. "Oh, yes. She is very nice. That's the trouble. It's always the nice people that behave like stinkers. But you'll see."

"Is it a big house?" This was put casually, but there was a note of nervousness in the voice.

"Not big enough for the gang she has there. Hardly big enough for her when she's in full stroke."

"I mean I never been to a big house before. Not in Kensington. I was wondering . . ."

"Oh. See what you mean. I know. Had it myself at your age. We all do. Those who're not born in the big house air. Nothing to worry about, though. All you got to do is to play. And you needn't give a damn for any of 'em. You've got as much as any of that herd."

"But I mean — I was thinking — you see — I — she was laughing at my belonging to a public house. And I don't suppose any of them there — I mean, I expect they're all people who —"

De Florent spoke one syllable — a street corner syllable expressing objection, disbelief, scorn and impatience. "What's that got to do with it? You're doing something — or will soon. They do nothing. They dabble. They piddle about with art. Talk about it. Read about it. But they can't even paint an Academy picture or compose a "Garden of Roses" or write a shopgirl novel. Let alone do the Real stuff. They're undergraduates. And will be all their lives. Prattlers. Piddlers. They know all the jargon. And that's about all. The half artists — exposing their dirty little minds to the world. When they do do anything,

it smells. Think they're presenting their vision when they're only chalking things on walls, like nasty old men. May not be any of that breed there today. But you'll see."

He saw. Mrs. Silvernigh breasted a wave of guests to greet them, made a way for them into her double drawing room, and forgot them. Despite de Florent's comments, he was impressed and crushed by it. This was like nothing that he had seen before. It was magnificently above de Florent's music room. There were great pictures, great rugs, great divans, two great fireplaces, and the greatness of Mrs. Silvernigh. It was for him the expression of splendid living, and it awed him.

Young men and middle aged men and young girls and middle aged women stood or sat about the room. Long hair and short hair was affected without regard to sex. Old and young smoked cigarettes and threw their ash where they would. When Mrs. Silvernigh approached a group, the group assumed an air of intense enjoyment. When she had passed the faces fell back to nature. De Florent was claimed by a tall man with a thin yellow beard, who took him away with lofty waves of the hand. Christopher was left by the door. He took a position behind it, and wished he had not come. Among these serious adults, some well dressed, some ill dressed, but all *looking* distinguished, and taking tea from servants as though the servants were not there, he saw himself as the half grown Lout. The dowdiest people here had an air that lifted them far above the most prosperous people of Islington High Street; and he felt that he ought to be downstairs. But he was there, and he must carry the situation. He tried to do this and to hold as easy an attitude as the people about him.

He leaned against the wall, folded his arms over his chest, and crossed one leg over the other; and immediately felt that the pose was ridiculous. He put his arms behind him and clasped his hands; and felt awkward. He let them hang straight from the shoulder, and stood upright; and felt conspicuous. He put both hands in his trousers pockets; and remembered that that was Bad Manners. He put his hands in his coat pockets, and took them out again. There was then but one thing to do with his arms—the one thing he wanted to do—wave them in the air. Be expressive. But he could no more be expressive in this room than swear aloud in church. A maid saved him by asking if he was taking tea. He said, "Thank you, miss." She handed him tea, severely, and another maid presented a cake stand of three tiers. He saw cake on the top tier and fumbled with it. The cake had been badly cut. The maid held the stand limply and with resignation. He made attacks on three separate slices, and at last gave them up, took a more yielding portion, and broke away with half a continent of cake: the unsliced half. The maid looked at him, and with the brutality of girlhood, left him with it. He began to eat cake, and saw himself eating cake for the next half hour. Hot eyes over the tableland of cake saw that two or three people had seen and were smiling. He heard a voice asking, "Who's the scrubby little chap against the wall?" He cursed them. To ease the strain she began to think about Eric. He did not know where Eric was, or what he was doing, but he wished he were with him. He had a sudden desire to tell these people about Eric and about "The Sun in Splendour"; to shock them; and a firm desire to be rid of that cake and out of that house.

