

Posters by Cassandre [pseud.]

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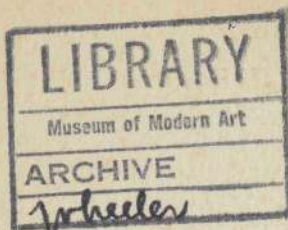
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POSTERS BY CASSANDRE

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART



PLEASE RETURN TO OFFICE OF
MONROE WHEELER

POSTERS BY

CASSANDRE

THE

MUSEUM OF

MODERN ART

NEW YORK

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The President and Trustees of the Museum of Modern Art wish to thank Mr. A. E. Gallatin and Thos. Cook & Son—Wagons-Lits Inc. for the loan of additional posters for the exhibition, and Mr. Howard Trafton, for his generous assistance. Special thanks are due the donors of the collection, who wish to remain anonymous.

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FOREWORD

Poster art is one of the most informal and ubiquitous of all the arts. Every bus, every subway, streetcar, elevated train presents it to the casual eye of the passerby. On the tops and sides of buildings, in banks, railroad stations, shops, travel agencies, and theatres, along the roadside when you motor, in the taxi as you rush, no matter where you look, a poster meets your eye. If there is an anti-noise campaign, posters urge you to keep quiet. If there is a war, posters inflame your patriotic zeal. There is no escaping them. They are, because of their influence on our lives, important.

The American poster has not kept pace with those of other nations in artistic quality, originality of form and variety of idea. Although England, Germany, Russia and Switzerland have produced interesting work, France, the birthplace of the modern poster, remains pre-eminent in contemporary poster design.

A. Mouron Cassandre lives in Paris. He was born in 1901 in Kharkov, Russia, but is a French citizen. Although he studied at the Académie Julian and the free schools of Paris, he considers himself self-taught. His first poster was published in 1922 and by 1923 his fame had been established with his Bucheron woodcutter. Since that time he has designed about eighty posters in which he has advertised with equal grace steamships, wines, shoes, horse races, railways, magazines, fairs, tennis matches, newspapers and airlines.

Poster advertising is possibly as old as painting. It is but a step from the propagandizing of ideas to the advertising of specific objects. Babylon, Egypt, Assyria, Pompeii and Rome all used sign boards, announcements, reliefs that in form were the precursors of the modern poster.

With the commercialization of the lithographic process, the poster as we know it today had its real beginning. Before that time placards had been illustrated with woodcuts. The first posters reproduced by lithography were black on white or colored paper. It was not until 1866 that three colors were used in the immensely successful series by Jules Chéret. Many artists have made designs for posters, just as many have done illustrations for books. The music

hall posters of Toulouse-Lautrec excited Paris, but he was first of all a painter and draughtsman who had turned to poster design. Bonnard and Manet in France, and Beardsley and Brangwyn in England designed posters, but these men also were primarily illustrators and painters. Cassandre follows the tradition of Chéret, Steinlen and Mucha. He is a poster artist and not an easel painter.

The work of a poster artist and that of an easel painter differ in many respects. To begin with, the poster artist must work to order. He has a certain product or event to advertise. In many instances he is given the exact contents of the picture he must compose and sometimes even the color is stipulated. In France an artist of Cassandre's prestige is less restricted. Although he still lacks the freedom of the non-commercial painter, he may, however, depict the subject given him in almost any manner his ingenuity and fancy may devise. Then, too, the poster artist must include in his design certain copy. This results in a combination of two arts: illustration and typography, a synthesis known familiarly as layout. In Cassandre's posters the copy is subordinated to the composition and often—though perhaps not often enough—is handled as an integral part of the design.

Cassandre utilizes many of the manners of modern painting. *Wagon Bar* (no. 18) for example, is an exercise in cubism. *Air Orient* (no. 14), *Fêtes de Paris* (no. 24), *Ecosse* (no. 8), *Maison Prunier* (no. 22) are expressed in the vocabulary of the surrealists. But these manners are used stylistically and as a means, not an end.

His methods of rendering are simple. Gouache is the general medium, applied conventionally or with paint gun or stipple brush. Cut-outs of paper, a form of stencil, are also used. By such uncomplicated means he exploits to the fullest the technical possibilities of the lithographic process. His colors are handled with freedom and originality. In many posters he uses five or six colors (*L'Intransigeant*, no. 5; *Wagons-Lits Cook*, no. 19); in others two are sufficient to give emphasis to his idea (*Lawn-Tennis*, no. 16; *Triplex*, no. 11).

It is impossible to separate Cassandre's ideas from their execution. He has a quality of spontaneous gaiety and wit which, combined with his refinement

of style and adroit handling of color, make of his posters an important esthetic whole.

Advertising in general is geared to the intelligence of a child in order to insure universal comprehension. In America the main emphases are apparent: Sex Appeal (young ladies of fabulous face and figure); Statistics (different but equally fabulous figures); Fear (will your best friend tell you?). A tooth-paste advertisement achieved widespread notoriety by combining all three. Beneath the picture of a beautiful girl (formula no. 1) appears the legend "4 out of 5 have it" (formula no. 2),—the implication (formula no. 3).

