

**GEORGE
DU MAURIER**

A collage of colorful sticky notes, a tablet with a stylus, and a notebook with sketches. The sticky notes are in various colors like blue, yellow, orange, red, and purple. The tablet shows a stylus pointing at a drawing of a face with colorful hair. The notebook has sketches of a face and some text.

**SOCIAL
PICTORIAL
SATIRE**

George Du Maurier

Social Pictorial Satire

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It is my purpose to speak of the craft to which I have devoted the best years of my life, the craft of portraying, by means of little pen-and-ink strokes, lines, and scratches, a small portion of the world in which we live; such social and domestic incidents as lend themselves to humorous or satirical treatment; the illustrated criticism of life, of the life of our time and country, in its lighter aspects.

The fact that I have spent so many years in the practice of this craft does not of itself, I am well aware, entitle me to lay down the law about it; the mere exercise of an art so patent to all, so easily understood of the people, does not give one any special insight into its simple mysteries, beyond a certain perception and appreciation of the technical means by which it is produced—unless one is gifted with the critical faculty, a gift apart, to the possession of which I make no claim.

There are two kinds of critics of such work as ours. First there is the wide public for whom we work and by whom we

are paid; "who lives to please must please to live"; and who lives by drawing for a comic periodical must manage to please the greater number. The judgment of this critic, though often sound, is not infallible; but his verdict for the time being is final, and by it we, who live by our wits and from hand to mouth, must either stand or fall.

The other critic is the expert, our fellow-craftsman, who has learned by initiation, apprenticeship, and long practice the simple secrets of our common trade. He is not quite infallible either, and is apt to concern himself more about the manner than the matter of our performance; nor is he of immediate importance, since with the public on our side we can do without him for a while, and flourish like a green bay-tree in spite of his artistic disapproval of our work; but he is not to be despised, for he is some years in advance of that other critic, the public, who may, and probably will, come round to his way of thinking in time.

The first of these two critics is typified by Molière's famous cook, who must have been a singularly honest, independent, and intelligent person, since he chose in all cases to abide by her decision, and not with an altogether unsatisfactory result to Mankind! Such cooks are not to be found in these days—certainly not in England; but he is an unlucky craftsman who does not possess some such natural critics in his family, his home, or near it—mother, sister, friend, wife, or child—who will look over his shoulder at his little sketch, and say:

"Tommy [or Papa, or Grandpapa, as the case may be], that person you've just drawn doesn't look quite natural,"
or: