

**ARTICLES OF GENERAL INTEREST
FROM THE UNIVERSAL REGISTER OF
SHIPPING**

COOKERY

A Posset of Game Hens on a Small Salad of Quinces and Blood Bread. Offered by especial courtesy of the Duke of Ullswater, as made by the hand of his own personal chef, one Odrigo Slane, a Master of his Craft and lately the chief of cooks at Geesley Hall.

First get up a brace of good hens. Bossleys or Marmingets are best as to the thickness of their stout little legs and the sweetness of their juices. Draw, pluck and quarter the little birds and leave over the livers and kidneys in a pottle. Next do take up the meats and pull their bones forth. Take these bones and seep them in a pot of good water over a lively fire. Leave him to steep and from them make a broth which may be kept over for afters. Get the meat and dice him strong with a sharp knife and stew him upon the coals til the meat be tender and pull him with a fork. Take the fat and run him loose in a hot pan, letting in bay leafs and six corns of pepper. If the posset is to be a dessert course, it is as good to add three scrolls of cinamon and perhaps enough juniper berries to fill a small spoon. Let the fat render and crush in flakes of salt enough to flavour the whole of the meat. Press the the torn meat into a possetting jar and press amongst them the leaves and scrolls of herbage and spice as have been run in the panned fats. Run the fats atop the meat and let them settle.

– Take good quinces and peel them, pulling forth the hearts pieces and seeds. Set these and get forth sound handfuls of silver beets' leaves, sufficient to one hand for each of these small birds. Tear these tightly and heap in a bowl. Crush over them a lemon's juice and an orange's juice, or a candied orange's pieces were the fresh pieces not to be had. Take a thin slice through these quartered quinces and cast these among the leaves of beets. Put into the centre of the bowl the pottaging jar and place atop him a little spoon for taking up the pottage.

– Lay into a stout and well singing pan full two cups of blood from a calf or lamb. Sear him cast

through dry crumbs of a soft bread, let them to sponge upon the blood and rown with salt and oil of olives. As the blood is sopped up thus roll the pan and put on more oil and the crushed stuff of two cloves of fresh garlic. Take out the apn from the heat and cast the morsels of blood bread over the salad.

– Flake upon the whole salad little pieces of a sour cheese. Take up the pottage and salad entire in the bowl and serve him forth.

ARTS

***AN EXPOSITION of THE WORKS ON
PAPER of M. PIET DENNINGS, late of
LIESZT AND LEMONS HILL, STILL
EXTANT IN THE COLLECTIONS OF THE
FOUNDATIONS AND PRIVATE
GALLERIES OF THE QUEENS CHAIN.***

Reviewed by Mme. Eleth Dorffen, of Tert-Nisoisse.

The present exposition at Onsoirs House Museum, Viette Nisoisse, showing until Autumn 3rd, provides a rare chance to see, in the true original, a remarkable body of Dennings' extraordinary oeuvre. So often glimpsed only piecemeal and in underwhelming reproduction, the cumulative effect witnessed herein is a curative to the stultifying drowsiness which has fallen over our critical inquiry and appraisements of the great craftsman as time and war have stolen more of his creations from the public awareness and taste and style have drifted towards decadences wholly at odds with the sublimity of the elder craftspeople's work.

– Bringing together four hundred and thirty-eight leaves, fully half of Denning's paper works still known to exist, this exposition arranged by the Willem Dorsey, Landsgrave Nissoinne, is the largest assembly of the artist's works to be collected in one place since the unforgettable presentation of the Folfleurs collection of his chalkings at the Perrywide Museum in 283. Herein prepare to witness Dennings' astonishing virtuosity in all the tools of the drawer's art, from scratching blade to goosequill redding chalk. Witness also the brut vigour and concentration of his compositions, so often

snipped and abased upon the printed page. These geometries deepen and complicate the felt life, erotic passions and spiritual wonder of the figures he captures. The breathless presentness of Dennings' papers is so persistent that even a full century from his death, they burst to full bloom before the dizzied observer.

– For the spectator of our present age, knowing Dennings only for his mannered late style and didactic works on commission to the foundations, which are so often, and so drily reproduced, one shock comes in the pure abandon and passion of these preparatory and private works. This quality of liveliness, gaiety and hunger in Dennings public work has oft been hidden away, behind scholarly blandness and careful toeing of various spiritual lines not much given to depiction of wild ecstasies. It is the truest argument of this incomparable exposition that the great Dennings, for that must be his appellation, now and forever, was, from his start as a precocious and ardent youth in provincial Lieszt until his quiet and impoverished death at sixty-four years in Lemon's Hill garret in 241, a true believer in the power of art to express the vividest emotions and to speak truly of matters of the most complex and passionate, secret soul.

***AN EDITION OF THE SO-CALLED
"GANTT LETTERS" OF M. WILBUR
DENTLEE, LATE OF FORTREES HOUSE,
GATHERED IN THEIR ENTIRETY FOR
THE FIRST TIME IN GENERAL
PUBLICATION***

The Gantt saga is one of the most extraordinary and strange in all the history of the 30s, that turbulent decade which brought the nation so close to its mortal ruin. For the younger reader, who has not yet had reason to hear the tale told, the principal facts attend on Gantt being not a person of the common type, but a sort of talking magical vole which a country gentleman claimed to have taken up residence in his estate. The gentleman in question was one M. Wilbur Dentlee, of Fortrees house in Estoc, who first wrote of the talking vole's arrival in a letter to this paper on the 3rd of Winter 231. It is a missive remarkable for its candour and its simplicity, running thus:

"Madams and Sir. He does not eat like other voles I have seen in the greenwood or any animal I have kept as a pet, being princely in his leaving of good foods to go cold and staley. He speaks often and it seems his only purpose in so doing is to goad me that our victuals are poor and ill - chosen. I think it very ill that he does not regard the troubles we go to in offering up choice morsels for his table or in keeping him from cats (we have many). I bring this to the public notice, that scholars and people of learning might be brought to my house to ascertain what manner of beast is he and whether his wit is alike to that of persons or mere contrivance and tricks as is practiced of beasts and dev ils. He gives his name as Gantt and says he is older than I or any other person living (and full four times as wise). He lives in a nest I have made of a teacup and dolls house beside the coal stove and vexes all the servants with peevishness and questions enough for any aged gentleman though he is but small as a fieldmouse. "

– The repsonse to this letter, as can be imagined, intermingled curiosity, ridicule and merriment .But Dentlee was a proud and influential person in his native Estoc, who told this tale widely and without shame. In so doing, he did succeed in drawing the interest of many learned persons and investigators to his house, as well as crowds of puzzled local rustics and fashionable seekers after sensation. From the day of Gantt's arrival, Dentlee began keeping copious books of observations which detailed his family's small guest and its curious habits in the minutest detail. Under one list entitle "offered up foods", from Summer 235, we find: "Tuesday: Taken up and no complaint were bananas and oranges, chocolate and biscuits made of oats and barley, sausage without skin, and good salted bacon- the fat part left untoucht". Such lists also exist for "garments nibbled at", "things stolen from servants", "secrets shared", and "languages spoken in my company and that of others". This final list also tells us something of Gantt's temperament, as

well as his learning: "Rhench, spoken like a Rhencher, Chanchennois perfectly, Da Ren but only understanding and not speaking, and a few words of Kistchichette (all curses and most vulgar)".

– The vole seems to have been seen only by trusted members of the family and servants, invisible always to those who doubted his presence; in this respect he seems entirely alike to denizens of the blessed wood, who reward disbelief with silence and credulity with purported miracles. Perhaps as a consequence of this invisibility, the common view of Gantt's strangeness and prodigiousness grew with wider telling and often out of all proportion with the creature's diminutive stature. As the story of the talking vole filtered down from the letters pages of the journals to be taken up by the quills of pennyfright authors and be shouted in the booths of piemen and puppeteers, it became scarcely recognisable; the common literature of the late 30s is littered with a veritable genre of so-called "Gannt Frights", plots which invariably concerned a sort of marsh demon or overgrown devils egg which took the form of a giant man-mole or man-weasel who butchered young boys and lived in the cellars of a great house whose evil master connived in the beast's wickedness. It need scarce be said that whatever Gantt's appreciation for low curses, there exists no record of him as a personophagist.

– The most famous and well-remembered of the sojourners among wonders who came to visit and inspect the house for signs of the prodigious Gantt was Mme. Cicely Livy-Casell. Mme. Livy-Casell, forever "Cix" to her admirers, was an inimitable columnist for the common press who made it her business to seek out marvels and frauds, writing of with a keen eye for the eccentric and a love of the inexplicable and strange. Strangely enough for one so discerning, her visits to Fortrees over a period of six years did not yield a singular answer in her mind as to the reality or otherwise of the strange visitor. The evidence she reported seemed rather to lean on disproof than belief: one specimen of the beast's fur which she was offered for inspection was shown by duoscope to be doghairs, and the many small tooth marks in the foods she was given as evidence of Gantt's breakfasting of a

morning were as a whole of a pattern to be explained by the action of mice. Despite these moments of frankly rank imposture, Mme. Livy-Casell forever demurred as to the truth or otherwise of the legend of Gantt, offering up no substantive proof, but a host of charming anecdotes of servants going in awe of "a mighty earthbound spirit in the slightest of forms and with the meanest of minds". Perhaps in this case, Mme. Livy-Cassel's love of humorous wonders went ahead, while her love of harsh exposures followed in train.

– This enduring affection, if not outright credulity, for the legend of Gantt in so famous a journaliste may have done much to protect the eccentric Dentlee in one of the harshest moments in this otherwise jolly history. This was of course the commission of inspection into Dentlee's sanity which was arranged by his nephew and heir, Collin Braystrete, in 239, when the young man made public statements to the effect that his uncle's belief in a talking vole made him "all-crackt in the pate" and "too addled to know a mouse let alone to abide in monies or properties". A huge swell of popular affection for Dentlee attended on this commission, as many of his neighbours treasured the old man's diverting letters on the odd habits and philosophical ramblings of his mysterious guest. Against Braystrete's accusation, fully four dozen suits of support and two briefs of friendship by officers under the crown were presented to the examining magistrate to argue Dentlee's capacity.

– Following a finding that the old man was sane, Dentlee took a suit in the Estoc courts of contest for defamation against Braystrete, who was ordered to pay his uncle twelve hundred shillings for damage to reputation and pernicious pursuit of writs. Unsurprisingly, one of Dentlee's first actions after receiving a favourable judgement was to disinherit the boy and to send forth a pamphlet "Authored by the sagacious Gantt on the wickedness and moral insufficiency of the younger generation". It is highly recommended to any among the readership with an appreciation for acute wit and multilingual swearing.

– This collection brings together for the first

time not only the letters to this paper and other journals which Dentlee sent from Gantt's arrival until his own death twenty-two years later, but also letters between the old man and his intimates, many of whom were luminaries of that stunning age. Included among his correspondents are M. Wilhuf Toxe, Mme. Livy-Cassel, Mlle. Hutchkiste and Lance Bombardier E. R. Ghernley. The collection is presented in elegant type and with copious margins for annotation. I could scarce recommend it more highly.