

The Heart in Exile : a new Novel on the homosexual theme by Rodney Garland

Autor(en): **Young, R.**

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than, when men are possessed of great influence by their wealth, power, and resources, to procure other things which are bought by money - horses, slaves, rich apparel, costly vases - and not to procure friends, the most valuable and fairest furniture of life?» And yet, he continues, «every man can tell how many goats or sheep he possesses, but not how many friends.» In the choice, moreover, of a dog or of a horse, we exercise the greatest care: we inquire into its pedigree, its training and character, and yet we too often leave the selection of our friends, which is of infinitely greater importance — by whom our whole life will be more or less influenced either for good or evil — almost to chance.

Much certainly of the happiness and purity of your lives depends on our making a wise choice of our companions and friends. If badly chosen they will inevitably drag us down; if well they will raise us up. Yet many people seem to trust in this matter to the chapter of accident. It is well and right, indeed, to be courteous and considerate to every one with whom we are brought into contact, but to choose them as real friends is another matter. Some seem to make a man a friend, or try to do so, because he is in the same business, travels on the same line of railway, or for some other trivial reason. There cannot be a greater mistake. These are only, in the words of Plutarch «the idols and images of friendship.»

(Avebury: «The Pleasures of Life».)

«Of course the United States are not the land of honey and tolerance. And if we are now in the category of dope-addicts I'd say things are looking very fine for us. Only ten years ago we were considered to be among the criminally insane! In ten more years they may decide we're harmless entirely like idiots and morons!

My best wishes to the Swiss editor and my prayers for his enterprise's continued success.»

(From the letter of an American friend.)

The Heart in Exile

a new Novel on the homosexual theme by Rodney Garland

It is with very great pleasure that we make readers of «Der Kreis» acquainted with an exceptionally good new novel on the homosexual theme. It is Rodney Garland's «The Heart in Exile», (W. H. Allen and Co., London, 12/6 sh.) Among the ever increasing number of fiction dealing with the same theme this book ranks very high indeed, both in its literary quality and the message it conveys. The story of the book, told with nearly all the tense excitement of a detective story, runs briefly as follows: a London doctor is asked by a young woman to try and find out why her fiancé has to all appearances committed suicide. This request meets the doctor on an unexpected level. Without the young woman knowing anything about it, the dead man and the doctor had been lovers, some ten years earlier, when they had both been students. The doctor

feels himself more than emotionally involved: the police had visited the dead man's flat. Following not very promising clues, the most important of them being a photograph of a good-looking young worker, he begins to unravel the mystery surrounding the death of his former friend. On this journey into the past, not only of his friend's, but of his own as well, he comes once more into close touch with what the author calls London's «Underground». One clue leads him to another until the reasons for the suicide of his former friend are completely cleared up. This chain of events forms one part of the novel, beginning and ending — as so many novels on the homosexual theme do — with a suicide. But closely connected with and interwoven into this story is a second one, i. e. the development of a friendship between the doctor and a male nurse, whom he has taken into his house to act as his receptionist and housekeeper. And it is the development of this relation, leading for once to a well reasoned out happy conclusion, which brings to this novel the note of hope missing in practically all similar books. But apart from these two stories on which the plot of the novel is built, there is a third and perhaps the most important element in this book. Written as it is in the first person singular, the author uses the figure of the doctor as his protagonist to voice his opinions on an immensely wide range of questions connected with and relating to homosexuality. And it is in those statements that perhaps the greatest value of this book is embedded. No one interested in this problem will fail to gain considerably by reading these 'comments' of *The Heart in Exile*, not the least remarkable for its excellent portrayal of homosexual men of all kinds, among them the receptionist Terry, one of the most lovable characters one has met for a long time in a book of this kind — a man as inspiring as Walter Baxter's Private Anson or James Barr's Tim Danelaw. By depicting his characters in the way the author does he evades successfully the danger of cheap sentimentality as well as the coarseness, both so often found especially in American novels on the same theme.

«The Heart in Exile» is decidedly a book to be wholly recommended for its inherent qualities as well as for the note of human understanding it strikes so perfectly.

R. Young.

From «The Heart in Exile»

by Rodney Garland

On the way to Islington I told Ron that he could come to see me any time he was in trouble, and I gave him my card. But I didn't expect him to return; he would probably be too shy. I also told him he must try to pull himself together. I vaguely felt I was treating him a little shabbily, just pushing him out after he'd given me the information I wanted, but there was something else on my mind.

It was nearly two o'clock in the morning when I drove up to the house. I was surprised to see the light in Terry's window. Why wasn't he