In the thick of a mouthful Mrs. Silvernigh passed him and tossed a few disheveled sentences at him: "Hullo. . . . There you are. . . . Been looking everywhere. . . . Wondering what. . . . Send someone talk to you. . . . Don't go away. . . . Expecting lovely music. . . ." At the threat of sending someone to talk to him, he mumbled desperately at the cake, but before he was halfway through it she was back; and with her came a new disturbance. A vision of blue and white and black. A softly breathing vision. Something rarer than he had yet known. The essential Girl of schoolboys' dreams. Silk frock, touched with blue ribbon. Blue eyes. Bright red lips. Black bobbed hair. Soft white neck. Roses in the cheeks. Slim legs in brown silk stockings. The Lewis Baumer flapper. Forgetting all de Florent's warnings, he saw it as a sudden descent of beauty into his path, and surrendered to it. She was smiling at him, brightly, and he heard only distantly Mrs. Silvernigh's voice. "Oh, Pam, come here and talk to him. My daughter—Pamela. Boy I told you about, Pam. Look after him. Hold him down. Looks as though he wanted to run away. Quaint boy!"

They were left together behind the door. She began to talk, and as he tried to listen he had a desperate feeling of being held down by cake and cup and saucer, and battered by smiles and blue eyes and a throat so white and girlish that it seemed an indecency to look upon it. She talked with the jolly candor of tennisy sixteen, and through his confusion he heard sometimes her and sometimes the chatter from the chairs and lounges about them, and said "Yes" and "No" at random. People came and went.

Some came lightly, shaking hands

casually with Mrs. Silvernight, and passing from her to their friends as though the house were a public rendezvous: which it was. Some, making their first visit, and prepared by rumors that had reached them, entered with an air of despondency and alarm. There was continual circling, with Mrs. Silvernight as M. C., and continual talk. He had always regarded the talk at "The Sun in Splendour" tea parties as the talk belonging to his class only, and thought that well to do people in drawing rooms had a talk of their own, tinct with learning and of full bouquet. He found now that Still Alarms and Buff Orpingtons lived everywhere, marked from those he knew by the slight difference of aspirates and pleasing inflections. A sweet clear voice came through the babble. "Mumsie told me about you and your playing. Hope we're going to hear you. She said you're wonderful. You're fond of music, aren't you?" This was precisely the penetrating question that Aunt Julie would have asked a musician, and he had a moment's thought of "What a fool!" But the blue eyes and the bright lips gave life to the question, and there was a look of admiration with it that made him hurry to answer, "Oo, rather. I am. Music's —" only to discover that he had nothing to say about music. After a few moments she moved away, leaving him with the certainty that he had made a bad impression or no impression at all. Listening to the babble, he heard something that bore solemnity and richness, and gave it his attention.

"Exactly", a voice was saying. "Exactly. But you see, the essence of the short story . . . Tchekhov . . ."

"Ah, Tchekhov . . ."

"Yes, of course . . . Tchekhov . . ."

"Quite."

Two girls and two men leaned back in their chairs with the air of having said something about Tchekhov. From another point a word was caught. "Puccini." They all laughed. "Oh, Puccini!" Oh, Lord!" They had discussed Puccini. Somebody said, "The German fellow — Wedekind, you know."

"Ah, Wedekind. Now there's a case that presents what I was saying. A lot of people don't understand Wedekind. They can't see his Urge, his Significance."

A voice like a trundled cannon ball came from the back. "Well, what's it matter anyway? Why the hell should they? Eh?" Heads were turned to see who had said it, and somebody covered it with, "Oh, well, if one can't, one can't. I don't know. . . . After all, Wedekind's there. There's the Message. He prepared the way for Toller. Decidedly he matters. If one had said Michael Arlen, now . . ." There was laughter. The laugh was cut through by the cannon ball. "They're all alike. All the lot of 'em. Intelligent people don't write plays. Least, not for the theatre. . . . Punch and Judy shows — that's all the theatre is. Silly faces. Silly figures. Silly voices getting between the author and the public."

They looked a little uncomfortable. Somebody had said something; had expressed a definite opinion; and had profaned the charming mistiness. Hastily they enclosed themselves again, and small talk dripped about the room like November rain.

He heard the use of the word "these" as a term of disapproval. They spoke of *these* Tories, *these* reactionaries, *these* jazz bands, *these* films, *these* Robots. Mrs. Silvernight's voice came through it. "Clever boy. Comes from the people, you

know. Father keeps a public house somewhere in King's Cross, and plays the cello. So interesting, I think. I mean — it makes it so different, doesn't it? I mean — ”

He became aware that de Florent was at his side, and was looking at him. “Well? What d'you think of this lot of Oomps?”

“I — I don't know. Who's that over there — the man with the spats?”

