

The Green Sheaf



“JUVENILES.”

IT was in the Provinces.

Everybody in the restaurant was looking at them, and they were looking at everybody in the restaurant.

“‘Jealousy is the essence of love,’ or ‘love is the essence of jealousy,’ isn’t it?” he said to her, running his fingers through his hair. “I read the part, too! Never mind; it runs all right, and the audience don’t stop to analyse.”

He was fat in the face, and carried off his forty years and his blue linen lay-down collar very well.

She was robed in black and fingered a string of coral beads, and she glanced furtively towards my table in displaying the curves of her ten-shillings-a-night throat; treating us all to a free rehearsal, as she sipped her expensive liqueur.

“I don’t see the rationale of it, do you? Give me two drops of Ibsen in two large penn’orths of Pinero, and I am content.”

They were puppets; clowns; and, as such, played to amuse the theatre-going public. What cared they about the improvement of public taste?

Actors are not the only mummers in this world, after all.

Bernhard Smith.