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CONTRASTS IN STYLE

Two books have come to hand that are in striking contrast. In one, entitled "Moonchild," we have an example of the complicated, turgid, esoteric writing—the kind that reaches out for the effect that is aimed at by the futuristic painter, in which he gets beyond the infinite—or believes he does. In the other, "Carl and Anna," a translation from the German, is the simplification of language to perfection. "Moonchild" is difficult to understand. You read words, words, words—mystic references, invented oddities, and peculiar actions, until the confusion is worse confounded, and you get tired of endeavouring to find out what the author is driving at. "Carl and Anna" is one of those plain stories that appear to have been sifted and polished until not one superfluous word is left. One is carried through the first in curiosity to know what strange thing will be said next, while the second holds the interest by the sheer intensity of the dramatic story being told. "Moonchild" is a tale of a "magickal" operation by which a spirit of the moon is invoked into the being of an expectant mother and is full of passages of romance and poetic meanderings in anything but a lucid style. "Carl and Anna" is of a woman left alone when her husband went to the war; of his companion in the prison camp, who is his counterpart in appearance, becoming so saturated with the husband's talk of his wife that when he escapes he impersonates the husband, and, though detected by the woman, is accepted by her as such.