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THE MODERN CONCEPTION OF PHILOSOPHY

BY BENEDETTO CROCE

Translated From the Italian by Raffaello Piccoli

I BELIEVE that if not all, at least many students of philosophy will be ready to acknowledge as an actual fact, that there are two conceptions which have become superannuated and almost foreign to the spirit of modern thought, two words which have lost all authority, which indeed lend themselves either to suspicion or to derision: the conception of metaphysics, that is, of the research of a reality which should be above and beyond experience; and the conception of a systematic or final philosophy, that is, of the construction of a closed system, which should once for all constrict reality, or the supreme reality, within its bounds.

It is a double negation which, if we look carefully into it, reveals itself as the double aspect of a single one—the negation of a transcendent world, and, through it, of the conception of philosophy as theology. It is only in so far as we presume to know a transcendent world that we may look for a closed and final system, for truth as an immovable entity in opposition to the historical knowledge of passing facts, and of a world which is constantly either passing or becoming.

It is true that there are minds which are not yet resigned to this disaffection, to this divorce of modern thought from metaphysics and the closed systems; but I believe it to rest on solid foundations. It is well known that the conception of metaphysics and of the

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closed system had its origin in antiquity and reached its climax in mediaeval scholasticism; that every philosophical movement in the modern age, from the Renaissance with its appreciation of Humanism, to the rationalistic and empirical schools of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, from the ideological systems, with their historical leanings, to Positivism and its naturalistic tendencies, was in one way or other a reaction against it; and finally that Bruno and Vico, Locke and Hume, Descartes and Kant, Hegel and Comte, though among many waverings and survivals and partial returns, all worked for the general erosion of transcendence. And the physiognomy of modern society, so different from the mediaeval world and so unascetic, directly confronts us. And finally, the concept of tolerance, which modern history has reached through the wars of religion, what does it import, but that truth in a static form has loosened its profound grasp of conscience, since tolerance is made possible only by indifference, or at least by the fact that theology has been confined to a place of minor importance? For a counterproof it is enough to recall that in its Syllabus, the Catholic Church, with its inflexible logic, condemns both modern philosophy and modern life.

If philosophy does not give us either a knowledge of the transcendent, or the final truth, it is clear that it cannot be anything but experience, as immanent as experience is, and, like experience, subject to perpetual growth and change. From these premises it has been hastily inferred that philosophy has ceased to accomplish any legitimate function, and the bankruptcy of philosophy has become something of a catchword, history and science being regarded as the modern substitutes for philosophy. But the truth of the matter is that the one which is bankrupt, or on the way to bankruptcy, is only transcendent, theological philosophy, and that by ridding itself of all theological implications, philosophy has but asserted its nature more energetically than ever before, and in greater conformity with our times.

The nature of philosophy consists in an enquiry concerning the categories of experience, the ideas or "values," as it is the fashion to call them, or, in other words, the Spirit in its forms and in the distinction and unity of its forms. For this part also it would be possible to prove, by an historical demonstration, that genuine philosophy has never been anything but this, even in antiquity,

even in the Middle Ages, not to speak of modern times which have produced the *Discours de la Méthode*, the *Scienza Nuova*, the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, and Hegel's *Logic*. It would be possible to prove that the theological, transcendent conception, when it did not constitute the negative element against which philosophy fought and developed its strength, was a mere husk, with which, more or less unconsciously, it protected itself while opening new paths; and that all the acquisitions made by philosophy are recognizable as successive increments of our knowledge of the way in which the Spirit works to produce art and science and practical and moral actions. But I shall leave aside the testimonials which could be drawn from the history of philosophy.

It may be useful, however, to point out that this conception of philosophy does not in the least re-establish transcendence and static truth in a new form, by pretending to give a final system of the eternal ideas, or categories, or "values," by which experience is governed. And indeed, if such were its task, philosophy might save itself the labour; since, when philosophy is presented in this way, there is nothing to do but to grant that the conclusions which philosophy reaches laboriously and abstrusely are the same which good sense or common sense already possesses without any philosophy, the categories which our common speech designates by the words true, good, beautiful, et cetera, and with which we deal as with intimately known and transparent objects, being actually present in our every act and word. Categories are in fact categories because they are that which *semper ubique et ab omnibus* is recognized as real and effective.

This is the reason why I did not say that philosophy discovers and determines categories, but only that its enquiries concern the categories, that is, formulate and solve the ever new problems which are continually placed before our spirit by the development of life and by the necessity of observing and judging facts which are ever new, according to that saying of the poet, that we must constantly earn anew that which we already possess. A mind with a love for rather material comparisons and images, might represent the categories as instruments with which we give form to matter and which are deteriorated by use, or show themselves inadequate to the task; and philosophy as the technique which repairs them and makes them efficient once more. And, stretching the comparison,

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one might add that just as instruments are not instruments, are not real instruments, except in the work for which they are made and in which they wear themselves out, philosophy is not real and concrete except through experience and in experience or, to use a larger term, in history. And this addition to our comparison leads us naturally to a consideration of the unity of philosophy and historical construction, of philosophy and historiography.

I hope that, after this explanation, my definition of philosophy, as the abstract moment of historiography, or the methodology of historiography, will not appear a paradox. The knowledge that interests us truly, and which is the only kind that is of any interest to us, is that of the particular and individual things among which we live, and which we can transform and produce incessantly, since we are not immersed in reality as in an external medium, but are one thing with reality; those particular and individual things which *are* the universe. It may sometimes appear that we can do without philosophy, or methodology; and to a certain extent this is true, so long as our judgement finds the road clear before itself, or not too crowded with obstacles, so long as the definitions implicit in its terms are vivid with light. But as soon as our judgement, through the complexity of facts, or through the passions by which it is troubled, becomes embarrassed and arrested, and seems to lose its criterion, doubt is born, and, with doubt, the necessity for new distinctions and new definitions, that is, the necessity to philosophize. It is only by philosophy that historical thought and judgement can be started again on their course. New facts require a new philosophy; but, as the old facts live in the new ones, philosophy is at the same time transient and eternal; never static, however, never vanishing in the direction of phenomenism, philosophy has its existence not as a closed and final system, but as a perpetual chain of systematizations.

The dignity which this conception of philosophy lends to history imports an opposition, but an opposition only to metaphysics and transcendence. It is strange, be it said in passing, that this opposition should have been often misunderstood, as an opposition to physical science. The main cause of such misunderstanding is to be looked for perhaps in the persistent dualism, in which so many of us are still entangled, of history and nature, mythologically

posited as two metaphysical entities, while they are but two gnoseologically different modes of mental elaboration of the same reality. The one is a purely theoretical mode, the other a theoretical and practical one. But if in science we leave aside all that is mere auxiliary abstraction, and didascalie schematism, we see that science as well as history investigates and thinks out and knows particular and individual facts in their becoming. Science therefore is history, and not even, rigorously speaking, a history of nature as against a history of man, but a living and spiritual history of the same kind as human history. Human history, on the other hand, by the use of abstractions, can also be lowered, and has been lowered, to nature and to abstract natural history. The historical concepts of evolution, or of creative evolution, of struggle for life, of the survival of the fittest, and such like, which have become part of the sciences of nature, and the consciousness which the theorists of physical science have reached of the abstract and conventional elements and of the exigencies of mental economy which inform scientific thought, tend to show in the clearest fashion that the content of the physical sciences is an historical content. Similarly, the development of historical thought tends to draw a sharper and sharper distinction between true history and historical abstraction or schematism, between historiography and sociology.

An analogous answer must be given to another objection, that such a philosophy as we have tried to outline is contrary or at least foreign to religion, and that it is devoid of the sense of mystery. Without doubt philosophy is opposed to the transcendent and consequently mythological conception of religion; but since the essence of religious feeling has never been anything but a confident effort towards purification and elevation, a striving through sorrow and joy towards truth and goodness, this modern and human philosophy admits within itself any earnest and sincere religion which there could be in the world. And since it looks upon reality not as a fact but as a continuous doing, a perpetual creation, it does not impose any limit to new forms either of life or of thought. The sacred mystery is after all but this infinite creative power, this divine life of the universe. It may be said that this does not satisfy us entirely, and that there is in the heart of man an inextinguishable desire to overcome the conditions of life itself, and to escape from

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the barriers of thought, and a hope and presentiment of another reality which is not the reality that we produce in our life and in our thought. Thought, however, as such, and therefore philosophy, can well account for this desire, can discern if it truly exists, what it is, and how it arises; but it can never, even if it obeyed the strongest impulse of humility, transform it into an exigency higher than itself, nor deny, within the circle of thought and reality, thought and reality itself. A world different from our world possesses as its first characteristic this one: that it should be unknown to our world, because, if it were known, it would not be different, and the hypothesis would fall. And this seems to me to be a perfectly orthodox proposition, since transcendent religion does not appeal to thought but to revelation. Of revelation, however, there is no occasion to speak here.

It would be well to discourse, instead, of the importance which philosophy, as an enquiry into categories, ideas, and values, and as a gradually deeper and more vivid consciousness of humanity, may have for the solution of the religious crisis in which modern society is involved; a crisis which has become more severe since the time when, after the youthful audacity of the Renaissance, after the secure but somewhat facile and arid confidence of illuministic Rationalism, the Romantic era began, which still lasts, with its discordant aspirations, with its idealism and sensualism, with its dreams of beatitude, and its pessimistic despairs. We shall not come out of this crisis except through the strengthening of a new and human religious susceptibility, at least for those who, like myself, consider the restoration of the old religions or the introduction in the European world of the ancient Eastern religions, a Utopian fantasy.

If philosophy can be but the philosophy of historical experience—if metaphysics and the superhistorical systems and the innumerable problems and positing of problems which are consequent upon them, are truly dead and buried—is it possible that the type of the modern student of philosophy might still be that which developed itself in the mediaeval schools, and was later transplanted to the modern universities? The type of the “pure philosopher,” who deals with the “eternal problems,” and strives for the interpretation of the enigma of reality, and sometimes imagines that he has resolved it, and sometimes confesses his own defeat or, being a

man of good will, believes that he has brought his own contribution towards the much sighed for solution which one day somebody else shall discover, this type is clearly derived from the theologian of the mediaeval schools. The consciousness of the unity, and of the active interchange, of philosophy and experience, of methodology and history, postulates the necessity for a new type of philosophical student, who should take part in the investigations of history and of science, and in the work and life of his own times, both from a political and moral standpoint, if not always directly and actively, at least as a passionately interested observer: a student of philosophy, who, in order to be true to his vocation need not be a pure philosopher, but practise, as other men do, a profession, being himself above all (let us remember it, since there is a kind of philosopher who is willing to forget it) a man in the full sense of the word.

TREE

BY WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

The tree is stiff, the branch
is arching, arching, arching
to the ground. Already its tip
reaches the hats of the passersby
children leap at it, hang on it—
bite on it. It is rotten, it
will be thick with blossoms in
the spring. Then it will break off
of its own weight or from the pulls
of the blossom seekers who will
ravish it. Freed of this disgrace
the tree will remain, stiffly upright

NORTH IS BLACK

OLIVER LA FARGE *2nd*

IT is true that we say that North is black, and cold, and bad because of the stories of our old men, but those are good stories. They had them from the old men before them, from the time that there were no Americans. The Navajo have been here ever since the land was made, the Americans are new.

It is no use to show me that picture of mountains in the North again. I know it is white because it is all snow. I know those mountains. I have seen them. Yes, why do you suppose they call me North Wanderer? I went there, I came back with many horses. Ask my people about the horses Nahokonss Naga brought with him. Yes, that is why I went, to steal horses. I stood on a high place, praying, and my prayers fell away from me, down into the valleys. My prayers got lost, they would not fly up to the Four Quarters. It is bad there.

Give me more coffee.

I speak with one tongue, I went to steal horses. I was always brave. When I was a boy they took me to San Carlos, where the Apaches are. They taught me to talk American. I ran away, and lived all alone until my hair grew. When my hair was long again, I had made myself a bow and arrows, moccasins, a skin blanket. I had stolen two horses. I was always like that.

It is true there are good horses nearer than there. I was three moons going, and three moons coming, but I wanted to see.

Then I will tell you the truth. I am old, it is good someone should know. But you must not tell. I know you, you will not tell; no one would believe.

You see that fire? If you try to shut it up in a box, it will burn the box. I was like that. The soldiers would not let us go on the war-path. There was no work for us. Sometimes we went down to raid the Moqui a little bit, to steal sheep, but not enough. We young men were looking for trouble.

A man with a big red beard came and made a Trading Post

near the railroad, a few miles from my mother's *hogahn*. I lived there, because I did not think of marriage; all the time I was studying to be a singer, learning about the Gods, and the Medicine. I was like the Black Robed Preachers at Chin Lee, I did not think about women.

Red Beard was not like other traders, he was the other kind of American. They don't have that kind out here, I got to know about them later. They are different. Red Beard was sick, that was why he came out here. He did not care about the trading. He was honest with us and we made money off him. He never understood us. He was a good man.

He had a lot of friends coming to see him, from the East. They, too, were different. They liked to wear little pistols. At this time, Americans only carried pistols when they thought there would be trouble, then they had big pistols, not like the ones most of Red Beard's friends carried. And Red Beard's friends never shot anything. Most of them did not know how to shoot. They had bad manners, like the people at Grand Canyon. We were not used to that then, two or three times we were going to kill them.

Their women came out with them. There was one who was tall, and straight, and had black hair, like an Indian's, and brown eyes. She pulled her hair tight, tying it behind, like a Navajo. I fell in love with her.

I was digging holes to plant corn one day, and I saw She-Rain coming up the valley, with a rainbow behind it. I thought, "That looks like that American Girl." Then I was frightened, for I knew I must be in love. How could any man think that the rainbow, that is the Way of the Gods, looked like a woman, unless his eyes were twisted with love?

The next time I was with Mountain Singer, learning Medicine, I sang the *Hozogi*. When I said, "I walk with beauty all around me," my mind wandered to her, I forgot about the Gods and the Holy Things. I said to Mountain Singer, "My mind is bad." He told me to fast.

When I had fasted for four days, I returned to my mother's *hogahn*. When I came in, she said, "What is the matter with you?"

I said, "Nothing."

She asked me again, "What is the matter?" Again I told her, "Nothing."

She asked me four times, and the fourth time she said, "Warrior-With-Gods, tell me what is the matter with you?"

When she called me by that name, I had to answer true. I said, "I am sick inside, I am bad inside; I must cleanse myself."

My mother said, "You will not wash out your sickness, nor pray it out. That is man's talk."

I had already fasted. Now I let down my hair, praying. I went into the sweat bath. All the time that I was there I sang. When I came out and jumped into the creek, I felt all well again. I ran, singing and leaping.

Then I saw mother-of-pearl dawn in the East, all-colour rain, and the rainbow. I heard the Four Singers on the Four Mountains. But it was midday, and clear, and the desert was silent. I had seen that American Girl come out of the post to watch me running. So I went back to my *hogahn*, and sat down, covering my face with my blanket.

My mother said, "By and by she will go away, then you will get well." My mother was a wise woman.

After that I tried to keep away from the post, but I was like a horse on a rope. She used to hire me to guide her to places. When I had been with her and she was friendly to me, I used to feel weak, so that after I went away I sat down and groaned. Sometimes, though, I would want to leap and run, because I had foolish thoughts. When the corn began to sprout I was like that all the time. She should not have been so friendly to me.

One day she said to me, "I will give you this bracelet if you will let me ride your pinto horse."

He was the best horse anybody had round there. I answered, "You do not need to pay me to ride my horse; but if you will give me the bracelet, I should like it."

Her face was strange when she gave me the bracelet. I was afraid she would laugh at me, but she did not. My heart sang. I did not understand them, those people.

She wanted to go up to the top of Blue Rock Mesa, where the shrine is, where you can see for many days' ride all around. So I took her up there. She was not like most Americans, the way

they act. They talk fast, and shout, and spit over the edge. She was quiet, and looked, and thought about it, like an Indian. Then she made me tell her the names of all the places we could see. I showed her the mountains where the Utes are, you could just see them, like a low line of smoke in the north.

She said, "To-morrow I go up there."

I told her, "It is far."

"I am going in the iron-with-fire-in-it. I am going to my brother's house, far beyond there. He lives there because there is good hunting. You can come there."

When she began, my heart was sick; when she ended, my heart was high with joy, that she should want me to follow her. I thought I would make sure. I said, "I do not know that trail."

She told me she would show me on the map when we got back to the Post. I did not know about maps, then; I thought it was strong medicine. She told me about the trail, then she told me about one of the mountains you have in that picture. You see it a week before you come to it, and it is marked so that you can tell it. She showed me a picture of it. While she was talking, her voice broke once; when she got through, her face was strange. Again I thought she was going to laugh at me, but she did not, so I read those signs, and was glad.

I did not watch her go, there was no use. I went on learning to be a singer, to make myself strong. My heart was happy, and I learned well. I traded close with Red Beard, to get money. I had Mountain Singer make me a fire drill, with turquoise and abalone-shell and mother-of-pearl and black stone on it, because it would be dark in the North, and I knew I would need it. I made more arrows, with fine points to them. A man came to the Post who had a rifle, the best I had ever seen, and lots of cartridges for it. It took me three weeks to steal that rifle. Every day, I drew the North Trail in the sand. I gave that girl a name, Nahokonss Atad—that is, in American, Northern Maiden.

A lot of time went by this way. When I was ready, I went and gambled with my money. I knew that I could not lose, my medicine was sure. I gambled with some Americans, with their cards; that was easy. Then I gambled with Indians. I won very much, so that I was rich.

At the moon of tall corn there was a squaw-dance over in Blue Canyon. I told my mother I would go there, and see if I could find a girl I liked to marry. She saw me gathering all the jewellery I had won.

“That is well, if you do not lose your way.” She said, “Have you good medicine, lots of corn pollen?”

My face was ashamed when I heard that, but no one could have stopped me then.

I painted my pinto horse, so that he was an ugly dun colour, and I tied a horse-hair around his hock to make him lame. I packed my jewellery and buckskin on him, and my good blankets, and dressed myself in old American clothes, with an old blanket. I had much jewellery for her, and a silver bridle to give her with the pinto horse, I did not want it stolen. I tied turquoise to my gun to make it strong.

All that night I sang, but not at the squaw-dance; I sang to go North. At dawn I started.

It was a long trip. When I was far enough North, I took my hair down and braided it, saying I was a Pai-Ute carrying a message for some Mormons. The Pai-Utes are always poor, and they are friends of the Mormons; they let me pass. I passed beyond the Ute country, through tribes I did not know. I talked signs with them, asking for this mountain. Once I had a fight with some Indians, and two times with Americans. Those Indians scalp everyone they kill, like the Utes.

I was three moons on the trail. Then I came to where snow was. It was the end of harvest moon, too early for snow, I knew I was coming to the North. I hoped to meet some of the Frozen Navajo, who live up there, but I did not. By and by it got to be all snow and colder than it ever is here. That was not like winter snow, but deep like all-year snow that you see on the north side of Dokosli, high up. Then I saw the mountain.

I had not seen Indians for a week, it was all ranches and cattle. There was a railroad, and a big town. I made camp where there were some woods, away from the town. I had stolen a hat from a ranch I passed near, leaving a lot of fine horses, because I was afraid to make trouble. Now I wound my hair up around my head, so that the hat covered it. I took off my head-band. With

my old American clothes, I looked like a Mexican. I talk a little Mexican. So I went into town.

That town was big. It did not look as though I could ever find Northern Maiden there. And I could not ask for her, I did not know her name. All I could do was walk around and look. I saw places where they sold bitter-water, and thought I would buy some. I had tasted it before, but never enough. The first place I went into the man said, "Hey, Injun, get the hell out of here."

Then I went into another, and I spoke in Mexican before the man noticed me. So he sold me drinks. I bought a lot. They cost ten cents, and I spent a dollar for them. Then I felt so good I began to dance a little bit. One of the men said, "Hey, that Greaser's drunk, throw him out."

They threw me out. One of them kicked me hard when I went through the door. I fell down in the snow. My sight was red with anger. I walked away, out of the town, to the woods where my things were. There I made ready for the war-path—let down my hair, and took off my American clothes. I thought, none of the people in that town carry guns. Now I shall take my very good gun and shoot them, all those people. I shall burn their houses. While I am doing this, I shall find Northern Maiden; her I shall take away, and go back to my own country, with many horses, and much plunder. That way I thought.

I began making war medicine, praying to the Twin Gods. I held my gun across my knees, that my medicine should be strong for it, too. Praying like that, I fell asleep there in the middle. That is a bad thing.

When I woke up, it was night, and I was cold. I was shivering. The fire was out. My head hurt. When I thought how I had gone to sleep in the middle of my prayer, I was afraid. I put on my clothes, and made a fire with my fire drill. Then I prayed, for a long time I was praying. But my prayer would not go up; it fell down where I said it. All of a sudden I was sick for my own country, for the smell of dust on the trail when the sun is on it, for the sound of my horse's hoofs in the sand. My heart was sick for the blue South, where the rainbow is, and tall corn growing by red rocks. I remembered the smoke of my mother's fire, and the thumping as she pounded the warp down in the loom.

Then I thought how far I had come, and how I was near to Northern Maiden, and how she was waiting for me. My medicine was very strong, it was the bitter-water that had made me feel like that. I thought that I would be ashamed to go back now, and I was a brave, who did not run away from things. So I rolled up in my blanket and went to sleep again. I was like that, we were warriors in those days.

There was game in the hills behind those woods, so that I had enough to eat. When I was not hunting, I stayed in the town. I stayed eight days, until I began to lose hope. Then I saw her. She was in a wagon with a man. They had two good horses with it; they were not as good as my pinto. I followed them out of town, and saw their tracks in the snow, along a road. Then I ran to my camp.

I threw away my American clothes then. I sang, and while I sang I tied up my hair like a Navajo. My head-band was good, my shirt was worked with porcupine quills, my leggings had many silver buttons. My belt was of silver, my necklaces and bow-guard were heavy with silver and turquoise. I put the silver bridle on my horse, to make him look well, and so that when I gave it to her, with the pinto, she should know it was my own. Then I rode out, still singing.

I looked all around me. I said, the North is not black. The ground is white; where the sun strikes it, it is all-colour. The sky is blue as turquoise. Our old men do not know. I galloped along the trail. I sang the song about the wild-cat, that keeps time with a horse galloping and makes him go faster. That way I felt.

I started in the morning, I got in just after noon. It was a big ranch, there were many horses in the corral, but no sign of cattle. That is not like an American's ranch. They were just getting out of the carriage when I rode in. When they saw me, they cried out. She was surprised, she did not think I would come. I sat still and rolled a cigarette. Inside I was not still. I looked at her, and my heart kept on saying, "beautiful, beautiful," like in a prayer.

She came forward to shake hands with me. Some more men and a woman came out. She told them who I was. One of the men kept on saying, "George, George!" I thought he was calling

someone. Later I found out it was his way of swearing. They were different, those people.

She told me to put my horses in the corral. She went with me while I unsaddled my pony. Her face was flushed, she was glad to see me. I could not speak, I was afraid all those people would see what I was thinking. When we were alone in the corral, I gave her the pinto horse, and the bridle. At first she would not take them. She gave me a room to sleep and keep my things in. Then she took me into the big room where the people were.

There were her brother and his wife. They' were good people. There were two other men who were good people. One of them knew Indians, he could talk American so that I could understand everything he said. There was another man who was not good. His mouth was not good. He had yellow hair, but there was a dark cloud around his head. I could see that, especially when he was thinking bad things. I did not like him, that one. There were other people who stayed with them and went away again, but these were there all the time.

They were nice to me. I stayed there a long time. Those men were always going hunting, they took me with them. I was a good hunter, so they thought well of me. They liked a man who could do something better than they could. They thought well of me because I had come so far. They asked me to play cards with them. They did not play cards the way the Americans here taught us, except the man I did not like. I won from them, but never very much. I did not think it was good to win too much from them. They were my friends.

The man I did not like was called Charlie. He, too, wanted Northern Maiden. He was not like those others. Sometimes when they had friends and drank bitter-water, one of the women would tell them they had too much, or one of the other men would. Then they would go out and walk around until they were all right. I did not take anything. Sometimes, when there was another woman staying with them there, one of the men would be making love to her. If she told him to stop, he always stopped. This I saw, different times, when people came to stay with them. But Charlie was the only one who made love to Northern Maiden. He did not stop when she told him to. One day I was coming down the long

room they had that ran between the other rooms. He was out there, trying to kiss her, the way Americans do. I walked up. He got red in the face and went away. I made talk to her as if I had not seen anything.

I stayed there a long time. I thought, when it was time for spring in my own country, I should ask Northern Maiden to come with me, and I thought she would say yes.

One day I was walking into the door of the big room, when I heard someone inside say my name. Horse-Tamer they said, that was my name, that people used. The man's voice was angry, so I listened. I could not understand everything that they said, they were talking fast in American. But I understood that Charlie was telling them that I cheated at cards. This made them angry. They said that if they caught me, they would run me out. They called me a damn Indian. I was angry; because I knew that Charlie cheated, too, as I have said. I did not understand this, so I went to Northern Maiden.

I told her that the cowpunchers taught us to cheat at cards, that we thought it was part of that game. An Indian is better at it than an American. I did not say anything about Charlie. She said that her kind of American did not cheat at cards, any more than they told lies. They were always honest. So they trusted everyone who played in a game, that was why they were so angry. They would run out any one who cheated when they trusted him. Then I understood.

I took my money and went in where they were. I said, "Here is your money, that I have won at cards. I did not know you did not cheat, until I heard you talking. The Americans who played with us always cheated. Now I will not cheat. That is my word. It is strong."

Northern Maiden's brother said, "The Indian's all right."

The other one, who knew about Indians, said, "Yes, what he says is true. He will not cheat any more. Let him play."

Charlie was angry, but he was afraid to say anything.

So then I played with them some more, and I watched Charlie. I knew what I wanted to do, and I took my time, like a good hunter. Finally my chance came, it was like this—We were playing poker. Charlie used to hide a good card from the pack. When he thought he could use it, he put it in the palm of his hand. Then when he

reached down to pick up his draw cards, he mixed it with them. He discarded one more card than he should. Sometimes he slipped it in with the other discards; sometimes, if it was a good card, he kept it out. I knew it would be no good to find the card in his clothes, they would think I had put it there. I had to catch it in his hand, and he was quick.

This time there were a lot of people there, some men from other ranches, cowpunchers. There was a lot of money, and Charlie got excited. I was sitting next him. He did not like to see me next him. I waited till I saw he was about to use his card. I got my knife ready. When his hand was sliding along the table, before he got to the draw, I put my knife through it. He screamed, and everyone jumped up. I took out my knife. There was the ace of diamonds, and he held two other aces.

Charlie went out of the room. He was white in the face. The cowpunchers stood around for a little while, then they went away, too. I said nothing, waiting for them to thank me. These three men, the ones who lived in the house, went off into a corner and talked. I could not hear what they said. Something was wrong.

The man who understood about Indians came over to me. The rest went out.

"Now," he said, "you must go away. It is not your fault. Charlie is one of us. You were right to show that he cheated, but not in front of all those cowpunchers. Now we have lost face with them. We are all made ashamed. You should have told us, and we should have caught him when no one else was here. When we see you, you will make us remember that you, an Indian, showed up our friend in front of those people. When you are here, we shall be ashamed. If a white man caught a friend of yours in front of a lot of Moqui, would you like it?"

I said, "I see. Now I go."

He shook hands with me. "You are a good man," he said, "I want to be friends with you. I shall come and see you on your reservation. We shall hunt together."

I said, "Your talk is straight. It is good. Now I want meat and coffee and sugar to take on the trail."

He brought me what I needed while I was saddling my horse. He gave me the money Charlie had won from me. He wanted to give me more.

"He will go to the train to-morrow," he said, "he is too weak now, you made him bleed a lot."

It was in the middle of the afternoon that I rode away. I went up to a high hill behind the ranch-house. There I made camp. When I had a fire lighted, a little one that would not make smoke, I began my medicine. It was not good. My prayers fell away, down into the valley. I saw that a man could not pray there, where there was only one direction, North, the Black One. I wanted to go back to where there was East, and South, and West, Mother-of-Pearl dawn, Blue Turquoise, and Red Shell. I prayed the best I could. I used the last of my corn pollen. When the sun set, I made black paint with ashes. I drew the Bows of the Twin Gods on my chest. I put a black line on my forehead. I stripped to my breech-clout, moccasins, and head-band. I took off all my jewellery except my bow-guard. I took my bow, because a gun makes too much noise. Long after it was black night I went back to the ranch.

They were all in the big room, except Charlie, sitting round the fire. I came in quietly. I hid in a corner behind a chair. All the time I had my bow ready. They did not say much, but sat, not talking. One by one, they got up to go to bed. I was hoping that Northern Maiden would be the last, but if she was not, I had enough arrows. I could not have come so well to her bedroom, it was upstairs. That house was built like a Moqui house, with two floors.

My medicine was good. She stayed sitting and looking at the fire. I could see that she was sad. That did my heart good. In the fire-light she was beautiful. I stood up.

Then Charlie came into the room. I was in the corner. I did not move. He never saw me. I made ready to shoot him. He walked over until he stood in front of Northern Maiden. For a little while they looked at each other. I waited. Then he spoke.

"I'm sorry."

She said nothing.

"Can't you forgive me?"

Then she spoke to him. She got up and stood very straight. I could not understand all those things, that they said. They were talking in American, and using words I did not know. They used words we have not got. But this I understood. She loved him.

Now she sent him away, for the thing he had done. She said she was very angry. But I saw that she loved him. She gave him a ring, the ring that Americans give when they are going to marry a woman. Now she gave it back to him. I saw she was that kind, that she sent him away, although she loved him, because his heart was bad. She told him that he was like a snake. She meant he was all bad.

He went away again, holding his face down. His hand was tied up. He looked like a sick man. I let him go.

Northern Maiden sat down in the chair. She began to cry, like an American, hard, so that it hurts, and does no good. I came, then, and stood in front of her. She looked up. She did not start. She was not afraid of me.

I said, "I did not know, now I do; I would not have done this. Here is the bracelet you gave me. I should not have it."

She said, "I understand."

Then I went away. I rode all night.

I came home at the time of short corn. I had twelve good horses with me. I met a man prospecting in Chiz-Na-Zolchi. I got a good mule from him. These I showed to the people who asked me why I went away. It was good to see the canyons again, with the washes full of water from the snow. It was good to hear my horse's hoofs in the sand, and smell the dust of the trail.

I sat down by my mother's fire. The smoke was rising up straight. She was weaving a man's blanket. She said, "This is for you, your blanket is worn out. You must choose yourself a wife, you are too much alone. That is the best medicine for you, to have a house and children. When the corn is green, tell me the one you want. I shall ask for her."

I saw that she was right. I said, "It is good. You will ask for one."

But I did not care if she were old or young, beautiful or ugly.

NOT THEATRE, NOT LITERATURE, NOT PAINTING

BY RALPH BLOCK

AN art may have a large body of aesthetic tradition and be moribund. It may have none to speak of and be very much alive. The movies are this kind of art. It is not possible to understand them, much less truthfully see them, within the limitations, judgments, and discriminations of the aesthetic viewpoint. The movies are implicit in modern life; they are in their very exaggerations—as a living art often may be—an essentialization of that which they reflect. To accurately size them up, they should be seen functionally, phenomenologically, in relation to their audience.

Like music, painting, and the drama in their primitive stages, the movies are manifestations in some kind of aesthetic form of a social will and even of a mass religion. They are in effect a powerful psychic magnet, an educing force which draws submerged dreams from hidden places to the surface of the common life. By releasing wishes which are on the margin of accepted behaviour, they partake of the social function of art. In a transitional civilization the *mores* of the people no longer reflect their real social and tribal requirements, nor to any appreciable extent their individual and social hungers. The movies help to disintegrate that which is socially traditional, and to clear the field for that which, if not forbidden, has been at least close to the shade of the tabooed.

Primitive art is usually recognized as art only after it has become classical. In the manner of all primitive expression, the movies violate accepted contemporary canons of taste. Even as they arouse the sentinels of moral tradition, so they draw the attack of aestheticians, who are unconsciously measuring expressive works by the standards of those arts that have completed their cycle, especially painting and sculpture. But it is absurd to praise or blame the movies in their present state, or do any more than try to understand them. Whether the movies or what they reflect represent the Good Life depends on whose Good Life is being selected. They exist—massively, ubiquitous. It will be time enough to judge them as an art when they become a historical method of presenting selected truth, mellowed and tested by time, and captured by an

audience saturated with tradition—acclimated by use to an understanding of the laws, intentions, and refinements of the medium. The movies by that time will have lost their excitement, but at least they will be aesthetically correct.

The movie is a primitive art, equally as the machine age is a new primitive period in time. But being a machine, the motion camera is not a simple instrument. Like the pianoforte, it is an evolved instrument, predicated on the existence and development of other forms. It is itself still in an evolving state. Indeed those who make use of it and those who appreciate it without empirical knowledge of its use, have failed to grasp, except in a loose intuitive sense, a full understanding of the complicated laws that govern it. Here and there in its past performance are startling bits of technical excellence, discoveries of how the instrument may be properly used in its own field. Bound together these form a rude body of technique, already complicated, but not yet pushed to any important limits by personal genius, nor classified significantly in use by any development of important schools.

It is fashionable to say that the camera is impersonal, but those who use the camera know this is untrue. Indeed, even abstractly, it is no more impersonal than a steel chisel, or a camel's hair brush. The camera is on the one hand as intimate as the imagination of those who direct it; on the other hand it has a peculiar selective power of its own. Its mechanism is governed by an arbitrary set of rhythms—sixteen images to each foot of celluloid—and reality is seized by the camera according to a mathematical ratio, established between the tempo of what is in front of the lens and the tempo of the machine itself. The camera is also governed by another set of relations, which have to do with light and its refraction through lenses. These are no less arbitrary in a physical sense, but within their limits they are open to a large number of gradations and variations, according to the human will behind them. Far from being impersonal, the camera may be said to have pronounced prejudices of rhythm.

Most critical discussion of pantomime in the movies is vapour. Screen pantomime is not pantomime in the conventional Punch and Judy sense. In the theatre, pantomime is in the large, a matter of long curves of movement. On the screen the lens intervenes between the eye and its objective. The camera not only magnifies movement but it also analyses action, showing its incompletions. It is indeed more prejudiced than the human eye itself, helping the

eye to detect false rhythms in the utterance of action, or an absence of relationship between sequences of movement, where the eye alone might fail. The intervention of the camera necessitates not only a modification of what might be called the wave length of pantomime for the screen, but also a more closely knitted flow of movement. Traditional pantomime on the stage is a highly schematized and rigid organization of units of movement in which every motion has a definite traditional meaning. But for the camera, movement must be living, warm, vital, and flowing rather than set and defined in an alphabet of traditional interpretation. Like Bergsonian time, it must seem to renew and recreate itself out of the crest of each present moment. It is in this sense that it resembles music. It is also because of this necessity that the stage actor who essays the screen is often exposed at the outset in all the barrenness of habitual gesture and stock phrasing of movement.

Experience rather than theory has taught many actors on the screen the need of plasticity, composure, modulation of gesture, and an understanding of how to space movement—a sense of timing. The screen actor at his best—the Beerys, Menjous, and Negriss—tries to give fluency to pantomime, so that action may melt out of repose into repose again, even in those moments when an illusion of arrested action is intended. He recognizes that against his own movement as a living organic action is the cross movement of the celluloid. It is only by long experience that the motion picture actor discovers a timing which is properly related to the machine; but that experience has already produced screen pantomimists whose rhythmic freshness and vitality the modern stage can rarely match.

The actor is the living punctuation of reality. He is conscious and has the power to make his action valid in an imaginative sense. But Appearance—the face of Nature—is itself sprawling and only vaguely connotative. Words are packed with the reverberations of human history; Appearance on the other hand, must be selected, organized, and related to ideas that conform to the limitations and possibilities of the camera, before it can be robbed of inanity and made significant.

All this is the function of the director. The movies are full of mediocre directors. But, comparatively, there are not as many poor motion picture directors as there are poor musicians, painters, and creative writers in the world; it is easier to go to school and

become any of these than it is to direct a motion picture. In its present state of development, motion picture direction demands not only logic, tact, sensibility, the ability to organize and control human beings and multifarious materials, and the power to tell a story dramatically, but it also requires a gift which cannot be learned in any school. This is a richness, even grossness, in the director's feeling for Life, an abundance of perception, a copious emotional reflex to the ill-assorted procession of existence.

Good motion picture direction has little to do with literacy or cultivation in its conventional sense. Several of the most cultivated and literate gentlemen in the movies are among the most prosaic directors. They have brought with them a knowledge of other arts, which has blinded them to the essential quality of the camera. They think of the movies as a form of the theatre, of literature, or of painting. It is none of these things. It demands at best a unique kind of imagination which parallels these arts but does not stem from them. It is true that the rigid economic organization of the modern studio demands the same kind of prevision and preparation on the part of the director as on the part of any other creator. Even aside from urgencies of this kind, the St Clairs, Lubitschs, Duponts, Einsteins, are under the same imaginative necessity to organize their material as a Cézanne or Beethoven. But there the similarity ceases. Directors of this kind know that their greatest need is the power to seize reality—in its widest sense—and make it significant in forms of motion. This power, this understanding, is a gift by itself. It requires a special kind of eye, a special kind of feeling about the relationship between things and things, events and events, and an intuitive as well as empirical knowledge of how to make the camera catch what that eye sees and that imagination feels. It has nothing to do with words, as such, nor with history or politics or any of the traditional matters which are politely assumed to represent cultivation, and which so often debase the metal of the imagination.

The movie is in other words a new way in which to see life. It is a way born to meet the needs of a new life. It is a way of using the machine to see what the machine has done to human beings. It is for this reason that the best motion picture directors arise from strange backgrounds, with a secure grasp on techniques of living rather than on academic attitudes. They are not always preoccupied with proving that life is so small that it can be caught in the

net of art. It is the pragmatic sanction hovering over them which offends academicians.

Here and there are indications that the movie is arising out of its phenomenalistic background into the level now occupied by the novel, and the theatre, touched by the same spirit of light irony, and predicating the orientation of a special audience. But there are no signs at the moment that it can rise higher than this point. Pictures such as *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* are interesting laboratory results in experimental psychology, but they have as little to do with the direct succession of the motion picture as *Madame Tussaud's* has to do with *Rodin*. *The Last Laugh* and *The Battleship Potemkin* are technical explosions, important only in their power to destroy old procedures and light the path ahead.