None of these formulae appear in Cassandre's designs. His railway and steamship posters do not tell you how many miles of rail the company has laid nor how many tons the steamship may draw. They merely give you the excitement and magic of travel (*Etoile du Nord*, no. 7; *Angleterre*, no. 20), or make more incredible the incredible size of an ocean liner (*Normandie*, no. 26). The pretty girl whose head floats over Paris in the *Fêtes de Paris* poster provides the only direct sex appeal in the exhibition. Perhaps his most widely known posters are those of the little *Dubonnet* man (nos. 15 and 23) who appears all over France in a great variety of sizes. His is the universal appeal of Mickey Mouse.

No matter how sophisticated Cassandre's esthetic vocabulary may be, his design captures the essence of the object he wishes to advertise and expresses it with directness and simplicity. A craftsman and an artist, he brings to the tradition of poster design both imagination and taste.

ERNESTINE M. FANTL

CATALOG

The medium of all the posters is gouache. Stipple brush, paint gun, montage and stencils are used in varying degrees in each design. All the posters are reproduced by lithographic process. An asterisk before a catalog number indicates that the item is illustrated by a plate which bears the same number.

DESIGNS FOR POSTERS

Numbers 1-4 are original gouaches on paper; only the first has been used.

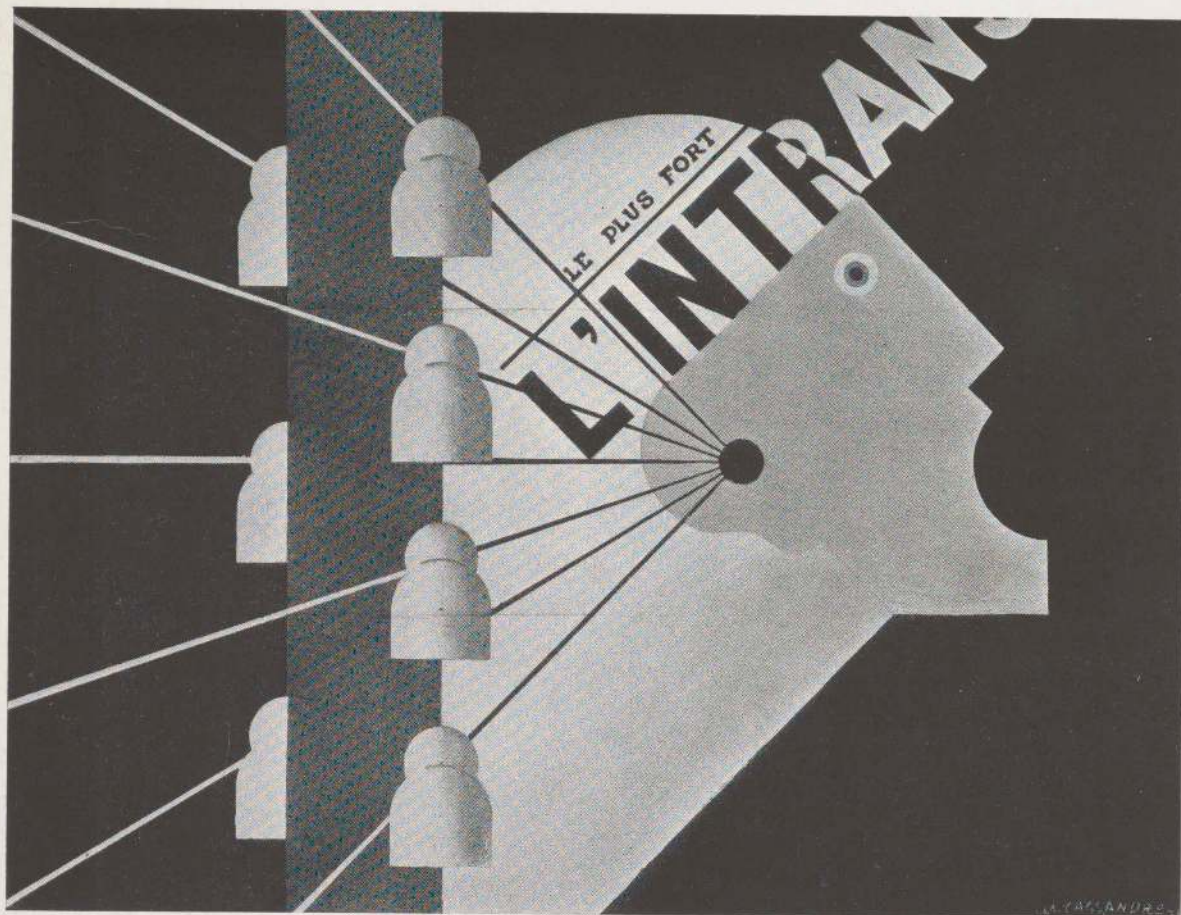
- | | |
|---|---|
| *1. " <i>L'Intransigeant</i> ," 1925 (newspaper)
15½ x 11⅞ inches
Collection A. E. Gallatin, New York | 3. <i>Cécil</i> , 1930 (shoes)
73 x 47¼ inches
Collection the artist, Paris |
| *2. " <i>Candide</i> ," 1930 (periodical)
63¼ x 47¼ inches
Collection the artist, Paris | 4. <i>Cuir</i> , 1934 (leather soles)
58 x 45 inches
Collection the artist, Paris |

POSTERS

- | | |
|---|--|
| 5. " <i>L'Intransigeant</i> ," 1925 (newspaper)
47¼ x 60 inches
Collection A. E. Gallatin, New York | *8. <i>Ecosse</i> , 1928 (travel)
40⅞ x 25 inches
Collection The Museum of Modern Art |
| 6. <i>Amsterdam</i> , 1927 (automobile show)
46¾ x 33¾ inches
Collection A. E. Gallatin, New York | 9. <i>L M S Rails</i> , 1928 (English railroad)
39⅞ x 23⅞ inches
Collection The Museum of Modern Art |
| *7. <i>Etoile du Nord</i> , 1927 (Pullman cars)
44 x 31¾ inches
Loaned through the courtesy of Thos.
Cook & Son—Wagons-Lits Inc. | 10. <i>Chemin de Fer du Nord</i> , 1929 (railway)
37½ x 22⅞ inches
Collection The Museum of Modern Art |

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>11. <i>Triplex</i>, 1930 (unbreakable glass)
 $47\frac{3}{8} \times 31\frac{3}{8}$ inches
 Collection The Museum of Modern Art</p> <p>12. <i>S. S. Côte d'Azur</i>, 1931 (travel)
 $37\frac{1}{4} \times 22\frac{1}{2}$ inches
 Collection The Museum of Modern Art</p> <p>13. <i>Grand-Sport</i>, 1931 (sport cap)
 $62\frac{1}{4} \times 46\frac{1}{4}$ inches
 Collection The Museum of Modern Art</p> <p>*14. <i>Air Orient</i>, 1932 (air line)
 $23\frac{3}{4} \times 20\frac{3}{4}$ inches
 Collection The Museum of Modern Art</p> <p>*15. <i>Dubonnet</i>, 1932 (apéritif)
 22 x 18 inches
 Collection The Museum of Modern Art</p> <p>*16. <i>Lawn-Tennis</i>, 1932 (Davis Cup Matches)
 $59\frac{1}{8} \times 44\frac{5}{8}$ inches
 Collection The Museum of Modern Art</p> <p>17. <i>Spidoléine</i>, 1932 (gasoline)
 $61\frac{1}{4} \times 45\frac{1}{4}$ inches
 Collection The Museum of Modern Art</p> <p>*18. <i>Wagon Bar</i>, 1932 (dining cars)
 $39\frac{5}{8} \times 29\frac{1}{2}$ inches
 Collection The Museum of Modern Art</p> | <p>19. <i>Wagons-Lits Cook</i>, 1933 (sleeping cars)
 62 x $46\frac{1}{4}$ inches
 Collection The Museum of Modern Art</p> <p>20. <i>Angleterre</i>, 1934 (travel)
 10 feet 7 inches x 7 feet $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches
 Collection The Museum of Modern Art</p> <p>21. <i>Grandes Fêtes de Paris</i>, 1934
 (exposition)
 $60\frac{1}{2} \times 44\frac{1}{4}$ inches
 Collection The Museum of Modern Art</p> <p>*22. <i>Maison Prunier</i>, 1934 (restaurant)
 59 x 38 inches
 Collection The Museum of Modern Art</p> <p>23. <i>Dubonnet</i>, 1935 (apéritif)
 10 feet 4 inches x 12 feet $10\frac{3}{4}$ inches
 Collection The Museum of Modern Art</p> <p>24. <i>Fêtes de Paris</i>, 1935 (exposition)
 $60\frac{1}{4} \times 44\frac{3}{8}$ inches
 Collection The Museum of Modern Art</p> <p>25. <i>Nicolas</i>, 1935 (wine merchant)
 13 feet 11 inches x 15 feet $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches
 Collection The Museum of Modern Art</p> <p>26. <i>Normandie</i>, 1935 (French Line)
 38 x $23\frac{1}{8}$ inches
 Collection The Museum of Modern Art</p> |
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The cover of this monograph has been especially designed by M. Cassandre.



CHEMIN DE FER DU NORD

A.M. CASSANDRE²⁷

THOUZARD - C. PARIS

ÉTOILE DU NORD

PULLMAN

DU DÉJEUNER AU DINER

PARIS — BRUXELLES — AMSTERDAM

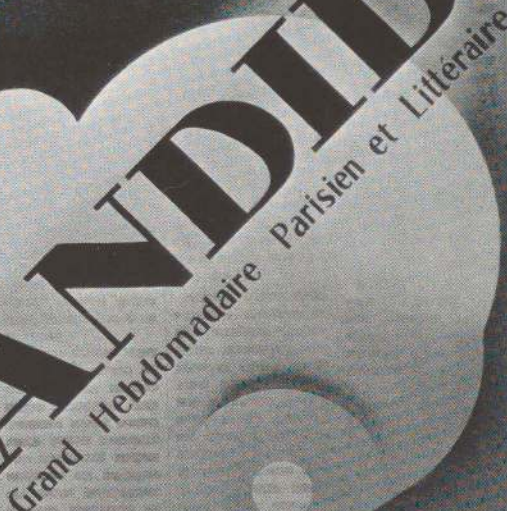
COMPAGNIE DES WAGONS-LITS

NEDERLANDSCHE SPOORWEGEN

SOCIÉTÉ NATIONALE DES CHEMINS DE FER BELGES



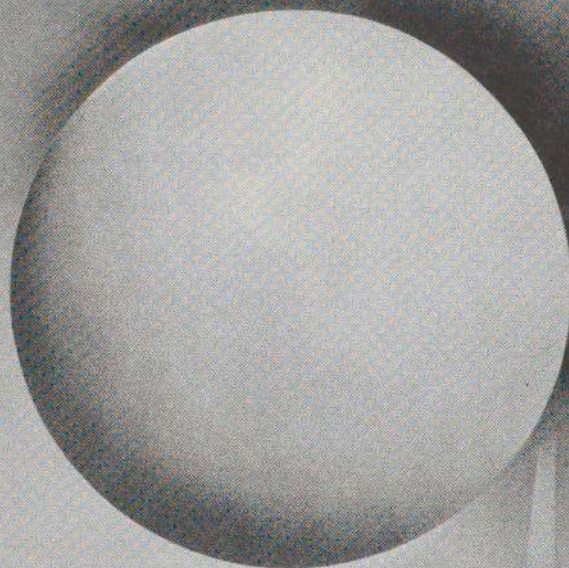
CANDIDE
Grand Hebdomadaire Parisien et Littéraire



ANDIP
Grand Hebdomadaire Parisien et Littéraire

S.F. FEDERATION FRANCAISE DE LAWN-TENNIS R.C.F.

A. M. CASSANDRE



DU 21 MAI AU 5 JUIN

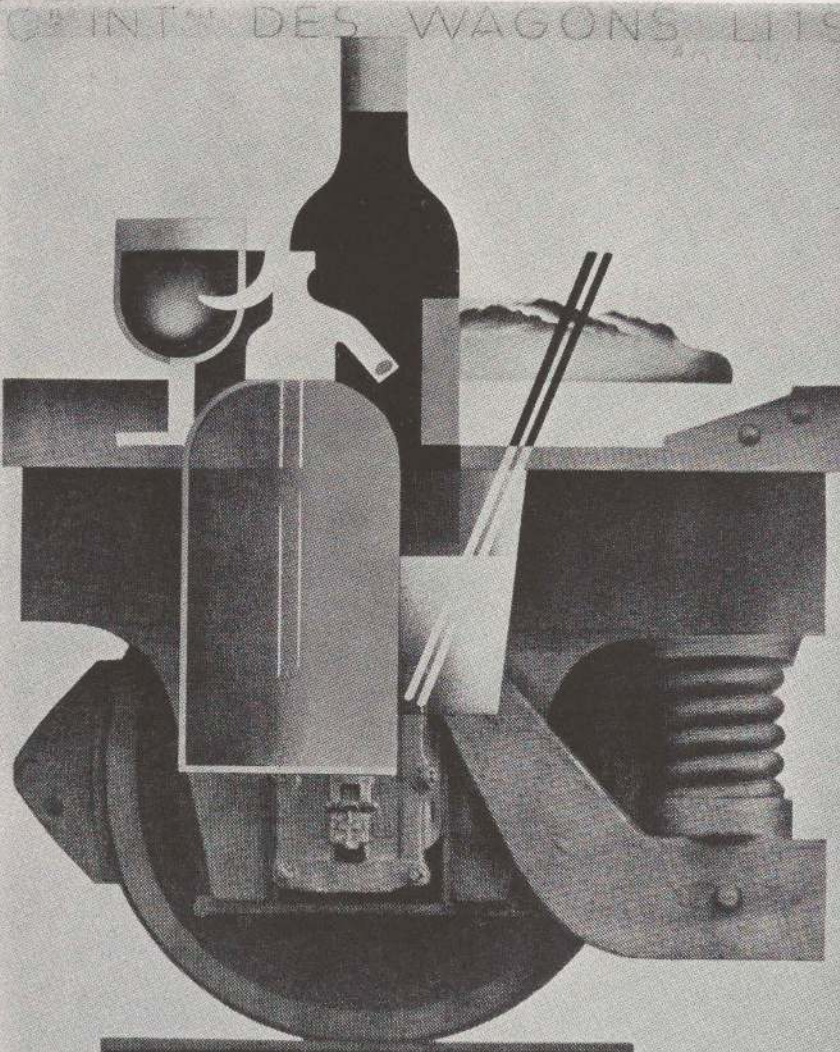
GRANDE QUINZAINÉ INTERNATIONALE DE LAWN-TENNIS

STADE ROLAND GARROS — PORTE D'AUTEUIL

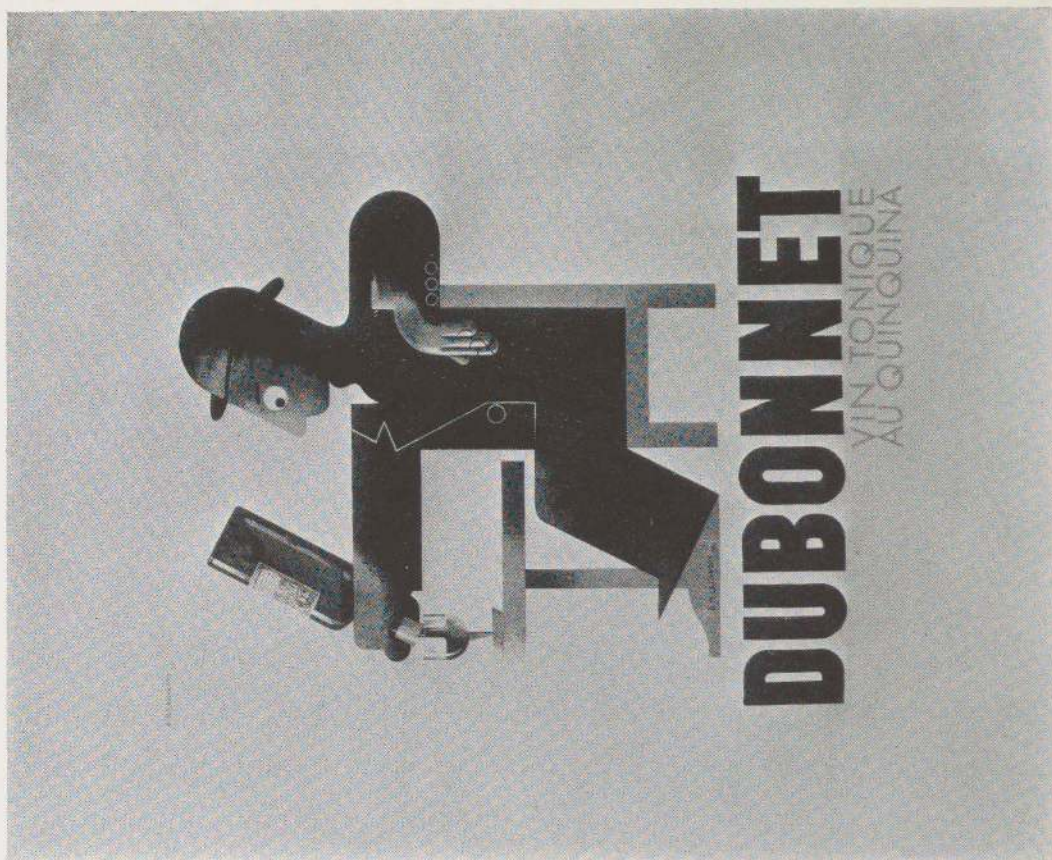
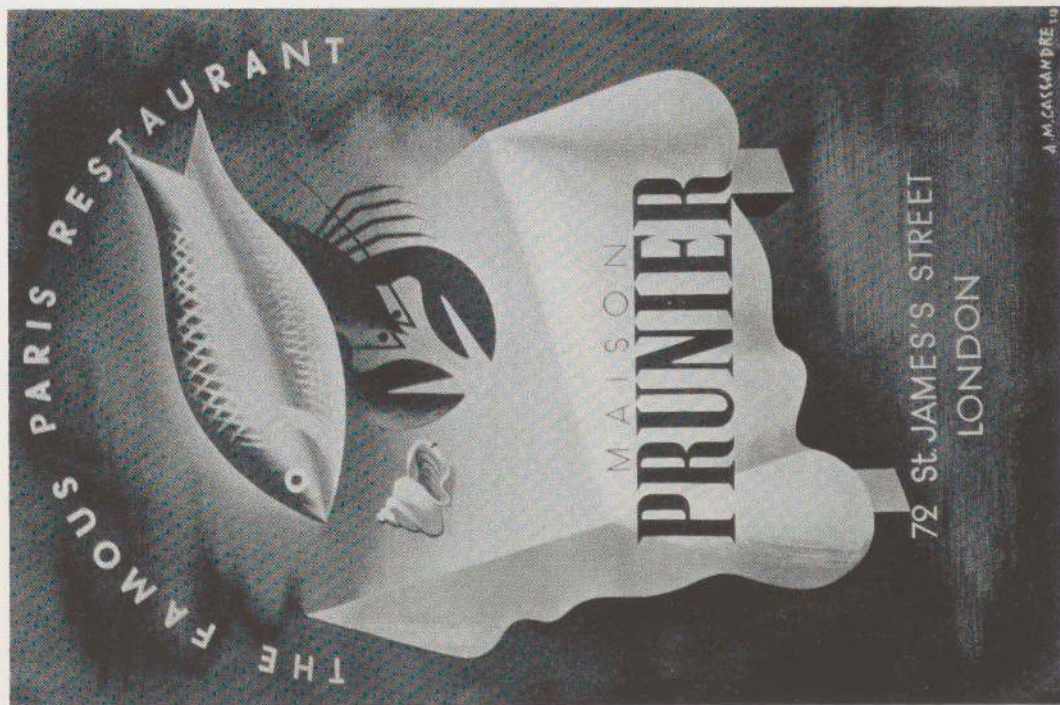


