**Sherlock Holmes** is a good detective melodrama. This characterization of Mr. Gillette's very successful play seems to the Theatregoer, if he may define his term, criticism enough.

Probably Dr. Doyle's stories, and certainly the play of *Sherlock Holmes*, aimed merely at diversion. As such, book and play are effective. No incident or character, however wildly improbable, is omitted from the stage to give the Theatregoer every delicious shudder possible or conceivable. The breaking of safes and the shrieking of a tortured woman; the underground headquarters of crime, with dim light and clanking chains; victims bound and thrust behind doors fastened to by gleaming knives; plentiful showing of revolvers; and a crashing climax—all this farrago is performed with due melodramatic solemnity by the characters—by servants supernaturally observant and discreet; by Mr. Larrabee, swaggering and burlesquely brutal; by the muffled Moriarty, "Napoleon of crime"; and by the astute detective in all his affectation and languid indifference of manner. If you are not diverted by *Sherlock Holmes*, that proves either that you can't enjoy melodrama as melodrama, or that you haven't a sense of the ludicrous.

In Madam Duse's plays of the first week I confess to some disappointment, very probably because I am unfamiliar with spoken Italian. That she has much personal grace and charm is as undoubted as is the wonderfully simple effect of truthfulness her acting, seemingly without effort, produces. But the plays are not only morbidly decadent but, as plays, without movement or conclusiveness. Long speeches by the different characters give, perhaps, beautiful poetic pictures, but land the drama nowhere in the end. I have not yet seen the play which is probably the best in Madam Duse's repertoire, *Francesca da Rimini*, d'Annunzio's terribly brutal drama of hate, based on Dante's terribly pitiful drama of sinful love in the fifth canto of the "Inferno."

**Extracts**

From "The Diary of a Saint," by Arlo Bates.

"What you cannot at need sacrifice nobly, you are not worthy to possess."

"Prayer-meetings seem to be a good deal like salt in the boy's definition of something that makes food taste bad if you don't put it on; prayer-meetings make churchgoers uneasy if they do not go."

"Meekness may be a Christian virtue; but over-meekness is a poor quality for one who has the bringing up of a real, wide-awake, headstrong boy."

"Death is terrible only when we think of ourselves who are left behind, not when we think of those who go. Life is a thing so beautiful that it may be sad to think of them as deprived of it; but the more beautiful it is, the more I am assured that whatever power made the earth must be able to make something better."

"Sin is not what one actually does, but is the proportion between deeds and opportunities."

"Every human being really makes a deity for himself, and the difference between believers and unbelievers is whether they can allow the Church to give a name to the god a man has himself created."

"Any woman wants to marry the man she likes best, and, barring him, she'd take up with the man who likes her best."

"There is nothing so pleasant as a disagreeable duty conscientiously escaped."

"Saintship used to be won by making life as disagreeable as possible for one's self; but nowadays life is made sufficiently hard by others."

"Women are so made that they must have a religion, and men so constituted as to take the greatest possible satisfaction in inventing one."

"The advice of women is wise often, and yet more often it is comforting; but it has somehow not the conclusiveness of the decision of a sensible man."

"If we could be as firm with ourselves as we are with other people, what an improvement it would be."

"Society and morality have so fenced us about and so guarded us that we have rather to try to get outside than to struggle to keep in."

"In biblical times, dancing before the Lord was a legitimate form of worship; it is almost a pity that sleeping before the Lord cannot be put among proper religious observances."