American directors have always mistaken cruelty on the one hand and sentimental realism on the other, for irony. Satisfaction for the sadistic hunger of the crowd is present in almost all popular entertainment. Griffith early understood this crowd desire, and his technique in exploiting it has filtered through a thousand pictures since. De Mille, Von Stroheim, Brennon, and the many unnamed have all used it in one form or other. But none has reached irony empty of brutality—an unobstructed godlike view of the miscalculations of existence, yet touched by human compassion. There are no *Hardys* nor *Chekhovs* in the movies. *The Last Laugh* dribbled out into German sentimentality, although in substance it seemed familiarly like one of *Constance Garnett's* translations. The comedians—Keaton and Langdon as well as Chaplin—have touched near the edge of true irony, but only as children might. Chaplin rose to the intention in *A Woman of Paris*, but his forms were conventional and worn, cast in the *clichés* of irony of cheap fiction.

In the end, what remains wonderful about the movie is its instrument. Its ideas are still sentimental or bizarre, reflecting the easy hungers of life, and of to-day's shifting surface of life; it fails as yet to draw from the deep clear wells of human existence. Aside from its need of another kind of audience—even another world, a deep ironic point of view in the motion picture would require a great individual spirit equipped with a true knowledge of the medium. And none of this kind has arisen. He is rare in any art and any time.



WATERFRONT. BY MAURICE DE VLAMINCK

THE ROBBER

BY HELEN FITZGERALD

“TELL us the story of your grandmother and the robber!” said one.

“*Già!* I do not know if I can—” she began. Then she went on.

“About a hundred years ago my grandmother lived here on the Lago di Como. She was a widow. She rented a *casina* and a little piece of land from a rich landlord, and she raised hay and corn and kept a few goats and silk-worms, and maybe a cow.

Ecco! Anyway—once she was cutting hay in the field, when a man with a stiletto in his mouth, ran past. He went only a little further and climbed a great *castagno*—what is it you say in English?”

“Chestnut-tree,” prompted the girl.

“*E vero!* He climbed into the thick branches and lay still, completely hidden. Some soldiers came running up. They were red in the face and puffing for breath. They stopped and asked my grandmother if she had seen a man go by.

‘I see nothing. I hear nothing. I do my work,’ she said, and went on cutting hay.

‘*Sacramento! Impossibile!* You lie,’ the soldiers cried. He must have passed here. We saw him run in this direction. You could not fail to see, *Signora!* He is a robber, a prisoner, who has escaped. How dare you cut your damned hay! It is hard to track him.’

‘I tell you, I hear nothing. I see nothing. I am a poor old woman. I do my work.’

They made an angry gesture. ‘She is a poor old fool,’ they said.

‘*Ecco! non ce ne più,*’ one added mockingly, and tapped his head.”

“Nobody home,” the girl explained.

“Looking all around, they never thought to glance *up* at the strange bird in the tree! *Stupido!* They could have touched him! Then in hot haste they hurried off. As soon as they were out of sight the fugitive came down from his hiding-place. He had heard and seen all.

'*Grazie mille, Signora.* A woman who can hold her tongue! You are a rare creature. Perhaps some day, by the grace of the *bella Madonna*, I may do a good deed for you. *Chi sa? Buon giorno! Buona continuata!* I will pray for you.'

He bowed low.

'I see nothing. I hear nothing. I do my work,' answered my grandmother, as never stopping she cut hay.

One evening soon after, she was cooking *polenta* over the big stone fire-place. The flames made the polished copper shine. She loved her copper kettles and coffee-pot as great ladies do their jewels. She was watching the twinkling lights upon them when there was a rap, rap at the door.

'*Avante,*' she called, thinking it was some neighbour, or a *bambino* come to buy goat's milk.

Ma! It was not so! But a tall man, cloaked and masked.

'*Scusi, Signora,*' said a deep voice, 'I have come to reward you. By your wisdom and prudence you saved the life of my chief. From the *castagno* he heard and saw all. He is a great man, *Signora*, and his followers love him. The rich call him bandit, but the poor call him friend. He never forgets his friends: also he never forgets his enemies. You have been his friend, *Signora*. Therefore he wishes to make you a present. Here is silver. It will make your old age happier.'

He laid on the table a silk purse with silver in it—indeed a fortune for my grandmother. But she answered, wagging her head:

'*Non, Signore.* I will not take the money. I see nothing. I hear nothing. I cut my hay. That is all. If I take this money from the man you say is a bandit, some day maybe he will want it back and kill me. *Non, Signore!* I will not have it! Take it back to him. I am a poor old woman, but I do my work. *Buona sera, Signore. Buona passeggiata.*'

She moved with him to the door.

'*Ecco! va bene, Signora!*' he answered with a shrug, bowing and putting the purse in his pocket, the silver pieces ringing as he did so, like the bells in the *campanile!*

The summer passed. The first fall of snow shone on the peak of La Legnone. The corn was gathered and dried for *polenta* and the last crop of hay had been cut and stored. The two sheep had been sheared and the wool was ready to spin. Just at this time the landlord raised the rent to a price my grandmother could not

pay. The poor old woman was nearly mad. She told the *Padre*, thinking he could advise her what to do. But all he said was:

'Pazienza, Signora! Pazienza! The Lord tempers the wind to the shorn lamb!" And he recommended a certain number of Ave Marias.

When she went to the village post office, where everybody came to gossip, she told the neighbours. She told the story again at the *albergo* where she went for her *fiasco* of *chianti*. She told everybody she met. She could think of nothing else. She could talk of nothing else. You see she was getting—what do you say?"

"Childish, mother," the girl put in.

"Ecco! Childish she was, *veramente!* Everybody listened to her. Everybody was sorry for her. Everybody agreed that the *egregio* landlord, who was rich off the toil of the poor, was a brute, *proprio*. But nobody *did* more than talk. And talk never pays the rent—*è vero?* There was just one thing for my grandmother to do—to get out. To get out at the beginning of the winter, with no place to go was terrible. It was death.

The news spread from village to village. If it had been printed in the *Corriere della Sera* it could not have been more advertised. She could not get the money. She tried to sell her copper. Nobody wanted copper. She tried to sell her goats at the market. Nobody wanted goats. Everyone was too poor—but not quite so poor as she.

One evening she sat by the fire trying to spin, but her hands dropped in her lap. For the first time they forgot the habit of work. *Già!* they had seldom been still for fifty years and more. What was the use? Her eyes were dim with tears as she looked up at the walls with the copper shining like the halo of the Saints, the strings of garlic and the neat bunches of sweet rosemary and thyme, the ears of ripe corn drying so they could be ground into meal, and the image of the blessed Madonna with a lighted candle beneath. Most of her life had been lived there. In the matrimonial bed in the corner under the crucifix, her husband had died. Her children had been born there. Some had died there—*Santa Madonna*, rest their souls! Others had grown up, gone out of the door, and forgotten. That was the saddest thing of all. Now in her old age she sat alone in the little *casina* which was all she had left. And it was going, as everything dear in life had gone before. Tears ran down her cheeks. She muttered to herself, though there

was no one to hear but the old goat, who knew too much for a *bestia* (she was certain he suspected her of trying to sell him) and the red cock who was roosting on the back of a chair.

Suddenly there was a sharp rap on the door. She started with fright. The chickens in the corner stirred. The cock flapped his wings.

Ecco, it might be the landlord's man? She made the sign of the cross and wiped the tears from her wrinkles.

'*Avante!*' she called. Her voice cracked and her hands shook as she fumbled with the wool.

'*Buona sera, Signora, come sta?*' a man's voice said as a stranger stepped out of the dark into the fire-light and the light of the candle. He was a dare-devil with twinkling eyes. His black moustaches made his teeth look very white when he smiled. And *ecco* it was a pleasant smile! He threw back his long mantle. A scarlet sash was tied in a knot about his waist, and in it a stiletto shone. He wore high boots, dusty from travelling. He had the gracefulness of a—what do you call the singers who went about in the old days?"

"Troubadour," prompted the girl.

"*Ecco!* Troubadour! The old woman was dumb. She could not believe her eyes. This was the man who had run past her in the hay field and had hidden in the *castagno*. He looked so different then, wild with pursuit, stained with dust and sweat, running for his life! But there was no mistaking him—a *diavolo* one could not forget! He smiled as he watched her expression change from fear to amazement.

'*Ecco, Signora!* You remember me, *è vero?* *Si*, I am the man you saved by holding your tongue and knowing nothing. That is a rare virtue for a woman—especially for an old woman. Things have changed, *Signora*. It is you who are in trouble now.'

'How did the *egregio Signore* know?' she stammered.

'*Egregio Signore?* Since when have I become lordly? Last time it was bandit, or robber, if my friend reported you correctly, *è vero?* And how did I know of your trouble? Who does *not* know? You see in my—profession, I come and go like the wind, observing, but not observed. I have heard the peasants talk. This time you have *not* held your tongue, You have wagged it like the bell of a grazing goat. And in that you were wise. A woman who knows when to be silent and when to talk! A miracle!'

He fixed his dark eyes on my grandmother's as though he could read her thoughts—if she had any.

'*Egregio Signore* or robber, *madama*, it matters not which I am—that is a matter of opinion. Usually, if a robber steals enough he is an *egregio Signore* or even a *Duca*, but if he steals only a little he is a thief. The important thing is, I have not forgotten that I owe you my liberty—perhaps my life. I have come to pay my debts. It is my turn to serve you and you will not refuse. But you must do exactly as I say. *Attenzione!* You will send word to your landlord that you will pay the rent to-morrow night. He must come here for it—or send his agent—after dark. Mind that you get a written receipt from him. And in the meantime hold your tongue as well as you held it the day the soldiers questioned you about me!'

My grandmother was speechless. After awhile she said:

'*Ecco! Benissimo, Signore.*' Then remembering the words of the good *Padre*, she lifted her eyes to the image of the Madonna and murmured, crossing herself:

'The Lord tempers the wind to the shorn lamb!'

'*Sacramento!* He chooses strange weathercocks to show which way the wind blows!' the stranger said, with a laugh.

He asked her how large a sum she needed. She named it.

'I will be here to-morrow evening with the money,' he said. '*Buona notte, Signora. Buon riposo!*'

He smiled, bowed low, and was off before she could return his *saluti* or offer a prayer for him.

She obeyed him *exactamente*. She sent word to the landlord that she was ready to pay the rent if he would mend the leak in her roof. She was too ill to go to him, so would he call as he rode by, or send someone? At the same time she would show him the bad place in the roof. She would have the money ready in the evening after eight o'clock.

The cloaked stranger appeared as he had promised. He counted the total of the rent—and a little besides to drink *saluti*.

'I must be off,' he said, with a sweeping bow. '*Buona fortuna, Signora.* May you continue to cut hay in your own field! May the field bear a rich harvest always and may the Lord always temper the wind to the shorn lamb! *Addio!*'

He was gone! His movements were quicker than her wits. Before she could collect her thoughts to thank him the door had

closed behind him and she stood bewildered, mumbling bits of prayers for him.

The landlord followed quickly on the stranger's heels. He was a *superbo* man of large estates, who had made his fortune by—what do you say, now?"

"Extorting, mother—graft."

"Extorting! So it was! Extorting heavy rents from the *contadini*. He expected some excuse, or piteous story and his face was cruel when he entered. He would listen to nothing. Not he! The money or—*Scappato!* But when he saw the pile of silver shining in the candlelight he almost smiled. The old woman curtsied. Reverence was due the lord even if he was no better than a robber.

'*Ecco, Signore,*' she said, 'the rent. It came to me from one of my sons. He wishes to know that you have received it, and I have not spent it foolishly. Will it please your lordship to give me a written receipt? I will send it to my son, *Signore*, and he will be satisfied.'

He gathered up the money, counted it, wrote a receipt, signed it, and handed it to her.

'*Buono!* There was something you wished to show me?' he said.

'*Si, si, Signore,*' she answered, pointing to the roof. 'There is a leak.'

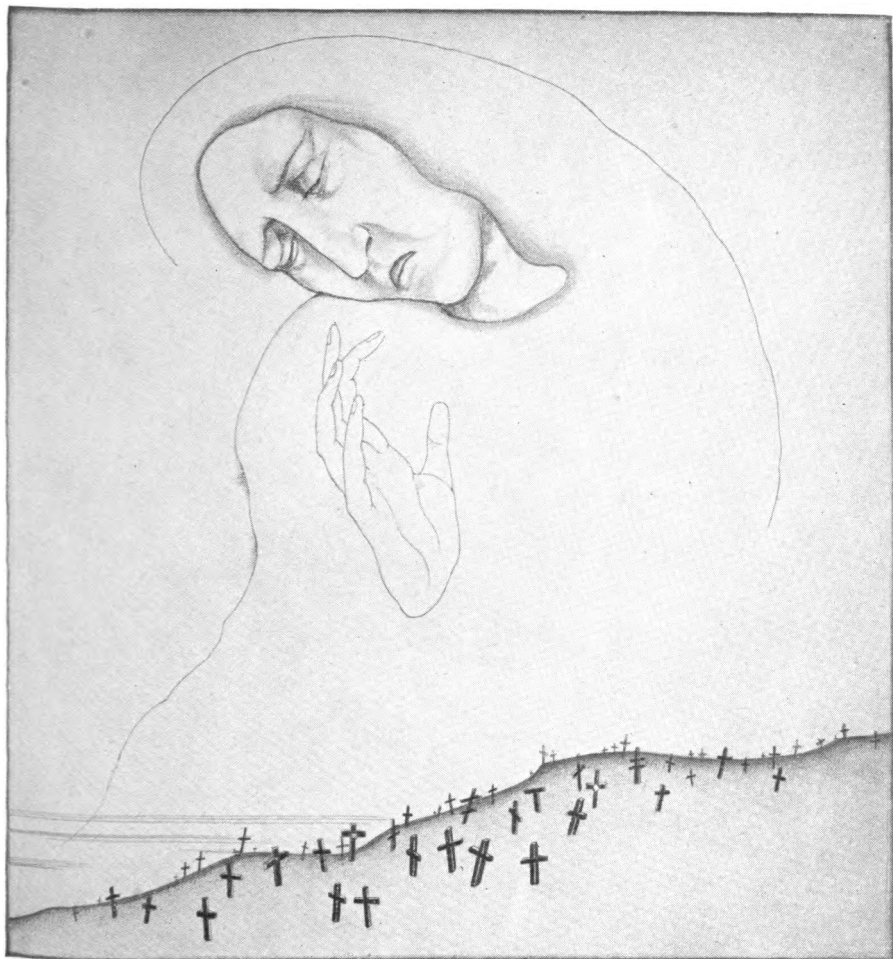
'It shall be attended to,' he replied.

Next morning there was great excitement! The night before, in a dense piece of woods, on his way home, the landlord had been robbed! Everybody rejoiced—in secret, of course. It was talked about at the post office, the Church, and the *alberghi* for weeks. The robber was never found. My grandmother knew quite well who it was, but when she was questioned, she shook her head and answered:

'I am a poor old woman. I see nothing. I hear nothing. I do my work.'"



GIRL'S HEAD. BY SASCHA KRONBURG



WAR. BY SASCHA KRONBURG



ST. FRANCIS AND THE POOR. BY SASCHA KRONBURG

THE BARN-YARD

BY YVOR WINTERS

The wind appears
and disappears
like breath on a mirror
and between the hills
is only cold
that lies
beneath the stones
and in the grass.
The sleeping dog
becomes a
knot of twinging turf.
It was the
spring that left
this rubbish
and these scavengers
for ice to kill—
this old man
wrinkled in
the fear of hell, the
child that staggers
straight into
the clotting cold
with short fierce cries.

MEMORIES

BY LEON SRABIAN HERALD

II

IN OUR HOUSE

EVERYWHERE, like the multi-coloured birds which were leaving the village, the fruits had disappeared from branch and vine and shrub as the frost was settling. Our Nor-ding only, like a deep-buried lucrative mine, was still yielding even though its grapes had been carried away all through the summer in sieves, on heads, in large baskets, on horseback, and in aprons and pails. No one slept in the vineyards any longer; people were settled in their homes again at night, and the guarding of our grapes against increasing looters was a great responsibility. My parents Lazarus and Vartouhi, and other valiant relatives of ours had taken this risky watchmanship out of our hands—Ohannes' and mine—although Ohannes still stayed with them. For it was not many days since Ananias had been stoned nearly to death and found by the children in the morning, his head cracked in various places, almost unconscious.

In our house several rooms were packed with basketfuls of melons, grapes, and other fruits. My sister Helena and her friend, my younger brothers and I, were left at home, the girls and I sleeping in the outermost room where only space was to be had.

At a late hour hearing footsteps on the street, the girls began to whisper to each other. First I heard them speak of fear. Then their whispers turned upon a more interesting subject which made my attention sit up on its hind legs like a curious animal. I was delighted.

“I wish Oscan would come; I wish those footsteps were his,” was Acabin's secret suggestion.

Someone coughed.

“It's Nisho, the destitute of hair.” They giggled.

But "Levon—Levon!" warned Helena, her voice infused with joy.

"He is asleep." Giggles.

I did not answer, happy in suspecting what it was about and anxious to hear these girls converse about their favourite young men. It was a child's golden opportunity to experience this—to hear two young girls talking in private of such matters. Acabin called again, to make sure that I was sleeping. I did not answer, hardly able to check the laughter beating at my cheeks from inside like a swarm of caged birds. Quite convinced that I was fast asleep, they began their golden revelations.

Acabin said how often she had seen Oscan that week and had talked to him, how happy she was that her meeting him was not known to any one else, her sister approving of the match, and how thrilling would the day be when it came. But I was most anxious to hear what my sister would say; I so liked to think of having a brother-in-law and would have liked to know who this fortunate one could be, for Helena was the favourite of the village, although none had yet dared ask her hand of my stern, refusing father.

At last she began with a familiar comic song, the author of which was a recent bride whose husband was a numskull:

"Mine is better than the rest;
He can read, he can write,
And he sings
In the choir.
Mine is better than the rest."

"Mine," she added, "is the *head* of the choir."

Cutting grief then pierced her, so serious, so simple, making me feel sorry for her. "My father won't let me have him," she said, "he is a bully; not satisfied with domineering over everybody in the village, he bullies me too. Mother told me." From that time on such a deep devotion developed in me toward my sister's future mate, though she never married him because of my father's bullying, that I could not later love the man she married, half so much.

I thought of a prank. I wanted to tell them I had overheard

what they said and would with all delight be their confidant, but modified my intention in a way which resulted for me in misfortune and ignominy too; I threw at them some of the berries of grapes which were all around me.

Silence.

“What’s that?”

“Berries of grapes; here is one.”

“Thieves wouldn’t do that. It’s someone that knows us.”

“He knows we are alone.” Acabin referring to Oscan.

“Suppose people knew that he was here at this hour of night. My father would butcher us.”

“Another one! I know it did not come from outside.”

“Is that you, Levon?”

My laughter, long suppressed, flew out like wild wings before I could pretend I was asleep.

“Let’s get up and choke him!” they said half crest-fallen, half threatening.

“Wait till Mother comes in the morning; just wait. She entrusted us to your protection, and you are doing your best to scare the souls out of us.” But I knew they were not so much scared as vexed that their secret had found leakage.

Morning came, Mother came, and the deserved punishment.

“The girls say you scared them last night. How could you!” Though she was severe, her severity did not manifest itself in manual agility. I was ashamed of myself.

Helena, seeing perhaps that I had not got from Mother what I deserved, slapped me. I took a stick and hit her. She cried softly and this made me inwardly sympathize with her more than ever. I should have had sense enough to be satisfied with my sister’s slaps; since I hadn’t, my mother did what she had thought of doing before. Thereupon, I took my stand outside, in front of the door and wailed savagely to attract the neighbours’ attention. Naturally everyone knew that the trouble came from within, from my mother, or I would not have been sitting outside, but near her, to be comforted by her. Kind-hearted neighbours after sympathizing with me, went to plead with her, but this augmented my roars. “Yes, daughter and mother beat me, one after the other,” I cried.

“Shut up and come in,” my mother called to me, “or I will

tell your father." But instead, I went away, and did not come back all day. I disliked my sister for some time; my mother also.

One time my mother took sick. As the most learned boy of the family, I had to read the Bible standing at her head, several times a day. Also I had to read another scroll, hand-written, with devils on it, which showed Satan taking their souls from people; Satan and an archangel quarrelling together—one to take the soul, one to protect it; the devil by himself running away with a blood-trickling liver. I hated this, or rather, some sort of incomprehensible revulsion against it, wouldn't let me read it. Yet it was painful to me to refuse, and I battled with myself day after day. It woke me sometimes at night, and in the morning when I got up, the thought of it flogged my mind. Nevertheless, one day to everybody's surprise, I refused.

"What! Not want to read holy books over his mother's bed! He has taken to the devil's ways," they said, and I was anathematized. My younger brother took my place, and sometimes learned sons of the village came at my mother's request to read Hamayil, with the picture on it of the devil choking a woman in childbirth.

My brother was amply rewarded for his perseverance, for as Mother had promised while in bed that when she got well she would go to the feet of St Guiragos several villages away to offer sacrifice, she took him with her and not me. My child's heart broken, I stood and watched as they got ready to leave, as she dressed in her fineries and then mounted the horse with the for-special-occasions saddle on him—my happy, victorious brother behind her and my eldest brother leading the horse. I had kept up courage while the ceremony mocked my defeat. I did not cry, thinking until the last moment that she would take me with her for I had read over her bed when she was sick, longer than all the rest together. But I was left behind unnoticed, with feverish cheeks. I fell sick soon after they left. In the evening my stern father saw this and with his own hands, gave me brandy which made my upset stomach better, but I was still sick the whole week they were away. It was a supreme joy, however, to have my austere father sit by me, asking for my condition and I compared my loss with the gaining of my father's heart; that was something. But whenever I thought of the procession and how it went away without me, I wept and wept. Then quite unexpectedly

he said, "You will make a better journey some day." Although I did not know what he meant or how soon that would be realized, I asked no question and was glad of the promise. He always did things unexpectedly and he did anything he promised.

The neighbours came in from time to time and would say, "Your younger brother has gone with your mother to sacrifice, to see the city and many wonderful places and you haven't been anywhere beyond the village. You ought to be kinder to your mother."

"I don't like to read Hamayil!" I felt like saying but could only stammer, realizing at the same time that I would have to do in life even those things which I did not like to do. What can one tell about people, parents included? They are all "good" and because they are good, they are not afraid to hurt you in any way they like and no one takes special care of you because you are a child.

In autumn when people have housed their livelihood for the winter, their thoughts turn toward their roofs. A sort of clay was rare which when spread on the roof and trampled upon became solid as stone and leak-proof. Upon the question of roofs every villager's thoughts might well focus.

THE HILL OF THE CROSS

Each Sunday evening, before it grew dark, the young people of Put Aringe climbed up the Hill of the Cross joyously to offer weekly homage to the centuries-old cross—to burn candles and to sacrifice roosters. Their energetic voices were like mellow fruit falling upon the village from a tree whose branches were youth. How enviously the older people watched them!

This cross on top of the hill commanding a radius of twenty miles, is said to have been erected by Thadeos and Bartolomeos, Apostles who had chosen Armenia as their field of ministry and were beheaded by an Armenian pagan king. This eloquent memorial was about four feet wide, ten inches thick, and more than six feet high. It must have been deep in the ground to have endured the winds and the rainwash of centuries. Upon it a thick coat of red moss had grown. How suggestive this cross was!—bathed in a nation's blood.

Autumn. There were only two hills in the village from which

clay could be got by the villagers to mend the flat roofs of their houses and barns, against rain and thawing snow. Those who did not clay the roofs, did not sleep when rain fell. Their houses leaked more than it rained outside, leaked even when it did not rain, leak, leak, leak over their winter provisions, their animals, and themselves.

While they trampled it and ran large stone rollers over the clay to make it hard and uniform, one often heard them speak of a relative, a son, or a brother who had left Put Aringe in search of fortune and had become a premier in Constantinople, a professor in Egypt, a merchant of great renown in France, or Russia; a musician, a poet, or a journalist in some other part of the world.

There were, as I have said, only two hills in the village where clay could be got. One was the Hill of the Cross, the other was in poor Oscan's orchard. Oscan protested that it ruined the orchard to travel through it—that, when they pulled clay from under the surface, the people actually pulled the heart-strings of the trees, which were the strings of his own heart.

The representative of the Hill of the Cross was a hallucinating woman named Mary who had recently come as a bride from the village of St Theodoros. Mary was a stranger as well as a strange person. Whether the villagers felt for her prophecies awe or disgust, was hard to say. When any one tried to say something, the word seemed the contrary of his wish. One could express neither love nor contempt for her. They objected that she was too young, too beautiful to be believed. Such oracles should be delivered by an old grandmother who had passed the age of motherhood, not by a bride who had not yet even been a mother. They were firm in their opinion, since nothing she foretold ever took place. Yet this prophecy sounded different. It was something to think about—the explanation that she gave to the people of Put Aringe, of this cross. It had seemed a simple sign of Christ, the hand of God, an emblem showing that Armenia had been a Christian country for many reasons, and ages.

During the week in which Mary heard that clay was to be got from the Hill of the Cross, on Sunday evening, at the foot of the cross she assumed terrific manners of explanation. She performed in the open—on top of the hill solely for the young people who were not accustomed to hearing messages of religion other than from the priest and in the church. After saying incomprehensible

things, and tearing her hair, she went, down the steep hill straight as an arrow, and was found at the foot, writhing, and mumbling that this hill was not a hill as people saw it, that it was a vast cathedral which had the aspect of a hill; that this cross was not like other crosses anywhere else, that it was the pinnacle of the temple; and that each time people carried away clay, they wrecked the walls of an invisible church.

As in the history of the world so it was in Put Aringe: the more phases of religion there were, the more divided people became. Part of the village accepted the oracle and refrained from destroying God's institution, not daring to dig any more clay from the hill. The other half thought that since they had been created in the image of God, He could have no better institution than the dwelling of His people. In accord with conscience, both sides were in favour of keeping God's house intact.

On Monday morning half the strength of the village fared forth with picks, shovels, bags, and hilarity, to the Hill of the Cross. For years clay had been taken from this pit so that each year the upper part projected more and more.

When enough clay had been loosened—as if it were so much treasure—the men put it into bags which they carried away on their backs, almost running. They then helped each other clay the roofs, accepting commands from Paul because he was kind at heart and kindest in action; because he was the strongest; and because—most admirable—he was engaged to be married in the winter. It was for Paul to show his wisdom and strength, and prove that he was worthy of the people's regard and fit to be married. He therefore undertook the hardest part of the work and dug while the others carried. All talked while they worked, about what they were happy to discuss, and the work was so easy to them that one hearing their hilarity might have thought them the only happy people in the world.

They first scattered the clay in small heaps on the roofs of the houses which were so close to each other that they looked from a distance like one building. Paul had advised them to level the clay roughly on each roof in order to know how much more was needed. And as they were doing this, a heavy thing fell on the village, on the villagers, on their hearts. Something heavy fell upon their souls. In a moment, voices, laughter, action, were all thrust into the furnace of silence to be brought out a different

shape and of a quality to be used for a different purpose. No one asked what had happened or where; everybody seemed to know, and voices from all over the village became louder and louder like thunder from silent clouds—meaningless yet elemental. Whoever could walk, whoever could run, sought that—a finger of dust, rising in wrath. How far away it seemed, the Hill of the Cross! It seemed as if the hill were running away, as if it were rising. Fear had clutched the people's knees and but few were able to climb as far as the pit; among them a woman, Sandought Morkoor. As the men were recovering from under the caved-in clay, the body of the strongest in the village, she, an Amazon, came out of the pit and deafened the ears of the fear-bound throng below: "Nana, your home is wrecked!"

No one could mistake her voice and everyone knew that Nana had but one home, a mansion; namely, Paul.

Those who worked that day, claying the roofs, felt very tired for the first time in their lives. Those who had thought their dwelling an institution of God, were defeated.

SCHOOL DAYS

In the heart of winter, we often walked to school barefoot; not all of us because of poverty, but rather as a matter of custom, and we carried with us not only our breakfast and clumsy books but kindling. The more we brought, the more were we favoured by the teacher; hence there dawned in me, the idea of stealing. No parent would allow his children to take the best of the wood to school, for wood was scarce, and often I hid some behind the door where it was dark, to slip out with—when the chores had been finished and it was time to leave for school. And almost as often, my father discovered it, saying, "I wonder who puts this wood behind the door and why," and to my disappointment would put it in the stove. The teacher sent back any child who came in without a stick or an armful of faggots. But if the child cried because his feet were frozen, the Master would sympathize with him, letting him wear his own shoes. Indeed the schoolhouse was the warmest place in the village and we liked to breakfast there better than at home, and could talk as we pleased for the teacher arrived as much as an hour after we did.

Winter was a mystic season, of a thousand happenings—joys and sorrows. Joy for all, with most of the hardship for men, most of the sorrow for children and especially for boys. The first blizzard thrust open the door of the schoolroom and what could be expected of a door which had been so stubborn as not to open to spring's fragrant winds? It was the most uninviting door a child ever entered. Had my eager ambitions lain there like chopped wood, the schoolroom would have been buried in a disorder of blocks rising to the sky. Day after day, year in and year out, it was the same so far as books and learning were concerned. Psalms and the Bible all day and every day, written in the ancient language, incomprehensible except as letters. There was always the same kind of teacher, cruel and ununderstanding. When one went away or died, there grew as it seemed out of the decayed trunk, its offspring. The only things that were changed often were the rods—new ones every Monday morning. On that day the benighted schoolhouse was almost a *morgue*. We cried until our eyes had swelled nearly to the size of our hands and feet. As docile pupils, we were not allowed on Saturdays and Sundays when there was no school, to play even a quiet game freely, but we were supposed to stop, run, or hide, when we saw the sight of the teacher or the priest. Many games, in fact those that we liked best to play, were taboo and if we were caught playing them or had been betrayed by a Judas, that was the end of all our pleasure; a forest could not supply rods enough. The teacher's power was final even if a child broke under it and took sick. A schoolboy is the slave of his elders and there were many Judases who spoiled my happiness by notifying the teacher that I had done this or had not done that. If the teacher had seen me at a forbidden game or somebody for his own selfish sake said, "I will tell the teacher," I then had nightmare on a Sunday night, my imagination tormenting itself about the scenes of Monday. Playing with unfortunate children who could not go to school because they were poor and were the sole support of their families, was unbearable, a sacrilege. "The savages, the untamed!" speaking as loud as they wanted to on the streets, swore what they pleased, did not go to church, took no sacrament. Play with them? It was a disgrace to ignore such distinctions.

On one of those restless spring days that burst prematurely out in the middle of winter, the teacher intended for some reason to

keep a boy in school at noon, the time for us to go home to our luncheon, and to tend the stock. Hatchadour uttered a loud cry, the teacher could not silence him even when he had promised not to punish him. "It means just that you will stay here," he said. "See! I am putting the rod under the mat."

"No! no!" the boy protested, "it is sunny outside, and I want to go home. I will stay in another day!"

The boy's sound reasoning made the teacher laugh and he began to twit his victim a little, which meant that he was going to free the lad. The prisoner, however, accepted no sarcasm and turned toward the open door, crying as he did so at the top of his voice. The Magistrate laughed and the child said to him what had often been said to him by this very man: "You damned useless vagabond, why don't you let me go home!" then slapped the Magistrate's face with his little hand, and made his way out. The crest-fallen monarch was mummified for a moment; dignity would not allow him to run after the boy who was now out of sight and he called to the other pupils to catch him. But as I have said, the boy had got away.

The process of our promotion and retrogression was sickening. There were no divisions of classes. The pupils sat lined along the wall, on straw mats. There were two recitations during the day—one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Yesterday's proud success often stumbled and was the next day's failure. Any one who recited his lesson better or memorized it to sing in the church, or on a special occasion in a home, was promoted in the line toward the place where the teacher had his own soft, private mat and pillow. The success of the morning could be a failure in the afternoon, tears in eyes. For what lad could recite continuously well in those two incomprehensible books? One memorized better to-day, another recited better the next day; for innumerable duties at home would not let one study regularly. So this "up to-day," "down to-morrow" went on and on. The struggle for supremacy and its consequences were just as heated and impassioned in that little schoolroom as anywhere, in any undertaking in the world.

The teacher was fair or else was beyond our standard of judgment. Most injustices originated among the higher students, "Infallibles" as we called them. When, during recitation hours the teacher wished to take a nap or to go out, he put the students—sometimes babies sent by mothers who were busy, and again, young

girls of eighteen or nineteen, or young men up to twenty-five—in the charge of one or two Infallibles. The sole aim of these higher students was, like that of the middleman anywhere, chiefly graft. I often did not eat the fruit my mother gave me or stole some to appease their wrath or to stimulate a sense of justice, for sometimes they would beat me harder than the teacher did. And they were likely to send me from the middle of the line to the bottom. They had gone to school twenty-five years because they were poor and had no fields or orchards or vineyards to work in. No wonder they had become Infallibles, having cringed so long by the side of the teacher. And the teacher of course could not beat grown people.

Once my brother caught hold of another little boy and said, pulling him back, "That's my place!"

The other lad cried, "No, it isn't; it's my place!"

The Infallible called my brother into the centre of the room and ordered him to stand on one leg, but the child could not do it, and wobbled. Each time he touched his foot to the floor, the whip struck him sharply, and he began to cry. I could not stand this; but the only thing I could do was to volunteer to take his place.

"You will?" snapped the Infallible, "then do it." I stood on one leg, crane-like, longer than he thought I could, and this irritated him. In a moment, however, someone who was trying to mimic me, attracted my attention and I lost my balance. "Aooo!" I cried and swore at him. My ankle was badly hurt, I was crying, and to make matters worse, the Infallible said, threatening me, "You swore in the schoolhouse; just wait till the teacher comes."

One Monday morning, Punishment Day—when we were whipped in accordance with our Saturday or Sunday sins, some lying on their backs to lift up the soles of their feet, some opening their hands to the rods—one of the boys proved ingenious and ingenuous, at the same time: the idea was clever, but the results proved frightful. As soon as the rod had descended on the bottom of his foot, a column of dust rose. Thinking it ordinary dust from the fellow's thick woolen socks, the teacher struck the other foot ferociously to reprimand the first foot for its impudence in blowing so much dust at him. The rod awakened an even greater column of dust, which streamed up to the Magistrate's countenance in proportion to the strength of his official action. The Master

stood up to escape the dust of these unholy feet and brought down his blows in rapid succession. In vain, however, for the dust in its reciprocity rose yet higher. Finally he stopped half choked and perspiring, made his eyes protrude as if they were in some way extensible, and looked at the face of the boy who was not, however, inconvenienced by the dust and was not crying at all. The teacher was furious and ordered one of the Infallibles to take off the lad's socks and lo, about a bushel of ashes spread itself on the floor.

The poor lad was in the end a loser, for by noon, although he had stopped crying, he could hardly walk. Poor fellow! We knew that there was no extra wool in his house, and ashes were so unreliable.

One season from far, far away, a youthful fellow came to the village with his parents, a younger brother and sister, and another sister still younger named Zarmanazan. Although his parents were from the village, he had been born in Smyrna and had not known before what our village looked like. It was said that he could do everything in the world except sing in the church. But that did not matter. The village chose him unanimously for its new teacher. He was the focus of our childish imagination and admiration: such a teacher! "He can soon learn to sing in church," the villagers agreed, "a man of such capacity can do anything." Though they found that he had a voice no better than a year-old burro, he was satisfactory inasmuch as he could impart knowledge to their children.

He was about twenty-five years old, and very clean looking. There was for us children the next season, a different air in the schoolhouse. To make a promising *début*, each of us, one by one, kissed his hand. Unfortunately this seemed to annoy him. He told us that those who wished to study French might ask their parents to order books for them from town. Study French! The thought of it was heavenly to us. We should have new text-books, the Bible and Psalms were only to be used in church! It seemed like a dream. We were to have a black-board on the wall! Now we were going to learn something.

At noon I rushed home and poured the news into my parents' ears. I could pronounce "French" better than I could "black-board," which is "writing-board" in Armenian. I had never seen one, but a French book was a French book no matter what it was. What was a "writing-board"? Even on this first day I

thought I had already learned something. My parents agreed to everything except to buying me a French book. My father shrugged his shoulders and said that I might never see a Frenchman all my life. But I cried, and did well to cry for it brought me the book. How strange I thought when at last the book was in my hand, none of the letters in it looked a bit like ours.

From this on, things were a bed of roses. There was no more beating, learning only. We studied French like so many frogs in a pond, repeating in chorus; a, u—O; e, a, u—O; a, u, x—O. And the z (zed) at the end of the alphabet—so distasteful, so flat. It sounded like *zet* which is a malodorous oil for burning in lamps.

Song is the first and last expression of the spirit; it is a child's first outlet, and an old man's last inlet. Men who are blind, who are dumb or maimed, sing, or love to hear songs. A man may have lost everything; song is the last thing to leave him. We sing not because we love, though love makes our singing; we sing not because we have anything or expect to have anything. Song is the bark or rind of the spirit. Flowers may come and vanish; fruit may ripen and fall, leaving a scar; leaves may flame and fall; but the bark is still there and when it disintegrates, hardening takes place. Is not song the lining of the body?

All types of men came to our schoolroom—alone, in groups, prompted by a decanterful of liquid, urged by love or loneliness or sorrow. "Ach, teacher, I am burning, I have sorrows," they would say. "Teacher, give command to your pupils to sing me a song. Come, boys, a song. Let me see you; louder, louder! Ach! ach!"

Song is the inevitable sequel of every emotion; people look for it and want it after joy, after sorrow, after victory; even after defeat. And although we children had no knowledge of the emotions of our listener, tears gathered on his face as if our songs were actually taking form and motion there.

Although my father never came to the schoolhouse for song, song went to his house when he felt a need for it and this was often. One day he had sent to ask the teacher to bring a group of the best singing boys to our house that evening. In a group I could sing well, for children sing better in groups; but when he asked me to sing alone, a paralysis held me. I would start, falter, and start again, but my vocal chords became choking fingers which seemed to break my voice into glassy pieces. Of course my austere

father could not tolerate so disgraceful a failure and when wine had made him agile, all those in his presence were bound to respond to his activity. His tobacco-box made a vault in the air and landed on the nape of my neck as I was retreating in disgrace. I tented behind my mother, and in stifling a cry, made the sound one makes in trying to dislodge a disturbing cat—Psust! Psust!

Presently complaints poured into the schoolroom. "Teacher," a log of a man, a great trunk of an oak would come in and say, "I am told that you do not punish my children at all. It is getting so that they do not mind even their parents. You should beat them, Teacher, you should beat them. I will have to report you to the school-board. 'Their flesh to you and their bones to me,' don't forget, Teacher, and don't be afraid. Beating is the best way to teach children; it should be thus," the villager took half a rod that was still to be found in the peaceful domain, calling to his children, "hey, you, dog-sons-of-a-dog, come here!" When the children had come to him, trembling, he gave the rod to the teacher and commanded, "Open, open your hands and let me see the teacher whip you. Now," he said turning to the Master, "let me see you whip. Show me the strength of your arm, Master."

The teacher gave them a few light strokes.

"No, no! Give them the kind we used to get. Is that what I am paying ten piastres for? That is no way to train children!"

Then our youthful Master declared himself. "Who gave you leave to instruct me?" he demanded, and the meeting ended in a raw fashion.

The poor teacher could not withstand the whole village. He took to beating, which like drink became a habit with him, and we were beaten as unmercifully as ever. We studied no longer either Psalms or newer books. The Master was a martyr and we were helpless victims.

Next to the church, the schoolhouse is the best building in the village and next to the church, has the quietest location. Late one night, an enemy of the teacher's saw smoke coming from the schoolhouse chimney. Keen to discover something, he listened at the door and heard whispering. He then summoned a companion and waited with him in a corner. Incredible! At this late hour of night the teacher came out with a woman whose name was Mary—a Mary in every place.

That year the school closed early, before spring came, for it

was too late to appoint another teacher. And the black-board which had been so inspiring, remained on the wall with boys' initials carved all over it.

However, even in so short a period of study, a rift in the black wall of learning had disclosed itself to me: "A Frenchman named Joseph Leverrier, had discovered the existence of Neptune, thus completing our planetary system." I knew that to be learning and have not forgotten it—the only learning which I brought from my village.

To be continued

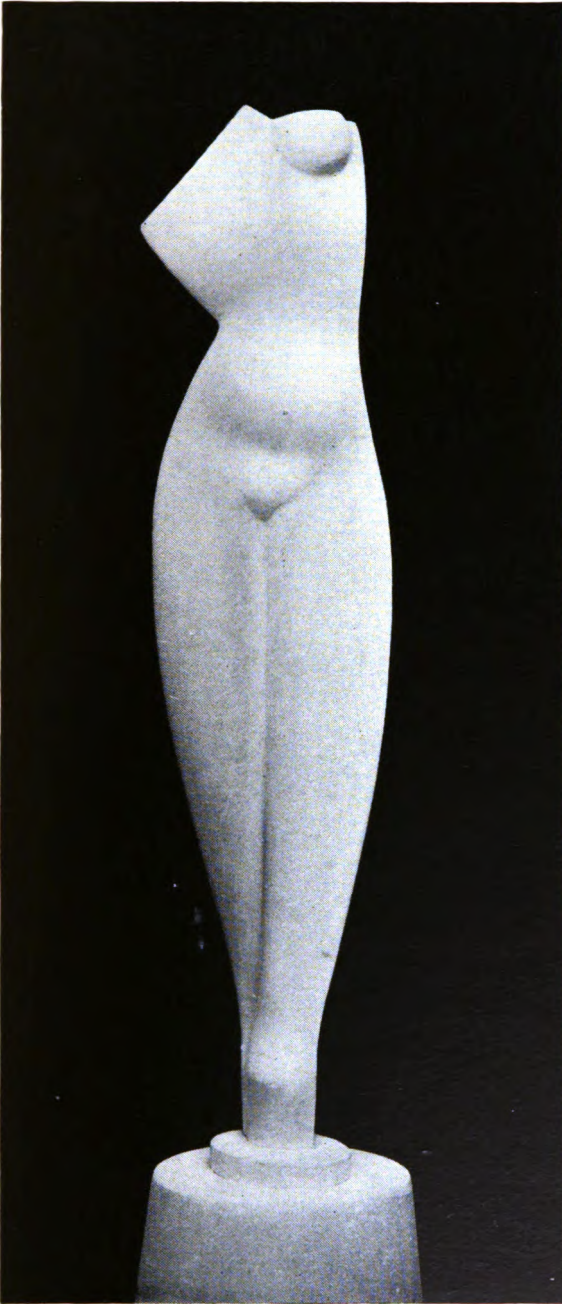
AND LOVE SAID, LET THERE BE RAIN

BY SCOFIELD THAYER

Twist me not laurel from the mountains
 Nor break me heather from the plains,
 For I have sat by Love's dry fountains
 And now it wholly rains.

And now the downpour of disaster
 In liquid drops is turned,
 And headlong fast and headlong faster
 My heart has wholly learned.

My heart has learned that every sorrow,
 Though at the quick it dig and stay,
 Shall liquefy in a to-morrow
 Whereof He Pours the Day.



TORSO. BY ALEXANDER ARCHIPENKO

TWO SWARMS

BY STOYAN CHRISTOWE

MASSES of bees adhered like huge clusters of black grapes to the entrances of the hives in the gardens at the back of the houses. Forsaking the dim interiors of their homes, they had established themselves out of doors and awaited the propitious moment for making a final departure.

It was a day such as bees choose for swarming. The sun fell warm upon the low mud-plastered houses with their red tiled roofs, upon fruit-trees and kitchen-gardens. Above the river which cut the hamlet in two, the patches of corn-field on either side, and the young girls who clumsily pounded wet clothes on the bank under the willows, the sky arched, blue and cloudless.

A cluster of bees on one of the hives in our apiary began to stir, rustling and fluttering like an army preparatory to an expedition, or a nation on the point of exodus. Slowly it dissolved into a shimmering stream that gushed from the hive as if sprayed from a spout, into quivering, animated drops that floated in the air. The swarm was prodigious—an innumerable, aerial army that blackened the air above the garden, buzzing continuously above and around the fruit-trees.

“Tick . . . tock . . . Tick . . . tock,” came the monotonous, unvarying sound from two cobble-stones which my grandfather knocked between his hands as he chanted, “Perch . . . perch . . . Perch, queenie.” Then suddenly, a deep faint noise, a kind of distant rumbling came from our neighbour’s garden. A swarm had issued from that apiary also and like a conoidal, baseless tower, reeled, wavered, and twirled in the air, drifting gradually toward our swarm.

“Pick up stones, son, and lead it the other way!” cried my grandfather in a tremulous voice. I endeavoured to entice the swarm in the opposite direction, but as if annoyed by my crude music, it trembled above me stationary, inclining, however, more and more toward the garden above which our own bees were still spinning and warping.

Attracted by the knocking of the cobble-stones and the buzzing, our neighbour came out, wiping dough from her hands on her thick woolen apron. She also picked up stones and tried to lure the swarm, keeping time as she chanted: "Come, queenie, come, queenie. This way; come, charming." She was the best bee-breeder in the county. When "evil eyes" had enchanted a hive and dead inmates fell like autumn leaves in front of the hemper, if the priest's psalms and the sprinkling of holy water had failed to disenchant it, the owner rushed to her for counsel. Now, however, despite her skilful efforts, the black, rustling bee-cloud slowly drifted toward our swarm. Hoarse from his prolonged cantillations, my grandfather importuned the bees to settle on a cherry-sprig which had been sprayed with dissolved sugar. Unmoved by the intoning and as if it loathed the candied twig, the swarm continued to float in the air.

"They'll mingle," my grandfather quavered, "and scythe each other—to the last bee!"

Children who had come running from their play, kept at a distance. At a distance also, for fear their "eyes" should be blamed for it if the bees intermingled and fought, men and women leaned on the wicker fences in their court-yards, furtively observing the curious coincidence.

Like clouds moving together and destined to collision, the swarms gyrated forward, closed, and instantly rebounded like toy balloons—collided once more and began to fuse, transforming the atmosphere above the low cherry-trees into a viscous mass of animation—a dense network which screened the sun itself from us. With a sudden cry, a child tore madly away, palm against forehead where a bee had planted its tiny, spear-like sting.

My grandfather scratched his neck puzzled, as the two-fold titanic swarm gradually began to encircle the twig upon which there was already a nucleus. The black bee-cloud was then distilled by degrees, into dancing, living drops that rained upon the sprig like a volley of bullets. As the round mass grew bigger, the heavy, continuous noise subsided a little; the air became clearer of the innumerable specks that floated in it. It was as if some invisible atmospheric hand had compounded the bee-cloud into a bag and hung it on the cherry-branch.

Our neighbour and my grandfather hived the bees without difficulty by placing over them a rectangular wooden box; and beneath

them, a pan of dry, burning ox-manure, the fumes of which drove the bees into the box. When none was left crawling on the sprig, the wooden case was lowered and left by the tree the rest of the afternoon; for as long as the sun shone, bees spun round the branches, surveying the vicinity before finally deciding to enter their new home.

The unfortunate little bough on which the queens of the pilgrim bands had chosen to alight, lifted again, but looked withered; its leaves had a frost-bitten appearance in comparison with the other healthy twigs.

“Grandfather,” I said, “Look at that little branch. How sad it is. I think it’s going to dry up.”

“’Tis the inside of the tree, sonny,” replied my grandfather, “that keeps the branches strong. The roots and trunk are sound. It will recover its healthy look.” He sighed, swinging his arms a moment. I was too young to understand.

The long day was about over. The sun had partly sunk below the horizon and a breeze was stirring as peasants, a bag over the shoulders, staggered along the road toward the village. Oxen paced homeward and the herders trailed behind—youngsters with sun-burned faces, with bare, scratched-up legs, and staffs in their hands like sceptres of authority. Night slowly enfolded the houses, trees, barns—the whole village in its shadow. Bees that had murmured hesitant about the trees through the late afternoon, reluctantly entered the empty, as yet unfamiliar home. My grandfather and our neighbour lifted the wooden case and set it in the row in our apiary to stay there until fall, when the bees would be killed and the honey divided. My grandfather said it was the only thing to do. The bees could not be separated and for either to buy the other’s bees was out of the question. For as long as he could remember, no one had ever sold a beehive. “Bees are sensitive little things,” he said, “and would resent being bartered.”

Summer had passed. Divested of their rich, hanging clusters, the vineyards lay spread at the foot of the hills like faded reddish blankets. Peach, apricot, and other fruit-trees loomed against the sky, lonely and barren. Bees still journeyed to and fro, perched on coarse, withered autumn flowers, trooped as far as the vineyards in the hope that hidden grapes might still hang somewhere, but returned with their bags empty.

It was a night in September. Stars trembled in the clear sky.

An autumn breeze swept over the fields. The bees had retreated to the innermost chambers of the hives, where numbed by the cold, they huddled together for warmth. As my grandfather and our neighbour lifted their joint property from its place in the row, the bees stirred and shuffled like nuts in a sack. What was it? Some natural disturbance or a catastrophe that had befallen them? Before they could determine their misfortune, a kettleful of water was spilled on them, sweeping them with it as it ran through the interstices of the combs. They struggled, crawled, and rolled in the water, hopeful of life, but another cataract descended and put an end to the struggle. Our neighbour and my grandfather stooped under the weight of the honey-box as they carried it to the shed adjoining the garden. After placing it open side up on a wide smooth board, they swept away the drowned bees which lay like a black veil on the combs. When the dead and half dead bees had been brushed away and the honey gleamed there in its purity, those gathered around the box were awestruck by the novel, unanticipated arrangement of the combs. Such an astonishing network of wax had never been seen by any one, though dozens of hives had been spoiled by us in this way, for the honey. Instead of building the combs crosswise and strictly parallel, as had always been the case with any hive from which we had taken the honey, the bees had in this instance, divided the box with mathematical precision into two equal compartments, separated from each other by a thin resinous wall. Half the combs ran crosswise—that is parallel with the partition; the other half, lengthwise and at right angles to the partition. Indisputably the two families of bees had separated as soon as they had been hived and had peaceably divided the available space. Why they had chosen to mingle and to remain together when they had deserted their original homes in the first place for lack of space—risking poverty and uncertainty in the hope of finding it—even my grandfather with his practical knowledge of bee-breeding, could not divine. That they had managed to divide the space amicably and live in concord, was evident. Because the space had been small, every comb was filled with honey; there was not a dry cell. It was unnecessary, accordingly, to weigh the honey. We had merely to take the two halves into which the bees had divided it.

THE WINGED SERPENT

BY WITTER BYNNER

The eagle is of the air toward the sun,
And the rattlesnake is of the earth toward the sun;
And the mewling of the eagle is the sound of many people
under the sun,
And the rattle of the snake is the sound of many people
under the sun.
But nowhere are there people who can make the sound of the
winged serpent,
Clapping the air into thunder
And shaking lightning from his scales.
This is the bird of the wonder that prevails,
The serpent of the wonder that prevails;
This is the dragon that lives in the mountains above the
yellow people of the middle kingdom,
This is the dream that lives in the lake among the red people
of the outer kingdom;
This is the heaver of earthquakes,
This is the dreamer of rain;
This is the earth in the air
And the air in the earth;
This is the winged terror in the hearts of men,
Because a snake can be so high in the air
And a bird can be so low in the ground,
With a hiss of water against the scaly girth
And a stir of rainbows through the feathered mane.
Pray to him well,
He will dart through your prayer,
Through the very heart and centre of your prayer,
And out of the words of your mouth
He will scatter a mist that will reassemble in a great white
cloud,
And out of the cloud will come rain.
Laugh for him well

THE WINGED SERPENT

And he will dart through your laughter,
Dashing it into splinters and spars of light
To be reassembled in the sun.

Die for him,
And out of your death he will make darkness
And, if you have lived for him well,
He will add the breath, that you have sung with,
To the everlasting wind of his plumes.



A DRAWING. BY EDWARD NAGLE



A DRAWING. BY EDWARD NAGLE

PARIS LETTER

December, 1926

ONE of the numerous recent collections devoted to the refurbishing of great authors (the past, with its death's head, needs all the paint and powder we can give it) has published a volume on Villon by Francis Carco. This brilliant writer, who made a great success in the literary stylization of Parisian "*apaches*," happens to be particularly well equipped to write the history of the "bad boy" poet, as they would say in the fifteenth century. These reconstructions always have on me much the effect of "*vieux Paris*" at Hollywood; yet the principal character is very much alive. This is the picturization of the sorry life of one of France's five or six authentic poets—foreigners best acquainted with our literature never go wrong in such matters—a life which is known to us principally through legal inquests, reports of tortures, and the records of imposed sentences. Vagrant, reckless, jealous of liberty,

*"Mais, lâs, je fuyais l'école
Comme font les mauvais enfants
En entendant cette parolle
A peur que le coeur ne se fent . . ."*

Villon is reminiscent of La Fontaine, and yet more, of Verlaine. M Carco, who is himself a poet, has emphasized this sombre story by excellent quotations from Villon's poetry.

The Talleyrand of M Jacques Sindral and the Vie Amoureuse d'Henri Beyle (Stendhal) of M Abel Bonnard, are not so much biographies as character studies seen from a professional angle. For Talleyrand the important thing in life was diplomacy; for Stendhal, love. Stendhal-Beyle studied its technique like a trade, although with much more heart than a Lovelace. M Bonnard, one of our best writers, maintains the tradition of the great classical eras; he has the French feeling for nuance, and is master of a style which, though often brilliant as poetry and strongly metaphorical, has the precision of steel. He explains away the apparent contra-

dictions of Stendhal-Beyle's temperament: his sensitivity so well concealed beneath dryness and cynicism; his surprising combination of extreme lucidity and extreme blindness; all the detours and doubling of this typically modern mentality (Stendhal wrote in 1830 that he would not be understood before 1880) which could make full allowance for the demands of both perception and affection without sacrificing one to the other.

Everything about Talleyrand seemed to have been said. Nevertheless M Jacques Sindral has successfully ventured to add a new portrait to the iconography of the prince of Benevento. Sindral (who is already well known under his real name, Fâbre-Luce, as the author of several novels and two political studies, the second of which in particular, *La Victoire*, aroused much discussion in 1924) was especially qualified to study this figure, both as an expert in diplomacy and as a romantic in politics. To-day, when statesmen count, only in so far as they possess international merit and, we might say, a gold value, it was interesting to acclaim Talleyrand as a great representative of the European spirit. Traditionalist and reactionary through his aristocratic birth and refined taste, revolutionary and modernist through the vigour and audacity of his judgement and the range of his unprejudiced ambition, Talleyrand finds in M Sindral, in whom one might detect a duality of the same sort, the interpreter best fitted to understand him. The work of this young writer displays an intelligence which is rare in its scope and impartiality. With thorough objectivity, he has been keen and resourceful in undertaking the revision of the Talleyrand case, and in acquitting Talleyrand of the charge of treason. Talleyrand merely opposed the excesses of the Napoleonic chimera by a system of defences which, since they anticipated the worst, were conceived with a view to mitigating the disaster. "Is this not," says Sindral, "wholly the attitude of the governmental departments in normal times, when they assure the continuity of a national policy by a series of petty treasons against their successive administrations?" "It is well," he adds with audacity, "for a nation to have at its disposal several rings of statesmen, one trusting to fortune, another hesitant and inclined to compromise. France had need of a Thiers in 1871; she may have had need of a Caillaux in 1917." Towards the end of the book, where Talleyrand is given proper rating with respect to Napoleon and in view

of "the incommensurable differences of quality" between the two men, there are magnificent pages to show us which of these leaders claims Sindral's admiration.

In his *Le Dépaysement Oriental* M de Traz, editor of the *Revue de Genève*, takes us through Egypt and Syria. His book (like his magazine, which maintains at a very high level the impartial thinking of the forum of European culture and politics which Geneva has become) hovers equidistant between lyrical praise and denigration. M de Traz admires Islam for its past, but questions whether it has the qualities necessary for an active participation in the future. The formalism of Islam; the *magister dixit* of its genuinely scholastic methods of instruction; the character of Mussulman thought, "reproducing itself in a fashion predominantly ornamental, by the repetition of a single motif"—all this seems to him irreconcilable with progress. Furthermore the rulers of Angora seem to share the opinion of M de Traz, and they are resorting to secularization as the first step in their attempts to ensure the survival of Turkey.

If M de Traz pays tribute to Europe in a beautiful and comforting outburst of courage and hope, M André Malraux, for his part, looks toward the Orient. After his first appearance as a Surrealist poet, this young writer went to China, where he spent two years among the revolutionary circles of Canton and of French Indo-China. Now, on his return, he gives us his first book of prose, *La Tentation de l'Occident*. Under the guise of an imaginary correspondence between a Frenchman and a Chinese (where, reviving the device of the Huron or the Persian in our eighteenth-century literature, M Malraux puts all the criticisms in the mouth of the Chinese and allows the Frenchman very weak replies) it is a lyric attempt to settle the Orient-Occident problem. One could wish that the work had been more precise: but in any event, it is a contribution to the study of the most complex and formidable of coming issues. Like all Asia, M Malraux takes the part of the many against the individual. But all art is individual, and M Malraux is an artist. Will he carry his ideas to their logical conclusion, which is suicide? . . . An eventuality which is not, perhaps, wholly repugnant to him.

I am glad to be able to call attention to the appearance in French literature of a young writer whose remarkable talent bears the most

brilliant promise. His book, *Mont Cinère*, has been very justly compared to the works of the Brontë sisters: one finds here the same reflection, the same attentiveness to the smallest details of the life of the sensibilities, the same power of creating characters which live with an incredible intensity, verity, and force of passion. This new author, M Julien Green, is an American, and in fact his book does at first give somewhat the impression of having been translated from the English. The thought is thoroughly Anglo-Saxon and the style is sometimes at fault, having preserved the contours of the author's native language (although, we are told, he was educated in France and is accustomed to think in French). M Green has since corrected these shortcomings, and there are no further reservations of the short story which he has just given the *Nouvelle Revue Française*, except perhaps that the subject pleases me less than that of *Mont Cinère* and seems to have been handled with less depth.

M Octave Homberg, one of the "leading figures" in French financial circles, has recently published *Le Financier Dans la Cité*, a book which has already attained a circulation of over fifty thousand and is making a great stir at a time when France is reaching a crucial point in its financial history. M Homberg attributes this grave situation to two causes: first, the intrusion of politicians into finance; and second, the collapse of the two principal mainstays in the plans for France's financial rehabilitation after the war—Germany's failure to pay, and the failure to ratify the convention which would permit France to reduce her military budget. The French treasury, as is well known, has been the subject of lively disapproval in the United States and England, where it is generally said that the French tax-payer is paying no taxes. I do not believe that I have ever heard in reply to this accusation the statement that the French tax-payer has paid the heaviest of all taxes, a tax which deprived him of seven-eighths of his wealth by the drop in the franc, the devaluation of his government holdings, treasury bonds, railway securities, et cetera, and finally the absence of assets on the part of his Russian, Turkish, and German creditors, because by a supreme violation of both justice and prudence it is the French tax-payer who has paid without guaranty the hundred billions required for the reconstruction of the devastated areas. On its part, the French press demonstrates how the French are the most heavily taxed people in the world. As always, each faction is partially in the right. M Homberg explains that

the French treasury system, thanks to the competitive bidding at elections, admits of such tax reductions at the base, that the workers and the peasants no longer pay anything, while the rest of the citizens of France, a minority, pay all. In 1924 the tax on agricultural profits in France yielded forty-six million francs, the tax on industrial and commercial profits a billion francs! The numerous politicians who represent the farm population in parliament are waiting till the Greek calends before making a new assessment of land values, although this is indispensable, since the present figures date back to the period before the war. On the other hand, the corporations ("money powers" as they are called by the politicians, who make as much of this imaginary danger as they once did of the "clerical peril") are burdened with enormous taxes. The Left Wing, by its vexatious fiscal tactics, has succeeded only in frightening French capital into investment abroad. It is necessary, M Homberg remarks very justly, that the Left Wing cease considering taxes as a punishment inflicted upon the well-to-do classes. This demagogic and thoroughly Latin conception is shamelessly maintained by the party theorists, such as M Jèze, who writes: "The problem of taxes is essentially a political problem." After a revision of the treasury system on the basis of equitable principles which will assure a much better return, M Homberg like all right-minded persons sees no other way of arriving at the restoration of our finances than by stabilizing the franc. As for inter-allied debts, M Homberg denounces them as a great injustice. "The French," he says, "at this moment are paying for munitions which laid France waste at a time when she was serving as a shield for allies better protected by nature." "One could," he also says, "make the plea of constraint valid in law for every acknowledgement of debt obtained by force; and with the Germans at Noyon, was not that a case of the dagger at the throat? But at least, let France's allies not treat her more severely than Germany; let them recognize that she, as well as her aggressor, is entitled to some arrangement whereby the yearly debt payments would be automatically suspended at the first symptom of a drop in the exchange." Finally, we should mention the fact that M Homberg, one of the Frenchmen best acquainted with his country's assets, estimates that at the present rate of forty francs to the dollar the franc is far below its real value.

In my last letter I was only able to mention in passing the book

of M G. Gabory on Marcel Proust. Less methodical perhaps than the work by M L. P. Quint, it is more imaginative, more intelligently intuitive. It is a charming piece of gossip, somewhat informal, in which the author of *Swann* and *Guermantes* is very exactly rendered, with his style, his language, and his profound thinking. On the subject of Proust, a controversy has arisen recently in *Les Nouvelles Littéraires* between M L. de Robert, a friend of Proust as a young man, and the critic M B. Crémieux. The former maintains that Proust wrote his novels without a plan, "like a long letter"; and the latter, with arguments which seem to us irrefutable, asserts in agreement with avowals of Proust himself, that the author, for all that he composed in accord with a new and very personal formula—around a centre, and as Gide has happily expressed it "*en rosace*,"—did have a guide-line to follow. If I may make a personal contribution to this debate (and the issue is not without importance, since it goes far to absolve Proust of one of the accusations which has most often been laid against him) I should say that Proust when referring to the last books in his great symphony, *La Prisonnière* and *Le Temps Retrouvé*, often said to me that these books should serve to clear up certain attitudes of the author and aspects of some of the characters which might have remained obscure to that point. "Wait for the end," he said; "the spread of the compass is very great; this prevents one as yet, from judging the whole; but never fear: that has all been traced out in advance."

PAUL MORAND

BOOK REVIEWS

A YELLOW PERIL

RIEN QUE LA TERRE. *Par Paul Morand. 12mo.*
255 pages. Bernard Grasset, Paris. 15 francs.

IT is the devil and the devil only that takes people to the tops of high mountains, said "B.V." Thompson. The same subtle influence, apparently, draws people to the tropics. Llewelyn Powys in equatorial Africa and Paul Morand in Siam came to the same conclusion. "To look for a meaning, a purpose in life, out here in Africa, appears as foolish as to look for the meaning in the creation and death of an extinct ichthyosauria whose meaningless existence has already reached its appointed end." That is Mr Powys. This is M Morand: "The Tropics are themselves a silent and permanent cataclysm and one might say, a punishment for man, were it possible for an instant to be a question of man in this *épopée végétale*. Here corruption is life and life ends in finishing to be born. . . . Halted by the impassibility of these tepid, smoking woods, one perceives fruits that have the air of tumours, maladies that have the air of animals, and corpses which, a half-hour after their death, have become flowers." Strange *milieux*, are they not, for a Cambridge man and a Parisian to suddenly find themselves in? They returned enriched by experience and with stories to tell, but punished, as traffickers with strange gods are apt to be, with new fears. Since Africa Llewelyn Powys has written an essay entitled, *In Defense of Cowardice*, and M Morand returns from his tour of the world livid with a sense of what we used to call "The Yellow Peril."

In circling the globe M Morand stopped longer in Siam than in any other country, studied it more closely, and gave it the bulk of the book he devotes to his travels. It is obvious, although it is not avowed, that Siam was an "objective." He rushed to get there. Accustomed as Americans are to speed and the idea of speed it

dazzles a good New Yorker to see a world-traveller devoting but twenty minutes to his home town. Perhaps it was less. A lucky taxi sometimes makes the distance from the dock to the Grand Central Station very quickly. At any rate it takes about seven lines in the book. Chicago the same, Niagara Falls even less. It is breath-taking the speed of a Frenchman once he gets started. In Vancouver there is a pause long enough to vignette a portrait of the place. In Japan there are more vignettes, charming, skilful, and already appreciably in the manner of Hokusai, but with still a sense of hurry in the background. It took old China to stay M Morand in his mad pace. In Peking, after a dinner on the roof of the Grand Hotel, looking out over the dimly lighted, strange city, our traveller, musing over what he has seen, writes:

“So long as the Chinese population does not increase to excess it will always prefer this soil to another; no military ambition, no political crusade can ferment it. It will be necessary, before the reservoir overflows and the yellow waters descend once more from the roof of the globe, to imagine a China without wars, without epidemics, without cataclysms. Then these four hundred million men will become a milliard and the world will be a yellow world. The example of Japan and her fantastic increase—more than a million births a year—since she has been converted to hygiene and science, do not permit it to be doubted. To-day it’s not a question of whether Japan loves or does not love America, Australia. The query is—who will Japan kill in bursting?”

The peaceful Americas that lie east of The Rockies are entirely engrossed in the new game of being rich and will not catch fire at this flame, but it can be imagined that harassed France will now add The Yellow Peril to her other terrors, especially since M Morand makes it plain that Europe is not protected, as we are, by a difficult ocean, and that the Bolsheviki are extremely busy and fiendishly clever along the Yang-Tse-Kiang.

In Siam, happily, there are no politics worth speaking of. “*On ne peut qu’aimer ce pays, isolé, intact, petit mais dernier échantillon des monarchies asiatiques absolues, cette terre de bonheur assoupi et de foi vive,*” he begins, and it is clear he intends a full-length portrait. But the fine edge of his enthusiasm dulls a trifle

before he completes his circle of the country and he finally leaves less secure of his Siam than when he found it. It may have been simply the disabling climate, but more probably it was the disintegrating effect of the cinema upon Siamese aesthetics. M Morand, one of the finest of French intelligences, judges, rightly enough, life by art. He must have been captivated by the luxurious fantasy of the *Douanier* Rousseau's tropical landscapes, yet when he reached the tropics he found to his dismay, what Rousseau knew before him, that the monkeys of the jungle keep to their original state and that only those that escaped to the lenient climates of the north took on civilization. He must have been influenced by the tradition that still lingers in France of the marvellous Cambodian dancers who so took Rodin's fancy, yet once in Siam, he discovers that the perfection of the ancient technique is not only in imminent danger but practically doomed. It's the modern tempo beating down in this far-away retreat, the classic rhythms. The best families no longer send their talented daughters to Court to be submitted to the necessarily stern disciplines. One by one the companies of dancers disappear. By way of entertainment the young Siamese frankly prefer Douglas Fairbanks. It is even possible to suspect that M Morand himself found the Siamese theatre a bit trying. "By way of giving an idea of the monotony of the spectacle I may say that it took four hours to develop the theme of love. At a given moment, the prince, seated by the side of his lady-love, attempts to put his arms around her. She evades him with a gesture, exquisite, very slow and very chaste. But this gesture was repeated eighty-three times! Each movement is, in fact, a ritual and corresponds exactly to a theme."

Once away from Bangkok the demon of haste again became the captain of M Morand's soul. Never were boats so maddeningly slow and never was a Parisian so impatient to return to his mornings amid his books and his afternoons in the studios of Juan Gris and Georges Braque. Yet the record closes upon a mournful note. When Portcros, the first lighthouse of France is sighted, there is nothing of the frenzy of Americans catching a first glimpse of their New York.

"It's the country conquered with difficulty, the new homeland of a thousand resources, of a clear future, beautiful children, force,

easy money, hope. Hats fly into the air, the orchestra rages, the old dance like mad. All crowd together, ask questions. . . . Here, this night of November, on this sad, unheated boat, return fatigued and shivering colonials, carelessly perfumed prostitutes, badly paid and irritated functionaries, uneasy heads of families enemies of risk, people who have seen their fortunes cut in half since they have quitted France; they are quiet, turning their backs. After a month of sea-going, with quick friendships and too much conversation, all cordially detest each other."

But "touring the world is not a French exercise," M Morand confesses, and doubtless, it was a matter of conscience with him to discourage his countrymen with the sport.

HENRY McBRIDE

VIRGIN SPAIN

VIRGIN SPAIN. Scenes from the Spiritual Drama of a Great People. By *Waldo Frank*. 8vo. 301 pages. *Boni & Liveright*. \$3.

I WOULD rather not say what I think about this book; I would much rather not obtrude my opinion. If I did, the editor might reprove me, and perhaps I should never be allowed to review a book for *THE DIAL* again. For this reason, I will restrain myself, and the only opinion I will offer is that Mr Waldo Frank evidently enjoys travelling; we read enjoyment in every page; he leaves nothing unseen; he looks into everything. But we must not be selfish even in our pleasures. And I think it would have been kinder if Mr Frank *had* left Spain a virgin.

Let us look at a specimen of Mr Frank's style at its best and almost at its worst, welded into one paragraph:

"Here is a better model for Adam and Eve than the pretty Italians, the mystic lovely Byzantines; this rudimentary pair, the man decking his stone simplicity in a clownish gape of drawers and breeches, and the woman, earth-mooded, earth-whole, chording her man and bearing him along."

Womanhood always sets Mr Frank off in this strain. . . . Why does the recognized fact that the world is peopled by two different sexes, or the slightest mention of the earth, drive Mr Frank down into such abysses? Surely it is not necessary. A little discipline is good for the soul, and if Mr Frank would practise being ordinary for a time and would stop being such a He-man, I am sure we should all be much happier, and we should find in his books, instead of the vulgarities which deform every page, phrases and sentences as admirable as these: "Children not yet dead weave through the intricate clamor. . . ." "His world" (the Castillian peasant's) "is a coarse world. Winter is a blast and summer is a blast; the short spring covers his field with mud more than with flowers." Or again, "These villages would fit well into heaven." What a disappointment it is, after these, when we are met with

such horrors as the following sentences: "In the gutters which are clean, play children, warm like their mothers, *lyric like the lilacs*" (the italics are mine) or "The sheep are solid masses of tempestuous wool; each sheep is a writhe about four feet, about stalks of sinewed bone jerking it on." Or this sentence, describing a woman dancing, in the chapter called *Hinterland in Africa* (you will pardon my frankness). "The male music works . . . a stomach wrench, violent as childbirth, shatters upon the mellifluous woman's body." Sentences like these abound, alternating with whole paragraphs of a vulgarity such as this:

"Young Isabel, sister of the king, sits in her castle tower at Medina, and looks beyond Castille: looks south to the Moorish realm, Granada; looks east and north to the kingdoms of Aragon and Navarre; looks west to Portugal. 'Let there be Spain,' says Isabel of Castille."

In fact, if I may be frank for a moment, the book contains terrible passages of vulgarity and affectation. I see that the publisher, on the jacket of the book, announces that "Not often in literary history does a sympathetic and competent critic rise to interpret and estimate an author of genius while that author is still fighting his battle for acceptance." Well, here is another competent critic come to do it too. "Author of genius, battle for acceptance," indeed! It is about time that the truth was told about this kind of thing. Critics for the most part, while they are eager to stop real progress and the development of literature, are afraid to tell the truth when they are brought face to face with anything as noisy as this book, for fear "there should be something in it." Any one who foams at the mouth may be gifted with prophecy. They need not be afraid in this case. Mr Frank is not a writer of genius. He has, however, talent and is interested in things, and if he would stop thinking about genius, and would try to exercise restraint and develop his talent, he would give us writing as admirable as the chapter from *The Will of Saint and Sinner*. In this chapter he discards all his faults and develops all his virtues.

"Against the hostility which her sex aroused, against the distrust of the Inquisition, Teresa moves through Spain, cleansing and creating hearths for the luminous life. The world, to her, is a

household. The Master is Christ and he requires service. Her imaginative powers . . . in which the Arab glamour is not wanting . . . make so vivid the delights of service that the convents of Spain become as magnets, sapping the humbler households of the land. To Teresa, the soul also is a home; and her book 'Las Moradas' is a picture of its chambers. 'As above, as below.' Christ, the bridegroom, enters the household of the soul: and at once, the household becomes Heaven. Teresa's convents are literal heavens upon earth; they are the dwellings of a Lord whose passion fails not. Spain's will pours a sea of energy into this fragment of her deed. Teresa's work is homely; and so is the rough plastic language of her books. . . ."

This is beautiful and true. It is a great pity that Mr Frank is not content to restrain himself and give us writing like this more often. He would deepen and widen his talent and develop his powers, which are real. His admirers are doing this writer the worst disservice in bolstering him up to works of noisy bombast. No amount of shouting will bring fire down from heaven; but a beautiful household fire is within the reach of this writer of talent, if he cares to work for it. How true, for instance, is this:

"The process of art is the endowment of a particular experience with the full measure of life. . . . The work of art is a fragment of word or substance informed with the wholeness of spiritual vision."

SACHEVERELL SITWELL

THE WAY WE LIVE NOW

ALL SUMMER IN A DAY, An Autobiographical Fantasia. By *Sacheverell Sitwell*. 8vo. 287 pages. Duckworth, London, 16s. George H. Doran Company, New York, \$3.50.

IN speaking of the art of literary portraiture, "If the drawing be undertaken," says Mr. Saintsbury, "let it be faithful." Memoirs, subjective and objective, seem to have usurped the place of the "mere" novel. Indeed, one perhaps unconsciously extends a reprieve to the form of certain stories and novels because one has encountered in them the author's inviolate living—a personal essence superior to chapter-headings and machinery.

Of autobiography, we are familiar with several varieties. There is the *devoir* so to speak, conceived by a writer out of respect for his past and in solicitude for the rights of posterity. There is also, what might be called the personal cyclorama—a thing of expletives, italics, and untriumphant puns. *I Have This to Say* by Violet Hunt¹ is a book of this kind—a book which, despite many an unsayable saying, moves one. Its mentality has regard for the mentality of others and is not impatient of those "who have not novels to write, but gain their living in a less nervous way." Much that purports to be much, has dwindled it seems in the printing; and as a mere matter of literary style one cannot but be aware that an enquiry is sometimes more conclusive than dogmatic pronouncement, but even in the suspect realm of the hero-by-an-eye-witness there are particulars in this book, which in all asceticism and gossipless renunciation, we should have. Certain photographs, "My Niece," and Henry James by Miss Boughton, are talismanic and one recognizes as essential the verbal portrait of Henry James holding between his open palms, "my last new Persian kitten . . . which was too polite and too squeezed between the upper and the nether millstones of the great man's hands, to remind him of its existence."

¹ *I Have This to Say: The Story of My Flurried Years*. By Violet Hunt. 8vo. 306 pages. Boni & Liveright. \$3.50.

There is a kind of reminiscence, may we add, which is religious, rapt, a thing inner and final—such writing as has been given us by The Venerable Bede, by W. B. Yeats, by Henry James, and by less conspicuous exemplars of what is burnished and priestly.

In the personal record which is somewhat remote, so also in that which is informal, one may have a devout “interiority.” One is aware of it in Mr Sacheverell Sitwell’s *Autobiographic Fantasia, All Summer in a Day*. A wealth of unhackneyed metaphor, to be sure, has the effect occasionally, of being not quite serviceable to imagination; and as the rapid enlargement of face or other object in a motion picture may seem to one too large, Part Two seems “large.” Habits of indocility furthermore, may permit some readers to reverse the author’s characterization and find in the half of the book which tells of childhood—“a low and sad half”—“some ground for optimism,” and in the half of the book which tells of “the winter walk”—“equivalent to spending one’s afternoon in a cistern”—and of an Italian theatre’s “groves and pavilions of comedy”—a slight sadness in sophistication. But the likeness in both to the way we live now, is faithful. (When Anthony Trollope told us of *The Way We Live Now*, that way of course was different.) In “the world of things one’s eyes could see,” there was as Mr Sitwell saw it before he “had grown tall enough to fit his coffin,” much that we ourselves, now coffin size, corroborate: the grass, “like the schoolboy’s pocket-knife which will never shut properly from ill-usage . . . bent back and trampled upon”; “a long brick wall, white-washed in a nautical manner”; the music of Chopin which “has such an immediate and overwhelming effect when one is young and first hears it”; and Dürer’s water-colours—“the bunch of violets, the rose-tree, the rabbit, the jay’s feather, the cornfield.” Mr Sitwell’s human things, Colonel Fantock and Miss Morgan, are truer even perhaps than his inanimate ones. And a certain sail-boat is, as made to behave in these pages, “sempiternally” marine.

When, as in the Italy of this *Fantasia*, Mr Sitwell “distorts the present, so as to make it full of anecdote and mythology like the past,” it pleases us less than when he had tea with the Polish musicians, “at a round table, which was hidden like a baby in long white clothes,” in a house “with seven great windows coming right down to the floor, and two more of them at the end of the room.”