CENTRE DES WAGONS LITS

GRANDS RESTAURANTS DE CHEMINS DE FER FRANÇAIS

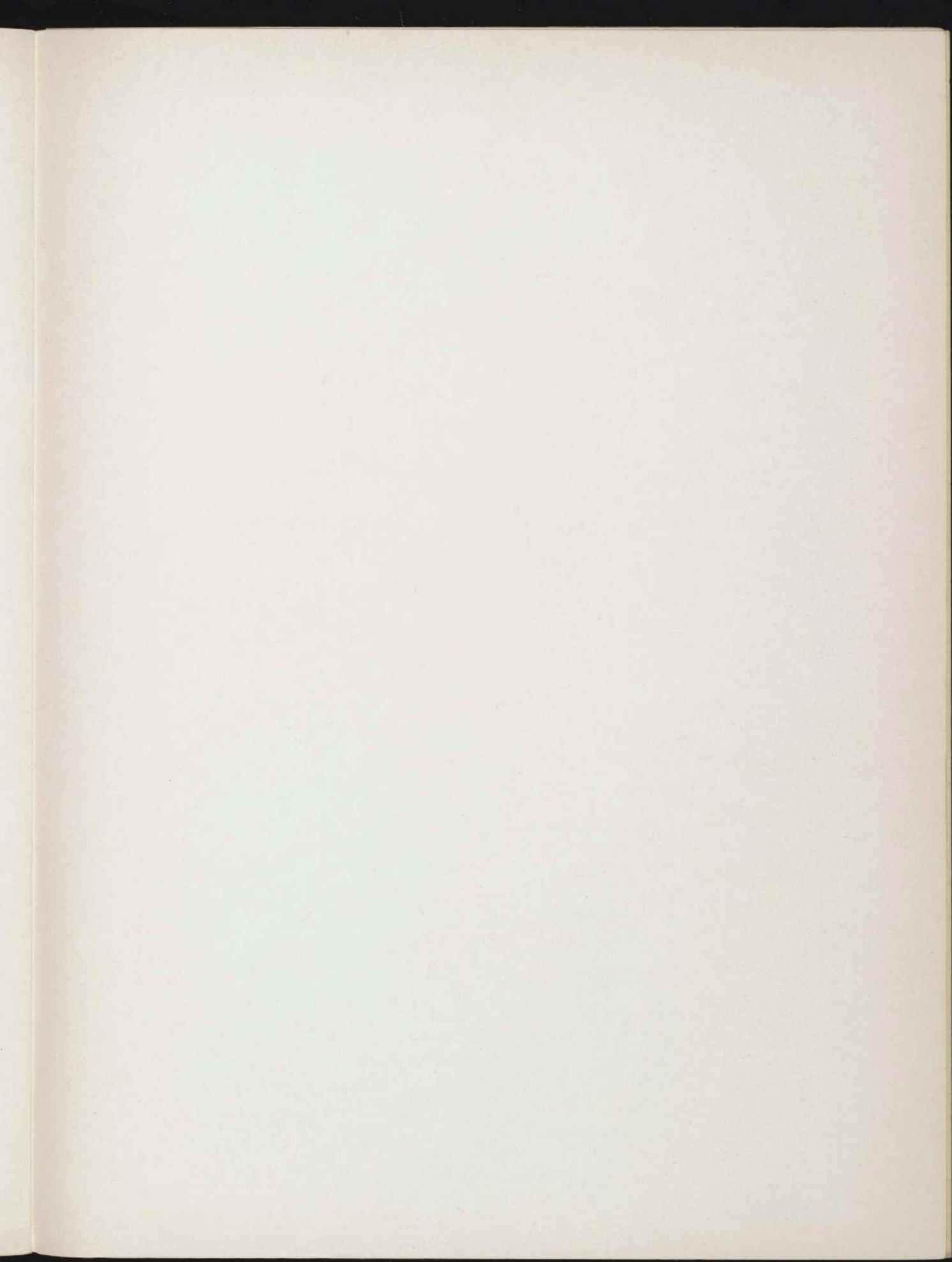


