

in the grand hall of the Aquitania on the Atlantic, or in an airplane volplaning felicitously down on Warsaw.

The literature of Louis Aragon, André Breton, Paul Eluard, Philippe Soupault, Tristan Tzara is an exhilarating record. Tzara's poems are as naturally expressive of the beauty of this age as Herrick's are of the 17th Century. With an utterly simple and unaffected touch they employ all the instruments of the time, the streetcar, the bill-poster, the automobile, the incandescent light, etc. The poems are not modern because they indicate: „I was riding in the tramway“ (instead of a diligence), but because the tramway gets into the very rhythm, form and texture of the poems.

In the prose of Louis Aragon there is the speed and vividness of the motion picture, a constant and uproarious dialectic, and a volume and richness that is quite distinguished after so much thin and lucid French prose. The humor is not of human foibles so much as of smoothly functioning swiftly moving modern devices. The influences of the up-to-date detective and the American cinema are strongly evident. There are marvelous American films whose characters, out of all the sincerity of the director's heart, make the most preposterous, imbecilic and imaginative gestures. There is much of this terrifying beauty in Aragon's stories.

*Les Champs Magnétiques*, which André Breton and Philippe Soupault wrote in collaboration is another commanding book of prose. It rejects plot as completely as Joyce's *Ulysses* does, but goes even farther in disavowing even such a precise and inchoate verisimilitude as Joyce employs. The book achieves an upheaval of methods. Take a single sentence or a paragraph and it is, alone, rich-and-beautiful, but means nothing without its context. For the writers instead of attempting to express human drama by definite words or phrases indicating so many incidents or details, work for an effect of growth in their theme by a large continued rhythm. The prose changes its blend and intensity of light, spatters its broken tracts of conversation or cogitation, gathering a large momentum through the succession of chapters rather than sentences. This is simply another case of literature coming abreast of modern painting or sculpture or music.