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THE ITALIAN FUTURISTS

swollen head; in which everybody is in the habit of being consulted by the governors of the country on matters concerning which he is perfectly well aware that he knows nothing; in which, finally, every Tom, Dick and Harry is upheld and confirmed in his insolent and outrageous belief that the world revolves around him and his pestilential personality.

For even if the Futurists reply that they care not a fig for what we can or cannot read from their arbitrary symbolism, and that they mean their symbolic pictures simply as decorative panels to which they do not desire to give arbitrary connotations, but simply arbitrary titles for the sake of identification alone, I reply in the teeth of this plausible subterfuge that in that case they simply belong to the Whistlerites and their kin, who are beneath content or substance in a picture, and who lay all their power in matters of technique and form alone, of which decoration is merely a part.

To some who have ignored the Futurists, or who urge that they should be ignored, all this may seem exaggerated attention, excessive seriousness lavished upon a kind of art-product that ill deserves either. This may or may not be so; but in any case, the Futurists made sufficient noise and sufficient boasts in our midst for us to ask ourselves seriously whether there were any substance—any truth in their many proud claims. If there had been nothing more than the usual brazen note of triumph in their music, we might simply have put our fingers to our ears until they had passed by, knowing full well that they constituted simply one more sensational variety of this catch-penny age, and that they differed in other varieties only in non-essentials.

But there were two things about them which compelled attention—more particularly in my case, as I have felt