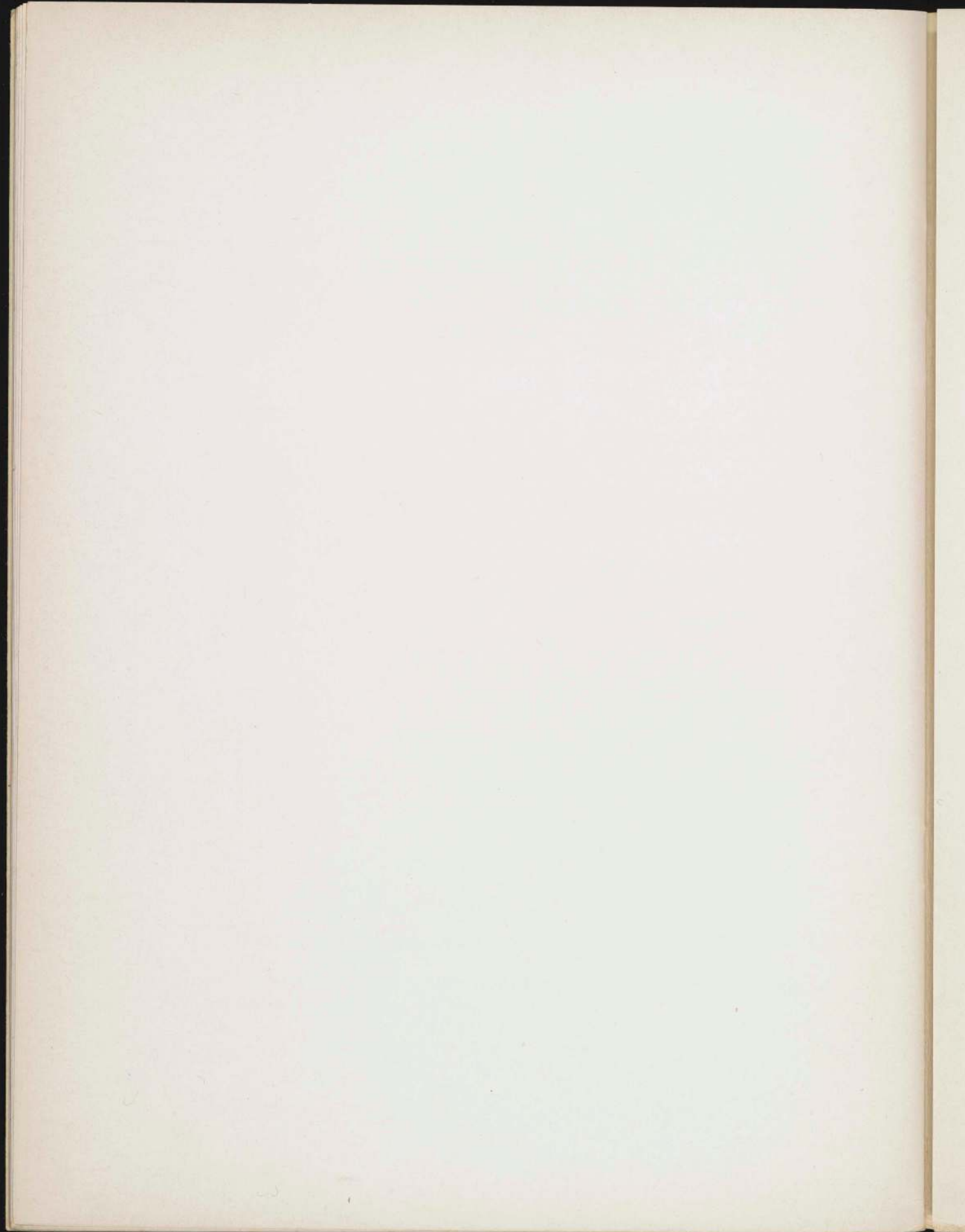
RESTAUREZ-VOUS
AU
WAGON-BAR
consommations - petits repas
A PEU DE FRAIS

