

to understand a little what she is trying to do and what she is in my own opinion doing.

My own thought in the matter is something like this—that every artist working with words as his medium must at times be profoundly irritated by what seems the limitations of his medium. What things does he not wish to create with words. There is the mind of the reader before him and he would like to create in that reader's mind a whole new world of sensations, or rather one might better say he would like to call back into life all of the dead and sleeping senses.

There is a thing one might call 'the extension of the province of his art' one wants to achieve. One works with words and one would like words that have a taste on the lips, that have a perfume to the nostrils, rattling words one can throw into a box and shake, making a sharp jingling sound, words that when seen on the printed page have a distinct arresting effect upon the eye, words that when they jump out from under the pen one may feel with the fingers as one might caress the cheeks of his beloved.

And what I think is that these books of Gertrude Stein's do in a very real sense recreate life in words.

We writers are, you see, all in such a hurry. There are such grand things we must do. For one thing the Great American Novel must be written and there is the American or English Stage that must be uplifted by our very important contributions, to say nothing of the epic poems, sonnets to my lady's eyes and what not. We are all busy getting these grand and important thoughts and emotions into the pages of printed books.

And in the meantime the little words, that are the soldiers with which we great generals must make out conquests, are neglected.

There is a city of English and American words and it has been a neglected city. Strong broad-shouldered words, that should be marching across open fields under the blue sky, are clerking in little dusty drygoods stores, young virgin words are being allowed to consort with whores, learned words have been put to the ditch-diggers trade. Only yesterday I saw a word that once called a whole nation to arms serving in the mean capacity of advertising laundry soap.