

to the bodily necessity he has so cleverly understated and Rabelais, Cervantes, Mark Twain (in „1601“), Huysmans and Apollinaire have made varying use of it, Bray invades subject matter that most people and most poets would condemn as unsuitable for literature. Yet Bray saw a certain humorous significance in the occasion which he conveys to us by rhythms, inventiveness and adroit evasions. We can perceive his loyalty to his stimulus, note the manner in which this loyalty has been made concrete, and experience an esthetic satisfaction from the solution of his problem.

In sum, criticism says to the other arts: Use any subject you wish. My concern is in the state of mind you create with it.

Another poem printed here, that by Tristan Tzara, will assist in developing this conclusion. (I do not, at present, vouch for the bulk of Tzara's activities but he has written several indubitable poems.) In this poem, Tzara contrives an abstract\* organization. He departs altogether from conventional coherent intelligible subject material and gives us instead a controlled series of physical sensations. The effect is as unalloyed with intellectual and extra-esthetic reactions as those of music or cubist painting. Yet it cannot be defined in terms of musical or painting criticism nor very well by literary criticism since that is lamentably weak in its own esthetic vocabulary. Tzara's word arrangement approaches mathematics. (There is some reason for believing that the ecstasy arising from the solving of a complicated mathematical problem is very much akin to the esthetic emotion.) What he does here is, by means of words, to make a pattern of sharp arrest, dead calm, rising motion, developed calm, progress, spreading out, contraction and final collapse that leaves us physically satisfied. And emotionally satisfied. His is an abstractness as devoid of idea-emotions as music or painting can be but still belonging very definitely to words.

Satisfying as this is, it nevertheless causes speculation upon the depth, solidity and interior organization of

\* Abstract, like romantic and realistic, is an indicative finger for certain readily perceived phenomena, but not a precise defining term.