“That — seen him before, haven't you? Jimmy Magson. Jimmy Magson's band. Calls himself a conductor. Might do very well on a pirate bus.”

“And who's that over there — the man with the cropped hair and side whiskers?”

“Him? Oh, poor imitation of the Frenchmen — Erik Satie and that lot.”

It was a relief to have someone to talk to. “What's he dress like that for?”

“Oh — goes with the prison crop, I suppose. Putting himself up for identification.”

Mrs. Silvernigh swam to them. “Now, boy — I've forgotten his name — oh, yes, Christopher — now, Christopher, you're going to play to us, aren't you? Come along.” De Florent shrugged his shoulders and followed her and Christopher to the piano. His face expressed, “What on earth am I doing in this crowd?” Many other faces expressed the same question, and when they saw the scrubby boy unpack a violin, they expressed it more clearly. They looked at each other, telegraphing: “Oh, Lord. Another of Margaret's working class geese!”

At the first chords of the piano, there was a momentary hush; then the talk continued though in subdued tones. De Florent nodded to him and muttered something, and began one of Sarasate's Spanish dances. A few people turned heads to look at him;

then looked away. As his nervousness passed, he tried to look round the room for beauty's face and if possible to catch her eye and play to *her*. This was his chance to assert himself and to claim her regard, to say, in effect: “I know I'm nobody. I know I look a fool, and you think I'm a fool. But I'll show you. I want you to know that I'm not.” It seemed most important that she should know as soon as possible that he wasn't entirely scrubby and commonplace. But she wasn't there. When the Spanish dance was finished those nearest the piano nodded and smiled; the others didn't know it was finished. Mrs. Silvernigh called, “Go on. Go on, Splendid!” as though she were encouraging an athlete. He played, on de Florent's orders, a Paganini Caprice to equal attention and effect, and was again urged to Go on. De Florent turned to him and gave his platform smile, and said, “Wings of Song”. While he was doing this, Mrs. Silvernigh lay back with closed eyes, and when he was done, said dreamily; “Mendelssohn . . . I always think there's something about Mendelssohn. I mean — he seems to have a something . . .”

In the uprush of talk de Florent drifted from the piano, and Christopher was left alone. He tried to follow him. As he passed behind chairs, one or two people gave him half an eye, and an elderly woman said that she thought he was wonderful for his age, and hoped he would play again. Nothing else was said, and de Florent had reached the far end of the room beyond pursuit. He fumbled, and took his old position by the door. It was half open and through it he could see into the hall. Among a pile of hats and coats on a centre table he saw his cap. Beyond the table he saw the street door. He looked about the

room and at the scattered groups of people bent toward each other. He saw his chance. Hitching his case under his arm he streaked through the door, reached for his cap as though he were stealing it, opened the hall door, and was away.

In Kensington Road he found a bus — he had been provided with a shilling for the occasion — and mounted it as though expectant of arrest. He reached Islington at six o'clock, wondering how he was to report upon this tepid affair which his mother had seen so hopefully. But the disaster of Eric had clouded the household, and questions were few and perfunctory, and his bright answers were hardly heard.

For this he was glad. He was in no mood for talk or for discussion of his musical achievements. He was not at all worried by the fact that the

afternoon had been a washout. He had other things to think about; and that night, in the bedroom which he now had to himself, he stood for an hour at the window looking down toward the lights of St. Pancras and the Victoria Tower, and thinking. Against the violet sky he saw a wonderful girl, and against her shining presence the thought of Connie came suddenly as mean and drab and lustreless. He found himself wanting to stop knowing her, and wanting to stop right at the moment. He wanted to cleanse himself of past mean associations, and start a new and beautiful period of service to the luminous paleness and garden grace of Pamela. He wanted to change the power and beauty of the strait stony road for the luscious valley of Avilion.

He wanted to do what de Florent had found hell in doing.

SONNET TO E. W.

By Maxwell Bodenheim

NOT proud, and yet perverse, you raise a shield
 Of glass, which could be broken at a stroke,
 Because you know that pain is but a joke
 Made for the fatal relishing concealed
 Within your thoughts, and for your feelings still
 Impenitent, disarmed, and subtly white.
 You came late to your trysting place with fright
 And found that he had lost his weary skill.

Yes, you were late, and so your smile remains,
 Not cruel, never kind, and always just
 Evading clowns and monsters in the stream
 Of people stopping you along your lanes.
 The merciless extremes of rust and lust
 Will never penetrate your naked dream.