

highest concern for the good of literature. It is out of this high concern that he is led sometimes to make the most annihilating revelations about the composite Aesthetic type.

There is an enthusiasm, a vatic fervor about Mr. Boyd's manner of utterance. As he goes about his job, one of his most striking qualities is the lack of any restraint or inhibition in touching upon the most intimate details from the private lives of these scandalous youngsters. Among the calm, polite fraternity of present-day journalists and translators, he is unique in his willingness to martyrize himself, to appear snooping, tale-telling, vulgar. Did not Mr. Mencken write a delightful essay in praise of vulgarity? It is with just such abandon that he recounts a notorious altercation with one of the younger poets. This young gentleman, it appears, was unconvinced by Mr. Boyd's pertinent allusions to his generation, and his obscene protestations are published by the author with perfect blandness. This complete lack of reticence, this brazenness is what I value most.

Another secret of Mr. Boyd's successful method is his refusal, as instanced by *Aesthete: Model 1924*, to touch at all upon the ideas (or any ideas) which arise in the present discussions of modern art. One searches quite in vain for reasoned opinions as to the direction of taste, for discovery, or constructive proposals. This, too, is admirable. Mr. Ernest Boyd is a fundamentalist! Here in America, we have not had our feet on the ground; we have revelled in the realms of the imagination without watching our q's and p's. The scholarly Mr. Boyd brings us sharply to earth. Perhaps the essence of his whole critical process is contained in this penetrating sentence. "Nevertheless, information is the one thing the Aesthete dreads." We have it all in a nutshell here. America, he was convinced, was a land of ideas without information. Mr. Boyd's peculiar mission, then, was to arrive at our benighted shores with a criticism grounded upon information without ideas.

His most brilliant contribution is probably this novel scheme of criticism. To deliver a telling stroke you must scan what your unsuspecting victim has committed himself to, and plunge therefrom into the *Century Cyclopaedia*, the *Grande Larousse* (3), etc., etc., to emerge ultimately with dripping scalp. In the light of this new criticism, to extract a misplaced accent mark, an error of orthography, even the slightest bibliographical fault, is a triumph from the point of view of realities and fundamentals.

What of his scholarship and his eagerness for the fray, Mr. Boyd has brought in our midst these practical homely qualities, which are after all so admirable and which we have so wanted. Perhaps I have spoken too little of the other essays and portraits in his book. But it is because, for one thing, they have seemed to lack the "punch" of the *Aesthete: Model 1924*; and again, his dominant tendencies and qualities are so successfully embodied in the opening study. As to his style, it is not always as sprightly as that of F. P. Adams, nor as smooth as Heywood Brown's, but it is vigorous, and since he is scholarly, it is uncommonly given to citations from the little classics, such as: "The press agent is made not born. . . . He realizes that art is long and life is short. . . . He takes the cash of writing and lets the credit of literature go. . . . He is glad to become one of that company of glorious, perhaps, but never mute Milton's. . . ." In short, an excellent vehicle.

MATTHEW JOSEPHSON.

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(3) Mr. Josephson here commits a horrible blunder in French. *Larousse* is masculine and the adjective should be *grand* instead of *grande*. What more can I say?—E\*\*\* \*t B\*\*d.