

and negatively charged. In the presence of the necessary lipid substances, then, we should have the reaction that produces the sense of smell.

But suppose we learn the very nature of each reaction, and that somebody were to tell us the precise processes that take place when we smell, let us say, geranium leaves, or any other substance, it wouldn't make us wise. I can imagine some biological chemist working out the structure of bodies eliminated by the human system under the emotion, let us say, of fear. Then, if he is correct in his conclusions, he may separate this body, or even synthesize it, and present it to us, and allow us to smell it and—then we shall think we know. But he may make a mistake, or he may not offer it in the right dilution—and then we shall be wrong when we think we are right. What we need most is a real live curiosity about the smell of things. Then we can find out for ourselves with an organ already made and with which none of us wants to part, but which, olfactorily speaking, we are all too lazy to use. It is experience rather than chemical explanations that will make us wise.

Just now there is great interest manifested in regard to the possibility of bodies and powers, and even persons abiding in invisible attenuation in what is called the spirit world. I do not understand how such things can be, and it does not seem to me that they really are, although I am not vain enough to believe that my opinion is conclusive. But if we would become conscious of matter in such attenuated form it is only through

our noses that we may discover it. If ghosts dwell among us it is by our noses that we may know them.

After writing the foregoing I sent a copy of the manuscript to a friend for criticism. He is a man of profound scholarship in organic chemistry, and a person of rare loveliness of character. He writes:

There is a point in question—but I dare not suggest that you will make the change, even after I have mentioned it. You write that we need faith, but your last paragraph is agnostic of a subject which has long occupied the attention of some very thoughtful men. I believe if you were to drift into some of the more serious literature of psychical research you would inevitably, as a thinker, be attracted by it. And if you undertake to make first-hand investigations—which is easy for any one to do—I believe you will wish about five words of your last paragraph written differently. In my own experience I have been forced to the same conclusion as Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir William Crookes, Lombroso, F. W. Myers, and others.

Most curious is your intuition which has indeed a reflection in the actual facts. At several sittings I have been amazed by a phenomenon seldom, if ever, mentioned in the literature of the subject—namely, a remarkable succession of well-defined odors, practically all sweet and almost always of various flowers. A peculiarity has been that they are the true odors of fresh flowers, and not “perfume” odors.

Curious also is the news that my friend believes in these things. That is, it seems so now. But who knows what we shall be believing within the little while before the Beckoning Hand of Silence is raised for us?

## THAW

BY ALBERT BIGELOW PAINE

GRAY sky and wood, and ragged drifts of white;  
 Dull shapes that blur to distant monotone;  
 A laggard crow that, calling, flies alone:  
 A somber world, with somber-hearted men  
 That trudge to toil, and then trudge home again  
 As sodden day dims out in sodden night.

## LITTLE FRIENDS OF ALL THE ARTS

BY HOWARD BRUBAKER

IT is an ironical fact that Vera de Vere, who was destined to bring so much sorrow to unoffending youth, came gliding into Lakeville in the name of art and beauty and the pleasure of life. Out of a dull November sky and a late-afternoon train, she brought a dash of color into Mrs. Wilton's rather drab boarding-house. Having unpacked a trunkful of esthetic gowns and exciting hats, some smocks in improbable tones, and a bale of sandals, she went to the post-office and inquired for mail addressed to Mrs. Jenkins. Obviously "Vera de Vere" was also part of the pictorial effect.

The next day Miss de Vere took a calm look at Lakeville, made some inquiries, and attacked it at its weakest point.

The wife of Lakeville's most prominent dry-goods and clothing merchant, patroness and encourager of upward-looking movements, owner and proprietor of Clarence Raleigh, sat in her ornate drawing-room that afternoon and wondered what it was that was about to come into her life.

"Do I understand that you propose to organize an art class?" she asked. "That would be lovely, of course, but I wonder whether Lakeville—" Mrs. Raleigh's gesture indicated the esthetic hopelessness of the community.

The visitor tinkled out a little high-art laugh. "I know what you mean—I sympathize with your position here. You must at times feel like an oasis. It would be hopeless if we had to depend upon adults." Remarks followed which were too facile to be impromptu—some complex and well-rounded sentences about preconceived ideas, inhibitions, hardening of the arteries. "We must

work with the next generation," she triumphantly concluded.

The slightly wilted beauty of the apostle of the esthetic seemed to revive as she outlined her plan for the renaissance. Her hostess caused tea to be brought and gave a sympathetic ear, nodding in agreement whenever the visitor said something that she did not fully understand. Despite a certain haziness, what was clearly about to happen to the next generation was a general uplifting of its finer nature. Art? Yes, but all kinds of art. Drawing, modeling? Yes, but also dancing, rhythm, gesture. We must get into their little lives the real meaning of music. Miss de Vere put no limitations upon her powers. All art was her specialty. Art drawing, art walking, art dressing, art everything.

"Can you imagine anything more atrocious than the clothes we make the kiddies wear?" Whoever is about to inflict something upon the human young always begins by calling them "kiddies." No doubt Herod said to his minions, "Go out and slaughter all the kiddies."

Mrs. Raleigh obediently shuddered at the atrocious way other people's children were dressed. What is more, she called up her close friend, Mrs. Weyman—Mrs. County Treasurer Weyman—and invited her to come over and shudder, too. Also, before civilization was an hour more effete, the ample Mrs. Thompson became a fellow-shudderer. Mrs. Thompson was especially impressive when she shuddered, because of the liberal quantity of bangles with which she was adorned.

By the time the teapot was empty it was established that children are natural