Less curiously and baroquely apical than Italy, these times enchant us when he was "too young to realize that we are in a condition of absolute liberty, except in so far as we may punish ourselves by too much greed or curiosity." But the "ghosts," early and later, of this his "private mythology" recalled in accordance with "oral and visual memory," are properly poetic and fantastic and one cannot but identify them. What could be more undeniable than the appearance when travelling, of the "interior scene . . . outside the window as though it was travelling along beside the train," "my five fellow-passengers counterfeited on the left-hand side instead of the right, so that while it was true that they now surrounded me, I was none the less able to keep a watch on them which they could not inflict on me, for they were too far away to catch any distinct reflection of the carriage." Mr Sitwell's oral memory is not a ragged one, as we know from what he has to say of music in the theatre where "everything glided continuously into the next thing," and of music in the hotel: "No one stared and there was a noisy peace." And it is a pardonable phonetic mimicry that preserves to us the French *châteaux* which Miss Morgan "always attributed to the reign of 'Angry Cat,' giving by these words to the debonair and vulgar Henri Quatre a kind of fantastic alertness and sharpness of whisker that was not out of keeping with the dandyism and self-assertion of those buildings."

If one seems to be assenting to this "caparison of ghosts . . . which all came from their tombs at the band's harsh breath" as to something in which everyone has participated, is the compliment less than it would be were one speaking of life? In having said that Mr Sitwell faithfully describes our analytic habit of subjecting experience to a poetically scrutinizing modern consciousness, we have not said how much we like his portrait or how friendly we are to certain of his sentiments as he "sat in safety behind that bed of sunflowers," particularizing "those sentiments because of their florid openness and their gilt and rayed ornament to so large and simple a centre."

PETER MORRIS

A PROPHET GOES ABROAD

LIFE AND LETTERS OF THOMAS JEFFERSON. *By Francis W. Hirst. 8vo. 588 pages. The Macmillan Company. \$6.*

MR HIRST has written a life which will be a pleasure for Jeffersonians to read—perhaps just too much a pleasure. In this work, undertaken at the suggestion of his friend and mentor, John Morley, he has presented in smooth and mellow style and easy good nature a complete and capable account of the thought and action of the most singular of all those sturdy persons who, in spite of conflicting opinions and rabid animosities, muddled through with the making of the American nation. The abiding danger of biography, as distinguished from general history is, of course, just this: one hero in one book is more than apt to be placed in a false position of predominance; the saving graces of the Union are all Hamilton's or all Jefferson's—as the case may be. Readers have only to wonder why other actors were necessary to a given scene, to realize that the emphasis is a trifle too insistent. Yet Mr Hirst's enthusiasm is pardonable for the obvious reason that history, as a rule, has given Thomas Jefferson a "bad press": vocal Yankees, for whom the making of books has literally no end, solemn persons who buy in on scholarship, have between them sadly dimmed the memory of his glory.

Someone has observed that Saint Louis contributed such a wealth of character to the reputation of the House of Capet that the French monarchy was saved in royal descent for over seven hundred years. In the same sense America has had occasion to draw heavily on the capital of Washington, Jefferson, and Lincoln. Just how long these funds will hold out is not, for the moment, in question. But of these three men Jefferson affords the most striking instance of the rare combination of personal distinction with public achievement. Like Franklin, without the presidency, he would have been famous; indeed, his eight years in the office have cost him slander rather than absurd praise; he owes little of his reputation to the accidents of successful war. If Washington made

the Union and Lincoln preserved it intact, Jefferson saved it in its early days from foes persuasively more subtle than George III or Davis and Lee. He it was who stemmed the tide of reaction from the Declaration of Independence, established the Virginia dynasty in the White House, and made way for the freedom of Jackson and the frontier.

Although brilliant legalists like Mr Choate are never weary of repeating their jibes at the "sophomoric age of American political theory," the mass of less fortunate citizens has frequently found the reckless optimism of Jefferson distinctly to its taste. In our own days opportunity for preference in these important matters is, to all intents and purposes, removed; one hundred years ago the public seems to have held on to the uncanny certainty that Hamilton, at best, could only have Napoleonized our Revolution. Mr Hirst makes this realization so significant that his book, one of the minor duties of which was to celebrate the centenary of Jefferson's death, leads one to feel that his hero must have been dead rather longer than is commonly supposed. So much water has gone under the bridge that bids for a new one are not out of order.

Mr Hirst is not confused, apparently, with the cross currents of American politics, so unreasonably mysterious to the average European. In the language of the arts, he keeps his eye on the object: the basis of the Revolution was English: the obstinate though inconvenient insistence on self-government. Just here is the supreme importance of Jefferson: he was not afraid to practise at home what he proclaimed abroad, and freedom was a bitter pill after 1783. People who fight for their liberty are closely akin to people who work for a living: they enjoy seeing others do likewise. Jefferson saved the American colonies from the ironical ridicule earned by nations like Hungary, or Italy.

Among Britishers, Mr Hirst assures us, there was an immediate need for this book, Hamiltonians having had, up to date, the advantage of space and sound. The easy assurance that "your people is a great beast" is especially prevalent and popular, when the "great beast" is a beast of burden. There is a peculiar fitness in the growth of Jefferson's fame in England, for thence he drew the main inspiration of his political theory, according to the indications in such volumes of his library as survive. Contrary to common opinion, Mr Hirst maintains, Englishmen like Locke, Sydney,

and Harrington, rather than Rousseau, were the guiding influences on his thought.

Apart from the general royalist reaction, which his rise to power definitely checked, if we are to believe Henry Clay, Jefferson saw three perils for republican government so clearly as to be inconvenient for the peace of mind of his generation. The national debt, standing armies, and slavery were the nightmares of his life, and history has justified his dreams. The weight of his sagacity and prestige checked all three during the quarter of a century he was either in power or in consultation on questions of state. In matters of policy his opinion was significant: his correspondence shows that the Monroe Doctrine, for instance, was submitted to him before it was proclaimed. Incidentally, all persons who believe vaguely that Jefferson's financial theories were unsound and his purchase of Louisiana inconsistent, had better consult Mr Hirst before they close their minds to conviction.

His problem contained a double difficulty: to do the right thing, and to do it the right way. The question of end was solved with his victory in 1800, but the question of means remained. For him the answer was a matter of constant readjustment: "This country should always belong to the living generation and not to the one that is gone." At times it seems as if his warning had fallen on deaf ears—or had asked too much of the indolence and prosperity of the people he served. Certain it is that the conflicts and sorrows of a whole century have sprung from our good-natured neglect of his foresight. Because we have buried the prophet to ease our conscience, it is well that men should dig him up and make him live and speak again. For his part in this office Mr Hirst has earned good praise.

STEWART MITCHELL

BRIEFER MENTION

THE TWO SISTERS, by H. E. Bates (12mo, 320 pages; Viking Press: \$2) might be said to belong with the adumbrative schools of fiction, which seek to convey a maximum of impression with a minimum of narrative statement. It does not describe the temperamental life of persons, but suggests it; and does not suggest it as it might appear to the casual passer-by in the hours of nine to noon of everyday, but as it clamours to its owner and victim in his vigils before dawn. This tale of odd sisters and brothers, and a father odd to the point of lunacy, is certainly compact of strangeness, but by virtue of the art of saying things without saying them, it makes apparent the fact that the strangeness pictured is the strangeness of daily humanity.

CREWE TRAIN, by Rose Macaulay (12mo, 319 pages; Boni & Liveright: \$2) is another gay demonstration of satirical fencing in the now familiar Macaulay manner. There is one point about this planet, she says, which should be remembered—"into every penetrable corner of it, and into most of the impenetrable corners, the English will penetrate." And nothing delights her more than to be at their heels—a sharp observer of what they do, and a witty reporter of what they say.

On the plane of fact **THE FOOL IN CHRIST**, by Gerhart Hauptmann, translated by Thomas Seltzer, with a preface by Ernest Boyd (10mo, 474 pages; Viking Press: \$2.50) is a careful psychological history of the Messianic delusion of Emanuel Quint, "a carpenter's son of the Eulen mountains," and of the religious mania that developed among his following of Silesian peasants; here appear Hauptmann's modern, much studied, and great intuitive acquisitions in the knowledge of human nature. On the plane of analogy, where his alchemic magnificence of poetry and sympathy is most manifest, the tale describes the reappearance, in modern Prussia, of the first Christian, and shows with scrupulous rich realism the aptness to modern scenes and modern natures, of that commentary on the world and the spirit which was uttered first in Galilee. The lives of the carpenter's son of Nazareth and the carpenter's son of the Eulen mountains are not precisely similar in letter, but they are identical in purport; and in this the story advances into the fields of allegory, where it parables, with Hauptmann's globed and thorough art, the fate in this world of every truly committed seeker after the spirit.

TAMPICO, by Joseph Hergesheimer (12mo, 328 pages; Knopf: \$2.50) is elaborate, deliberate, and sultry—a first-rate example of Mr Hergesheimer's masticating manner. The author's settings, his heroines, and his style grow increasingly tropical; his tiger-like plots prowl in impenetrable prose. Tampico is large in design, ambitious in scope, and has moments of real power, but seldom shakes itself loose to run with the freedom that its subject demands.

MY MORTAL ENEMY, by Willa Cather (8vo, 122 pages; Knopf: \$2.50) is a character study of such severity that even its rightful emotional quality has been denied it; it is presented with a creative tautness which robs it of warmth. The story is set down with unquestioned economy and skill; it has touches of swift discernment, but it would be a better work of art if the mind could fasten upon an occasional moment of relaxation in its unfolding. Although a work of imagination, it has the surface of glazed pottery.

THE NINTH WAVE, by Carl Van Doren (12mo, 226 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$2) seems to have been composed with a shade too much precision and detachment; Mr Van Doren gives the impression of having watched the approach of his ninth wave from the shore. The reader is never brought close enough to the theme to feel anything but the spray. Perhaps the episodic form in which he has cast the story is somewhat to blame, but the total effect is so orderly and so unruffled that one feels—on laying the book aside—as if one had completed a problem in literary geometry.

EAST OF MANSION HOUSE, by Thomas Burke (12mo, 270 pages; Doran: \$2) offers an excellent course in the writing of salable fiction. All of Mr Burke's stories are very deft, very neat, and nicely calculated to "sell" on the strength of the curiosity aroused in the opening paragraphs. In *East of Mansion House*, as in *Limehouse Nights*, Mr Burke again goes slumming with rose-coloured spectacles. Where love and death are so easy and so romantic, it is pleasant to escape from the sordid details of ordinary living to the paradise of London's slums.

RETURN TO BONDAGE, by Barbara Blackburn (12mo, 333 pages; Lincoln MacVeagh, Dial Press: \$2) surveys the revolt of the restless new generation from the middle distance of impartiality—a vantage ground in one sense but not in another, for while it means a better perspective it involves a sacrifice of immediacy. The author is like a motion picture director supervising the "long shot" of a battle scene; the camera effect is the test of realism. That the effect is achieved is to her credit, but one is now and then conscious that the preliminaries had to be managed strictly for that purpose.

THE SUN ALSO RISES, by Ernest Hemingway (12mo, 259 pages; Scribner: \$2). If to report correctly and endlessly the vapid talk and indolent thinking of Montparnasse café idlers is to write a novel, Mr Hemingway has written a novel. His characters are as shallow as the saucers in which they stack their daily emotions, and instead of interpreting his material—or even challenging it—he has been content merely to make a carbon copy of a not particularly significant surface of life in Paris. "Mike was a bad drunk. Brett was a good drunk. Bill was a good drunk. Cohn was never drunk." "I knew I was quite drunk." "It's funny what a wonderful gentility you get in the bar of a big hotel." There are acres of this, until the novel—aside from a few sprints of humour and now and then a "spill" of incident—begins to assume the rhythm, the monotony, and the absence of colour which one associates with a six-day bicycle race.

The chief trait of the thirteen verse narratives contained in *EAST WIND*, by Amy Lowell (16mo, 240 pages; Houghton Mifflin: \$2.25) appears to be less poetic originality than strenuously accomplished execution. In reading these short stories—for in essence they are short stories—made from the harsh lore of farm and village character in New England, one thinks of Robert Frost, and Edwin A. Robinson, and even Edgar Lee Masters; but they have not been imitated; their fields, rather, have been invaded, invaded by a considerable eclectic energy, well versed in how to reorganize to its own purposes whatever be found suitable, wherever it be found.

The more than five hundred pieces of verse contained in *EMBERS, HYMNS AND OTHER VERSE*, by Melancthon Woolsey Stryker (8vo, 388 pages; Ernest Dressel North: \$6.50) are characterized by generosity of sentiment, by a certain command of poetic terms, and by a certain readiness of prosody; but they do not carry any great weight of poetic conviction. Their facility of feeling fails to suggest creative travail of any ultimate sort, such as works not merely in words but in universal memories, and makes memorable lines.

BEFORE THE BOMBARDMENT, by Osbert Sitwell (12mo, 344 pages; Doran: \$2.50). Mr Sitwell writes with the elegant quill of a connoisseur of manners rather than with the stub-pen of a student of life; he is more intent upon the arrangement of his characters than upon their reactions. His mood is charmingly detached and a trifle condescending, and it harmonizes very well with his detailed picture of what he terms the Golden Age of Comfort—an Edwardian era of carpets woven so thickly as to entrap the feet, when “a frothy sea of lace was receding for the first time in sixty years from the wanton legs of chair and table.” Mr Sitwell portions out his story most precisely, keeping the best of it for himself.

SHERWOOD ANDERSON'S NOTEBOOK (10mo, 230 pages; Boni & Liveright: \$2.50). Mr Anderson issued this autobiography in 1924, and this fall his publishers announce from his pen “the story of a mid-American childhood,” which will—if one may hazard a guess—be of similar character. In between, he has collected a miscellany of essays and fragments, some published and some unpublished, and called it his Notebook. From all of which one cannot quite avoid the suspicion that Mr Anderson is somewhat precipitately making himself fabulous. “When I travel about,” he writes, “. . . I am a cotton planter, a fireman from Cleveland, Ohio, taking a vacation, a horse owner, a gambler.” Because “business men, workers, and others not directly concerned with the arts think of all practicing artists as a race apart.” And “to know such men at all your vocation must be concealed.” Why is the gulf between a bank-teller and a story-teller so deep? And are stone-masons really more communicative to gamblers than to novelists? Artists are no more a “race apart” than gamblers are—except in their own minds; and even if it were true, wouldn't it be better to capture another man's confidence as an alien instead of trying to sail past his barriers under false colours?

A MILLION AND ONE NIGHTS, *The History of the Motion Picture*, by Terry Ramsaye (2 vols., 8vo, 868 pages; Simon and Schuster: \$10) is a history of the development of the motion picture set forth in a lavish scale appropriate to the "industry" with which it deals. The books are comprehensive in content, profuse in illustration, detailed in documentation, and weigh a fraction of a ton. Naturally, the emphasis is chiefly on patents, trade wars, production costs, and picture finance; the film in relation to art and national psychology gets scant attention, nor is the influence of German technical skill and direction adequately presented. These subjects are more or less excluded from the author's main purpose, however, which has been to compile an historical record, filled with facts and figures, a valuable reference work for the promoter and the press agent, and a fascinating album for the layman.

THE BOOK OF MARRIAGE, arranged and edited by Count Hermann Keyserling (8vo, 511 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$5) while it does not say the last word on an inexhaustible subject, assuredly says some of the weightiest. Novelists, mystics, scientists, philosophers, and psychoanalysts have all had a finger on the pulse of the venerable institution, and although they differ in diagnosis, their prediction is predominantly hopeful. With all but three of the two dozen papers translated from the German, the discussion has a tendency to wrap itself in the mists of Teutonic idealism; one wishes that at least one specialist with the Latin temperament had been called in. However, there is Havelock Ellis to restore the balance. It was a large undertaking, and Count Keyserling has consummated it with catholic scholarship.

THE HUMAN HIVE: Its Life and Law, by A. H. Mackmurdo (8vo, 309 pages; Watts & Co.: 7/6). If the human race were docile as sheep, as intelligent as the fox, and as self-sacrificing as the pelican "in her piety," Mr Mackmurdo's programme for society might have some chance of attaining reality. To this undoubting author civilization is but a hive in which every form of activity is gradually undergoing some beneficent change. Alas, how often have we not been told that the family is a unit, society an organism, and the state a kind of sacred entity to which the personal wishes of the individual must be wholly subordinated? Within the boundaries of his theory Mr Mackmurdo is logical, but when was logic ever anything but the handmaiden of desire?

THE NEW STANDARD BIBLE DICTIONARY, edited by Melancthon W. Jacobus, Edward E. Nourse, and Andrew C. Zenos (illus., 8vo, 989 pages; Funk and Wagnalls: \$7.50). Based upon the American Standard text of the Bible, in marked contrast with, yet not contradicting early literalism, courageously definite in its exposition of disputed questions, *The New Standard Bible Dictionary* will be found by scholar and amateur alike, a usefully concise, unprejudiced, and authoritative work. In alphabetical order and correlated with that which is Biblical, moreover, *Disease and Medicine, Exploration and Excavation*, and other extended articles upon subjects of outside interest, have been included in the volume.

THE THEATRE

LYRICAL telegrams from Edna St Vincent Millay, letters to the papers from the author of *Show Boat*, failed to save Philip Barry's *WHITE WINGS*; personally signed affidavits by other producers resulted in a stay of execution for *GO-GETTERS* (originally *GOD LOVES US*); impressive italic testimonials from well-known people keep *THE LADDER* going. Variety reports that one critic (Percy Hammond, I think) guessed right nine times out of nine in predictions on the success of current shows. It apologizes for the frailty of its own oracle.

Two entirely entertaining plays (without prejudice to those I haven't yet seen) are current on Broadway. Molnar's *THE PLAY'S THE THING* has a few draggy spots, one of which is aggravated in the production, and a few vulgarities; but with the light touch of P. G. Wodehouse added to the deftness of the old Hungarian, it is a great satisfaction. You are half persuaded, when Molnar breaks into the opening scene, and lets his characters come forward and explain themselves to the audience, that the craftsman has sickened slightly of his trade. But when the time comes to drop the curtain on act two and the dramatist suggests to two other characters that they bring the curtain down, and then as the curtain begins to descend, waves it back critically until he produces his own perfect climax, you realize that the craftsman is not at all ashamed; he is revelling in his own mastery of a complicated instrument. He is playing a bit of vaudeville in the middle of the drama.

It concerns an amorous scene between an actress and a former lover, overheard by the lady's *fiancé* and his two dramatist friends. (The awkwardness of production to which I alluded is in making this lengthy off-stage scene penetrate a brick or other non-conducting wall, so that the strain on the listener is too great.) One of the dramatists, to save the boy's illusion, writes an absurd playlet in which the impassioned words occur, and forces the wanton lovers to rehearse it before the lad. This plot for a vaudeville one-acter is elaborated into a play about dramatists, flippant and a little cynical and with a bare sufficiency of serious ideas. In the hands

of Pirandello we should have been tortured. Being amused by Molnar is much easier and I fancy equally good for us. The players are excellent.

BROADWAY is a melodrama with brightly worked in comedy, for the most part as slick a play as the street it is named for has seen since **SEVEN KEYS TO BALDPATE**. If it needed to be boosted, the producers could always claim that they were throwing in a good cabaret with their melodrama, for the setting, in the professionals' anteroom of a cabaret, gives us half a dozen girls in various attires, a hooper, and the highly advertised atmosphere of behind the scenes. The melodrama itself is concerned with bootleggers and hijackers, and an unsavoury crew they turn out to be. There is a very slick murder in act one, and from that time on there is, beneath the comedy and the rather feeble love interest, a sinister undertone which is remarkably well sustained. The ancient figures of hokum reappear so freshly dressed in the authentic tones and cadences and accents of Longacre Square that they please like old acquaintances suddenly grown prosperous and entertaining; the language and the gestures are so accurately reproduced that as you pass into the lobby during the intermission you are hardly aware of any change, the paint on **BROADWAY** is so fresh.

Mr Jed Harris last year presented an entertaining and slightly bawdy show called **WEAK SISTERS**; George Jean Nathan and I, one gathered from the advertisements, liked it. It failed. This year he has **BROADWAY**, as a reward for having been a good boy all last season. I congratulate him on it.

WHITE WINGS was a better piece of construction than Philip Barry's two preceding shows; its action developed naturally, without the forcing which he made so obvious before. It had a good theme, above it there was a good plot; and the medium (Mr Malevinsky's "crucible") was attractive. A failure with these elements is interesting.

The theme was the conflict between love and duty, figured by the oddest transpositions imaginable of Romeo (into the last of the white wings, lover of the horses which supply the white wings' *raison d'être*) and Juliet (into the first of the motorists, the daughter of the inventor of the motor car). Instantly Mr Barry gave

himself the subsidiary theme, always good, of the conflict between the generation of tradition and the generation of progress. By the choice of his protagonist he was bound to the fantastic; the figure always mentioned in old socialistic arguments may command an indulgent smile, but if you were not going to write a desperate study of dreariness, you had to make him the sort of person who could say, "I don't like to sit down while a horse is standing up," and your play would logically have a horse which, upon hearing these words, obligingly sat down.

A fantasy therefore on an old theme. And somewhere in the composition, Mr Barry's imagination flagged and he became diverted into verbal whimsicalities, puns, epigrams, jokes. He was trying the difficult job of keeping his fantasy running over a specific bed of reality, and never fused the two, so that in the end neither survived, and you remembered the same sort of cumbersome conversation that broke down *IN A GARDEN*. The effort to put a heavier charge of emotion into a framework like that of *BEGGAR ON HORSEBACK* resulted in the frame being broken, in the emotion being dissipated. There were, however, three attractive scenes: the love-making of the beginning, in which Mr Powers and Miss Lenihan were utterly charming, the Ziegfeld Follies dirty story told by the horse, and the supposed death of Major Inch which had a superb funny twist.

Mr Alexander Woolcott called *THE LADDER*, "or, Antoinette Perry [the leading woman] Through the Ages" which has the deadliness of wit and accuracy. It is a play which has as theme the idea that what we do now results, in some way, from our activities in previous incarnations. What we do now, regrettably, was a dull prologue; and the events which skipped through the centuries were each a bit of costume melodrama. The play seemed to me entirely without significance and the acting almost uniformly bad. The principals alone avoided the monotony of badness by being a little worse.

I have seen two plays of the repertory season created by Miss Eva Le Gallienne in Fourteenth Street and consider both of them so highly that I wish they were not involved in a project to which one naturally tosses the bones of "meritorious" and "commend-

able." **THE MASTER BUILDER** was done as it was done last year; Miss Le Gallienne herself appears to less advantage than she did in **THE CALL OF LIFE** and in **THREE SISTERS**. The quondam presser of Duse's flowers appears in an exaggerated make-up, and manages to lack the sense of life, of springiness and youth, which are needed to shake Solness and to send him to his height. In spite of that, the production has life, the play develops its momentum, and if a great deal of it had been omitted by Ibsen, it would have been tremendously effective.

THREE SISTERS is, so far, Miss Le Gallienne's triumph as an actress and as a director. Instead of the stout rope which Ibsen hands you two minutes after the curtain is up, by which he pulls you with varying power, through to the end, Chekhov tentatively, almost apologetically, lets a coloured thread drop before your eyes, considers it, sets it aside to find another in another corner of the room, matches the two, wonders if there is possibly a third, begins to braid a few threads together, and then, as if frightened by the obligation of starting, as if it bound him to knit a stocking he didn't want, lets them all fall, and comes back to them after he has looked at every other thread of life. Nothing is sewn; nothing is pulled together. And the great, significant, enormously interesting problem for the director is to let these threads lie as casually as Chekhov did, and yet to keep interest burning all the time. Miss Le Gallienne did it; it is hardly a subtraction from her triumph to say that she did it as the Moscow Art Theatre did, if that happens to be true, for that would only mean that she did it as Chekhov needs to be done. There are intense passions in the play; Heaven knows, for all the apparent listlessness, a great deal happens, including a fire and a duel. But what happens chiefly is that men and women love and are separated, dream and are cast into despair, desire and are disappointed or frustrated. Miss Le Gallienne found the tone for the gentleness and eagerness of the other sisters better than for herself; her early scenes were too much the bored princess of **THE SWAN**. In the second and final acts she was supremely right, presenting to us a terrible equilibrium of many passions. She vibrated and the play took its vibration from her.

I am not deeply impressed by the plays chosen for the first months of the repertory; they were, in all probability, dictated by other reasons than sheer artistic necessity. But I wish the Civic

Repertory Theatre a great success. I think it will easily avoid the stale feeling one always had in stock companies; Miss Le Gallienne's courage and intelligence will save it from worse pitfalls.

I have elsewhere expressed some reservations about Mr Ames's *IOLANTHE*, produced last year and still miraculously running. I am familiar with nine out of ten verses in the score; and distinguished fewer English words than I heard the first time I saw the lovely piece, when De Wolf Hopper put it on. This was especially true in the first act. In the second I heard, for the first time, a chorus correctly pronounce the name of Ovid (a highbrow chorus of a few years ago insisted on "invidious Naso") and there wasn't such a rush to have the songs over with. Some of the little girls were too arch, and Mr Lawford wasn't nearly as funny playing the Lord Chancellor as he was playing Polonius in flannels. The peers were superb and the stage management of "Go away, Madam" was sheer delight. For the forthcoming *Pirates* I predict a success; I am grateful in advance to Mr Ames for producing it. I only hope he will remember that it consists of **WORDS**, damned fine words, and **MUSIC**, very good music, too.

GILBERT SELDES

MODERN ART

IT seems like dipping into politics to mention that the committee for the French pictures at the Carnegie Institute International Exhibition was composed of the following: Franz Jourdain, Jean Pierre Laurens, Ernest Laurent, Henri Eugène Le Sidaner, Jean Marchand, Jacqueline Marval, Charles Masson, Emile René Ménard, and Paul Signac; and that the general European representative was Guillaume Lerolle; and that the work of this committee was pathetically inadequate and did a grievous injury to the reputation of France.

There is no intention, however, of dipping further into politics than to just merely mention the names. When France realizes, as it must, sooner or later, that at Pittsburgh, where these exhibitions are held, there is usually more to be learned from the English and German sections than from the French, it may decide to make a discreet enquiry into the matter, and the gentlemen and lady listed above may be able to throw light upon the situation. Or perhaps not. Committees are curious things. Committees are usually honest I believe. They mean well but their submerged natures are too much for them. The submerged nature of a committee is a thing that not even a Freud has as yet dared look into. Yet the English have on several occasions within memory of man, and in spite of their committees, managed to put their most artistic foot forward. This was undoubtedly the case in what was called "war work." In spite of the frenzied political atmosphere of the times the best men were chosen. That is all that is necessary—to choose the significant men. Why is it that the English can do this, and the Germans, and not the French? Is a "live wire" art committee an anomaly in Paris? Then away with committees. Committees are not the essential. The essential is pertinent work. Frankly, we Americans want the news from Paris, and in Pittsburgh we do not get it. A nation that makes a great statesman out of an ex-art critic, such as Clémenceau, and entrusts its present Ministry of Finance to an acknowledged connoisseur, such as Poincaré, ought to see the point. One word from the minister of finance to the *Sous-Secrétaire des Beaux-Arts* might work a change. (I can

imagine a Frenchman laughing at this and saying, "But you don't know our *Sous-Secrétaire des Beaux-Arts*." It is true I do not. But not knowing him I suppose him of the best.)

The annoying thing about this French collection is that it appears better on paper than in reality. At a time when Matisse, Picasso, Derain, and Braque were objects of keen intellectual curiosity throughout the world they were strictly taboo at Pittsburgh. Now that they command impressive prices for their work and figure in the public auctions they are at last admitted—in a fashion. I say "in a fashion," for who could gauge the gloomy spirit of Derain, which has won so much appreciation in gloomy England, from the two or three meagre little fish in the still-life that is supposed to represent this much-discussed talent? Or who suspect the gorgeous entertainment possible to a Matisse from the drab example here displayed? Or the power of Pablo Picasso from the innocuous madonna that comes to Pittsburgh via the Quinn Collection? Like most painters that have ever lived, Pablo Picasso has occasionally swung a lazy brush, yet he is not the sort of a man, unless I much mis-read him, whose idea in exhibiting abroad is to escape notice. He does, though, this time, and so do Matisse and Derain. All of which is absurd, and quite as worthy of the attention of M Poincaré as the decline of the franc.

The only thing in the French section that interested worthy Pittsburgh at all upon the occasion of my visit was the largish canvas by Dunoyer de Segonzac which the citizens chose, however, to regard as a puzzle rather than as an aesthetic treat. It was a composition of bathers with arms and legs flying about all over the place. Pittsburgh thought it could positively decide which legs belonged to which bodies and the audible pronouncements of the bystanders gave innocent pleasure to a considerable concourse. No other French picture had a comparable success.

The German collection was very small but it contained the most successful portrait in the entire cosmopolitan array, that of Mr D. by Conrad Hommel; the finest landscape in the exhibition, the Landing Stage on the Havel by Ulrich Hübner; and the wittiest, in fact the only witty picture among those present, D'Andrade as Don Juan by Max Slevogt. The Hübner and Slevogt paintings hung next on the line to Otto Dill's spirited Racing Horses and Max Liebermann's Portrait of a Lady. These four works of art

made the high point of this year's International and are a credit to the discernment of the committee that allowed them to pass. Upon looking again at my catalogue I see that there wasn't any German committee. Oh, oh, oh! Again I respectfully pray M Poincaré to look into this matter of committees.

There is not, I hasten to add, a hint of modernity in these German successes. One could suppose them to have been painted in remote recesses entirely shielded from the winds that blow from Montmartre or Montparnasse. I cannot say that I think it deeply matters. The only thing I ask of painters is to be alive and I do not even enquire how it happens that a man like Mr Hommel can put such zest in his style that you imagine he imagines he is inventing the academic formula. The whole business of portraiture, however, is in a most dubious state, and there are times when it appears to be going out altogether. Augustus John, the Englishman, who occasionally snatches us from the depths of despondency, is not of much help this year. He has been painting friends, it seems, and when he paints friends he lets himself down easily. He won't bother to paint hands and attach arms properly to shoulders and all that, except for money. Just the same he gets a suggestion of the special tan on young Mr Walpole's face that makes all the artists say, "Very clever indeed" and gives to Mr Roy Campbell, who is a poet, the genuine poet look. Mr John can be England's best or worst but he is neither the one nor the other this year in Pittsburgh.

HENRY McBRIDE

MUSICAL CHRONICLE

IT is a fortune to have the flight through a musical season launched at a recital of Richard Buhlig's. There, interpretations raise a platform close to the ethereal bourne of music, affording a matchless view of the blue and white expanse. Gases of analytic and mechanistic obsessions, smoke of personal projections, are banked well below: no interpreter possesses a perspective of the transcendental matrix clearer and loftier than this pianist's. His play is richly selfless contact with fundamental vibrations, and purest articulation of them. He will assure you "Sonority is a mere accident, a medium and not the music"; and from his keyboard there progress just, perfectly sensuous definitions of the great forms and pellucid, exquisitely proportioned tones, refreshing as water and breath of hill-winds and sweep of a clean sky. You may miss at first the opulent, satiny, and high-coloured touch of other performers, notably of certain Russian-Jewish pianists. Shortly you will be content without it. The gush of the limpid source of art carries you beyond the wish that moments linger and eternalize themselves, to where the linked, related, proportional movement of finely appreciated volumes holds the sovereign good.

Its station-post was found the evening of October twentieth in a special balance of romanticists and classicists reverently, passionately left to their own geniuses. The combination of the c-minor impromptu of Schubert, Beethoven's sonata Op. 110, Bach's c-minor partita, five of the preludes Op. 74, and the two *études* Op. 65 by Scriabine, and at the last one of the *Nenias* and the Roumanian Dance by Bartók, singing in their diverse tones, embodied extraordinarily fully the feeling of to-day. The I was lyrical still, but it sang with the modesty of the less exhibitionistic romanticists: with the warmth of Schubert, almost selfless in the pressive utter giving of his heart; with the subtlety of the last Beethoven so mystically close to the breath of things that his aggressive ego has become almost cosmical; with the coolness of the later Scriabine, far from the grand and solitary Chopinesque figure, feeling most keenly elusive sorrows greater than his own, and the shimmering hallucinations of delight objective as a rainbow or a wing. The places of vantage were occupied by the more stone-like expressions: the

partita's definition of a well-nigh impersonal Being, and intimate communication of an almost mechanistically conceived universe through a rhythmic station; the "objective" position of the dark-toned, earthy dirge and peasant-riot of Bartók. The movement of the centrally placed suite of Bach's indeed achieved the living pitch of the extra-personal and fresco-like, and projected one into a region of self-surrender where it was difficult and wonderful to breathe. And while the experiments of the Magyar included a romantic colouration and a rhythmic irregularity and unpredictability far from the feeling of the cantor's time, they too, in all their tentativeness, satisfied through an absoluteness and statue-like externality.

Richard Buhlig is himself the artist, orientated by the deepest heart of the hour. Art for us in our autistic chaos is a record and communication of pure transferences and objectifications, amorous unions of the whole personality with the fluid unbounded sources, impulsions

*“Sich einem Höhern, Reinern, Unbekanntem
Aus Dankbarkeit freiwillig hinzugeben
Enträthselnd sich den ewig Ungenannten,”*

such as the pianist reverently set before us. How fully he had done so, the experience of the next weeks was to demonstrate. One reviewer, at least, had not ever felt himself so assured of ultimate values, so conscious of what it was contemporary music lacked during perfect awareness of its manifold beauties, as in the month following this religious ceremony. It is true that none of the three noteworthy novelties and semi-novelties presented during the period were strictly contemporaneous products, and capable of bearing witness to an unusual alertness on the part of the critic. Alban Berg's string-quartet Op. 3 is of 1910. Bartók's first quartet is of 1908, and Bloch's Israel was written about 1912. Still, each of the three compositions stands with its author's most inclusive work, giving vivid form to the impulses which have set him solidly upon the musical front and made him problematical. The Berg quartet, for instance, recommends itself as the composition of one of Schoenberg's pupils with a personal song to sing, an individual experience to impart. As the extraordinary Pro Arte Quartet performed it the evening of the first concert of the League of Composers, a young

unifying force was perfectly evident in the web of this uncompromisingly atonal piece. Its subtle, daring, well-nigh fabulous string-timbres, cello *glissandi*, whistling harmonics, sparks *sul ponticello*, and other earmarks of the Viennese group, are structural; and the sensuous, refined, and fluent expression, romantic and yet dry, concentrated and reserved, both convinces the hearer and reveals elements of the exquisite impressionistic tradition in motion toward the focal-point of the future. It was equally evident, during the concert, that Berg's gift in this work as perhaps in *Wozzek*, is not clear of inhibitions. He appeared somewhat of a *précieux*, his manner more "cultivated" and kid-gloved than that which music is about quite warrants. That deep-blue night-sky, bestarred and Tristanesque, which he seemed to have felt above him as he wrote, was largely the interior of his master's shell. The frequent canons and imitations of the four instruments point to the terrible little sciolist; the initial theme announced by the second violin derives directly from the d-minor quartet of Schoenberg. A hearer of this semi-deafened time.

A record of experience certainly more meaty and robust, a proof of direction certainly more intense, was presented in the Pro Arte's performance of the Hungarian quartet. The mature Bartók's positiveness of attack, his capacity for powerful foursquare expression, in this early work assumes the form of a profound and anguished lyricism at first related to the "solitude" of Tristan Act Three, later more characteristically harsh and brusque. The popular and savage rhythms of the rounder Bartók, his broad plateaus and summits of sustained expression, already show their magnificent heads. Profoundly directed toward music, Bartók always has line, in this quartet an often long and ardent one. Yet the personality for all its force and honesty, is uncertain. Clearer feeling could not have countenanced some of the themes, occasionally as undistinguished in this quartet as in the not always more admirable second. Self-consciousness veritably weighs on the music in spots, evident in the embarrassment with which the voices of the first movement are conducted, and in the arbitrary and D'Indy-like recapitulation of themes in the final stretto. Again a hearer of the time.

Complaining of a lack in Israel comes dangerously close to being an act of ingratitude, so much has Bloch deserved of us with his glowing fragment of symphony. His richest, most puissant pages occur in it. If the work is not actually Bloch's greatest, it is not

excelled by Schelomo, the violin sonata, or the piano quintet, the most complete of his many deeply affecting compositions; and stands well to the fore in the ranks of post-Wagnerian music. It would be difficult to find in modern orchestral literature a work more compellingly filled with the feeling of bound and suffering strength, and Samson the Agonist in all its parts. The tragedy of a race at war with its own power and unable to find release; the dialectic of Jewish stubbornness, *hauteur*, and solemnity and Jewish weakness, sombreness, and despondency, is given form in an idiosyncratic, massive, and hieratically coloured music. Excepting the few Parsifal-like moments in the slow introduction "the tent of prayer in the wilderness," the fragment achieves almost perfectly the idiom for which Bloch commenced searching in the *Trois Poèmes Juifs*, and swells with strange Semitic trumpet-calls, stuttering brass, violent aggressive rhythms, and pastoral and still orientally melancholy lyric themes. None the less, we cannot banish from our delight the consciousness that this almost divine music lacks the great logic. These series of expressions of a rich deep fecund nature, of the richest, deepest, most fecund nature to be found among living composers, are not unhesitatingly, uncompromisingly expelled as music by Bach and Beethoven and Wagner is. It is plain why Bloch never achieved the whole of the projected symphony. Feeling was not quite absolute and irresistible: the second part with its pleading human tones, movingly lyrical, has not the life and *élan* of the first. The impulse is almost vanished before it concludes in space. That whole love, source of all great logics and great lines, so beautifully set before us at the piano recital; that vision leaving the artist dumb before unspeakable highnesses, had failed not only in Berg and Bartók, but here as well, as it had failed and still fails in so much new art, so much poor modern life.

But the interpreter who, even though he himself cannot create it, can make us aware of what it is we yearn for, comes with an impulse to liberty. With Schiller, we still feel that when the servants are so very busy, the Queen herself must be coming to visit.

PAUL ROSENFELD

ANNOUNCEMENT

THE Editors of **THE DIAL** have had pleasure in proffering to William Carlos Williams, **THE DIAL**'s award for 1926.

