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Abstract. This 1967 MLA presidential address summarizes the development of the Association and American scholarship during the eight years of the Executive Secretaryship of George Winchester Stone, Jr.: the production of floods of scholarship, the entrance of the MLA into national politics through the Foreign Language Program and NDEA, the development of the International Bibliography, production of endless professional pamphlets and policy statements. These scholarly and professional tasks resemble the unending labors of Sisyphus. The humanistic achievements of the scholar are still the most important. Each generation of humanistic scholars must redefine for itself and try to explain to a wider audience the values of literary and linguistic study. Despite the loss of purpose, floundering, sense of apathy and protest evident in post-war creative literature, American scholarship in all languages and of all periods is now at a peak. Americans have given back to Europe its greatest literary products of the past enriched by modern principles of editing, annotation, criticism, and analysis. American scholars move into the next century hand in hand with mechanical aids of tremendous value to liberate rather than enslave them. The one stone that Sisyphus had to roll has exploded and fragmented. The task devolving upon us is now tenfold. In our pursuit of minutiae in scholarship we will demolish all humanistic values unless we keep in the forefront of our consciousness the ten huge stones which challenge us: the new ignorance, muddleheadedness, bigness, crassness, rapidity of change, salvation of the good results of years of permissiveness, repossession of broad scholarship, realignment of new knowledge, pursuit of excellence, and above all assurance of relevance. (GWS)

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quate by echoing it in a demonstrably evil character. By means of this process of subversion, the reader is forced away from the bright social world of the Maylie-Brownlow group into an intense association with the orphans and the victims: Oliver, Fagin and his associates, and Mr. Bumble. (JRK)

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Momenti e problemi di critica pirandelliana: *L'umorismo*, Pirandello e Croce, Pirandello e Tilgher. Di ANTONIO ILLIANO 135

Abstract. *L'umorismo*, not merely a theoretical treatise on humor, is also Pirandello's introspective clarification and confession of the genesis and motives of his art. As such, it provides the best approach to his creative writings. Shortly after the publication of this essay in 1908 began the long dispute with Croce, whose negative attitude toward Pirandello was to influence many followers of aesthetic criticism. Although Croce's opposition cannot be attributed to preconceived hostility, he issued a sharply dialectical dissection of the essay and failed to recognize that Pirandello's theory cannot be dealt with in terms of logic and philosophical exegesis alone. The style, too, is significant, and for the very reasons that motivated Croce's disapproval, namely because Pirandello makes use of imagery as well as of philosophical definitions—a dichotomy that reflects the author's complex temperament. Tilgher, on the other hand, understood the anti-intellectualistic nature of Pirandello's art and published a stimulating interpretation of his theatre, one that was at first recognized as valid by the playwright himself. Often regarded as a "revelation" of Pirandello to the world and to himself, this interpretation should be more properly viewed in the light of Tilgher's own theory of the critic's preeminence and farsighted leadership in literature. In fact, after a period of "complicity," Pirandello firmly reasserted his autonomy and rejected all implications of the critic's insistent patronage. (In Italian) (AI)

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