

C. LÉANDRE

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tune to be present does not need to be reminded of the almost hypnotic power, the intensity of word and gesture with which this marvellous woman made her audience lose sight of realities and conjured up another world before their mind's eye. Her old program led them into the poorest quarters of Paris, to La Villette and on the heights of Montmartre.

The characters peculiar to the turn of the century came to life again and not one rang false. They were all true to life—the criminal, the daughter of joy, the vivandière, the little beggar children of the outcasts, the most wretched creatures of darkest Paris. They had all lived, loved and suffered there and their pitiful lives were unrolled in this little hall and pulsed with fire and passion, although the originals long since lay beneath the mould. They spoke their own jargon, a few words, pregnant and vital which Aristide Bruant had overheard and committed to paper.

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In the April number of this magazine, on the occasion of a review of Toulouse-Lautrec's poster work, an attempt was made to characterize this period at the turn of the century in a few strokes—that extraordinary age which saw the heights of Montmartre peopled by the most singular mixture of artists and proletariat. Yvette Guilbert also belonged to this group. Innumerable sketches, portraits, etchings of her came into existence, she was almost a focus to which everything was drawn, so well known that Lautrec could permit himself to draw her without a head, only her lean figure with the long black gloves, when he designed the invitations for her Chanson recital in the Divan Japonais (see April No., p. 29). The two other posters designed for her at this time were by Théophile Alexandre Steinlen and Charles Léandre. The last picture shows the whole troupe, with whom she went on tour for a time. Yvette Guilbert, eternally young, has also survived her friend Steinlen, who died in 1923. She towers above our age like a monumentum aere perennius.

Translated by E. T. Scheffauer