May we repeat ourselves: "Our insistence that **THE DIAL**'s award is not a prize is frequently taken to be a characteristic pedantry on our part, almost as reprehensible as the use of the preferred spelling in our pages. We can only reply that the dictionary and good usage are the pedants, not ourselves; we are using words in their accurate and accepted sense when we say that a prize is something contested for and that an award is something given. . . . **THE DIAL**'s award 'crowns' no book, nor does it imply any moral or even aesthetic judgement of superiority. It indicates only that the recipient has done a service to letters and that, since money is required even by those who serve letters, since the payment in money is generally so inadequate when good work is concerned, **THE DIAL** is in a way adding to the earnings of a writer, diminishing, by a little, the discrepancy between his minimum requirements as a citizen in a commercial society and his earnings as an artist. We have never believed that the recipient has, or will have, done exactly two thousand dollars' worth of service to letters. We haven't the standard of measurement for such delicacy of judgement."

William Carlos Williams is a physician, a resident of New Jersey, the author of prose and verse. He has written of "fences and outhouses built of barrel-staves and parts of boxes," of the "sparkling lady" who "passes quickly to the seclusion of her carriage," of Weehawken, of "The Passaic, that filthy river," of "hawsers that drop and groan," of "a young horse with a green bed-quilt on his withers." His "venomous accuracy," if we may use the words used by him in speaking of the author of *The Raven*, is opposed to "makeshifts, self-deceptions and grotesque excuses." Among his meditations are Chickory and Daisies, Queen-Ann's-Lace, trees—hairy, bent, erect—orchids, and magnolias. We need not, as Wallace Stevens has said, "try to . . . evolve a mainland from his leaves, scents and floating bottles and boxes." "What Columbus discovered is nothing to what Williams is looking for."

He writes of lions with Ashur-ban-i-pal's "shafts bristling in their necks," of "the bare backyard of the old negro with white hair," of "branches that have lain in a fog which now a wind is blowing away." "This modest quality of realness which he attributes to 'contact' with the good Jersey dirt sometimes reminds one of Chekhov," says a connoisseur of our poetry. "Like Chekhov he knows animals and babies as well as trees. And to people who are looking for the story his poems must often seem as disconnected and centrifugal as Chekhov's later plays." We concur that "his phrases have a simplicity, a solid justice." He "is forthright, a hard, straight, bitter javelin," said William Marion Reedy. "As you read him you catch in your nostrils the pungent beauty in the wake of his 'hard stuff,' and you begin to realize how little poetry—or prose—depends on definitions, or precedents, or forms." You do.

A child is a "portent"; a poet is a portent. As has been said of certain theological architecture, it is the peculiarity—we have noticed—of certain poetic architecture that "the foundations are ingeniously supported by the superstructure." The child

"Sleeps fast till his might
 Shall be piled
 Sinew on sinew."

In the arboreally imaginative world of thought as in the material world,

"creeping energy, concentrated
 counterforce—welds sky, buds, trees."

We have said that Carlos Williams is a doctor. Physicians are not so often poets as poets are physicians, but may we not assert confidently that oppositions of science are not oppositions to poetry but oppositions to falseness. The author of the *Religio Medici* could not be called anything more than he could be called a poet. "He has many verba ardentia," as Samuel Johnson has observed—"forcible expressions, which he would never have found, but by venturing to the utmost verge of propriety; and flights which would never have been reached, but by one who had very little fear of the shame of falling."

The service which it is our pleasure to acknowledge is "practical

service. Service not to that Juggernaut, the Reading Public,—that Juggernaut which is well served in being served badly. Service rather to the Imaginative Individual, to him who is in our world always the Marooned Individual.”

In one of Doctor Williams' books we find a poem entitled, “To Wish Courage to Myself.” It is to wish courage to him and in the inviting of his hardy spirit, to wish it to ourselves, that we have—inadequately—spoken.



Courtesy of Paul Cassirer, Berlin

BEACH AT BIARRITZ. BY OSKAR KOKOSCHKA

THE DIAL

FEBRUARY 1927

PATERSON

BY WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

Before the grass is out the people are out
and bare twigs still whip the wind—
when there is nothing, in the pause between
snow and grass in the parks and at the street ends
—Say it, no ideas but in things—
nothing but the blank faces of the houses
and cylindrical trees
bent, forked by preconception and accident
split, furrowed, creased, mottled, stained
secret—into the body of the light—

These are the ideas, savage and tender
somewhat of the music, et cetera
of Paterson, that great philosopher—

From above, higher than the spires, higher
even than the office towers, from oozy fields
abandoned to grey beds of dead grass
black sumac, withered weed stalks
mud and thickets cluttered with dead leaves—
the river comes pouring in above the city
and crashes from the edge of the gorge
in a recoil of spray and rainbow mists—
—Say it, no ideas but in things—
and factories, crystallized from its force,
like ice from spray upon the chimney rocks

. . .

Say it! No ideas but in things. Mr.
 Paterson has gone away
 to rest and write. Inside the bus one sees
 his thoughts sitting and standing. His thoughts
 alight and scatter—

Who are these people (how complex
 this mathematic) among whom I see myself
 in the regularly ordered plateglass of
 his thoughts, glimmering before shoes and bicycles—?
 They walk incommunicado, the
 equation is beyond solution, yet
 its sense is clear—that they may live
 his thought is listed in the Telephone
 Directory—

and there's young Alex Shorn
 whose dad the boot-black bought a house
 and painted it inside
 with seascapes of a pale green monochrome—
 the infant Dionysus springing from
 Apollo's arm—the floors oakgrained in
 Balkan fashion—Hermes' nose, the body
 of a gourmand, the lips of Cupid, the eyes
 the black eyes of Venus' sister—

But who! who are these people? It is
 his flesh making the traffic, cranking the car
 buying the meat—
 Defeated in achieving the solution they
 fall back among cheap pictures, furniture
 filled silk, cardboard shoes, bad dentistry
 windows that will not open, poisonous gin
 scurvy, toothache—

But never, in despair and anxiety
 forget to drive wit in, in till it

discover that his thoughts are decorous and simple
and never forget that though his thoughts are decorous
and simple, the despair and anxiety

the grace and detail of
a dynamo—

Divine thought! Jacob fell backwards off the press
and broke his spine. What pathos, what mercy
of nurses (who keep birthday books)
and doctors who can't speak proper english—
is here correctly on a spotless bed
painless to the Nth power—the two legs
perfect without movement or sensation

Twice a month Paterson receives letters
from the Pope, his works are translated
into French, the clerks in the post office
ungum the rare stamps from his packages
and steal them for their children's albums

So in his high decorum he is wise

.

What wind and sun of children stamping the snow
stamping the snow and screaming drunkenly
The actual, florid detail of cheap carpet
amazingly upon the floor and paid for
as no portrait ever was—Canary singing
and geraniums in tin cans spreading their leaves
reflecting red upon the frost—
They are the divisions and imbalances
of his whole concept, made small by pity
and desire, they are—no ideas beside the facts—

.

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS, THE METHODS OF

BY KENNETH BURKE

IN allegorical defence of his temperamental aversion to the superficial regularities of versification, Williams writes: "I am so sick of rhyme—The whole damn town is rhyming up one street and down another." Then, to drive this unilateral statement through to its complement, modifying a challenge into a diagnosis, he adds: "Yet there is the rhyme of her white teeth."

By way of *ars poetica*, we might at no little risk expand the figure as follows:

Art being a criticism, in some sense a corrective, the poet compensatorily reflects the superficial regimentations of contemporary life in terms of their logical opposite, and finds that the aesthetic equivalent for rhyming streets is anti-rhyme. Whereat the complementary statement, "Yet there is the rhyme of her white teeth," would equal: "But the chaos of our emotional relationships persists beneath all such conventionality of design, and this in art must be re-given contrarily as order, or at least as clarity."

Williams has consistently manifested an almost hysterical demand for newness, and we may pardon his attempt to make this a categorical imperative for all writers when we see how salubrious it has proved to be in the case of himself. He may in time develop set-pieces of his own, but an equipment of habitual gestures is as necessary to verse as it is to tennis. Williams, for his own purposes, was indubitably right in starting anew, however, as is evidenced in the heigh-hos, invitations to come play, and flowers flung at the feet, in his first book, *The Tempers*. The whole character of his experience seemed to close him to anything but the grimaces, the shaving faces, of the traditional aesthetic.

Partially as the result of technical progress, but mostly I suspect by reason of a more imperious moral necessity, Williams is in *Al Que Quiere!* fully launched upon the alteration of his methods. The poet, while outwardly conforming to the scheme of a provincial career—this poet, who is always somewhat of a *Villon manqué*—views his dwindling Bohemianism with obvious unrest, even persuading himself that his keen susceptibility to the

events of nature sets him apart from his "townspeople" (*sic*) by quality rather than degree. It matters little that in time he successfully encompassed this unrest—finding no doubt that a born writer has nothing to fear but a stopped heart. For the present, across the meadows in Rutherford, which surely lies at dawn within the penumbra of the "water-loving giants of Manhattan," Williams is by literal avowal lonely—and as one marooned he writes not lyrics but diaries.

This is a manner he has never since abandoned, in his verse at least, which tends consistently away from ceremony, from the sustained emotional curve and the conventional or readily felt progressions of oratory, towards the qualities of conversation and the friendly letter: moodiness, vagary, simple declarations, ellipses, and fresh starts, an art which as Gide says of life occurs without erasure, where the equivalent for revision is the writing of a new poem, and the mood or movement of a work may legitimately be changed at the ringing of a door-bell.

In *Al Que Quiere!* there are all the elements of Williams—his bristling rhythm; his sense of ease with his reader; rapidity and versatility of mood; the quick succession of sensations and tableaux which prepare for, and out of which he produces, his outcries; and above all, an imaginative agility which even threatens to defeat itself, his effects are got so quickly.

Here also, in a poem called *The Wanderer*, a kind of morality play made desolately plaintive by the persistence of falling end-rhythms, Williams evolves a credo, an intellectual blood-bath, pathological and clinical:

"She bent forward and knelt by the river,
The Passaic, that filthy river.
And there dabbling her mad hands,
She called me close beside her. . . .
. . . Then the river began to enter my heart,
Eddying back cool and limpid
Into the crystal beginning of its days."

And in the same poem (lines of a kindlier rhythm than is characteristic of him):

"And as gulls we flew and with soft cries
We seemed to speak, flying, 'It is she . . .'"

The Improvisations, while never developed nor offered as such, present a close analogy to the "theme with variations" of classical Western music. Generally, there is an artificial *Ideenflucht*, a play of free images, followed by an argument giving the situation or plot to which the cluster of free images presents a kind of sportive counterpart, a continual "hopping off."

"It is still warm enough to slip from the weeds into the lake's edge, your clothes blushing in the grass and three small boys grinning behind the derelict hearth's side. But summer is up among the huckleberries near the path's end and snakes' eggs lie curling in the sun on the lonely summit. But—well—let's wish it were higher after all these years staring at it deplore the paunched clouds glimpse the sky's thin counter-crest and plunge into the gulch. Sticky cobwebs tell of feverish midnights. Crack a rock (what's a thousand years!) and send it crashing among the oaks! Wind a pine tree in a grey-worm's net and play it for a trout; oh—but it's the moon does that! No, summer has gone down the other side of the mountain. Carry home what we can. What have you brought off? Ah here are thimbleberries.

In middle life the mind passes to a variegated October. This is the time youth in its faulty aspirations has set for the achievement of great summits. But having attained the mountain top one is not snatched into a cloud but the descent proffers its blandishments quite as a matter of course. At this the fellow is cast into a great confusion and rather plaintively looks about to see if any has fared better than he."

The metaphor of classical literature is used for the purpose of clarifying the object of reference; after symbolism, however, the metaphor is, in its own right, prominent—while the original object of reference is minimized or suppressed. (Thus, through a story by Joyce or Gertrude Stein, one gets the glimmer of plot, precipitated after effervescence.) Williams, by a simple dualism, a logico-associational parallelism, encompasses both tendencies alternatingly. The dioecious marriage of Androgyn and Gynander. So that in general we have a "variation" followed by a "theme," (the classical order significantly reversed) the metaphorical

arabesque in Roman type, the logical mid-rib in italics, although with this exception: that Williams being averse both emotionally and by grim precept to schematization, the italics also occasionally gravitate towards the free imagery of the improvisation proper.

A man who turns as spontaneously to words as Williams, obviously feels artistic adjustment to be a biological necessity. Thus the technical step from *Al Que Quiere!* to the Improvisations is euphoric, a poetic method affording him much the same fleetness and exuberance as others, of similar temper, have been forced to obtain by the chemistry of a drug. In earlier days, probably under the influence—however begrudgingly—of psychoanalysis, I mistook such “paper solutions” as evidence of weakness, thinking that one found by means of literature too easy and therefore too trivial a simplification. But the compensation of art is different—and if we are acted upon by the virus of words the readjustment we spontaneously seek will be aesthetic. In the case of Williams this discovery of method is, so to speak, the weathering of a crisis.

And *Sour Grapes* represents recovery. The range of subjects in this book is not so wide as Williams embodies later—but perhaps for this reason each element of the poet seems to exist in its happiest proportions. Statistics are not developed at the expense of lyricism, keenness of perception does not dislocate consistency of movement, the trace of hysteria or hyperaesthesia in *Al Que Quiere!* is here pure sensitivity. Williams has learned how to be lost without pretence or despair. He does not attempt to palm off horrors as facts. It is from curiosity that his ideas derive, rather than from unrest.

The book contains evidence of a pronounced animal well-being, converted by the imagination into watchfulness when the absence of imagination would have left somnolence. Close to his benefits and his scourges, he nods eager approval or says damn immediately after the event, without trial or hesitancy. Stooping to unlace his shoes, he sees the shadows of his fingers playing over the design of the carpet. Walking after a blizzard, he turns, “and there—his solitary track stretched out upon the world.” Noting a wife’s slippers moving about with “gay pompoms”

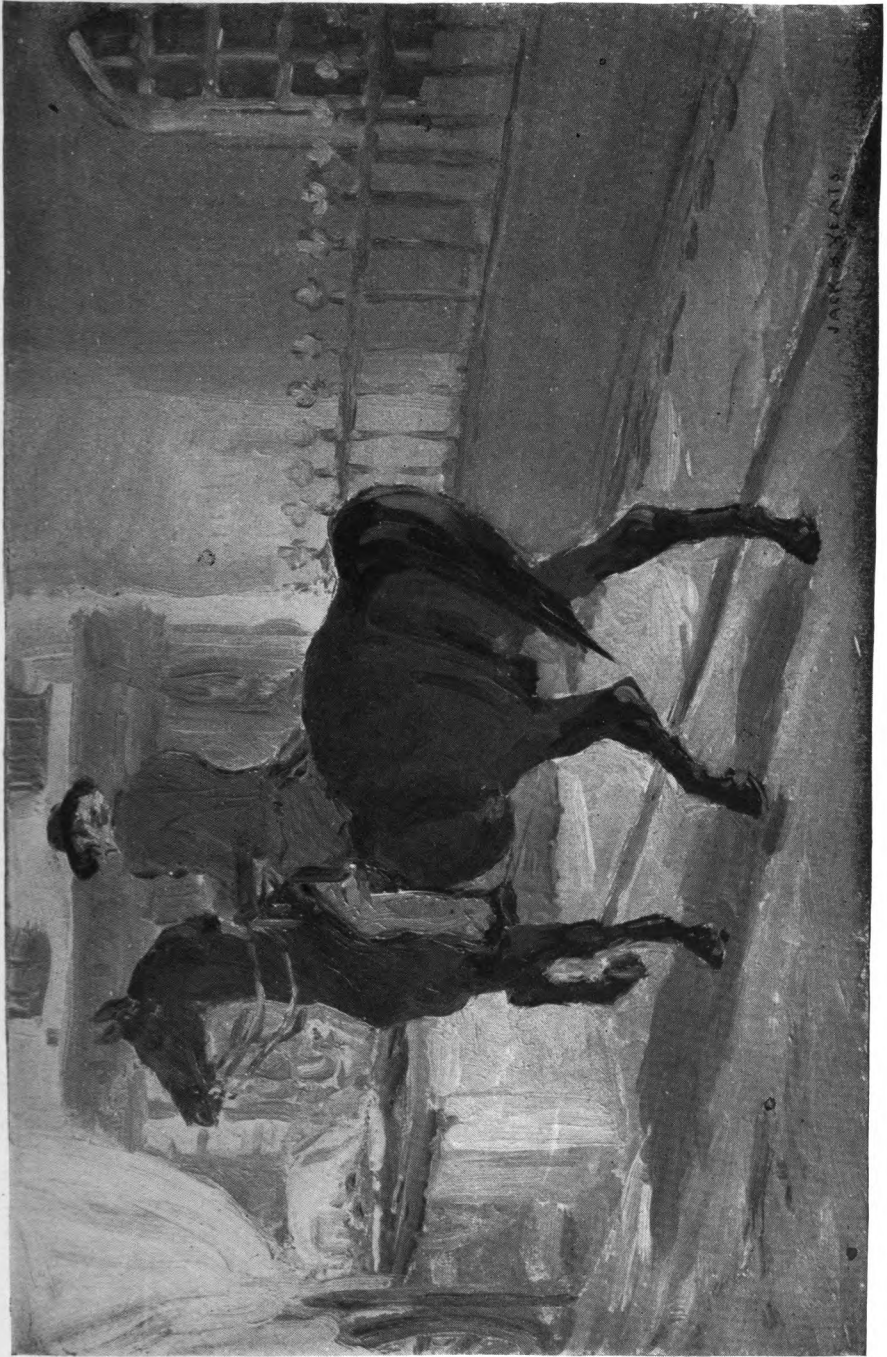
. . . “I talk to them
in my secret mind
Out of pure happiness.”

He dares to write lines on the Daisy (beginning "The dayseye")—following them with Primrose, and then advancing fearlessly to Queen-Ann's-Lace. He is on good terms, he tells us, with his neighbours. He is quick to herald the seasons. He speculates upon the fate of fleas. Thereupon, sobered:

"Among the rain
and lights
I saw the figure 5
in gold
on a red
firetruck
moving
with weight and urgency
tense
unheeded
to gong clangs
siren howls
and wheels rumbling
through the dark city."

The Great American Novel, an entire book written incidentally while the author searches for an opening sentence, is a prose inventory. André Gide has supplemented his newest work, *Les Faux-Monnayeurs*, by the issuance of a diary containing the critical theory and specific experimentation which preceded its composition. In *The Great American Novel*, the preparatory skirmish becomes the encounter. Incidents at the opera, travel reminiscences, advertisements, bits of conversation carried on the wind, panorama: statistics—the adventures of a Lincoln penny. *Spring And All* is a collection of poems interspersed with random pamphlets on poetics. As criticism the prose is too vatic; as poetry the verse is too expository.

These books, by coming after *Sour Grapes*, are evidence that Williams is an inveterate nomad who cannot be persuaded to remain in one locality despite its several amenities. The phase of *Sour Grapes*, however much it had of substantial results to recommend it, is definitely abandoned—making *The Great American Novel* and *Spring And All* serve as *The Tempers* to some new and hypothetical equilibrium of the future.



FAIR DAY. BY JACK B. YEATS



DUBLIN NEWSBOYS. BY JACK B. YEATS



THE FUNERAL OF A REPUBLICAN. BY JACK B. YEATS

THE SOLITARY AND OTHER SKETCHES

BY AZORIN

Translated From the Spanish by Katie Lush

THE SOLITARY

HE lived opposite our house; and was a neat, silent man, always accompanied by two dogs; his chief pleasure lay in planting a great many trees. . . . Every day, at a fixed time, he sat in the casino garden, rather melancholy, rather tired; after a while he began to play on a little whistle. And then a strange thing happened: all the birds in the garden-bushes joined gaily in, twittering and singing; he walked about scattering crumbs for them which he had brought in his pockets. He knew them all: the birds, the two quiet greyhounds, and the trees were his only friends; he called the birds by name as they fluttered about on the fine sand; lovingly he chid this one for not having come the previous day, and greeted that other one who came to-day for the first time. And when they had all eaten he got up and moved slowly away, followed by his two great, silent dogs.

He had done much good in the town; but men are inconstant and unkind. And one day, disgusted and embittered by their ingratitude, he went away to the country. Now he never set foot in the town and never held any communion with men; he led a solitary life among the leafy arbours he had planted and cared for. And in case this might be too fragile a dwelling for him, he had a small house built on a mountain top, and waited there for death.

And you will say: "This man hated life with all the strength that was in him." No, no; this man had not lost hope. Every day papers were sent him from the town, I remember. And these daily news sheets were a glimmer of light, they formed a weak knot of love which even those men who most hate men, conserve and to which they owe their persistence on the earth.

"IT IS LATE"

Often, when I came home—an hour, or half an hour, after the others had all finished supper—I was scolded because "*It was late.*" In country towns there are too many hours, interminable stretches of time when one does not know what to do, and nevertheless, *it is always late.*

Why is it late? For what is it late? To what high emprise demanding this rigorous account of every minute are we vowed? What secret destiny weighs on us making us tell the instants one by one in these static, grey, country towns? I don't know; but I tell you that this idea of its always being late is the idea at the base of my life; don't smile at this. And if I look back I see that to it I owe this incomprehensible anxiety, this eagerness for something I have never known, this feverishness, this restlessness, this awful, teasing preoccupation with the interminable succession of things through the ages.

I must just say this, though I have not come off badly in this matter: do you know what it is to ill-treat a child? When your violence has first brought tears to a child's eyes, you have acquainted his spirit with anger, and sadness, and envy, and revenge, and hypocrisy. And these tears for ever blot out the smiling vision that he had of life, and gradually, inexorably dissolve that secret, ineffable communion of spirit that should exist between those who have brought us into the world and us who come lovingly to continue their personalities and their ideas.

THE ROAD TO COLLEGE

With the yellowing of the vine-tendrils and the approach of the grey autumn twilight, my melancholy increased, for I knew that the time had come for me to go to college. The first time I made this journey I was eight years old. We drove from Monóvar to Yecla, down into the valleys, up on to the hills; we carried our viaticum with us: a *tortilla*, some fried cutlets, and sausages.

And as this day of mourning drew near, I saw my linen sorted and ironed; sheets, pillowslips, towels, table-napkins. . . . And then, the day before I was to start, a box with a rough leather

cover was brought down from the attic and my mother packed my clothes in it, very carefully. I must mention the table silver too; I sometimes now look meditatively at the sideboard and see there the set of well-worn table silver that served me for eight years; I see it always with an uprush of true affection.

From Monóvar to Yecla is a six or eight hours' journey: we started as dawn was breaking; we arrived early in the afternoon. The carriage bumped over sunken stones; we stopped occasionally under an olive-tree to eat some lunch. And I have a very pleasant recollection of how, from a high, stony recess about half way along our road, we could faintly see, over there on the far edge of the dark pastureland, the white points of the buildings and the huge cupola of the *Iglesia Nueva* shining in the sunlight.

Then trouble past words descended on me; I felt as if I had been suddenly torn from the delights of paradise and thrust into the darkness of a gloomy cave. I remember how once I tried to run away; the old servant who used to take me still laughs as he tells me the tale. I jumped from the carriage and ran across country; he caught me and said between his roars of laughter: "No, no, Antoñito, we have to go to Yecla!"

But indeed we *did* have to go to Yecla: the carriage drove on, and once again I entered the city of dreadful night, once again I saw myself irremediably one link in an endless chain, pacing the wide cloisters, or seated, silent and unstimulating, on a bench in the hall of studies.

FATHER CARLOS

The first scholastic priest I saw when I entered college was Father Carlos Lasalde, the learned archaeologist. I have very pleasant, very kindly recollections of Father Lasalde. He was old and thin, he had a fine head, and speaking, intelligent eyes; he used to pace silently up and down the wide cloisters, taking very short steps; his gestures and manners were incommunicably gentle. There was something in his glance, in the inflexions of his voice—afterwards, much later, when I came to study him, I saw this clearly—a tinge of melancholy that hushed even the noisiest of children, surprised and submissive at his side. It would appear that Destiny took particular pleasure in confronting me, on the threshold of life, with saddened, resigned, submissive men. . . .

When Father Carlos Lasalde saw me in the Rector's parlour, he took my hand and drew me to him; then he laid his hand on my head, and I don't know what he said, but I can see him now bend smiling over me looking at me with clear, melancholy eyes. I looked at him later, from a distance, with secret veneration, as he went noiselessly through the big halls, in his hemp-soled shoes, his head bowed over a book.

But Father Lasalde did not stay long at the college. When he went, there remained only the Egyptian statues, rigid, symmetrical, hieratic, which he had found in his excavations of the Cerro de los Santos. Perhaps his homesick soul found some distraction in reconstructing those bygone ages, and recognized in those sad, stone priests and philosophers, his brothers down the ages in irony and hope.

YECLA

"Yecla"—some novelist has said—"is a depressing town." It is indeed; my mind was formed in this town. It has wide streets lined by sordid houses or dilapidated old ruins; part of the town lies on the skirt of a barren mountain; part spreads out over a small green field which only serves to make more wearisome the great, grey, olive-inlaid stretch of flat seed-land.

The town possesses ten or twelve churches; their bells ring at all hours; labourers go by in their brown capes; devout women come and go. And every little while a sad-faced man runs through the streets, ringing a little bell announcing the death of one of our neighbours.

In Holy Week this inheritance of melancholy attains its consummation; long lines of men in hooded gowns of black, maroon, or yellow, walk in procession, carrying bleeding Christs and dolorous Virgins; bugles wail hoarsely in the distance; bells toll; in the churches a crucifix flanked by four great candles stretches piteous arms over the flags in the semi-darkness of the nave, and devout women sigh, weep, and kiss the nail-pierced feet.

This melancholy, enduring through the centuries in a poor town where winters are cruel, food scarce, the houses roofless, has formed, as it were, an age-old deposit, an impenetrable atmosphere of pain, resignation, mute, intolerable renunciation of the quivering nerves of life.

GOOD MANNERS

“Señor Azorín: do you think your attitude is academic?”

I think nothing about it; but I uncross my legs, sit still, and look at the priest who is teaching us.

Then he explains to me how young men ought to sit, and how they ought to stand. I have already acquired a few ideas on the subject; I have in my desk a little book entitled: *Manual of Etiquette*; four or six copies of this work have passed through my hands. What did I do with them? I don't know.

But I do distinctly remember some of the information the book contained; I found it among my papers some years later and looked through it again.

“When should you fold your arms?” the author asked; and he answered his question on the next line: “I should fold my arms in every act of religion, whether in church or elsewhere and in literary exercises when my teacher tells me to do so.”

I must confess that I have never had any opportunity to fold my arms in any literary exercise I have ever tried. What are the exercises to which the author refers? What are the exercises that one does with one's arms folded? These questions I asked myself then; afterwards, with the lapse of time, I seem to myself to have performed several literary exercises, but I never remember to have carried out this author's recommendation.

Nor have I carried it out in respect of putting the hands in the trouser pockets; that was a fearful crime in the opinion of the writer of the *Manual*.

“To keep one's hands in one's trouser pockets, especially when sitting,” he said, “is undignified, and something worse.” And having uttered this anathema, he added indulgently:

“To put them in the pockets of one's coat is quite another matter. . . .”

I treasure this book as a precious relic of my childhood.

MY TASTE IN BOOKS

A moment ago the master left the room; there is nothing in life comparable to these brief, delicious breathing-spaces that we boys enjoy when the abominable man who keeps us quiet and motionless

on our benches, leaves us. To the violent posture of submission, to the carefully moderated gestures, succeed freedom of movement, mad leaping, expansive faces. To lethal inaction succeeds life, full and impulsive. And this life, here among ourselves, in this sun-lit classroom, in this moment of the master's absence, expresses itself in jumping on benches, banging desks, running like mad things from one part of the room to another.

All the same I do not run, nor shout, nor bang; I have an obsession. My obsession is to see what the little book in my pocket has to tell me. I cannot remember who gave me the book, nor when I began to read it; but I do know that this book interested me profoundly because it was about witches, enchantments, mysterious magic arts. Did it have a yellow cover? Yes, yes, indeed it had; this detail has not slipped from my brain.

And it is a fact that I open this little book and begin to read it in the deafening hurly-burly of excited boys; I have never experienced a delight so profound, so genuine, so intense, as I experienced reading this book. . . . And suddenly, in my absorption, I feel a hand fall brutally on the book; I raise my eyes to find that the uproar has subsided, and the master has wrested my treasure from me.

I shall not speak of my anguish, nor attempt to exaggerate the profound impression—an impression that stays with him through life—made on a child's mind by such sudden transitions from pleasure to pain.

THE AWAKENERS

When I stayed all night at my uncle Antonio's, as I did occasionally, if it were the eve of a *fiesta*, I used to hear in the early morning—those long, winter dawns—the song of the *Awakeners*, that is of the peasants who formed the Confraternity of the Rosary, and who are so called by the vulgar. I do not know who composed that plaintive, supplicating, monotonous air: I have heard it was the work of a musician who was a little mad. . . .

I used to hear it as I lay hunched up in bed between the scratchy linen sheets with their little roughnesses; I used to sleep in the *sala*; over the mantel was a large canvas of Christ among rough soldiers; the bed was a large one, wooden, painted green and

yellow; I remember that the water jug, which used to stand in the corner, was always empty.

At first one became aware of a distant murmur, like the humming of a swarm of flies, accompanied by the tinkling of a bell; then the voices became more distinctly audible; and at last, quite close, under the balcony, the choir burst into full voice, supplicating, mournful, tremulous:

“Do not leave us, Mary Mother!
Look down on us with mercy mild. . . .”

they sang with rapt fervour. And I listened, stirred to the core of my being by the torturing music; music of barbaric sadness, the work of a mystic who was a little mad.

I heard it there, under my window for a moment, then, slowly, it faded into the distance till it was no more than a thin, scarcely perceptible lament.

A little later the hammers began to ring on the anvils in the smithy next door; they were putting an edge on the ploughs the country people had brought in with them on the Saturday. And a little later still, a vague, indefinite pallor began to show in the open section of the window.

“AZORIN IS QUEER”

When the mistress of the house says to me: “Leave your hat,” I am acutely miserable. Where do I leave it? How do I leave it? I am sitting rigid on the extreme edge of an arm-chair; I hold my stick between my legs and my hat is on my knee. How am I to leave it? And where? On the walls I see paintings of flowers done by the daughter of the house; the ceiling is adorned with blue clouds among which a few swallows are flying. I wriggle a little on my chair and reply to a remark the lady has made: “It has indeed been very hot this year.” Then, during a pause, I examine the furniture. And now a fearful thought disturbs me: this clamorous new furniture symmetrically placed—or, what is even worse, placed with studied lack of symmetry—this furniture picked up in bazaars and novelty shops, I should certainly not wish to have to give an opinion on it. What could I find to say

about these appalling double chairs with their inverted backs, painted to resemble white mother-of-pearl, and which no elegant house can be without? What am I to think of the vases on the mantelpiece, and the little china figures? The man of the house breaks the silence, asking my opinion of the recent crisis; I clutch at his words as a drowning man at a straw, hoping to be rescued from the internal conflict that is dragging me under; but I find I have no opinion about the recent crisis.

Another long silence follows. While it endures, I stroke the head of my stick. In the end the lady makes some frivolous remark, and I answer with another monosyllable.

Why should I make these visits? No, no, these sensations of my boyhood are too present with me. I have never had any inclination to pay visits; I can think of nothing in these rooms where swallows are painted on the ceiling, and can find nothing to say to these people in reply to their remarks. And that is why, when someone tells them that I am very clever—a thing I do not believe—they assent discreetly; and shake their heads and add: “Yes, yes; but Azorín is queer.”

THE THREE CASKETS

If I were asked to resume the sensations of my childhood in these dark, dingy towns, I should not be very ready with an answer. I should simply write down the following phrases:

“How late it is!”

“What can we do?”

“Now he’ll be going to die!”

Perhaps these three phrases seem strange to the reader; but they are not really strange at all; they resume briefly the psychology of the Spanish race; they indicate resignation, sadness, submission, the paralysing idea of death. I have no wish to build up any vague philosophy; I dislike theories and generalizations, for I know that circumstances unknown to me may possibly change the course of events; or that a profounder mind than mine might infer from the particulars that I assemble, laws and corollaries very different from those I infer. I have no wish to construct any nebulous philosophy: let each one of us, rather, see in events his own ideas. But I do personally believe that our racial melancholy

is a product—as Baltasar Gracián has suggested—of our parched land; and that the idea of death is an immediate, inevitable corollary of melancholy. And this idea, the idea of death, reigns over every Spanish country town with absolute, despotic sway. As a child, I often heard someone say that a neighbour or a friend was sick; immediately the person speaking or the person spoken to, after an instant's hesitation, would add:

“Now he'll be going to die!”

And this is one of the three apophthegms, one of the three mysterious, unbreakable caskets in which the mentality of our race is locked.

LINES

BY SCOFIELD THAYER

Rarely her fingers troubled
 The quality of my dream,
 Rarely her anguish troubled
 The anger of my theme;

Rarely the muted folly
 Of thought split wide astray
 Troubled the melancholy
 Of my deep-sunken day;

Rarely I heard the calling
 Of dreams that broke the night,
 Rarely the thunder crawling
 Riven with foreign light;

Rarely I listed musing
 And emptied my heart a while,
 Rarely the night confusing
 With a forgotten smile.

THE ARTIST IN THE THEATRE

BY GILBERT SELDES

THE director in the theatre ¹ is a specific individual, he is the master of all technique and the responsible head of all technicians, including the actors. In twelve years of professional attendance at the theatre I have seen hundreds of plays in which no other function was required, and have been entertained by these plays without reservation; occasionally, by grace of a good play, I have even been moved by a play brilliantly managed in this technical sense.

The conception of the theatre which lives by expertness of technique is particularly attractive to me; it is the average commercial theatre, the theatre of our comedies and musical shows, the theatre without solemnity or religion. The theatre, again, conceived purely as play, as relaxation, as diversion from the obstinacy of our own preoccupations and our limited series of significances. It is the theatre considered as a dependent, a secondary social function, and not as an end in itself. A theatre of weariness.

Yet it has taken a long process (of breaking down prejudices) for me to learn justice to the other theatre, the theatre in which the artist lives and gives life. It seemed to me for long that the effort to give life to the theatre was compounded of impure elements, and the abortion of these efforts always affected me as more painful than the failure of less ambitious schemes in the playful theatre. I had to be moved forcefully by the presence of success (in the effort, not in the commerce of the result); and, tentatively, a dissatisfaction with the secondary theatre has predisposed me to find happiness in the other. The artist in the theatre excludes the meretricious; the technician, when he loses his feeling for his material, embraces what is cheap. You may have a play botched and dull, like *JUAREZ AND MAXIMILIAN*; but you are spared *THE GREEN HAT*.

The artist in the theatre is, broadly, the one who creates. A few years ago we would have been compelled to dissociate the word "artist" from its limited meaning, painter, and to declare specifi-

¹ Discussed in a series of notes in *THE DIAL* for June, 1926.

cally that the then current focus of interest in the designer of scenery and costumes was another deplorable limitation of the scope of the artist's work in the theatre. The flurry of specialized interest seems to have passed and the designers of settings have become, or tried to become, artists in the wider sense in which I am using the word. They have found that it is unsatisfactory to create piecemeal; the actors and the chief electrician and the dramatist are compelled to do this; but there can be ultimately no satisfaction to the creator in the theatre until all these partial creations are synthesized, unified, recreated by himself.

There is no agreement on the important question, what is it that the artist in the theatre creates? Against the usual answer, Illusion, Mr Stark Young has devoted brilliant and persuasive pages in his new book, *Theatre Practice*.¹ "What the actor gives us is a reality and no illusion," he says, and suggests that if it were an illusion we might as well go to the reality without bothering to go to the theatre. This conclusion, which seems drastic, has, in Mr Young's development, interesting sources. He is so enthusiastic for the theatre in itself, so impatient with the plebeian idea that the actor feels or is his part (Chaliapin does not play Boris, he is Boris—the less Chaliapin he!) so correctly certain that it is no part of the actor's or theatre's function to reproduce actuality, that his theory of the theatre strikes us as extremely important, and only its application, *its* practice, not wholly satisfactory. For by illusion Mr Young seems only to mean an illusion of the actual, an indistinguishable reproduction of an original. This is what people often mean when they say that the theatre gives them illusion, and it is worth combating. Vulgar errors about politics and snakebite may have their uses; but a low conception of the art of the theatre will eventually bring low the theatre itself.

But there is a sense in which objection to illusion as the object of the theatre's existence seems to me as puritanical as the objection to the artifice by which the theatre creates its effects. The scene played on the stage, behind the footlights, *is*—it exists as surely as a man walking down the street exists. But except in the rarest instances—if the man be an Emperor and walk in a parade as the embodiment of Empire, for example—the man merely is, he does not *seem*; and it is this seeming, underlying the mere being of the

¹ *Theatre Practice*. By Stark Young. 12mo. 208 pages. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$1.80.

scene on the stage, which gives the theatre its potency and its charm. To a child, the first time at the theatre, the seeming and the being merge; and there are people who have kept that childlike rapture and innocence before the footlights. They are not always illiterate, merely uncritical. I recall that an effort of mine to make a distinction between Mr Chaplin, the taxable citizen and social being, and Charlie, the figure created by him on the screen, was considered by an awe-inspiring critic to be "arcane." The price one often pays for sophistication is that one cannot see Charlie for looking at Chaplin, cannot feel Hamlet because of the presence of Barrymore. But the reward is magnificent when you are doubly aware of Barrymore and of Hamlet, when through the delicate equivocation of your mind you eventually recognize Hamlet through Barrymore.

No matter how completely and how intensely Barrymore acts Hamlet, the primary reality which this acting offers in the theatre must remain a tidbit for critics; the second reality, the noble idea, the exalting truth, the witty point which an actor or a scene can give us, will not appear until the playing reaches to the intensity of appearing to be something else than playing. I cannot see why this appearance should not be called illusion, since it gives us a sense of being what it is not, provided we hastily add that it is an illusion not of reality, but of unreality. It is the illusion of the unreal, and to say that this constitutes reality seems to me to be using dangerous terms. It is usually in fantasy that we experience specifically the existence of a world created by laws other than our own, existing under a logic we cannot grasp, having a flow and ebb which perhaps do not correspond to the courses of our blood, and a pulse which we cannot relate to our own, yet which we feel to be intrinsically right.

This creation of a world not ours is to me the grandeur of the theatre. To play a clerk so that he is like a clerk is a poor achievement for an actor who can, with observation and brainwork and talent, play a clerk who conveys to us what no clerk individually can convey, the entire significance, the pathos and the terror and the magnificence, if there is magnificence, of clerkship. It is the function of the director in the theatre-as-play to see that an actor playing a clerk will not suddenly strut like a prize-fighter, nor talk like a professor, nor mince like an interior decorator. For in the theatre so conceived the first stage of illusion is wanted; it is the

theatre in which recognition is of importance, but only recognition of surfaces. It is, essentially, a theatre to which we bring our own laws of existence, the rhythm of our own heartbeats, the duality of our having two hands and two feet and two lobes in the brain; and the contravention of these modes affects us as an affront or a failure. But in the creative theatre a clerk might walk like Napoleon and yet be all clerk, without offense to our apprehension, because in that theatre the *milieu* in which the clerk moved would have already created its own laws, and so long as the clerk existed in accordance with those laws, however different from our own, we should accept him, as we accept poetry in the theatre or magic.

