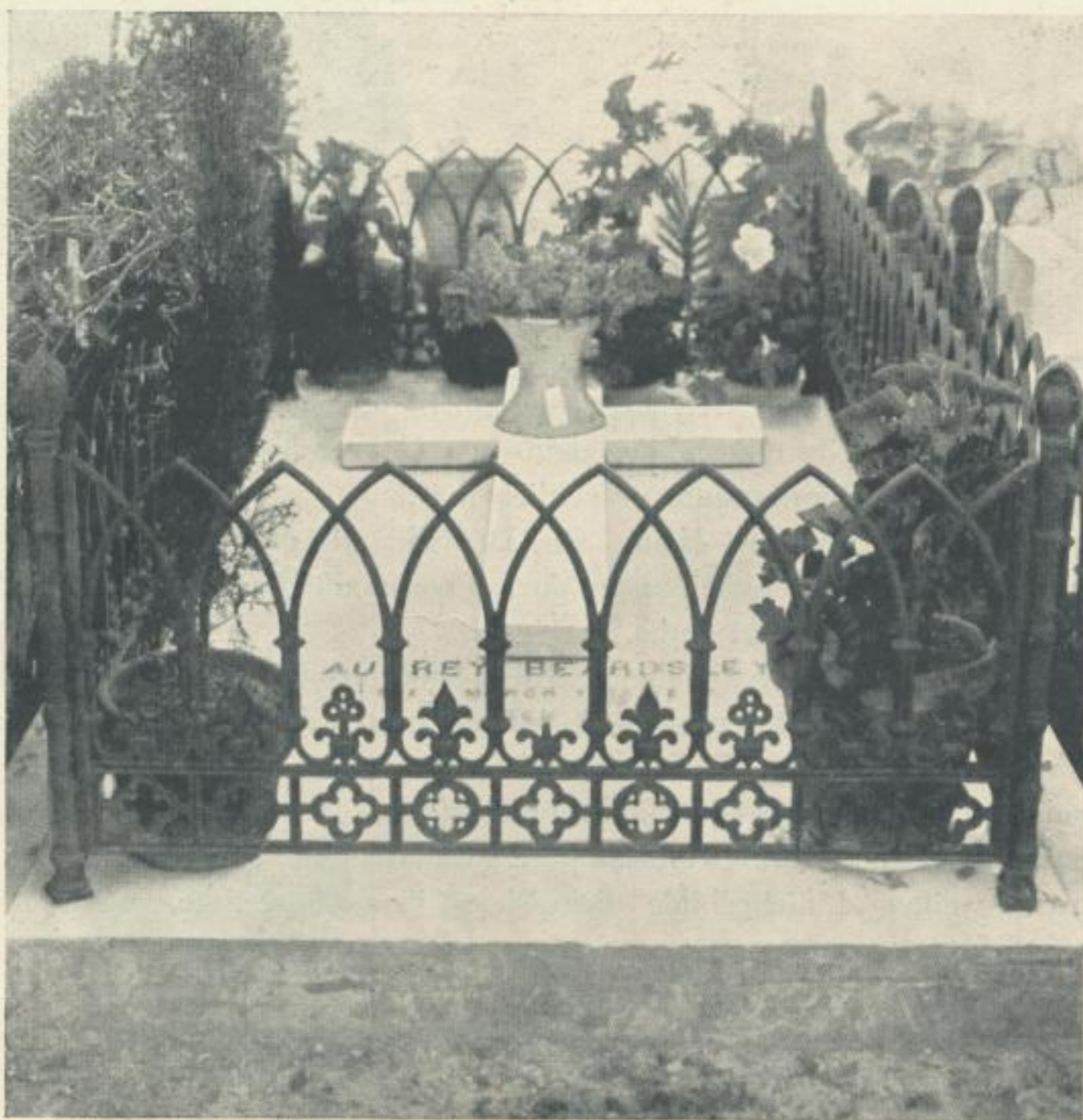


graphic process of reproduction despised and boycotted by collectors. With unexampled energy he adapted his method of drawing to the line engraving, invented new refinements which no one could suppose that common zinc would be able to cope with. To be sure he complained continually of faults in the engraving of his reproductions, which could not be exact enough to please him, yet he remained faithful to the end almost without exception to the line cliché which incorporated for him an honest and faultless matrix for book-printing free of the lines that often disfigure the autotype.

Beardsley, solitary and eccentric, was yet the first modern black and white artist to recognize the shifting of grades brought about by the advent of technique; acting out of deepest inward conviction he confided his personal and individual work to the new collectivistic technique. Zinc was inexpensive and could adapt itself, if necessary, to the demands of mass production and the rotary press. It was a stroke of genius on Beardsley's part that he forced the world around him, robustly bent upon profits, to take up his art against its will; art which must seem exaggerated if not perverse to the average citizen of his day. But the strictly limited aesthetes ranged around Sir Parchment Vellum rightly felt themselves threatened in their lily-like exclusiveness.

Long after Beardsley another artist, also a genius in his own sphere, entrusted the reproduction of his Thespian mimic art entirely to the photographic craftsman—Charlie Chaplin. When the cinematograph wantonly broke down its divinely-ordained barriers—to the detriment of art and trade alike—when the living photograph dared to give itself a voice, Chaplin accepted the logical consequence and retired from the scene.

That the youthful George Grosz, as he reveals in his "Reminiscences" should have been "left cold by the real Aubrey Beardsley" whereas he "admired Julius Klinger's modern posters and was almost led to copy their Aubrey Beardsley patterns" says nothing against Beardsley.



*Das Grab in Mentone*

*The grave in Mentone*

