

**THE COCKPIT;
ROMANTIC DRAMA
IN THREE ACTS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649271061

The cockpit; romantic drama in three acts by Israel Zangwill

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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ISRAEL ZANGWILL

**THE COCKPIT;
ROMANTIC DRAMA
IN THREE ACTS**

THE COCKPIT

Romantic Drama in Three Acts

By
ISRAEL ZANGWILL

THE WAR GOD
PLASTER SAINTS
CHOSEN PEOPLE
GHETTO COMEDIES
GHETTO TRAGEDIES
ITALIAN FANTASIES
THE MELTING POT
THE NEXT RELIGION
JINNY, THE CARRIER
THE VOICE OF JERUSALEM
THE KING OF SCHNORRERS
CHILDREN OF THE GHETTO
THE WORLD AND THE JEW
THE WAR FOR THE WORLD
THE PRINCIPLE OF NATIONALITIES

THE COCKPIT

Romantic Drama in Three Acts

BY

ISRAEL ZANGWILL

New York

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

1921

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Set up and electrotyped. Published November, 1921.

Printed in the United States of America

TO ALFRED SUTRO

MY DEAR ALFRED,

Your inspiring criticism and commendation of this play while it was still plastic has suggested to me to dedicate it to our old friendship. That friendship was already well and truly laid before "The Walls of Jericho" rose, and it was cemented by holidays together in Europe ere, caught in the coil of passports, visas and commerce-strangling currencies, the inhabitants of that unhappy Continent had turned into a mutual irritation society. The multiplication of "Sovereign States" has intensified the old plague of Custom Houses, and on the eve of a fresh journey across the Channel, I think with horror of the swarms of able-bodied varlets, waiting, in fancy costumes, at every frontier, to turn me out of my train in the middle of the night in any weather, when they ought to be at work reconstructing the Continent of which we are all citizens.

For what, in effect, does one find even in the heart of "The Cockpit"? Peasant populations toiling from dawn to darkness, the women following the men to the fields, with distaffs on their backs, and their children tugging at their skirts, and all for a crust dipped in soup, a song, a folk-tale, or the smile in a baby's eyes. It is hard to tell one people from another. I have not yet learnt what has happened in Valdania or

Bosnavina since I dropped the curtain on these quarrelsome countries, but of one thing I am certain—that their individuals are intermarrying. If the politicians would only leave it alone, "The Cockpit," linked as never before by railways, telegraphs, cinematographs and aeroplanes, would become of itself "The Melting Pot."

Curiously enough, this pendant to my play on that theme was written near Geneva while the League of Nations was in session—in the Switzerland whose French, German and Italian provinces offer a working model and prophetic emblem of a saner Europe—and it receives its last touches on the eve of the Washington Conference, which provides our war-worn humanity with a fresh spurt of hope. One recalls that it was Abraham Lincoln who said of his countrymen: "We shall nobly save or meanly lose the last great hope of earth."

But I am forgetting that for the reader the curtain has not yet risen. I hasten to efface myself, with the perhaps superfluous assurance that in accepting the dedication of this play, you, dear Alfred, are in no way committed to its vision or analysis of the factors of "The Cockpit."

Believe me in admiration and affection,

Yours sincerely,

ISRAEL ZANGWILL.

October, 1921.

"There is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. . . . Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues have they used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood. Destruction and misery are in their ways. And the way of peace have they not known."—*ST. PAUL: Epistle to the Romans.*

"He who chooses to avenge wrong with hatred is assuredly wretched, but he who strives to conquer hatred with love fights his battle in joy and confidence; he withstands many as easily as one, and has very little need of fortune's aid. Those whom he vanquishes yield joyfully, not through failure, but through increase in their powers. Hatred, which is completely vanquished by love, passes into love."—*SPINOZA.*