It is a common complaint that audiences laugh in the wrong place. Let a phrase of current slang come into Cleopatra's mouth, let a gesture remind the audience of an item in the day's news, and the incongruity will stir them to laughter—*except* where the artist has done his work completely, where the costumes and the lights and the tone of voice and the very door-knobs have combined to create an atmosphere in which "That's not so good" sounds so inevitably the torture of Cleopatra that the shop-girl in the subway is forgotten. There must be no break in the communication which the stage holds with the audience; false tone, false personality, false colour, are all interruptions, and the spectator, unused to giving himself utterly to the stage, welcomes the break to fall back into the world of his familiarity. The play which is homogeneous, created, sure, allows none of these escapes; the theatre in which the parts are not related cannot maintain its relation with the audience.

But the problem of making a production homogeneous is not merely a question of seeing that if an *escritoire* is eighteenth century, the shoe-heels are also eighteenth century; such a superficial unity is instantly undone by the intrusion of an actor or a voice or a gait which happens not to be properly schooled; more often it is completely broken down because the play itself is not in the spiritual period assigned to the actors and the setting. The process of creation begins with the discovery of style, of the one style in which the meaning of the play becomes clear. It seemed to me, last year, that making *ARMS AND THE MAN* a costume comedy about militarism completely lost the point of the play (the point of conflict between the realistic and romantic temperaments) just as the production of *THE CALL OF LIFE* as a period play about militarism precisely hit the medium which expressed its point of conflict be-

tween youth and age, discipline and rebellion. That it is not a question of costume, but of atmosphere, one gathered from the mufti **HAMLET** which remained less activated by modern psychology than the costumed **HAMLET** of John Barrymore. With a Shakespearean production we are always left groping a little, since interpretation has convinced us that different meanings are possible, and all we can ask is that, from the moment one meaning is chosen, all others be excluded, so we get clarity and emphasis. But the necessity of finding the category into which a play falls (unpopular as categories and classes happen to be at the moment) is essential because the category illuminates the meaning for us and prevents us from slipping out of bounds. A Shubert **MIKADO** making it a *revue*, an Ames **IOLANTHE** making it polite comedy with excursions into farce, are equally defective in this first essential, of knowing the style. Recognize Gilbert and Sullivan as operetta and the name itself, with its traditions, indicates the points of emphasis: wit and music. You cannot, in operetta, jazz the music; you dare not sacrifice the words to speed the action. The Savoy operettas, it happens, are the archetype in the English-speaking theatre; it is only necessary to know what they purport to be, in order to create them successfully. Failure to recognize the category into which they fall means a broken production (however agreeable in many respects) and as this is true of a simple case, it is true of a great one.

Three drawings for his **MACBETH** appear in Robert Edmond Jones's *Drawings for the Theatre*¹ and allow you, five years after the production, to meditate on the exceptional rightness of the settings for a production made in the same key. The luminous ogive frames which made up the motif of the settings spoke as clearly as words to declare that **MACBETH** was to be played for its inner values, that the trampling melodrama and the obscene witches were to be diminished or exaggerated so that we would lose our old pre-conceptions of murderers and ghosts and confront spiritual exaltations and terrors directly. The play was to deal with essences; to be an "anatomy." There was, in the event, no such play, since no principal actor within that setting had understood or accepted the meaning of the play as Mr Jones saw it. One turns in the same volume to his three drawings for **THE CENCI** in which the massing

¹ *Drawings for the Theatre*. By Robert Edmond Jones. With an Introduction by Arthur Hopkins. 35 half-tone reproductions. 8vo. 96 pages. Theatre Arts, Inc. \$5.

of the players and the disposition of a few tables or spears seem to create all there is to be of settings; one sees again that a definite style has been found to render the quintessence of the play; and Mr Jones's preoccupation recently with the whole art of the theatre, not with any part of it, gives one hope that when *THE CENCI* is produced, his style will prevail.

The most obdurate material in the hand of the theatre artist is the actor. Until you use him *en masse* (as Mr Norman-Bel Geddes proposes to use him in his vast project for the Divine Comedy¹) the actor refuses to diminish his points of attraction, as he considers them, by playing in any style which does not bring those points into relief. This refusal is not always explicit; one sees it in a gesture or hears it in an intonation—an unconscious rebellion against the pressure of an imposed style. The advantage of stock and repertory is not so much in the training an actor receives for many different parts; it is in the bar which these various parts place between an actor and the image of himself at his best. The good actor will always break with his past before his past breaks him. The average actor capitalizes a single notorious success or a trick of personality. It is of little consequence to the audience that an actor "is always playing himself" or is "a different person in each part"; what is of consequence is that the actor should be able to subdue the manner and mannerisms of that self or person to the mood of the play in which he appears. It is the director's business to prevent the actor from making too much of a part; and it is the artist's business to see that whether he makes much or little of a part, the actor creates in the terms of the given play.

This conception does away with inspirational acting as surely as it does away with "having a good time" for the players in a *revue*. It is not their good time, but ours, that we pay for in the one; not their private inspiration, but the afflatus of the whole play which we seek in the other. There must be tyranny over the actor until he has learned the discipline of the art of the theatre and knows that in his case the whole is literally greater than the part. The actress who tries to be appealing or natural in a strictly conceived production of *THE WAY OF THE WORLD* is as bad as the actress

¹ A Project for a Theatrical Presentation of the Divine Comedy by Dante Alighieri. By Norman-Bel Geddes. The Foreword by Max Reinhardt. The Photography by Francis Bruguière. 40 half-tone illustrations. 8vo. 96 pages. Theatre Arts, Inc. \$5.

who fails to be whimsical in *PETER PAN*; the meaning of a play cannot be communicated by the independent and unchecked activities of all-star personalities. There is no escape from tyranny in the theatre, and all efforts so far have only divided the mouthpieces through which the tyrant makes his will known.

Mr Jones and Mr Young both quote the same passage from Plotinus:

“As the actors of our stages get their masks and their costumes, robes of state or rags, so a Soul is allotted its own fortunes, and not at haphazard, but always under a Reason: it adapts itself to the Fortunes assigned to it, ranges itself rightly to the drama, to the whole principle of the piece. Then it speaks out its own business, exhibiting at the same time all that a soul can express of its own quality, as a singer in a song. . . . But these actors, souls, hold a peculiar dignity. They act in a vaster place than any stage. The Author has made them masters of all this world.”

A comparatively fresh *cliché* in criticism is “pace,” meaning speed, changes of speed, and the relation between one system of speeds and another. I have recently read an article by D. W. Griffith on Pace in the Movies which indicates that the counts on which action is based in the pictures correspond to the heartbeat, suggests that acceleration on the screen, when properly produced, can cause acceleration in the pulse of the observer, and notes that when a character goes out of a room at a certain speed, he should remain in that speed when next shown outside the door. Pace, in short, is our temporary critical omnibus; in the minds of directors it seems actually to mean high speed instead of rate of speed; to give a production pace, even so good a director as Mr Ames, will send *IOLANTHE* scurrying so that only fragments of the gorgeous Finale of Act One can be heard. Here the trickiest of our orchestra conductors would be of service, for it has been their established custom to drag an *andante* passage in order to make a *presto* seem livelier than it actually was. Pace, in its effect on the audience, depends on relative rates of speed, not on rapidity.

When meditation on a play has brought to the artist an assured sense of its meaning, its style, he can begin the labour of dividing

and subdividing his text until he discovers the tiny units which compose the whole. To each of these scene-units he assigns a tempo, just as in rehearsal he must assign a definite speed to every speech and gesture. The speed of the part will depend obviously on the speed of the whole; it will depend less obviously, but more significantly, on what the artist feels is the relation of part to part, of scene to preceding and following scene, of act to play. **THE WILD DUCK** as a tragicomedy will play the scenes between Gina and Hjalmar much more rapidly than **THE WILD DUCK** as a study in hysteria; **HAMLET** as pure melodrama will require a different relation between its parts from the relation established in **HAMLET** as philosophical tragedy. Pace for the artist is a contribution to this creation of relations, which gives us the sense of rhythm in a play, and rhythm depends on the original conception of style.

I wrote in my previous essay that we are aware of the internal rhythm of a play largely through our nerves, our motor-centres, that our sense of rhythm will be our awareness of the changes in pace and at the same time our feeling of the comparative duration of scenes. I think that a parallel might be erected for our sense of design in a production. It is sometimes thought that a perfectly designed production would be one in which a plot of the actual steps taken by all the actors in a scene would result in a graph having at least symbolical significance. It may be so, but I am dubious. In individual scenes, certainly, the movements on the stage trace a design on our retina, and we can be sure that this design affects our appreciation of the play, for we have all experienced the grateful sensation of watching the line a dancer traces in her movements, a sensation of physical beatitude. Beyond that point I think we become unconscious of details; and the design of physical movement in a play will be only of the grand lines; we may feel (without definite recollection of any one actor or group) that in one act movement was angular, in another it gave the impression of parallels, in a third of curves. In the handling of the great mass which Mr Geddes calls for in his *Divine Comedy* such stylization of movement would be essential; the actors, by their mass movement, would actually help to change the appearance of the vast stage, as the ingenious lighting system already worked out changes the stage from deep to shallow, from round to oval. In *ARABESQUE* Mr Geddes was already experimenting with design in movement sustained beyond the average time limit. It seemed,

on the whole, successful. It will be interesting to watch this development when the Divine Comedy is produced. So far, the design created by movement seems to me to be effective only in short spells. We follow Iago slowly in a circle round the baited Othello; but no actor and no group has yet been trained to the use of the body to such a point that an entirely stylized and designed production would be successful.

The playgoer of the last decade has become aware of artists in the theatre by way of the new scenery; he has followed the change from ugly flats to attractive practical settings, has watched *Rundhorizonts* and magic lanterns and seen the influence of interior decorators, until now he is being prepared for flats again, fantastically decorated; he has seen a hundred varieties of lights; he has observed the high advantages of steps and levels, of actors in the audience, on runways, and out of sight. And he may turn to Robert Edmond Jones for a final word, which does not belittle this work, but relates it properly: "The designer's sole ambition must be to affirm and ennoble the art of these mystical Protagonists" (the actors). He provides an investiture of dignity. But the artist, who must comprehend a hundred crafts and care for each of them, goes further. Ideally he would create his play, his production, and his audience. In each of these he meets resistance; he must divine the idea of another man; he must work in the limits of the theatre; he must overcome the timidity and the lethargy of human beings. It is no wonder that he needs to have inspiration and to understand structure; it is not even surprising that in his wrestling with his adversaries he begins to think himself a Priest. I am too sceptical to encourage him to priesthood; there is still so much to be done in clear thinking, in perception, in developing the senses. But I do not bar the reverential attitude toward the theatre; I suggest only that with piety there should always be the quality permanently joined to it in literature, usually separated from it in life: the quality of wit. It is wit without piety which now creates the best of our commercial theatre; it is piety without wit which gives us the worst of our arty ones. Will it not be the function of the artist in the theatre to deliver us from this dilemma?

BLUE MORNING

BY CONRAD AIKEN

THE sun was hot, the breeze was cold, the sea was an immense disc of blue light, just sufficiently rough to escape monotony; and the bright ship burned and sparkled in the midst of the infinite, swaying its high yellow masts ever so slightly against a witch's fingernail of white moon, lifting and declining its bows against the cloudless horizon. The long white deck, polished like bone, rose and fell just perceptibly, and with immense leisure, to the soft irregular accompaniment of waves broken and falling; and with it rose and fell the promenading passengers. The sense of the infinite, and of being isolated in its garish and terrifying profundity, was beginning to work upon them. Delighted with the ship and the sea, inquisitive and explorative, nevertheless they were restless; they paced the deck, climbed the companion-way, walked through the smoking-room and out at the other side, as if driven by a secret feeling of being caged. It was amusing to watch them—it was amusing to see them, like imprisoned animals, furtively try a bar, when none was looking, elaborately pretending all the while that no bars were there, that all was peace and freedom. They had put on their "old" clothes—supplemented, here and there, with grotesque white yachting caps, which the wind ballooned on their heads. Tweed suits were strangely accompanied by glaring white canvas shoes; and binoculars, obviously new, were extracted from strapped cases and levelled, with knit brows and a heavily professional air, at remote plumes of smoke which lay faint and supine along the horizon. Every slightest action betrayed their inordinate consciousness of one another. Those who walked, walked either more emphatically than was their wont, or more sheepishly, aware of the scrutiny, more or less veiled, of the row of sitters. Those who sat in deck chairs were conscious of their extended feet, their plaid rugs and shawls, and the slight physical and moral discomfort of having to look "up" at the walkers. The extraordinary feeling of kinship, of unity, of a solidarity far closer and more binding than that of nations or cities or villages, was swiftly uniting them; the ship was making them a community.

How often he had observed this process! He now felt, with almost physical vividness, its powerful, secret, and rapid operation. He felt it turning the head of one passenger to another, he felt the yearning confusion of friendliness, curiosity, loneliness, and love, which made them all puppets and set them bowing and nodding at one another; smiling mechanical smiles which concealed outrageous happiness, laughing a little too loudly or a little too politely, all like automatic performers of a queer primitive ritual. Every one of them wanted to be overheard or seen, wanted to be exposed, wanted even—it seemed to him—to be stripped. Those who already knew each other, or were relatives, talked to each other in a tacit mutual conspiracy of unaccustomed emphasis, loudness, and good-nature; made humorous remarks; delivered themselves of aphorisms or scraps of knowledge; with the one aim of making, in all directions, a favourable impression.

RAY

BY LOLA RIDGE

Balance a sunbeam as you would a jar
 Filled with clear water where no waters are;
 Let not slip silently back in the sun—
 There to be as in a field no more than one
 Of many dandelions—this nuclear
 Period set against the rushing hour
 That holds there, motionless, the leaning sheer
 Stalk of its illimitable flower.

Let pass into the night its shining band—
 So that they leave a covenant in your hand
 Of lighted water and the prideful calm
 Of hilltops in most high, untaken air:
 Yet know that there shall cleave forever there
 A golden nailhead . . . burning in your palm.

RUSSIAN LETTERS

BY MARIE BUDBERG

“Should nails be cast of the souls of these men
The world would never know an iron stronger.”

IT is just as difficult—especially for a Russian—to write about Russian literature of the present day as it is to judge of the virtues and vices of a close friend whom one meets after a long, long parting, only to find him changed beyond recognition. Something almost too deep to be analysed, even in our day of psycho-analysis, has taken place in the Russian mind and, as usual, found its reflection in literature. This something makes it impossible to apply the old standards, to start from a point from which one was formerly able to find one's way in the rich jungle that constituted the Russian letters of old—sadistic, mystical, dogmatic, and simple, and at the same time naïvely, childishly beautiful.

This is not to be an apology, for that would be superfluous and a little ridiculous coming from a Russian whose ambition is to be objective. Besides, so much was formerly and has lately been written about Russian letters—for and against—that there would be little point in so doing. I should not dream of joining in the dithyrambs of many a European critic, however flattering he might be, for sometimes in his enthusiasm he succeeds in condoning all the morbid philosophy that lies at the root of almost every Russian genius, and in rendering him this service, deals a death-blow at the same time to the beauty of his art, transforming it into a sugar-and-water performance without the Latin sense of harmony nor the Anglo-Saxon insuperable humour.

Nor should I attempt to refute, for instance, the attacks of “Sir Galahad” (I can hardly believe that Parsifal could ever have suffered from such an abundance of bile!) who in his last book entitled *The Idiot's Guide through Russian Literature*, has gathered all the nasty epithets to be found in the German dictionary (why, by the way, does an Indian write in German?) added to them all the mysterious “phobias” and “isms” from medical and pathological reviews, and showered them upon Tolstoy, Dostoev-

sky, Pushkin, Gogol, and Turgenev, leaving the reader gasping, breathless, but nevertheless a little bewildered: what if the man were right after all, and all the admirers and followers of Russian literature mere fools? For human nature hates nothing so much as to have been made a fool of; and, on the other hand, the position of an accuser is always the most favourable one.

No, all I should like to do in these lines is to make a short survey of what to my mind is the most singular metamorphosis that has ever taken place in the mentality of a nation—as reflected in the mirror of its letters.

The lines I have chosen as an epigraph are taken from the poem of a modern Russian, and represent rather vividly what I should like chiefly to point out: the desperate desire for some kind of compensation for the havoc wrought in those young souls during the years of war and revolution, finding expression in a very imperfect, very elementary, cosmic voluntarism, still unsatisfied with itself, as may be noted from the subtle irony discernible in the words quoted. In prose this voluntarism has manifested itself in the predominance of novels “with a plot,” up to now not a familiar type in Russian literature. A keen, obstinate struggle with all emotions that leave one unbalanced and unsettled, pervades everything—a struggle inspired by a wholesome instinct of self-preservation. As an older poet remarks, the motto is, “Let no glory be sung to the victorious, no pity be lost upon the defeated.” On the other hand, the spirit of irony, of satire, bearing witness to a growing sense of criticism, has sprung forth with great vigour.

Is this—what should one call it, sobriety?—a favourable symptom? I do not know. I repeat: I should like to remain unbiased. All judgements nowadays so easily acquire a flavour of politics that even in this very pure domain—the criticism of letters—one constantly runs the risk of being accused of partiality with reference to one “camp” or the other. To me, personally, it seems impossible to compare the writings of Tolstoy with those of Vsevolod Ivanov, or the poetry of Pushkin with that of Yesenin; but then, is it just to compare them at all? The one who has reached perfection on the lines of a tradition—and the other who has just started to build up a new one, to find his way among ashes? For that is what his work, every artist’s work in Russia, now amounts to.

From their very origin Russian letters were penetrated with what one might call a religion, a cult of suffering. This was due partly to the fact that in no other country was the *rôle* of social prophet so exclusively allotted to the man of letters as it was in Russia; partly to a racial inclination of boldly revealing sores in the passionate desire to find a cure for them. Often this glorification of wretchedness and hopelessness, the everlasting psychological analysis of the details and trivialities of life described with a crushing realism, drew a barrier of non-comprehension between Russian authors and their Occidental brothers. The latter admired—but they would never have dreamed of imitating. And there is no doubt but that the present line in Russian letters is that of a perhaps still unconscious but steady “Europeanization.” Yes, owing to this fact, our Russian literature will lose the indescribable “soulfulness” made up partly of Oriental philosophy which had such an enveloping, captivating quality.

But was not that bound, anyway, to disappear in the spirit of our age? And is it not better to have found a new path along which, at first hesitatingly, lapsing into inevitable errors, but gradually finding foot, the Russian mind will acquire a vigorous consciousness of its individual worth?

“The fetters are light,
For I do not slave for myself, nor for my country;
Whatever else is there that fills my book,
If it is not—myself?”

a sense of forbearance in regard to the World and Man?

And there is another factor, very significant for the present day, and to which the young poet Yesenin fell a victim. His tragedy was the tragedy of many a young Russian: it lies in the encounter of the country and its idyllic philosophy with the civilization of the town. He came—Yesenin—with a radiant smile, filled with the joy of living, still exhaling the aroma of fresh, green grass and moist earth. And there was the town, with its museums, its canalization, its vices, its tramways. The tram and the country cart collided. There came, inevitably, the period of intoxication, the desire to absorb everything to the last drop. Later—the sick feeling of satiety and disappointment, the longing to “get back.”

But—there was no “getting back.” How could there be with the poison of a music-hall in one’s veins? There must needs be an insuperable gap between him and his old father at the plough. And, what is more, the atmosphere he left behind was gone for ever. He turned back once in an anguish of loneliness, and found his sister reading Karl Marx. Result: a towel round his neck and a footstool pushed aside in agony.

Yes, for a long time this is going to be the *Leitmotif*, the problem which will fill Russian literature, occupy Russian minds—until the two civilizations come to an accord. I think this is true not for Russia alone.

Does the reader now see how much up-hill work is still in store for Russian writers, and how impossible it is to apply severe tests to what they are about to accomplish? As a proof of the earnestness with which they are setting to their task I should like to point out one little characteristic: the astounding development of the historical novel which up to now was in a very embryonic state in Russia. This is always a good symptom; it testifies to a lack of “hooliganism” in literature, of that cheap predilection for turning to problems of actuality which requires much less effort, much less study.

To complete this very imperfect picture of what Russian letters are at present, I should like to quote another of the world’s greatest poets:

“How many things by season season’d are
To their right praise and true perfection.”



Collection John Quinn

MILLE POGANY. BY CONSTANTIN BRANCUSI

BRANCUSI

BY DOROTHY DUDLEY

A SMALL, sky-lighted room in a New York gallery held a kind of constellation in polished bronze, in wood, marble, onyx, and alabaster—nine sculptures and also some drawings and frescos. It is not too much to say constellation; each work had been placed there and was living there accurately and simply, as if there were an axis to each one. The first impression was of beauty new and real, shapes strong and important, phases of sphere, disc, shaft, blade, oval, and branching trunk. Surfaces scintillant, flaming, natural; varyingly warm and cool, not hot or cold, nor dry or lush, but living. To one staying to know them, birds, fish, heads, torsos spoke out of these polished marbles and bronzes and seasoned naked wood. The planes of all were subtle and precise; a look of ease possessed them. At different heights in the room they balanced on their bases, cubic, circular, rhomboid, cross-shaped, with a measure known to jugglers. The drawings and frescos widely spaced seemed as true and limpid in pigment and line as the sculptures were sure of their volume and surfaces. Each lived in its own atmosphere, which together with the others made a new medium—that of the room. The room was now neither large nor small, but without measurement, a room to feel happy in. One had entered into something.

Here was a geometry of forms in bronze, wood, and stone. Each form had the look of having been proved; each was ruled by the material it was made of. An engineer or a workman, if his eyes were still fresh and untrammelled, would be happy here over virtues of calculation and craft. Yet these were not cold ends in themselves, but were here to reveal to a far decimal point the reality of projects derived from nature. People who call this sculpture abstract have not felt it, have not seen how the edges are vibrant, how a pulse appears to beat in each one, how they are living organisms and projects. And how they have the look of having been made by a friend, not an outsider, by one on the in-

NOTE: Exhibitions of Brancusi's work were held in February, 1926, at The Wildenstein Gallery, and in December, 1926, at The Brummer Gallery.

side of things, who stands on the ground an equal among rocks, trees, people, beasts, and plants, never above or apart from them. Maybe for this Brancusi likes Negro art, for Negroes still do this.

The art of the sculptor, he would say, is to call out the life of the material he is handling, never to dictate to it. He has no use for the word *master* or the word *force* in connexion with art. The words *hero*, *enjoyment*, *sacrifice*, *ease* suit him better. "To stand on a footing with others, isn't that necessary?" he asks. To show the biceps, to make gestures of grandeur, to be climbing the pyramid is to drag the "*pathétique*," the personal we might call it, into art where it has no place. The way of Homer is unequalled—"To enjoy with the gods, to penetrate (*'faire la bombe*,' his French was) into enjoyment and freshness."

"Besides," Brancusi says, "you cannot make what you want to make, but what the material permits you to make. You cannot make out of marble what you would make out of wood, or out of wood what you would make out of stone." (He speaks of the changes to be heard going on in the timber in his studio in Paris, in the huge untouched logs there, or in columns and sculptures already made.) "Each material has its own life, and one cannot without punishment destroy a living material to make a dumb senseless thing. That is, we must not try to make materials speak our language, we must go with them to a point where others will understand their language."

Within this led by the material, far from being abstract, his wish is to be real, more real than the realist. Organic form to a detail, bones, flesh, joints, he would have inherent in the project of a bird, a fish, a child, a woman. Only the planes have been made infinitely subtle that the whole may be more apparent. The high polish of the bronzes and the marbles has been to further subtilize the planes—a necessity, not an embellishment. "The wheel," he says, "turning at the highest speed, gives an impression of immobility. It is only when the wheel is still you can see the spokes." These nine sculptures then, assembled last year in New York, were meant as living projects brought to a high point of justice. "Beauty is absolute justice." Each breathed its own air. Each especially was surrounded by air. Each, if it had succeeded, had become whole, alive, free in the search of its own absolute.

The Bird in Space, polished bronze, feet, tail, full body and throat, head and beak annealed into a shaft of flight and song, was the peak, the powerful centre of the room. A companion to this, dark yellow marble, more quietly followed the song, repeated the shape. Spiral flame possessed these two, in the bronze reaching higher than in the marble. Looking at them you were among fables; you felt the throb of a formidable bird held soaring between two hands. The Sorceress, branching portrait of a witch shaped out of wood, as if a nameless wind had married clothes and person; big peaked head and face, strong arms and little body. Maybe a forest phantom, simple and cunning; yet you might pass her on a crowded street and her sliced face and windy laughing coat would come back to you afterwards. Naked wood had delivered secrets by a sudden interrelation of varied planes, sliced, rounded, peaked. The White Negress, alabaster, elongated oval of a head, the very fine planes of which spell elegance as of a race a long time savage and suave; the full lips slightly aslant the cheeks, strong vulgar flower of a mouth to mock at tameness. The Fish, polished bronze, flashing disc, equivalent of swiftness. Torso of a Young Man, cut out of wood, male youth untrammelled, erect, delicate, and having the symmetry of a tree. Torso of a Young Woman, marble, whose haunches are flesh deep on bone, firm and mystical as the first that came out of sea foam. The Little Bird, coloured marble, who mouth open for food has not yet left the nest, is still a little emperor close to earth. The flat oval of the mouth deliciously related to the solid oval of body and tail feathers. The New Born, polished bronze, scintillant cry of birth, with the wide open mouth, the trembling chin of the first yell.

People are heard to say of this sculpture, "Why there is nothing here, the parts of machinery are just as good." Or, "Any one could go out in the woods and pick up a Brancusi." This is praise for sculpture to give the quick thought of trees and machinery; but inept, the intentions being too different. Isn't it often this way that people feel when they look at art, which penetrating far into the sense of things, has become simple in order to be charged with life? The precise delicate lines of cutting, of detachment that carry the finite over into the infinite are such that some say glibly, "Why there is nothing here, a child could do it." Others, "There is something here, but we don't know how or why";

and they make a cult of their wonder. Here really are open secrets for those who happen to see them. Just as a few people can see four-leaf clovers, but fewer still see three-leaf clovers. Brancusi is one of these.

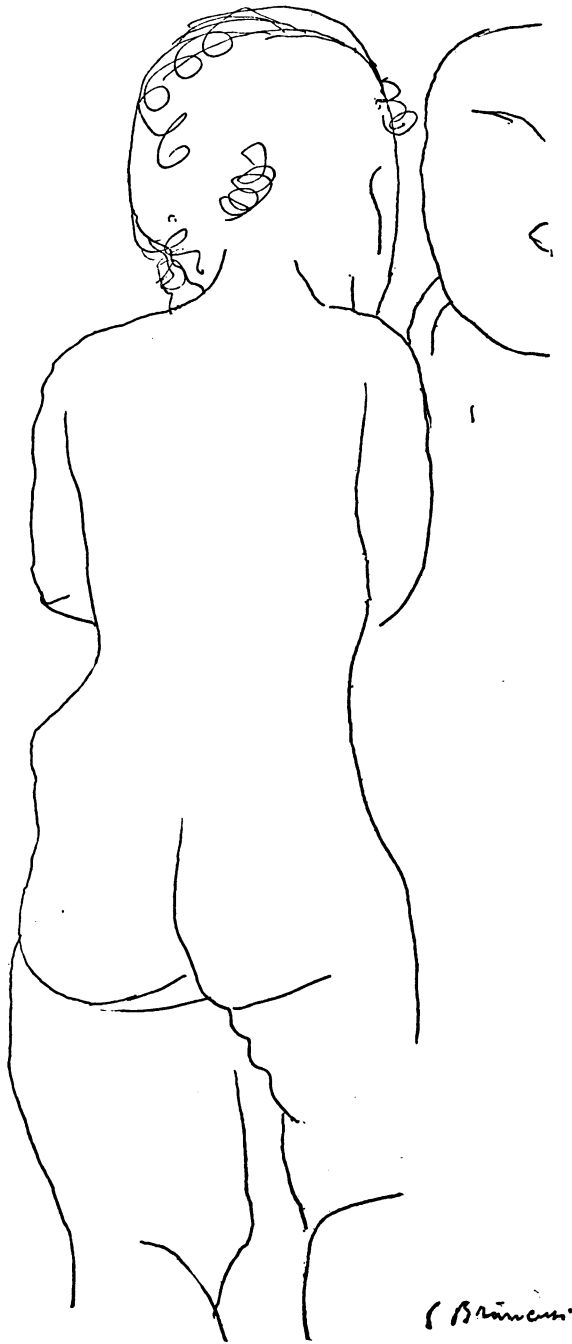
"It is not the work itself, it is to keep oneself in condition to do it, that is difficult," is a saying of his. Between the sculptor and his material he asks for a state of freedom. The sculptor like the musician must deal in equivalents, like all who would arrive at the thing intact, at "the thing itself."

Equivalents of his are sculpture conceived in block, as if worked from the heart of the project. Elaborate and highly simplified surfaces are nothing unless they follow out of this. "Simplicity," he says, "has been taken too often as the aim. Simplicity is complexity itself. It is the essence in oneself, and one has to be nourished by it to know its value. . . . I never seek to make what they call a pure or abstract form. Pureness, simplicity is never in my mind; to arrive at the real sense of things is the one aim. . . . Those who take only the formula are impotent. They produce a void, a blown-out egg-shell, fragile and pretty. The egg, shell and substance, is what is needed. Fulness and volume are necessary in order to give the shock of reality."

So the meaning of the words *Cube* and *Cubist*—not primarily to indicate simplified form, but form in volume, form conceived through its cubic content; true to the physical laws of the actual. And this in contrast to art forms which follow an ever weaker thread back to beauties of other years—echoes of echoes. "It is time we had art of our own." These are words Brancusi has used to build on as other moderns must also have done. But he maybe more than any with clear faith in these times as against the past:

"Outside of popular unconscious art (what we would call folk art) outside of what a few individuals here and there have made, the arts have never existed by themselves. They have been always the apaanage of the religions. Each time we look at a religion we see that very beautiful things have been created and that afterwards decadence follows.

One can't take this product of the religions as universal art. Water is always water. Yet each time it has a different quality, alkali, iron, sulphur. We must find the source of pure water so that everyone can drink.



Courtesy of the Brummer Gallery

A DRAWING. BY CONSTANTIN BRANCUSI

Art begins to be born. Once rid of the religions and the philosophies, art is the one thing that can save the world. Art is the plank after the shipwreck, that saves someone. . . .

People have always tried to express the beautiful, but they have tried in all faith to do it through particular things. No one may get there until he comes outside of particular things, and attains it through the thing itself, which is outside of him. It is like a funnel. We go in at the large end, into the midst of the diverse things that make up existence. We have to pass through all this by the small end of the funnel, to get out into the open, the essence.

Art must give all at once suddenly the shock of life, the sensation of breathing—the sense of happiness.”

Life is enough. The religions however alluring have been but artifices to lean on. To people looking for new religions his reply is, “What for? Now that we are just beginning to extricate ourselves, why get entangled again?”

He loves the loneliness of each thing, the freedom which rooted in the earth finds its way up into the air. His sculptures seen in the white light of his studio in Paris or against beach-coloured walls of the Wildenstein gallery have had for many people the impeccable air of children, of fabulous orphans who ask for nothing, lean on nothing, are themselves. And they have the naïve faces of birth, things for a moment freed and untrammelled. “When we are no longer children, we are already dead,” is one of his sayings. In his studio where the logs and boulders waiting to be used give the look of a lonely beach or tableland, even the tools are supremely themselves. The steel of a row of saws hanging on the white wall gleams preciously; mallets and chisels on a stone table are important. The separate intentional values of material objects have happened to strike me as forcibly in two far off places, the power house in the Ford plant at River Rouge, a Chinese theatre in the Bowery. Brancusi has it in him to evoke distant relations. And you feel his intimacy with material as you do with artists of cap-sheaf civilizations, Chinese, Greek, French, though he himself has had no wish to suggest them.

He came of an intensely native pastoral country, Roumania, a remnant of the first Rome, a camping place for gipsies; a small fiery fairy-tale of a country. Shining wheat fields, brilliant stitched borders on sheer white goods, intricate carvings and tapestries

derive from sun and dew of stars. The people are artist farmers and workmen, who loll close to the ground or work in patterns up a little into the air, in a gently obscene loam-like hum of stories shot through with wilder music. To this birth maybe Brancusi's sculpture owes its primeval strength, as of ancient things—dawn, fields, planets.

Then these shapes of his have grown in the open web of civilized life known as Paris. People live there within a mingling of many lights and shadows, a crossing of many planes. Paris is a figure of nameless dimensions, because the men and women have welcomed a network of relations with one another. It has been their drama and adventure to mingle, and not only in twos, but in threes, fives, sevens, nines, elevens, and so on infinitely and elaborately, and they have learned through centuries ways of mingling. Out of it an order, an elegance striking deep through all classes, baffling to us who have been taught that any but the simplest human relations are immoral, a waste of time. "Get to work," "Have another drink," "Forget it," are texts of ours. The art of Brancusi carries mysteries of a more complicated and sensuously subtle world than ours. A man must speak with the voice he has learned to use, no matter how primal his purpose. A room of his drawings and sculptures seems mysterious with an inner sophistication, outside of our experience as ours is outside of his. These overtones it is useless for us to imitate, as foolish as for New York or Kansas painters to sign their fruit with musical instruments, or put into their paint the half troubled, half nonchalant faces, breasts, and hips of the world surrounding Matisse, Picasso, Derain. The siren attitude of the bronze called *The Princess*, the brilliant *chevelure* of the final head known as *Mlle Pogany*, the amplitude and piquancy of women in the drawings belong there not here. That Paris can speak to us out of these brasses and bronzes and ink and pigment is exciting, but not so far our affair. Though lighted geysers of life have lately shot up in this country, we are not yet really asking, "What are all these lights for?"

What Brancusi has for us is the honesty of these shapes, the volume and enterprise of them, conceived as living objects in space. His nine projects had the look last March of being in place, even at home on Fifth Avenue. As the high buildings are new shapes in the world's story, and the feeling of Fifth Avenue, Madison,

Park, the cross streets, is a new feeling in cities, new and maybe cold but actual, the sculpture of Brancusi, though not cold, is a matter of newness too. It might not have happened here, being at the same time intentional, tempered, and daring, a blend of qualities we seem to fear. Yet in self-reliance and enterprise this sculpture has kinship with strong coarse America, more than with the America of art cults. It has kinship with skyscrapers, railroads, power-plants, jazz—the America of short-cuts to power. These figures seem to ask you to take the direct road to freedom in art. Even that will be long enough. They go to the gist of the matter. "Theories are samples without value; only action counts," is an aphorism of Brancusi's.

He says that on his first approach to New York and his first look at the legendary sky-line, his words were: "Why, it is my studio. Nothing fixed, nothing rigid. All these blocks, all these shapes to be shifted and juggled with, as the experiment grows and changes." Walking under the incredibly high-flanked windows of the Wall Street district he has wished for a piece of land to build there and show them where they are going "in this magnificent poetry of buildings."

Brancusi is a projector, a builder, a worker among plans. He stands on the ground among things, and would lift them over into their plan. His projects, each of them a unit, together are capable of being combined into a scheme to spell out life and raise its values. The Bird in Space he would like to see placed in a city square or harbour enlarged to a height of many hundred feet to be visible many miles distant. The Column Without End is designed to stand in a garden among trees, a sign of the endless. There are pedestals, bases, and ornaments of wood, granite, cement, which might have meaning in our gardens more than Greek pilasters or Italian urns. He has projects he would like to make live in glass and steel. And in his studio, architecture being sculpture he says, are columns for the building of walls, and a wooden model for a block of high buildings, which if executed might again deliver truth to the eyes, because of coming entirely out of some centre of our life, instead of partly from hybrid surfaces of other days and other lives.

Old and New, New and Old, the terms are nearly worn out. We know now that we are new. We know too that great art has origin older than the earth, more surprising than the spring. This

is the age and the youth there is in the art of Brancusi. Under its sway you begin to lose sight of junk houses of periods, fabrics, jewels, images. You get a glimpse of the sun, the disc, the rays, hot, cold, sweet, acid. "Art must give suddenly, all at once the shock of life, the sensation of breathing. . . ." And Brancusi repeats, and would have you believe it: "In the art of other times there is joy, but with it the nightmare the religions drag with them. There is joy in Negro sculpture, among the nearly archaic Greeks, in some things of the Chinese and the Gothic. . . . Oh, we find it everywhere. . . . But even so, not so well as it might be with us in the future, if only we were to go out of all this."

This is the lonely primitive faith that flashes in him, which he has carried far into skilful calculations.

THE SHACK

BY FRANCES I. WILSON

My shack is a grey shell
half buried in the sand;
dropped by a careless hand—
dropped and forgotten.

Each day it has become a little greyer;
each day the drifting sands
are piled a little higher.

Who would retrace steps
to look for a lost shell.



LE JEU. BY HERMINE DAVID

MEMORIES

BY LEON SRABIAN HERALD

III

ANGOOD'S WEDDING

NO one could penetrate Lazarus' mind. No one saw in him the shrewd strategist he proved to be six months after, though everybody thought his action unforgivable sacrilege. Who could think of breaking an engagement on such grounds! Furthermore, no one could remember that an engagement had ever been broken in Put Aringe, on any grounds; no one could imagine such a thing. Besides having created a tormenting situation through the whole village Lazarus had broken four hearts, one no less than the others—namely, two mothers', a daughter's, and a son's. He had filled two houses with unbelievable darkness and a village with endless gossip.

Lazarus had his comfortable house. This was one reason why he seldom went for pastime to the houses of others. Also, he was such an open-handed host that he liked to entertain people rather than to be entertained. But whenever he went to any one's house it was an eventful day—sometimes the event of years.

The light hearts of the night before had now become leaden. How delicate joy is! more transient than anything, even than perfume. Faces that had been pleasantly quickened by smiles were now deadened by disappointment; and Lazarus, the same incentive, was now radiating shadow. He blamed it all on wine; he said he had not gone to Babo's house to ask his daughter's hand for Nicholas. He did not deny Mariam's quality—her beauty and fidelity—yet insisted on nullifying the engagement, asserting that it was not an engagement-ring anyhow that he had put on Mariam's finger, but one of his own, an ordinary ring. Mother Vartouhi arose from the despot's side broken-hearted, and throwing her arms around Nicholas' neck, wailed disconsolately: "My son, my son, your father has mocked us!"