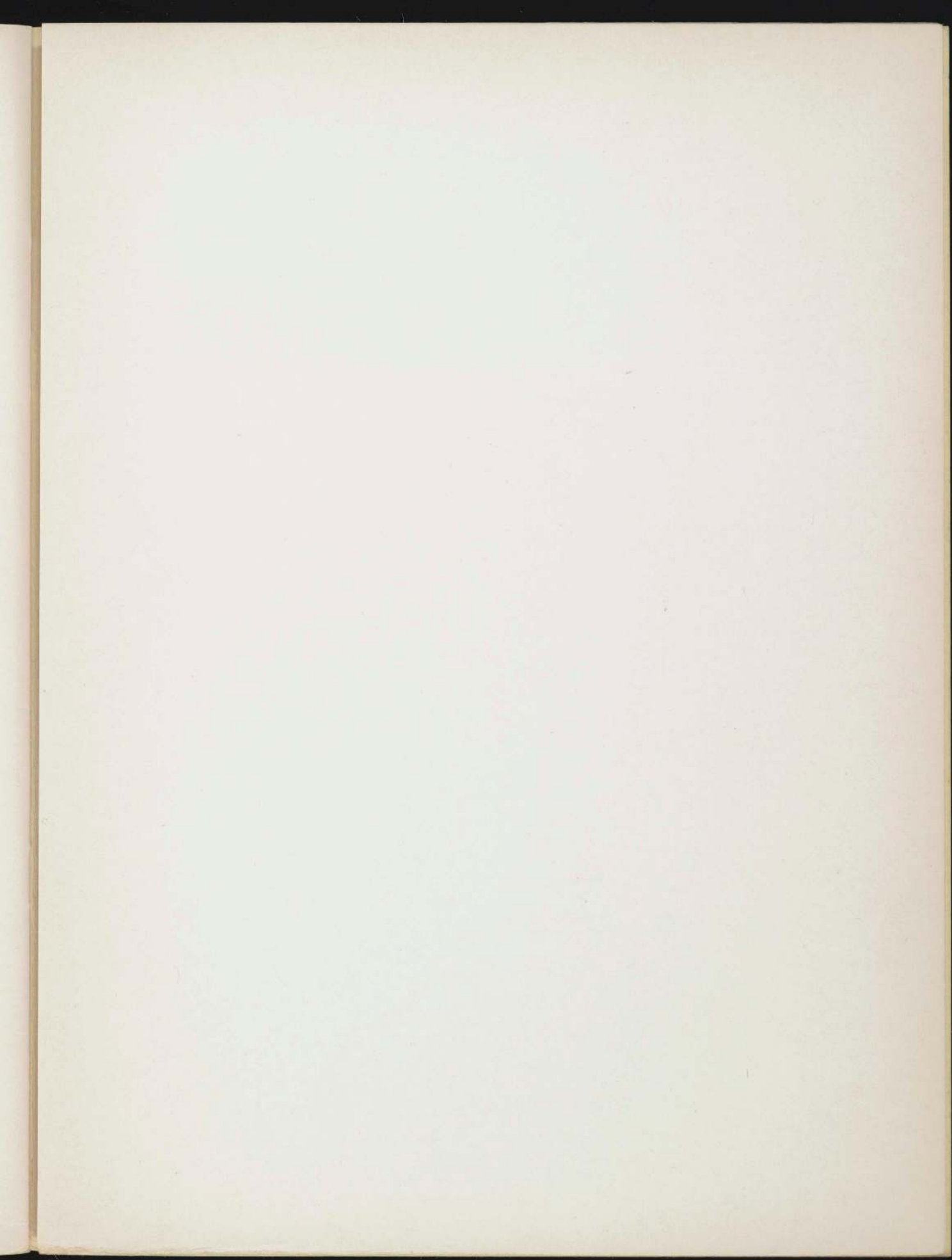


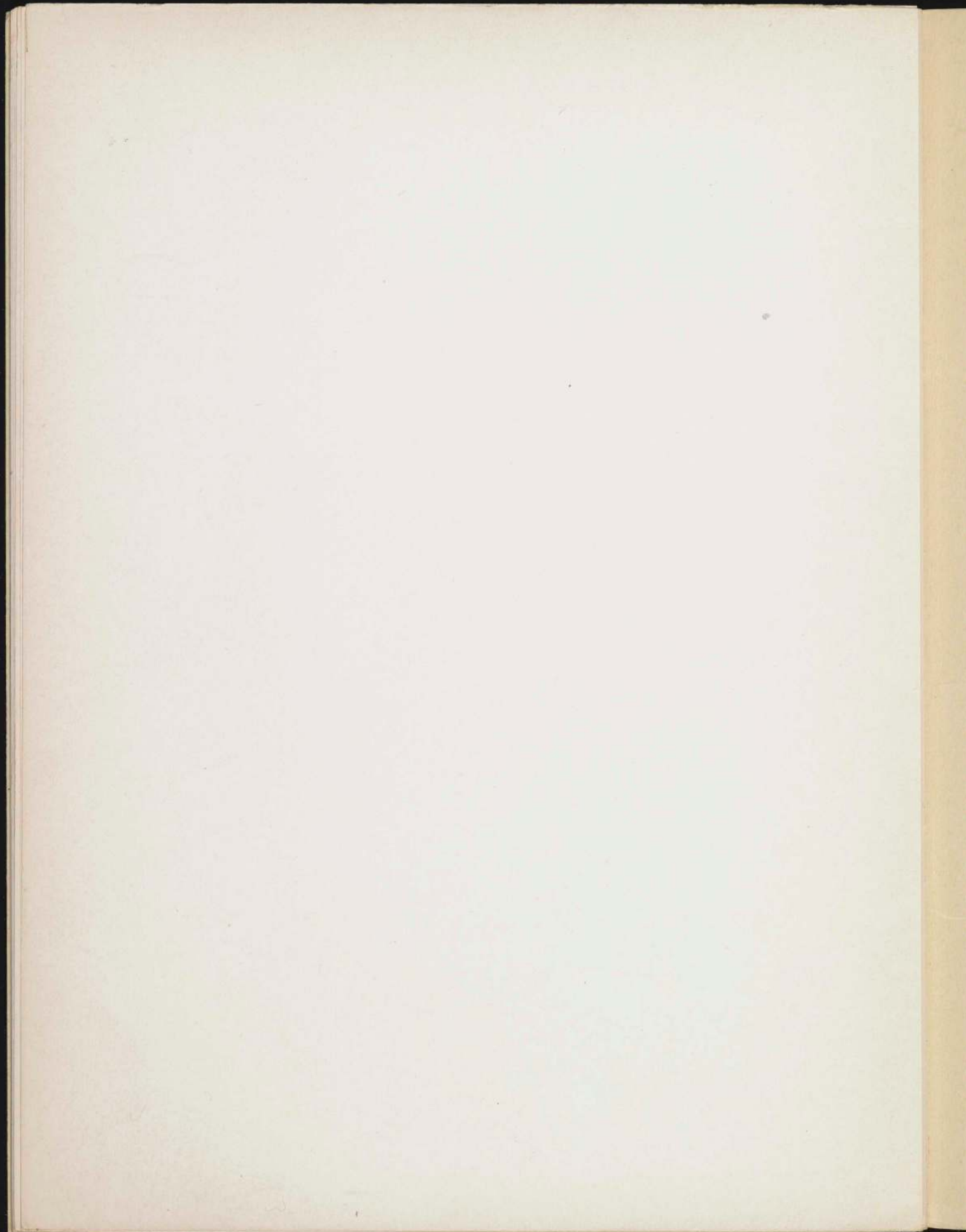
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