The last phase of Lazarus' self-justification was that lately

wine had been affecting him lamentably. And this was true. Even a little turned his head, whereas in days gone by he could drink almost all day without any bad effect. He promised his wife not to drink any more even of the best wine; indeed as he spoke, his head began to communicate with Morpheus, conversing first softly, then louder and louder—z—ZZZ!

The master shrewdness of Lazarus was presently made known to the public—given away by no other than his wife. It was not that Angood was superior to Mariam, nor was she to be considered inferior; but this it was: many of the vineyards of the village were irrigated by ponds, and Lazarus could water the trees and vines of his Nor-ding as well from the pond of Brother Mgo as from the common stream of the village. Often, when the ground was parched before it was his turn to have the stream, he sent his sons to steal water from the pond. Now he had thought and planned long before any one guessed it that if his son married Angood, daughter of Brother Mgo, together they would both own the pond and the little spring that filled it to the brim twice daily. Then perhaps he could excavate another spring from the marshes, dig another pond, and could plant and irrigate some of his land next to Nor-ding—for it was going to waste for lack of water.

This scheme was gratifying to many, but in Mariam's heart it was a deadly wound—making her the remnant of a broken engagement merely because her father, Babo, did not own a pond. But this was not all: the disgrace put her on the path to old-maidenhood, which was an unknown thing in Put Aringe. Would that her beautiful body were eaten by leprosy rather than that it should be crucified on the indestructible, undetachable cross, whose name is "Old Maid," from which no human power, nor Heaven's grace could free her!

"Angood" was Elizabeth's nickname. When she was born, she was such a wee thing, such a white thing, that the midwife Mother Talig had named her so—"Seedless," which in turn means a small seedless, very sweet, white mulberry.

As usual, Time had healed its own troubles. In conformity with custom, several people, men and women, were sent to Angood's father, to ask her hand for Nicholas. They were refused downright, out of formality, with the excuse that she was too young, which of course, was the traditional objection and did not mean anything. Otherwise the villagers would have whispered, "Her

parents threw her at the first man who asked her hand. Shameless!"

Several weeks later another party went to ask Angood's hand for Nicholas, and this time were told by his parents that if Mr Lazarus could wait another year, they would be glad to give her hand to his son. The third time the dignity of Lazarus was accompanied by gifts, fruit, wine, and a *bona fide* engagement-ring. The engagement was then performed in the absence both of the groom and of the bride to be.

It was the custom in Put Aringe that neither to-be-wedded should see the other during the period of their engagement, at least not in public. And if the groom loitered around the bride's residence she was careful not to go out, at least not bare-headed for fear of being recognized. However, it was a supreme delight and a good omen to meet, without being watched or suspected by the evil eyes of the public, the hounds of gossip.

A wedding was a special occasion for the godfather; and as was his duty, godfather Ago took complete charge of the intended groom several days before the ceremony. He kept Nicholas in his house day and night. During the numerous parties—preliminaries to the wedding, given by best friends—the groom was the most obedient servant-without-words to all guests, who were to be thoroughly entertained first. Nicholas' fatigue and hunger were entirely his godfather's responsibility, not his own. This was a kind of bargain: the groom had to pay the price before he could receive the joys of marriage.

As the hour of the wedding approached, godfather Ago and his wife the godmother accompanied the neatly attired groom to the bride's house and from there to church. The parents of the couple and the relatives of both, gathered then while Der Hyre put Nicholas and Elizabeth in position before he read the Bible.

The priest stood the two young people face to face and inclined their heads until the foreheads touched; then joined their hands—while godfather Ago held a cross in his right hand above their heads. After the yes-to-yes of the bride and groom—which consisted of a bow instead of words—Ago put the wedding-ring on the bride's finger. Then Gregor, the best man, poured out a glass of wine which was first tasted by Der Hyre. The godfather and godmother respectively then helped the solemn bride and groom to taste the wine.

As they came out of the church, the priest preceded the veiled bride and circumspect groom, arm in arm; and these were followed by the godfather and godmother, the parents, relatives, and almost the whole village. Music, which was waiting outside, began, and wine streamed as copiously as music. If the procession toward home was slow, gaiety was fast and unconfined. The beat on the drum and the blow of the clarinet, the percussion of the cymbals and the bow on the violin were very quickening.

It was not to a lean house that Elizabeth went, but to one that had sacrificed cattle for her wedding-feast. What if she were not free to partake of the things others were enjoying? They enjoyed these things because of her. She was the living cause of the abundance. The procession stopped in front of the house of the married pair. The crowd shouted three times: "Long life and happiness to the bride and groom! May they grow old on the same pillow!" while those whose presents were jewellery, offered them to the mother of the house or to the godmother. Elizabeth was then ushered into her special place, behind a for-the-occasion curtain, and Nicholas was taken by the godfather where there was provocative gaiety, where many shouted and called for the groom to come to be congratulated.

It was the desire of all the women and children to see the bride, to touch her and say nice things about her in her presence and see what beautiful things she wore. The strain of this upon her would have been too great if she had been left unguarded, for on this day and for many succeeding days, she was like a helpless child, indeed with less independence than a child, because she was not even allowed to cry. The godmother was a staunch guardian, permitting only a few choice ones to come within the curtain which separated the bride and her trinkets from the rest—from gaiety, activity, and eyes.

While a dozen women were preparing dinner in the kitchen for two hundred people or so, in the main room the men were dancing vigorously; they danced hand in hand, in circles or in a straight line; they danced with wine glasses in their hands, or solo.

Now and then the elderly father of the occasion was brought into the dance; and the groom who was still the obedient lamb of the godfather was allowed for a short time to enter the ring next the leader of the dance. If, however, someone succeeded in coaxing the groom's mother to dance, nothing more could be desired to

please the company. Everything went well on this occasion; the pleading of the musicians, the participating of the godfather and godmother, and a word from the father of the house. "Yes, she must dance to-day—by all means! There are not many such days that we can be sure of in life," made the day complete. Mother Vartouhi danced well and with a blush that had not been used for a long time past.

All weddings took place in winter because winter was a leisure period. If it was not extraordinarily cold, people liked to go out on the flat roofs for a room was never large enough to hold the anxious onlookers and the tireless dancers; and if the weather was at all bearable, the outdoor dancing continued until well past midnight. Accordingly, Peter who conducted the dance—a cousin of the groom—led the dancers hand in hand in Grecian manner. Their vivacious feet were free in the out-of-doors; the dance indeed was a thing to be admired. It was an event to see how entirely themselves these men could be!

There was plenty of wood on such occasions for bonfires—these fires being built to make light for the dancers and warmth for the army of admirers. In the centre of the roof was a tripod especially constructed, with a brazier full of oily pinewood burning on the top to furnish light to the musicians. The silhouettes of the dancers upon the night! Were they shadows begging existence from the flames—shadows of the dancers for a wedding—or unknown creations of some other orb which had come close to see the joys of a wedding? This was as near as men could approach godhood.

The making of a wedding was its musicians and its wine, for the merry-makers were many, and the making of this wedding was good. The festivities lasted three days and the greater part of the nights—during which, however, the groom had no permission at any time to see the bride. At the end of three days, gaiety underwent a sudden calm and peaceful nuptial days began.

During the time of the engagement Elizabeth had avoided being seen by her father-in-law or grown-up brothers-in-law or even by her betrothed. But now that she had come to live in the same house, this eluding became very difficult. The nuptial curtain still hung, and she went to hide herself behind it whenever one of the men came in, but not all the men were always considerate or thoughtful enough to make known beforehand some-

how, that they were coming. And if one entered unawares, then did a bird of Paradise fly away in her rustling feathers, leaving only an enchanting atmosphere behind, an overwhelming desire to see her.

Weeks, indeed months passed before Elizabeth regained three-fourths of the freedom she had known in her girlhood but a short time back. There were several grown-up men in her new home and they took their time about suggesting to her the "Face-revealing." If one of them thought, and the younger ones thought of it first, that he should give freedom to this innocent stranger entrapped among them, the mother then went to the bride's hiding-place and brought her into the presence of her son. The bride dutifully bowed and made the motion of kissing his hand, then she kissed her mother-in-law's hand. In return, her brother-in-law gave her a present.

This was merely permission to be at home in the same house—it was freedom only for her body-self; her spirit-self remained locked behind the bars of custom. Not only was it a mistake to speak to the grown-up men; she must not speak to her mother-in-law either. For the first few weeks, the only freedom of speech allowed her was to speak to her sisters-in-law and the children; this too in an absolute whisper. During the early months, her duties in the house were very light, so in a way she had liberty, but if something happened which required an answer from her, it must be by a motion of the hands or head, nothing more.

As time passed, withering her brief flower-period, she became again a normal being. They had each given her freedom not to run from them, and all excepting perhaps the eldest brother-in-law had given her permission to speak out loud to them. But when it came to the father-in-law! It was seldom that a bride might speak to him audibly, or others in his presence—even unto his noble death.

PARREGENTAN

One of our holidays was Parregentan.

Christianity had spread its branches over the four corners of the land, but beneath it was paganism, the healthy trunk upon which the stem of Christianity had been grafted.

Many of our holidays were significant of gods and goddesses, and Parregentan was reminiscent of Bacchus. This Bacchic festival was celebrated the week before Great Lent. During Great Lent no one could drink wine or milk, nor eat meat, nor eggs. Grains, vegetables, and sweets were the only sustenance. Fasting was optional. Therefore, the motto of the week was Eat, Drink, Be Merry. As coloured eggs are associated with Easter, throwing water on one another at Vartavar, jumping over the flames of a bonfire at Derendass, and the giving of presents is a part of Christmas, so was drinking wine a token of Parregentan.

Merry-making consisted not only of eating and drinking in everyday attire, but of dressing as *Fatdigs* and behaving in a way to stir the old gods from their sleep and fairly capsize them. *Fatdigs* were men—although sometimes unsuspected among them there was a woman—dressed like gods and goddesses, gnomes and giants, or animals such as bears and elephants. Indeed the word Parregentan, parregentanutium was Bacchic. It meant “good living” with a connotation of gaiety and conviviality. It was said in greeting when one drank wine.

In Put Aringe it was the custom during the winter, for those who could spare a room and afford to heat and light it, to do so, that the neighbours might come together either in daytime or in the evening to while their time away—play games, read, or discuss the topics of the day. When any one came in to one of these open houses or community centres, he was offered a cup of coffee, or a glass of tea or wine as courteously as if he were an invited guest. It was in these places that groups of *Fatdigs* perambulated in their oddity.

As darkness became a thicket about the village, the music and voices of various groups intermingled from adjacent streets and housetops like wild vines. Voices struck the steel wall of the sky, and pleading music was refracted from the edges of the stars. Gaiety was indeed more poignant than sorrow.

In the evenings during Parregentan, community places were filled to the utmost by men, women, and children. Everybody, young or old, tried to come as early as possible to secure a place. Stoves were taken down and additional balconies were built to accommodate the young ones and women, to safeguard them from injury in the crowd; the very windows were occupied.

Fatdigs were not supposed to speak to any one outside their

own group lest they reveal their identity and seldom took the liberty of speaking to each other, for this would have seemed unmannerly. However, there was with them, in plain attire, someone to call upon in an emergency, to collect tips, and serve them wine. Should any one venture to flirt with their fair ones, whips would flash upon him from all directions.

Fatdigs carried leathern whips with them, not only to punish flirts, but for an even better reason. Not merely one group or two were travelling from place to place, but several. If a group went to a place where another group was—playing, dancing, making love as gods, in pantomime, or provoking laughter by other extravaganzas—the attention of the audience was heightened by this fortuity. Gods in wrath, gods against each other were not to be seen often, and afforded unprecedented excitement. The whip-battle between the two groups would be real and awe inspiring.

If one group put another to flight, the defeated ones stayed out like gentlemen; if newcomers put out those who had come first, the hilarity to the audience was the greater. It was against the rules to battle with hands, and the owner of the house never interfered unless things became unsportsmanlike; nor did the leaders take part. If the vanquished had among them goddesses or nymphs, these became spoil in the hands of the conquerors.

On the balcony in my father's spacious room, when cousin Eva casually asked my mother Vartouhi where Helena was, my mother shrugged her shoulders in answer, for not only were some fascinating *Fatdigs* entertaining them, but a new one had just come in proudly and pompously. "Gurrrrrrr!" objected the group already established.

"Gurrrrrrrrrrr!" retorted the new ones.

The crowd pressed itself together to make a space in which the whips could play. The whip belonging to a giant in the first group, uncurled itself like a furious snake upon the prince-like, slender figure of one of the intruders. How could a whip intimate the identity of a lover, like the touch of hands? "David!" protested an intoxicating voice from inside the mask. The giant was not at a loss to recognize the speaker.

"Helena!" he whispered with more remorse than surprise, as he supported the falling cypress-figure in his arms.

Before the crowd knew what had happened or could become

excited, the giant with the legerdemain of a god caught up the utterer of his name like a jug of wine and disappeared into the thicket of darkness.

Parregentan was the entrance to a place shadowy and quiet; wine was sunshine which they absorbed in its every phase before entering. During this week the whole village traversed sylvan paths of paganism to arrive at a peaceful period of Christianity, the Great Lent.

STORIES

A fire-place was dug in the ground in the centre of our kitchen and in the evening we gathered around it or around the stove in the living-room, waiting for our great-grandmother, the sister of my great-grandfather, to come to tell us stories. These stories—among them the following—were the chief delight of my boyhood:

One time a knight mounted his horse to go in search of his love. He rode and rode and rode until one day at the setting of the sun he found himself at the end of the world—at the place where the sky bends down close over the world. The edge of the world was covered with unbelievable flowers of undreamed-of fragrance, where no human foot ever stepped, nor eye looked. From the rim of the sky extended shafts and hooks of pearl, from which were hanging stars, rainbows, clouds, moons, nights, days, suns, and every heavenly appurtenance. At this moment, though not himself in sight, God was showering stars over the face of the sky, had rolled the moon across it, and was spreading night over the world—having hung the day and the sun on their hooks. The knight looked on, wonderstruck and admiring. By and by, when it was altogether dark, he unsaddled his steed, hung the saddle on a pearly hook which a moment before had been loaded with stars, and fastened his horse to another. Then as he watched the stars spreading over the sky and ate of the food which he had brought with him, he was tempted to take a rainbow from its hook to give to his love when he should find her, but saw that God had taken precaution against thieves and had padlocked the rainbow. So he had to content himself with just touching it. He enquired of the suns and the moons, concerning his love, and the heavenly bodies told him that he would find her at home. This

surprised him, but knowing that the heavenly bodies could not lie, he was satisfied—yet puzzled, asking himself again and again, why he had not seen her there.

Soon it was time to sleep. He spread his coat far in from the edge of the world lest he fall while asleep, took off his armour and the rest of his clothing, carefully and joyfully hanging them on glittering hooks, happy in his strange experience.

The next morning when he awoke, he was greatly disappointed. Moons, suns, rainbows, vari-coloured clouds, and stars were all smiling at him; but his horse, armour, lance, and clothing were not there. He reproached himself for having slept so soundly that he had not waked up when a prowler had robbed him, and wondered how he was to go home without horse or clothes.

He then, as before, questioned the heavenly bodies which were no longer those with whom he had spoken previously, and each answered graciously that it was a pale winter sun, a cool spring sun, a hot summer sun, a red autumn sun; a first quarter moon, a harvest moon, a running-through-the-clouds moon. The clouds explained that they were cumulus clouds, rain clouds, storm clouds, or mere clouds temporarily accompanying storm clouds, or rain clouds who had asked their assistance. Each kind of lightning told him if it were a lightning that hit men, a lightning that split rocks, a lightning that struck trees, or a lightning that smote the ocean. Each day explained what kind of day it was, a holy day, a day of battle, a day of joy, or a day in which just nothing happened. Each gave him a polite and correct answer. Then as he was about to ask other questions, he saw that his horse and all his panoply were coming toward him. With renewed joy he realized that the sky was turning around the world and remembered that precisely at this hour of the preceding day, he had tethered his horse and hung his clothes and armour there. His happiness in this unique discovery was unbounded.

It was not many years until he was home, and seeing his armour studded with stars, a rainbow curled around his lance, a quarter moon in his helmet, the townsfolk were proud of him.

A girl who had been a neighbour of his had attained maturity and great beauty—beauty no less dazzling than that which he had seen in his journey—and finding her at his home when he

went in, he felt instantly that she was his love. He gave her the rare things he had gathered, and flowers he had brought from the edge of the world, which though wilted, had lost no particle of fragrance. He told her all that the heavenly bodies had said to him and they lived happily ever after.

Another story:

A father and a mother had prayed God to give them a daughter, but each time the mother gave birth to a child, it was a son, not a daughter. In time they had twelve children, all boys, and were still without a daughter. The father tore his hair in anguish and prayed, "God, give me a daughter even though she be a monster!"

His prayers were heard, for when the mother next gave birth to a child, it was a daughter, and in her honour the happy father made a great feast.

Not long after the birth of the daughter, the parents and brothers of the child noticed that every day from the barn, a beast was missing. Each morning when they counted the stock, a calf, a heifer, a cow, or a colt was gone, and no trace could be found. The door was locked, nor was there any possibility that a stranger could force the door without being overheard. There was no evidence of a broken window, or of one that had been pried open. There was no sign of blood in the barn, not a remnant of hair or a sliver of bone.

Exasperated, the father directed his sons who were now grown men, to arm themselves and taking turns, to sleep in the barn, one each night. The first night, the eldest son slept by the stock, and was not disturbed the night long. But in the morning when he counted the animals, his own saddle-horse was missing.

The next brother stayed awake until dawn, then slept an hour and thought nothing had happened, but when he counted the stock, could not find his own horse. And so for eleven nights, although each brother slept but an hour, when the stock was counted, a horse was missing, the guard's own saddle-horse.

It was now the youngest brother's turn. Toward dawn he saw his sister cleverly open the door, then close it, devour a horse, wipe her mouth, and go back to her bed again. Striking his forehead

with his hand, the brother groaned, "Our own sister—a monster, given by God, in accordance with my father's prayers!"

He feared to tell his parents and brothers what he had seen, since they loved this only girl child so much, but told everything to his wife and warned her to breathe a word of it to no one. "I must leave all of you," he said, "and go far away. We could not convince our parents and brothers of what I have told you. All the villagers will disappear, our parents and brothers also, without a clue, for our sister is fine-fingered and demoniac, and you must stay close to the twin lions which are chained to each side of our door. Though you were the only flesh-bearing creature in the village, if you are close to the lions she will not approach you, and should she come in sight of you, you must let loose the lions. That you may be able to tell when I am in danger, put a dish of *matzoun* (clabbered milk) on the shelf each day and should it commence to turn to blood, unchain the lions. They will know how to find me."

Taking leave of his parents and brothers he then set forth with a heavy heart for an unknown destination. There was at some distance from the village a lake beside which at noon he sat down and ate his luncheon. Then, after resting, he planted the seeds of the dates he had just eaten.

Years passed without his having had any news from his village; he wondered if his wife had faithfully executed his orders and in great anxiety resolved to go home. He passed the lake beside which he had refreshed himself long ago, and seeing that the date seeds which he had planted had grown into trees, rejoiced that he had planted them. As he drew near the village, he saw no living soul. Fear seized his body. And as soon as he entered the village, his sister, grown into the full dimensions of a monster, leaped at him saying, "Ah! my sweet brother, you have come to me at last. Long have I claimed the sweetness of your flesh." But when she was about to devour him, he entreated of her a favour.

"What is it you wish, sweet brother?" asked the monster, "but let your answer be quick."

"My sister," he said, "shall we not enter this uninhabited house and prepare for me some gruel? When my hunger has been appeased you may then devour me."

"Certainly, let us go in," said the monster, "there is an abund-

ance of food, sweet brother, but nothing will please me so much as your flesh."

He prepared a great pan of gruel and as soon as it began to boil, threw the scalding mass into the monster's eyes, and fled. Climbing one of the date-trees which he had planted so long ago, with no thought of future exigency, he saw the creature raging beneath and trying to break the tree. He had planted the date seeds so close to each other, that he could easily pass from one tree to another as the monster was demolishing the tree he was on, and as he did so called loudly, "Lions, my twin lions, O lions, save me!"

He was on the last tree, which the monster had almost destroyed, when the lions arrived and tore her to pieces and by the time he had descended, her body resembled nothing that had ever lived. Kissing the lions as if they were his own blood and caressing them as they walked beside him, he turned toward home, his mind a prey to complex fears.

When he reached home he found his wife on the floor as if dying, yet holding in her hands the chains which she had unfastened. He kissed her and helped her to rise and as soon as she was calm, she told him everything. When the monster had devoured the animals belonging to her father, she entered the neighbours' barns, and gradually, unsuspectedly, cleverly, dispatched all the animals in the village. Then when the children had been devoured, she attacked grown people, and lastly her brothers. Her father refused to believe the report that his daughter was the cause of this depredation and enraged, threatened any one who dared to suggest such a thing. "She devoured your mother in that same bed in which, as your sister, she had been born," said his wife. "I dared not say so to your father for fear he would kill me. At last this monster daughter faced her father and said to him, 'You remember your prayer to be given a daughter even though she might be a monster? I am she!' And before her father was able to move or to utter a word, she devoured him. The lions, of course, regarded her as they did me—a member of the family. But after you told me what you did, she never entered the house, and I never went out of sight of the lions until to-day when I saw the sour milk in the dish turning into blood. Then I ran to unfasten the chains and do not remember what I did or what happened."

United after these vicissitudes, they prayed God to send them that which is useful and beautiful, and above all, what they needed and could use and no more. And they lived long, long after and God vouchsafed to them, fullness of life and all happiness.

To be continued

SWEET-PEAS ADDRESS THE LADIES

BY S. FOSTER DAMON

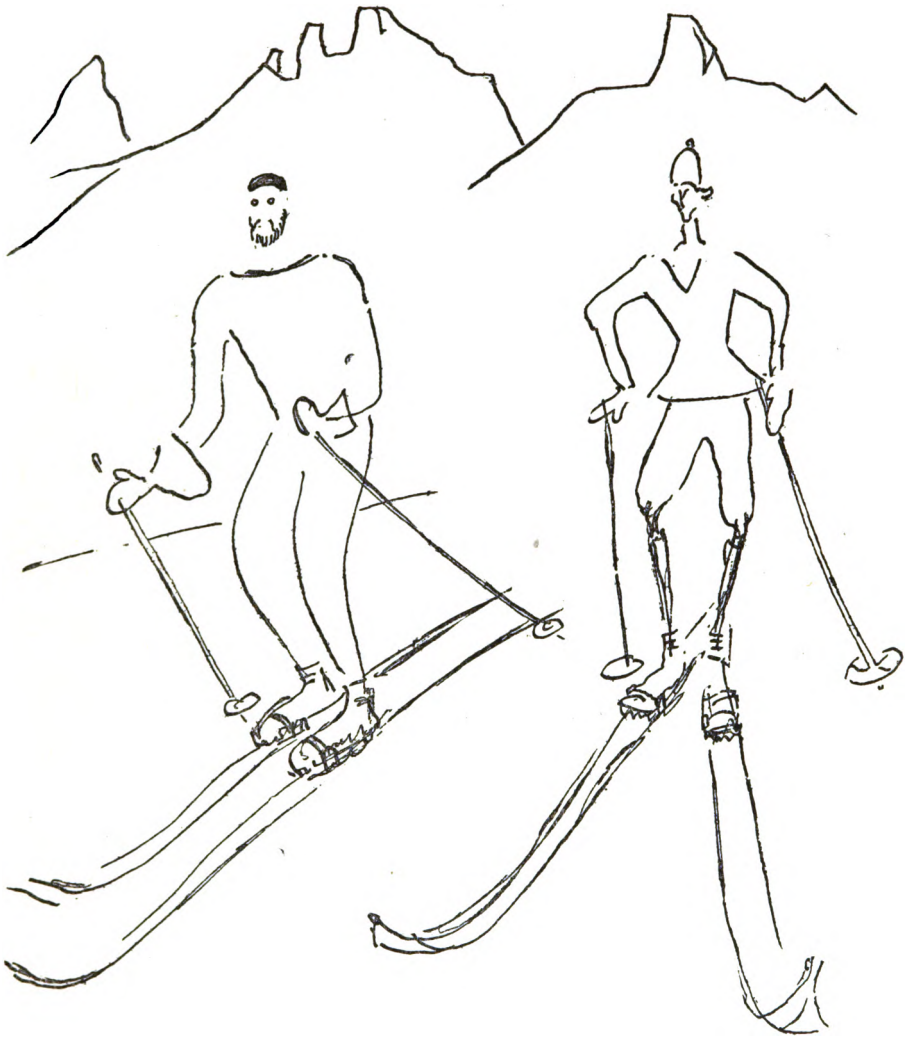
To your slow-hooved existence,
days and nights are solid things;
to us, they are a swift trill of lights.

And though you remain immutable,
you cannot see us dancing in the vase,
circling arm in arm and nodding with the rhythm.

Now you fade, and all your world.
(Ah, sisters, let us release the vanity:
our colours become frail,
our faces wrinkle—
yet we feel within us the strong futurity.)

Ah, sisters, fear not, though one by one
we fall, to lie outspread upon the waters
like drowned moths—)

As we were saying, immutable mountains,
we have lived as long as you.



ZWEI HERREN. BY BERTRAM HARTMAN

BOOK REVIEWS

WALPOLE REVISITED

SUPPLEMENT TO THE LETTERS OF HORACE WALPOLE. *Edited by Paget Toynbee. Three volumes. 8vo. The Clarendon Press. \$11.*

A SELECTION OF THE LETTERS OF HORACE WALPOLE. *Edited by W. S. Lewis. Illustrated. Two volumes. Crown 8vo. 514 pages. Harper and Brothers. \$10.*

LETTERS OF HORACE WALPOLE. *Selected and Arranged by Dorothy Margaret Stuart. Crown 8vo. Harrap and Company, London, Calcutta, Sidney. 2/6.*

HORACE WALPOLE'S LETTERS. *Selected and Arranged by William Hadley. 16mo. 535 pages. Everyman's Library. J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., London: E. P. Dutton and Company, New York. Eighty cents.*

THE coincidence of attention to the same author at the same time by different persons has sometimes in its turn attracted attention: and sometimes also, though not always, it has been possible to give reasons for it. Perhaps this is one of the occasions on which, without incurring certain well-known jibes or even curses, it is possible to do so. The immense advantage given to students of "Horry" by the labours of the late Mrs Toynbee and her husband's untiring continuation of them, is of course one cause: but this has been in operation for some time, and Time himself has come to help it and add to it, the last addition to the Supplement being scarce a year old. Almost everybody in the last generation was "entered" (in the old phrase) on Horace, under the very brilliant but too often very delusive light of Macaulay: and it is now quite unnecessary to say that the *praejudicia* in their literal

and etymological sense, received from Macaulay, were only too likely to be prejudices in the usual English acceptation—preliminary judgements *against*. Now although Macaulay has not ceased to be read (and it would be a great pity if he had) he has hardly at any time during the lives of the present younger writing generation been a gospel: while even earlier warnings had been given that he required considerable marginalling and correction. So they have gone to the (in this case by no means unblest) original with advantage to themselves and their readers. There is a not ungenerous dislike prevalent in some quarters to selections: but in such a case as this where the absolute whole is even less likely to be attainable than that other over which the Greek philosopher moaned; where the larger collections rather daunt the novice; and where the individual pieces, though constantly receiving reinforcement from their fellows, show the general quality unusually well, it would be simply silly to object to “sampling” which is very unlikely to be sampling only.

The actual Supplementary volumes—though of course they should and do contain a certain amount of mere “Add. and Corr.” as the well-known sub-title goes—ought by themselves to create a new interest in any one not familiar with the older matter: while to any one who is so familiar, however great his previous familiarity may be, they provide new zests. If there were nothing else but the supplying, from Mrs Toynbee’s separate book on the Deffand Correspondence, of Horace’s own contribution (alas! surviving in far too small proportion) it would be an immense gain to have this brought into direct comparison and contrast, with his letters to other people. Walpole may sometimes remind fanciful readers of a sort of screen in leaves endlessly portraying from within or reflecting from without all sorts of things. And this leaf of communications to his “old woman” has some marked distinctions from the others. It is as if he were “on his *ps* and *qs*” not merely as to his language but as to his thoughts: and there need not be much doubt that this was the case. Moreover we have here—especially from the Waller collection that came directly through Mrs Damer—many letters *to* Horace which provide not a little illumination. Especially welcome are those from his brother Edward, a very curious person of whom we otherwise knew little except that

he appears to have been one of those wise men who avoid all sorts of trouble whenever they can: that he was none the less a benefactor to the world to the not small extent of providing some half-dozen daughters and grand-daughters in the first place, and in the second a letter (May 7th, 1745) from Horace himself which shows him in a mood of pathetic but not in the least ludicrous sentiment, elsewhere not easily traceable. One gathers that Edward Walpole might have been an exceedingly annoying person without exactly intending to be so, but also without in the very slightest degree caring whether he was or not. But a very great deal can be excused to a man who was the *causa sine qua non*—not only of the Countess-Duchess of Waldegrave-Gloucestre and her sisters and daughters, but of the picture of these latter. For Sir Edward could perfectly well have provided the sitters without there being any Sir Joshua to paint them: but Sir Joshua could not have painted the sitters if Sir Edward had not provided them.

The three selections before us are hardly in any way rivals to each other: and though the same letters are inevitably sometimes repeated, a person who will not or cannot rise to the very nearly score volumes of the invaluable Toynbee edition might do worse than get them all. Mr Lewis' is a very beautiful and necessarily rather costly book—wisely divided for comfort of holding into two volumes but continuously paged; provided with everything in the way of paper, print, binding, and illustrating that a so-called "edition of luxury" promises but which alas! like the Honourable Mrs Boldero, it does not always pay; and specially welcome because of the rather unusual character of the illustrations themselves. Mainly if not wholly derived from the fortunate Editor's collections, they consist not merely of the usual portraits of persons and pictures of places, but of title-pages of the Strawberry Press books; fragments of MSS; topical caricatures; oddments of all sorts and kinds which ought to rejoice the soul of "Horry" and might have been chosen by himself. Of the others Miss Stuart's is a most carefully and successfully selected "sample" of about one hundred fifty letters; Mr Hadley's a more lavish bundle of perhaps three times the number. This, instead of following the actual or chronological order of the Letters, divides itself up under subject headings. One sees of course the reason for this, as a very large

number of people do read for subject only. But it may be remarked on the other side that this arrangement loses the subtle panoramic charm of the life-progress as revealed in the actual succession of writing.

Of the details of the selections one cannot say much in a short article. Perhaps the most interesting of Mr Lewis' embellishments—the interest making it more than an embellishment merely—is the portrait of Lady Mary Churchill, Horace's half sister, and daughter of Sir Robert's second wife, Miss Skerrett. Lady Mary is known perhaps chiefly by a pleasant reference of her brother's to her modesty in singing. The likeness between the two—though the sister is (quite properly) much the better looking—is rather unusually strong, and certainly gives no support to the scandal about Horace's own parentage. Miss Stuart's book has a most excellent Introduction: and her pieces appear to have been selected with a constant view to showing most sides of Horace's character. Mr Hadley's is a triumph of *multum-in-parvo* achievement. But of course it is the fresh opportunities of studying this most curious character itself which makes or make this paper worth writing and may make it worth reading. It would require considerable rashness to say, and almost more than considerable knowledge to justify the saying, that this is the largest body of epistolary self-revelation that has ever been put into print by now—that it is one of the largest is a safe but almost pusillanimous refuge. Nor can one exactly hold that Horace was a very complicated, deep, or problematical character. But in the first place the enormous number of subjects, situations, circumstances, on which he delivers himself has to be very carefully considered; and in the second it is exceedingly difficult to be sure when he is delivering a genuine judgement of knowledge, character, or taste and when he is speaking either carelessly or in obedience to fashion or with a view to this or that kind of public. Not that the older stigmatizing of him as a *poseur* is anything like adequate. He *does* pose now and then: but by no means always or even very often. No doubt he does give himself out as a Signor Pococurante who did not care for great things, who did care for many small things much, and who occasionally talked almost without thinking at all. But it was not always so.

Perhaps there is no single passage so illuminative, directly of Horace himself, and indirectly of the whole literary attitude of his time in the special way, as his remarks to Madame du Deffand in

March 1767 on The Castle of Otranto when it had just been translated (not well) into French. To most readers of the last hundred years or so and perhaps more, "this poor Castle" (as Carlyle might have called it) has always been something of a puzzle. The wiser of us and of our fathers have always given Horace full credit for his precursorship, though we could feel scarcely the slightest liking for the thing itself, and could indeed hardly make out either how he came to write it or how it produced on his contemporaries the effect that it did. For it certainly does look to us rather as a clumsy burlesque of Romance than as Romance itself, and as a sort of justification of the sneers at Romance in which the eighteenth century so often indulged and which by the way are by no means lacking in Master Horace himself. (See him for instance, doughty champion of Shakespeare as he professed himself, on A Midsummer Night's Dream which, as far as mortal can make such a thing, is romance incarnate on the lighter side.) But from this precious passage we see that what Horace *meant* the Castle to be—what he "loved in it better than all his other work," what, to use the words of a different language, it was "worth to God" being to Him what Horace thought it—was a very different thing altogether. He thought that he had "given free course to his imagination," that "vision and passion were inflaming" him. He thought also—perhaps with more reason—that he had "done it in despite of rules critics and philosophers" and that (which again is true) it was "all the better for that." Therefore this Castle is a real example of what has sometimes been fancied—a *chef d'oeuvre inconnu* in which the design is what it ought to be; in which the accomplishment seems to the designer what it ought to be; in which it looks to his contemporaries more or less as it did to him; but in which the appearance somehow withers and vanishes under fuller light.

You do not of course often—perhaps ever again—get so near "the metaphysicals" as this; and it is absolutely necessary to divest yourself of that tendency to throw a book aside when you come to a statement that seems to you absolutely preposterous and abominable which has been noted, pleasantly or deplorably, by many students of human nature. On the always dangerous subject of politics it is not necessary to touch further than to say that Horace evidently knew nothing about it, and that no wise Tory will claim him on the score of the utterances of his last decade or thereabouts any more than any wise Liberal will either claim him or reject him

on the score and character of the Whiggery of his earlier days. In the famous phrase he had not "a political head": and it is amusing to compare the sober and rather dreadful judgement, years earlier, of that Chesterfield whom Horace would like you to think a not over-witty wit and nothing else, on the certain coming of a Revolution in France, with Horry's certainty of a somewhat different character, on almost the eve of the catastrophe, that with such a nice young King as Louis XVI and two such nice old ministers as Turgot and Malesherbes France was "safe on the plan." In the immortal words of Mr Midshipman Easy on another subject he "didn't understand these things."

There is not quite such an easy way of avoiding stumbling-blocks in respect of literature. You can't exactly say that Horace didn't understand literature: nor that he was, as regards it, on one side at one time of his life and on another at another. He is a kind of mixture or "twy nature"—a chicken half struggling out of the eighteenth-century shell and half obstinately burying itself therein. He writes *The Castle of Otranto* and *The Mysterious Mother*; he backs up (not quite wholeheartedly) Gray; and says all sorts of handsome things about Shakespeare. But, as was previously glanced at, he thinks the *Dream of Dreams* "forty times as nonsensical as the worst opera libretto"; he calls Spenser's stanza "drawling"; and to mix arts as he himself does in the case, he dismisses Gibbon while admiring him as possessed merely of "good sense" et cetera, taking refuge for great original genius in some splash drawings of Lady Di Beauclerk's soot-water which, if you please, combine the merits of Guido, Albano, Poussin, Salvator, and Andrea Sacchi. Indeed one's mild indignation here can hardly even admit the "mixture of arts" as an excuse. For all good critics have acknowledged and admired in Gibbon the magnificent pictorial and architectural character of his work—the rainbow-like bridge that it makes from Roman to Renaissance history.

But this very example provides if not the solace of Horry's sin, to some extent the explanation of it—besides another in which he laughingly half admits, that Lady Di was illustrating work of his own. Everything with him was personal: and though he *had* personal acquaintance with both persons he was very much less enthusiastic about the gentleman than about the lady; while it would be

dishonest to omit, though unfair to lay too much stress upon, the different social and hereditary positions of the two. But never mind all this. You must take your Horace as you have got him: and, in the strongest and most liberal sense of the adverb, an uncommonly good thing you have got—a thing possessing idiosyncrasy, enjoyable even in its defects, unusually enjoyable in its qualities, and possessing also a bounteousness of quantity and variety rarely elsewhere met with. If you are wise and can afford it you will certainly buy Mr Lewis' book; you will only need to be wise and not absolutely poor to buy Miss Stuart's selection for the excellence of its editorial matter and Mr Hadley's for the copiousness of its allowance of text. If either or all of them induce you to indulge in the nineteen Toynbee volumes they will have done their perfect work. It is curious how little *satiating* Horace is if wisely dipped into. Even the same letter read in different texts over again has a certain freshness about it.

So one comes back to something like what was said at the beginning that Horace Walpole may interest from two—though one might here increase the number to half a dozen or more—different points of view. The least exalted perhaps but perhaps also the most natural (a correlation of conditions by no means exceptional) is something like this. Here are a lot of more or less interesting things written about in a certainly rather more than less interesting manner. Let us read about them. Then, straying upwards or downwards as you like to take it, there are other lines of curiosity in nearly all the good and not necessarily any of the bad senses of that word. You want to know about particular things; English schoolboy and college life two hundred years ago—of which you won't learn much; the Grand Tour business; the "great Walpolian battle" which unseated possibly a rather Godless but by no means an unhuman or inhumane and a very able Prime Minister (it is a Tory who writes this); the '45; the way people danced, dined, gambled, got more or less politely highway-robbed; made toyshop museums of their houses; picnic-cooked, expecting utensils to fly about their ears; tucked up (an absolute impossibility at the present moment) their garments when it rained—an absolute possibility at the present or any moment in England; and a thousand other things. Still in the "Excelsior" vein and neglecting the pedantic

and other criticisms on that young man or his "slogan"—you want to construct an eighteenth-century existence out of all this. Horace will no doubt help you to do it; but you will have to be careful over a little and add a great deal. And still again there is still something left outside of this though in a manner including it—the personality of this Horace or Horatio Walpole who has passed it all in a sort of kaleidoscopic panorama before you, and the qualities in him which gave him the power to do so.

GEORGE SAINTSBURY

REBECCA WEST'S CARL SANDBURG

SELECTED POEMS OF CARL SANDBURG. *Edited by Rebecca West. 12mo. 289 pages. Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$2.*

THE first interest of the present volume is in the editor. What does Miss West think of Carl Sandburg in general, and what of his work does she choose in particular, and why? It must be admitted that after reading the preface one approaches the selections with some trepidation. Miss West, perhaps for the sake of English readers, feels bound to introduce Carl Sandburg in his proper environment, to pose him amid the phenomena of his life, like one of the masterpieces of taxidermy to be seen in museums of natural history and known as "habitat birds." As a habitat bird Carl Sandburg simply does not come off. The background which Miss West has constructed for him out of her memories and impressions of Chicago is as artificial as that which the country photographer provides for his subjects. The picture of Lake Michigan, "packed with people from the slums . . . until they have no room to swim but must stand upright, crowded shoulder to shoulder," is one of the Gargantuan legends of the place. And the impression of Chicago which she registers so seriously, that "the normal citizen there is living a very intense life of self-consciousness and self-analysis," sounds like a playful bit of imposition. Undoubtedly the residents of the Middle West are freer in communication than the inhabitants of New England, but they are not nearly so self-conscious. Indeed, their willingness to talk about their own experience or yours does not suggest the introvert. The geographical similarity of the great prairies of the Middle West to the plains of Russia, which strikes Miss West, is an interesting one, but it does not extend markedly to the inhabitants. Middle Westerners still tend to exhibit the qualities of their several racial stocks, Scandinavian, German, Dutch, Irish, Italian, Czech, et cetera. When one reads that "in the Middle West more than anywhere else the introspective inhabitants have developed an idiom which is exactly the reverse of our English tongue in that it is admirably suited for describing the events of the inner life

and entirely inadequate in dealing with the events of the outer life," one is left gasping. Western slang, which is doubtless a manifestation of the idiom in question, is at least as realistic in objective as in subjective matters. Probably the average Middle Westerner, especially if he be of Irish or Mediterranean extraction, is less literal in noting fact and more understanding psychologically than a London policeman, but this is a matter of character, not of limitation of language. To say of Carl Sandburg that "the main determinant of his art is the power of his native idiom to deal with the inner life of man," and that "his idiom shapes him also in making him not so wise in his pictures of the external life" may be true to his qualities as a poet, but surely is fanciful as an explanation of them.

If one is disposed to lift eyebrows at the interpretative background in which Miss West has placed her subject, question yields to affirmation when we come to the presentation which she gives of the poet himself. Many of the things which the editor says of the Middle West in general are true of Carl Sandburg in particular, and the qualities of material and technique which she attributes to him are perceived by the eyes of a critic. Moreover, and of most importance, the poems are chosen with excellent judgement to illustrate these qualities. In any volume of selections, things are omitted which to certain readers are quintessential, while others are included which seem easily dispensable; but in the main Miss West's taste will appeal to Sandburg's admirers as catholic, and they may be proud to have him presented to an international public in such distinctive form.

Whether we agree entirely or not with Miss West's appraisal of Sandburg's limitations in picturing external scene, there is no doubt that human experience is his great theme and his chief power is that of entering sympathetically into the experience of others. In this respect he and Sherwood Anderson show unconsciously in art that pragmatism which has come to be characteristic in America of more formal thought. Sandburg's lines for S. A. are expressive of this kinship.

“. . . he sleeps under bridges
with lonely crazy men; he sits in country
jails with bootleggers; he adopts the children
of broken-down burlesque actresses; he has

cried a heart of tears for Windy MacPherson's father; he pencils wrists of lonely women."

Most of the poems of Miss West's collection are these poems of experience, of happiness and sorrow in simple lives, none more elementary than the *Fish Crier*:

"I know a Jew fish crier down on Maxwell Street,
with a voice like a north wind blowing over corn
stubble in January.

He dangles herring before prospective customers evinc-
ing a joy identical with that of Pavlova dancing.

His face is that of a man terribly glad to be selling
fish, terribly glad that God made fish, and cus-
tomers to whom he may call his wares from a
pushcart."

Sandburg has a special instinct of gregariousness, which is surely a Middle-Western quality. He likes to summarize experience as in *Skyscraper*, or in his characters of cities, *Chicago*, *Joliet*, *Omaha*. He sees the mass fury in *Mob*. Through behaviour Sandburg reads character, again in very simple lines. The type which emerges most powerfully is the man strong in control and enjoyment of material things and, like O'Neill's *Hairy Ape*, contemptuous of the parasites who don't belong. This is the man of *Ossawatimie*, of *Proud Boy*. Again, experience leads into reflection, a kind of rough philosophy, in *Caboose Thoughts*, *Crap Shooters*, *They All Want to Play Hamlet*, *The Sins of Kalamazoo*.

We do not share Miss West's feeling of the inaptitude of Sandburg's rendering of the external scene. For sheer exactitude of detail take Jungheimer's.

"In Western fields of corn and northern timber lands,
They talk about me, a saloon with a soul,
The soft red lights, the long curving bar,
The leather seats and dim corners,
Tall brass spittoons, a nigger cutting ham,
And the painting of a woman half-dressed thrown
reckless across a bed after a night of booze and
riots."

In general, it is true that scene is shot through with human feeling for it—sentimentalized, if you like, as in *Prairie, Haze, River Roads, Three Pieces on the Smoke of Autumn*. After all it is this enrichment of scene, whether of nature or man's handiwork, by human associations that constitutes Carl Sandburg's chief poetic service to our day. It is his constant closeness to human experience which gives him the right to use the extreme colloquialism of street talk, to base even his poetic form on the rhythms of actual speech. This Miss West recognizes even in what we take to be the wrong reason of her preface, and more abundantly in the right one of her selections.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT

FROM CIRCUS TO THEATRE

PLAUTUS. Volume III. *The Merchant. The Braggart. The Haunted House. The Persian.* Edited by *E. Capps, T. E. Page, and W. H. D. Rouse.* With an English translation by Paul Nixon. 16mo. 525 pages. *The Loeb Classical Library.* London: William Heinemann; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$2.50.

OF a play of Plautus' one should be more inclined to ask "Is it good circus?" rather than "Is it good theatre?" These comedies come out of the circus and are still very close to it: they were not produced indoors for a more or less decorous audience; they were produced in the market-place, with people standing in the sunlight to watch them, or looking out of windows, or mounted upon public monuments. These young men of Athens and their fathers, these slaves, courtesans, parasites, money-lenders, pimps, all wore masks. Unless we can remember the ring-master and the clown we will get no flavour from these whipped-up speeches. And unless we have a memory of the circus Pyrgopolynices, Miles Gloriosus, and his parasite Artotrogus, will be too tiresomely absurd.

Arto: And that elephant in India, for instance! My word, sir! How your fist did smash his forearm to flinders!

Pyrgo: Eh? Forearm?

Arto: His foreleg, I should say, sir.

Pyrgo: 'Twas but a careless tap.

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Arto: And how about that time in Cappadocia, sir, when you would have slain five hundred men all at one stroke, if your sword had not been dull?

Pyrgo: Ah, well, they were but beggarly infantry fellows, so I let them live."

In *The Haunted House* we see an effort being made, either by Plautus or by the Athenian comic dramatist from whom he adapted

it, to put an intellectual idea into the play—in other words to take it out of the circus definitely and put it into the theatre. The play is made to centre around a house. An attempt is made to identify the house with a human life. The idea is expressed by the young Athenian gentleman who happens to be the central character in the comedy:

“Now I want to go on and state why you should think men are similar to houses. Now in the first place, parents are builders of their children. They lay the foundations of their children’s lives. They rear them, do their best to instruct them solidly, and spare nothing necessary to making them useful and ornamental as men and citizens. Money spent on this they don’t count expense. They put on the finishing touches—teach them literature, the principles of justice, law, expend their money and their labour in striving that others may pray for their own sons to be like them. . . . Myself now—till then—while I was in the builders’ hands, I was always a steady, serious-minded chap. But after I moved into my own disposition, I ruined the builders’ work instantly and entirely. A spirit of idleness came over me. That was my storm. Coming upon me heavy with hail, it instantly beat down and bared me of my poor coating of modesty and morals.”

It seems that this long speech as delivered is clowned—Philolaches is maudlin as he makes it, and he probably staggers as he speaks. The Athenian father turns up. As usual the son has spent his substance upon a favourite courtesan. And as usual there is the wily slave to find a way of fooling the father (and fixing things so that the lovers are united. The house is haunted, the home-coming father is told, and it is dangerous for him to go into it or even to put his hand upon the door. It is a good situation for slap-stick comedy. But in this particular play there are better things than slap-stick comedy—the scene between Philematium and her attendant has something in it that brings it close to the comedy of manners.

The plot is always the same: a young man is mad about some courtesan; something happens to prevent his getting her or holding her; a wily, low-comedy slave fixes things; fathers are fooled; money-lenders are left without their cash; pimps are overborne;

braggart soldiers sue for mercy, and everything ends happily. Out of *The Merchant*, *The Braggart Warrior*, *The Haunted House*, or *The Persian*, a very good Mack Sennett comedy, with plenty of knock-about and slapstick stuff could still be made. The cinema is circus in the same way as the ancient comic theatre was circus—that is the reason why one sees Plautus so easily transferred to it.

Perhaps too much has been made of the distinction between circus and theatre: they are related as uncle and nephew are related. Plautus comes out of the circus and keeps close to it, but already everything that is in the comedy theatre is in his plays. Here are the types that are in every comedy—Pierrot, Columbine, Scapin, Sganarelle—we have added very few to these types. And it is certainly worth our while to realize how long types persist in the theatre. They persist in the tragic as well as in the comic play, and no matter what sort of a play he writes the dramatist has to make his central character conform to a recognizable type. The audience must be able at once to identify the person on the stage—"Who is he? Who is she? Prince, Pauper, Dreamer, Virgin, Courtesan?" If we are not permitted to make up our minds early we become distracted and bored.

Plautus took over from the Greek a stock of characters and handed them on to the Italians. The Italians presented all Europe with them. And at last Molière takes hold of three or four of them, gives a mind to them, and lets us look at the world through their eyes. And when he did that he took them out of the circus and put them definitely into the theatre.

As in most of the volumes in the Loeb Classical Library, the text is translated into readable English.

PADRAIC COLUM

“BONUS ORATOR, BONUS VIR”

THE HEART OF EMERSON'S JOURNALS. *Edited by Bliss Perry. 10mo. 357 pages. Houghton Mifflin Company. \$3.*

PROFESSOR PERRY'S selections well illustrate the range and depth of thought shown in the ten volumes of Emerson's journals, but even a random choice would doubtless have served to make plain the serene dailiness of Emerson's most elemental concerns, and the constancy of his affirmative—a very clear affirmative, rather blandly aloof, it is true, but incontaminate as virtue itself. All that myriad of shrewd, calm, gleaming pages declares the fact of a never lifted siege of inspiration, an unending devout gaze into the inner empyrean. “If one would know what the Great God speaketh,” he writes in one of his essays, “he must go into his closet and shut the door”; and to read much of his journals is to be persuaded that this was what he had done himself his life long; that he had, in fact, left his closet as seldom as he might, and then only for the materials of further contemplation. He might indeed be, as Professor Perry notes, almost as ardently sylvan a lover of woods and clouds as Thoreau, and in addition by no means an inert or injudicious observer of affairs; yet he appreciated it all not for itself but for its illustrative virtue; the great rhymes of nature and the world served him chiefly as a resplendent apologue for the perennial inwardness of men.

The passages chosen by Professor Perry outline plainly enough the course of Emerson's comparatively uncomplicated mental and temperamental history, his long life spent in the enrichment of his watchful soul. They include, for instance, his lengthy passage upon himself and his ambitions, written in 1824, his twentieth year. It is a shrewd piece of self-cognizance, and shows in him an ardent Ciceronian, yearning after “the strains of eloquence,” burning for the “*aliquid immensum infinitumque*” of the Roman orators. A few pages later we find him alluding with admiring relish to the treasuries of the wisdom writers, Solomon, Montaigne, Bacon, and even to “Mr Pope's judicious poems.” “I am not,” he there tells himself, “so foolhardy as to write *Sequel to Bacon* on my

title page; but there are some reasons that induce me to suppose that the undertaking of this enterprise does not imply any censurable arrogance." Again, he speaks with emulous zest of Milton's "doing good in the golden way"; but all this is still vague and somewhat sophomoric; it witnesses a general tendency more than a specific intent. And the next years exhibit him merely following the ministerial vocation of his fathers, earning a considerable character in it, but imposing no qualifications or departures of his own, until, as a sudden straw in the wind, came his resignation as pastor of the Second Church of Boston, because of his growing disinclination to administer the Lord's Supper as an official institution of the church; this was in 1832, his twenty-eighth year. In 1833 he went abroad, and in his journal entry, dated Paris, July 11th, one may notice a change of inflection, a finality of tone, which would indicate the culmination of numerous partial intimations into a full perspective of his true calling. ". . . I feel myself pledged," he says, "if health and opportunity be granted me, to demonstrate that all necessary truth is its own evidence; that no doctrine of God need appeal to a book. . . ." His subsequent life and thought seem truly enough the amplification and corollary of this conviction.

Meanwhile, as his lengthening row of manuscript volumes, so carefully indexed, could witness, he was developing his eloquence by thrifty practice. Professor Perry's selections cannot of course, for lack of space, make Emerson's progress in literary technique as evident as it is in the originals; but among the inclusions are several of Emerson's many iterations of the principles that governed him in training his mind to writing. "Like the New England soil," he notes, for instance, in his entry for December 14th, 1850, as he had often noted before, "my talent is good only whilst I work it. If I cease to task myself I have no thoughts. . . ." How industriously he tasked himself only a reading of the full journals can reveal. Though he wrote only when he had thoughts, which was not every day, he yet contrived an immense opulence of thinking; and as frequently as he had thoughts he noted them meticulously in his journals, for, as he told himself very early, "This book is my Savings Bank . . . fractions are worth more to me because corresponding fractions are waiting here that shall be made integers by their addition."

All this was, however, more than simply literary thrift. The

journals and his manner of conducting them are characteristic of the entire man. They were not merely aids to composition; they point to the fact that composition, in his view, was really the amassment of divine moments, the accumulation of pristine perceptions. The journals are a monument to his impressive devotion to the slightest whispers of the voice of divinity as he knew it. "The moment of inspiration,—I am its reverent slave," he writes, and repeats the thought often: "I watch and watch and hail its aurora from afar."

The journals thus join with the testimony of the auditors of his lectures, and with the testimony of his essays in bringing to naught the stock disparagement of his supposed lack of consistency; for the journals are the first, the lectures the second, and the printed essays the final draft of his transcript of "necessary truth"; and on the basis of so mercilessly complete a record of inner essential being as this threefold statement proves to be, few men could be found, surely, who could show themselves more robustly and admirably the exemplars of their own sentences upon life than Emerson was. Few things could be more evident than the swerveless singleness of adherence that maintains itself so devoutly through the three versions. Emerson said many contradictory things, as would any one else who was not slumbering in the final repose; but his very contradictions were made by the literality and intensity of his allegiance to the truth of the inspired moment; it was to him the essential principle of godhead in every man.

The depth of his convictions as to the divinity implied by the inspirations of the private heart was probably a basis for the well-founded criticisms of his aloofness. It is evident that notwithstanding his blandness and good cheer, he maintained distinct distances in his conference with his fellows. He prides himself, in one of the later entries in his journal, on having no personal disciples, on having led his hearers to the Above that was within themselves. And indeed, was not this the very essence of his benefaction? was it not this that made his essays that kind of tonic book which Goethe thought it so important to have about one in time of calamity? Emerson's audiences, if we may judge from the testimony of those who recorded their impressions, were both inspirited and puzzled by his so manifest and potent inwardness, and went away feeling as if they had been eavesdroppers on

the soliloquies of a soul—as perhaps they had: were not the words they heard the words the Great God had spoken to him in the privacy of his heart? How indeed could a man, who had so forcibly demonstrated his intentness upon the interior voices of eternity and divinity, help finding himself somewhat aloof from what he necessarily would consider to be effigies, in the men that surrounded him, effigies strutting and tottering in an effigy-world? How could he help putting blandly aside the juvenility of the Brook Farm and Fruitlands attempts at millennial fraternity?

However, if a man could genuinely speak to him, speak with the voice of his universal utter heart, "*la voix du coeur qui seul au coeur arrive,*" the response would be startling, as some of his contemporaries knew. He would go out to men joyfully, but he would go out to them only on high ground. "When men shall meet," he writes, "as they ought, each a benefactor, a shower of stars, clothed with thoughts, with deeds, with accomplishments, it should be the festival of nature which all things announce." Perhaps it should not be surprising, then, that meanwhile, moral aesthete and master of admonition though he had become, he should tend to dwell amiably alone with the revelation of his thoughts, his incessant pen filling the great scroll of his diaries and his essays with immense teaching words, with praises of the inner elysium, with the poetry of virtue, and the eloquence of character, and the present and ultimate glory of the more in man than meets the eye.

CHARLES K. TRUEBLOOD

BRIEFER MENTION

MITYA'S LOVE, by Ivan Bunin, translated from the French by Madelaine Boyd (12mo, 212 pages; Holt: \$2). This short novel is especially interesting to a student of the technique of writing. The centre through which the story proceeds never once shifts from the consciousness of the main character. It might be compared in this respect to the later novels of Arthur Schnitzler. But whereas the Austrian, by employing only the first person singular, limits his scene, and reduces his story to the quality of a monologue, the Russian, through the use of the third person, achieves flexibility and variety, and, while initiating us just as intimately into the conscious and unconscious thoughts of his hero, is yet able to conduct us through the charming country prospects where the tender and puissant drama takes place. Not only has this novel the same economy of means and psychological insight as were apparent in *The Gentleman From San Francisco*, but it is charged besides with a quality lyrical and moving. Why is it, one asks oneself on laying it down, that Americans almost never achieve in their fiction without self-consciousness this particular combination of simplicity and complexity, passion and restraint?

ASHE OF RINGS, by Mary Butts (12mo, 296 pages; A. & C. Boni: \$2.50) was first published by the adventurous Contact group in Paris (12mo, 304 pages; Three Mountains Press, Paris: Price not given). The book was written before those remarkable stories which have since given Miss Butts her clear and enviable reputation. *Ashe of Rings* is beautifully written and oddly composed to give successfully the effect of non-reality even when dealing with the commonplaces of realistic novels. There are mazes which an adept in sorcery might tread with confident step; the reader without knowledge is more interested in the figures composing the hedges of the maze itself. The trick of announcing a discord, faintly foreshadowing a resolution, and then withdrawing, is extremely effective, and with Miss Butts it often succeeds. A book of strangeness and fascination; it has a defect. One feels that the obscurity is not all necessary for the fulfilment of the theme, and has been a little exaggerated for swank.

NONE BUT THE BRAVE, by Arthur Schnitzler, translated from the German by Richard L. Simon (12mo, 74 pages; Simon and Schuster: \$1.25). This story published in *THE DIAL* under the title of *Lieutenant Gustl* is in the method of its writing similar to *Fraülein Else*. In the present case the plot discloses itself through the vain, shallow, affrighted intelligence of a typical, or so we suppose, Austrian officer. As a study of this young man's manner of meeting experience, of viewing life, it is astute, convincing, deft, finished. As a novel by one of the most distinguished writers of our day it is thin in substance and limited in conception. It is perhaps intended as but a stray bar in that noble symphony of art where passion, fertility, and control form the dominant motifs rather than penetration and intellectual versatility.

TIN WEDDING, by Margaret Leech (12mo, 279 pages; Boni & Liveright: \$2) has, as a narrative, the pace and sequence of a scenario; it unfolds with the pictorial detail, the groupings, and the dramatic technique which one associates with the more intelligent products of the motion-picture studios. The author has taken her characters from the smart and sophisticated layers of society, and while they are clearly hand-picked, she has fused some depth and significance into their superficial relationships. But the outstanding aspect of the novel is Miss Leech's consistent and successful adaptation of motion-picture methods in narrative development.

A MAN COULD STAND UP, by Ford Madox Ford (12mo, 347 pages; A. & C. Boni: \$2.50). The action of the story takes place on Armistice Day and thereabout, with a lengthy throw-back, in best Movie fashion, to the hardships of the trenches, but in spite of the realistic spelling of the sounds of war ("phoh.h.h.h.h.h.h.h.h." for instance, is the sound a cannon makes) scarcely bears reading. The author seems to feel that the license that certain of the "best gentlemen of England" permitted themselves after the war was justified, but other authorities on the subject hold that only the weaker members of society went to pieces on Armistice Day. Mr Ford therefore, is not only not entertaining but suspected of being old-fashioned.

A MIRROR TO FRANCE, by Ford Madox Ford (12mo, 290 pages, A. & C. Boni: \$2.50). An affectionate but not too profound study of a country in which the author has lived many years. Being really affectionate, Mr Ford lauds everything, but angry critics of the country of his choice can find points in the recital worthy of their own side of the argument, such as the naïve praise of the French genius for evading taxes. But the book is not so much written for angry critics as for travellers already bitten with the French cult; and these will find much in the writing to reassure them. It supplements Baedeker admirably.

COLLECTED POEMS OF JAMES STEPHENS (10mo, 268 pages; Macmillan: \$3). Considering the great vogue of James Stephens a collected edition of his poems has been a long time in coming; but it is here at last. The Stephens clan will enjoy dipping at random into the largish volume and pulling out plums of wisdom, or choice curses for the ungenerous, or scents of sweet fields, or dreams of frightened children. Mr Stephens is always himself and no other and he is fortunate in a public that always rises to his art.

THE FORMS OF POETRY, A Pocket Dictionary of Verse, by Louis Untermeyer (12mo, 166 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$1.50). Mr Untermeyer is like an indefatigable usher who delights in conducting the callow, uninstructed public into the sacred halls of poetry. The present volume is certainly a most serviceable one, and could be used as a text-book of terms by all students of this most elusive art. The reviewer misses, however, in those later chapters where is outlined the history of English poetry, any single arresting, original, or beautiful phrase, any indication whatsoever that Mr Untermeyer is indeed a poet himself and not merely a proficient worker in the fields of research.

EVOLUTION IN MODERN ART, by Frank Rutter (10mo, 166 pages; Lincoln MacVeagh, Dial Press: \$2.50). Mr Rutter perceives in the public taste, a revived interest in design and reminds us of the essential incompatibility between symbolism and representation. He writes of Impressionism; of Cézanne, Van Gogh, Gauguin, and Matisse as "the pillars of Post-Impressionism"; of Wyndham Lewis, W. P. Roberts, Mrs Dod Proctor, Henry Lamb, and other British painters. His paragraphs upon Sir Francis Galton's enquiries into the faculty of visualization and the comparison from Hermann Bahr between the mind's eye and the bodily eye, set one thinking. As for the hopefully, painstakingly, lecturingly kindly manner of this history, one must not dwell upon it. Nice press-work and pleasing pictures are not—even conjointly—able to redeem a certain kind of haggard diction.

JAZZ, by Paul Whiteman (8vo, 298 pages; Sears: \$3) is a readable excursion into the growth of the shirt-sleeve school of music; the theories concerning it are pompously unimportant, but the chapters that tell how it is made are genuinely amusing. Inevitably, of course, Mr Whiteman announces that jazz "expresses the spirit of America," but then, a little later on, "jazz is a safety valve." Putting two and two together, one derives the quaint idea that the spirit of America escapes through a safety valve—a thought which is not without its philosophic implications, particularly when it is set beside a remark of the author concerning his London appearance at Lord Mountbatten's party for the Prince of Wales: "There were just thirty-two guests, all related to the throne and it was the nicest party I ever went to."

THE NEW NEGRO, edited by Alain Locke (8vo, 44 pages; A. & C. Boni: \$5) is a well edited and superbly produced symposium on the interests, problems, and achievements of the Negro of to-day. It will serve as a background to our fresh excitement over spirituals and our old lethargy about lynchings; it helps us to understand Handy and Countee Cullen and Nigger Heaven. The warmth of affirmation in the Negro's own view of himself is matched by the moderation of his claims; the Negro appears as a contributing force in his own liberation and as a useful, vivifying element in American life.

LONDON NIGHTS, by Stephen Graham (8vo, 254 pages; Doran: \$4) is conventional journalism among the drab derelicts of London—the record of "midnight wanderings" in Limehouse, Soho, and along the Embankment. Mr Graham believes that "the key to the nine-tenths is possessed by the submerged tenth," but he has unlocked no hidden truths with it. He merely sets down (page 20) "One commonly meets the night-walkers near the coffee-stalls. You can tell them by the state of their boots"; and (page 30) "Night-birds prowl up and down. You can tell the homeless by the state of their boots"; and (page 59) "You can tell the poverty of people by the state of their boots"—an undoubted fact certainly not rendered more impressive by reiteration. Mr Graham collected his material while most people are abed; some of it appears to have been written when he should have been there himself.

BLUESTOCKING LETTERS, selected and with introduction by R. Brimley Johnson (12mo, 282 pages; Lincoln MacVeagh, Dial Press: \$2.50). One longs to shatter the surface of these capricious, glittering, unregenerate minds and be assured of some deeper recognition of the import of human existence. Yet none of these five distinguished women, examples of whose letters are here reprinted, is in herself either trivial or insensitive. Indeed all are among the most sober and intellectual people of their generation, the feminists, one might say, of the Eighteenth Century. But what would our modern feminists think of a leader of their cause who could begin a defence of her sex with the words "I believe that a husband has a divine right to the absolute obedience of his wife"? Entertaining, historically instructive, now and then intense, these letters undoubtedly are, but one is left in the end with a curious distrait over the realization that thought like slippers and parasols, changes its fashion according to the age in which we live.

LETTERS OF LOUISE IMOGEN GUINEY, edited by Grace Guiney, preface by Agnes Repplier (illus., 2 vols., 8vo, 529 pages; Harpers: \$5). One finds it impossible to visualize who in our preoccupied country will ever have the necessary interest to read through these large, dignified-looking volumes. Yet Miss Guiney's epistolary style is not exactly dull; she has a vigorous, prosecuting mind, and a lively manner of expressing herself. One may gather, however, the tone of her liveliness by such words as "toothsome letter," "puffickly 'orrid," and by her comments on certain of William Blake's poetry: "it would require peculiar qualities in both readers and audience to keep giggles afar." One ends, nevertheless, by appreciating in her character a certain New England uprightness, energy, and good humour, or, to use a word which she would have employed without hesitation, a certain "spunk." Miss Repplier in her unilluminated preface remarks "that her best letters were written to men, which was natural and right." Among these men are Richard Garnett, Clement Shorter, and Richard Watson Gilder. Miss Guiney was also the friend of many other people equally prominent in the latter half of the last century.

EDUCATION AND THE GOOD LIFE, by Bertrand Russell (10mo, 319 pages; Boni & Liveright: \$2.50). When obliged by parenthood to face the problem of education Mr Russell went into the subject with his usual thoroughness and enthusiasm; and shares his discoveries now with the general public. He is a keen student, as DIAL readers already know, and gladly adopts the newest precepts from all parts of the world. In consequence this new book is nothing if not up to date. It will be widely read, for there are many parents who share Mr Russell's feeling that the Victorian system of education is an wholly inadequate preparation for the times that are coming and will relish a clear exposition of the new ideas. The future, however, as seen by Mr Russell, is remarkably like the millennium. There will be no wars, fear will be eliminated, and people will have such a wide variety of interests that even death will not alarm them. Mr Russell is an inveterate reformer and goes the length in painting his Utopias.

EVOLUTION AND RELIGION IN EDUCATION, by Henry Fairfield Osborn (12mo, 240 pages; Scribner: \$2) offers no consistent development of the ideas implied in its title. It is a series of obviously extemporized addresses on various questions raised by the fundamentalist controversy, and is mainly occupied with presenting the author's articles of faith, the chief being his belief that evolution, which he defines as "a continuous creation of life, fitted to a continuously changing world," is a part of some universal system of design, faith in which may be rational and at the same time consistent with the religious spirit. Perhaps the best of the book, however, is not the several discourses of credo, but chapters seven and ten, wherein the author speaks as paleontologist and rehearses various important items of knowledge which relate to the Neanderthal, the Piltdown, the Foxhall, and the Crô-Magnon races, and which constitute grounds for the belief that man has existed on this earth as man, for half a million years.

THE CORRELATION OF CAPITAL AND LABOR (brochure, 8vo, 16 pages; Doubleday, Page: 50 cents) and **THE GREAT ENGLISH STRIKE** (brochure, 8vo, 10 pages; Doubleday, Page: 50 cents) by Gabriel Wells. One would imagine on reading the titles of these two pamphlets that some light was about to be cast on the vexing questions of which they treat. This is far from the case. They contain merely those stale generalizations with which we are all so familiar. The unusual complications entailed in the coal strike are altogether disregarded, and Mr Wells makes the fatuous and somewhat baffling statement that "Strikes are justified as a gesture, but not as an attitude." In tense and controversial situations such as the one under dispute one wants more than anything else flat facts and passionless figures, and after that one needs to recall that when all has been said and done the miners are, anyway at the writing of this review, being forced by starvation to return, one by one, into those dark caverns of travail where philanthropists of Mr Wells's kidney are content to abandon them to their own salvation.

While **PAN-EUROPE**, by Richard N. Coudenhove-Kalergi, with foreword by Nicholas Murray Butler (12mo, 215 pages; Knopf: \$2.50) is propaganda, it is propaganda well conceived and fairly argued. It aims at a universally-to-be-desired end, the staying of war in Europe, and it offers a persuasively reasoned programme to that end. The programme contemplated is the gradual peaceful consolidation of the twenty-six states of western continental Europe into a "political-economic federation based upon equality and peace," an "United States of Europe." Russia and England are excepted from this scheme for the good reason that their proper interests are not immediately coincident with the interests of the states proposed to be federated; Russian interests centre in Asia, and English in that inter-continental empire which spreads in all directions from the shores of the Indian Ocean. The mechanism by which it is hoped to accomplish this gradual federation is the Pan-European Union of Vienna, an organization patterned upon the Pan-American Union. The Pan-European Union, it appears, is now in the third year of its existence, and has passed its first milestone, which is the First Pan-European Congress, held in Vienna in October 1926.

THE THEATRE

I DO not recall a month in the New York Theatre during which I anticipated so little pleasure from forecasts and got so little from actuality. (I must add that an illness in the early part of the month prevented me from seeing the two productions, NED McCobb's DAUGHTER and THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE, which promised most and pleased the critics most.) There seems to be no stir in the theatrical world, and although several plays are enormously popular and people feel they "simply must see them," I do not myself share the excitement. Contemptible as I knew THE GREEN HAT to be, I could understand why it was attractive; it had a glitter of theatricality. This year only one play seems to have the magnetism of the theatre, and as I suggested recently, it is a good show: BROADWAY.

If you feel indifferent to the current theatre you approach a new play with a double hope, for itself and for its effect on you. And you get, as often as not, THE CONSTANT WIFE, by Somerset Maugham. It seems to me one of the most negligible plays in years, one in which all the epigrams are machine-turned and the wit heavy-handed. I saw it on its second night when Miss Barrymore chose to giggle or gurgle, alternately, after each speech, to indicate that it was ironic; and all the other notable members of the cast displayed dulled edges.

Mr Maugham, for TOO MANY HUSBANDS, has long been an admiration of mine; for THE CIRCLE, a detestation. This play retains the characteristic qualities of both; there is never any question that he has his hand in, knows his business, carries through a scene with great skill. The scene in which the wronged wife prevents the wronged husband from denouncing the two "opposite numbers" is excellent; the final scene, in which the same wronged wife announces her intention to go away for six weeks with a lover and then compels her husband to beg her to return when the affair is over, has talent in the highest degree. But the rest of the play is filled with the worst kind of smart tosh which doesn't come off, the whole thing is badly projected, and it is, I understand, a great success.

My permanent quarrel with the way Shaw is directed by the Theatre Guild did not entirely spoil my pleasure in *Pygmalion*. Because it seemed to me that Liza's scene when she first emerges into society and discusses meteorology and gin-drinking was deftly directed, and beautifully played by Miss Fontanne. The gravity and honesty of Liza as she presented her were something more than funny; they were moving. And it was precisely the lack of gravity that made Professor Higgins entirely out of key. Higgins, apart from his "Miltonic intellect" is interesting because he believes himself to be one kind of person, and is another. He says in effect, "I, brutal? You are mad. I am the kindest and most thoughtful person alive." And he means it. In the Guild production these lines were played for the superficial laugh you can get out of them, as if a fat man were saying, "I am a sylph." There are a thousand good horseplay laughs in Shaw and it would be a shame to omit one of them; but there is another kind of laughter in him also, the laughter of the mind, and for years now the Guild productions have neglected them. The result of this method in the present case is that you fail to believe unreservedly in the passion of Higgins, and consequently lose the point of the play a little. Which does not mean that *Pygmalion* can be omitted from the admirable and desirable plays of the season.

OH, KAY! has a delightful book by Bolton and Wodehouse, and lyrics and music by the two Gershwins which are below their usual level. Mr Wodehouse's product this year seems to run to comic butlers—a measure of his talent, because this play offers the second good one from his pen. Also in this piece is Harland Dixon, looking younger and more cheerful than ever, dancing with more agility, and possessed of a mastery of tricks and stunts which seem to me matchless. Every one of his movements is a delight to the eye; his comedy with his feet is uproarious. Since I am only a moderate admirer of Oscar Shaw and Gertrude Lawrence, Mr Dixon alone gave me great pleasure. Miss Lawrence I found much more amusing than ever before; her mannerisms still put me off.

To continue among musical shows: Moran and Mack at the *Vanities*, still going strong, are as good as ever, which is saying

a great deal. Mr Mack gets more and more into creating a character with his unhappy negro, and the lines and business are good. The knockabout Avon Comedy Four in the same show seemed to me to be reduced to two, and very good two they are. In **THE RAMBLERS** Clark and McCullough are a knockout and nothing less. This whole show is a parallel to **THE COCOANUTS** of a year ago, with similar business, down to the fake operatic scene in which **THE RAMBLERS** far surpasses Mr Berlin's effort. I find myself unable to decide whether I like Clark's old business better than his new; it doesn't matter, because both are extremely funny, and the well-timed elaboration of the scene at the bar ranks nearly with **THE COCOANUT'S** bedroom scene for exquisite slapstick.

Having gradually worked myself back into the middle of last summer I might as well confess that **AMERICANA** disappointed me considerably. In the midst of scenes with point and fun, in the midst of very good ridicule of the dull spots of our average musical shows, these same dull spots occurred and were presented with an abasement of seriousness. Lew Brice, however, is endearing.

Foot-note on Movies: **WHAT PRICE GLORY?** comes naturally as a parallel to **THE BIG PARADE**. It does not seem to me to carry the methods of the spectacle a step farther, but it proves that the early methods were good; because there are scenes of quite exceptional power in this second of our war movies. The novelty in this case is the unusually frank exploitation of bawdiness in a very good-humoured way.

GILBERT SELDES

MODERN ART

EVERY once in a while some half educated person in government employ mistakes himself for the whole government and commits an act of great foolishness. This time it is an underling in the New York bureau of the United States Customs who insists that Brancusi shall pay several hundred dollars of extra tariff upon his famous *Bird in Flight* on the plea that it is not a work of art. The official definition of sculpture with which this worthy fortifies his position, runs as follows:

“A work of art is not necessarily sculpture because artistic and beautiful and fashioned by a sculptor from solid marble. Sculpture as an art is that branch of the free fine arts which chisels or carves out of stone or other solid substance, for subsequent reproduction by carving or casting, imitations of natural objects, chiefly the human form, and represents such objects in their true proportions of length, breadth, and thickness, or of length and breadth only.”

The wily concocters of this fiat doubtless thought they had constructed a definition that was, as we say, “fool-proof”; but, it seems, they were mistaken. No law is or can be fool-proof and the best safe-guard to justice is, as a celebrated English jurist pointed out long ago, a sense of fair play in the community. A frivolous editorial writer on *The New York World*, citing the session of the United States Customs Court that was held to consider “whether Christmas trees were toys, timber or fresh vegetables,” opines that there is an irrepressible joker concealed somewhere in the Customs Bureau who occasionally “must have his fun.” Official incompetence is, of course, highly amusing to unimplicated bystanders, but the decision that attempts to fine heavily the superb Brancusi and to rob him of his standing as an artist, is a joke that the visiting Roumanian sculptor may not see.

The affair, however, is not grave, and the intended slight, I am sure, will have been circumvented in some fashion before these lines appear in print, but in the mean time, one must register one’s distaste for the episode. As for definitions they are, as I

said before, futile. Definitions of life, art, poetry, style, and justice are often diverting to those who already know much about life, art, poetry, style, and justice, but they cannot guide infallibly the inexperienced. I doubt, for instance, if the ignoramus who fined Brancusi would be much helped in judging poetry by Shelley's famous description of it. "A poem is the very image of life expressed in its eternal truth. . . . Time, which destroys the beauty and the use of the story of particular facts, stripped of the poetry which should invest them, augments that of poetry, and forever develops new and wonderful applications of the eternal truth which it contains. Hence epitomes have been called the moths of history; they eat out the poetry of it. A story of particular facts is as a mirror which obscures and distorts that which should be beautiful: poetry is a mirror which makes beautiful that which is distorted."

But in what Utopia will a custom-house official know anything of the eternal truths in which a Shelley and a Brancusi specialize?

Quite unconscious of the humiliating farce being enacted behind the scenes, the intellectual portion of the public flocked in greater numbers than ever before to the Brummer Galleries where the Brancusi carvings were exposed and where they had a real success. For my part, I felt that those who saw this sculpture only in the Brummer Galleries saw but the half of which these subtle and sensitive works of art were capable. They need the co-operation of the changing outdoor lights; or, indoors, some friendly shadows to which they may be tied. This is illustrated well enough in the truly excellent photographs with which the "Brancusi" number of *The Little Review* was illustrated. The exuberant Mr Ezra Pound, who shares my aversion to definitions, said in that issue, that "it is impossible to give an exact sculptural idea in either words or photography," and while he is quite right, the photographs by which his text is surrounded go as far as photographs can to defeat the argument. They at least definitely show what the right surroundings can do for a Brancusi. Who wielded the camera is not stated, but the various versions of Mlle Pogany are entirely worthy of Mr Man Ray. In the pitiless light of the Brummer Gallery the Portrait of Mlle Buonaparte swam for the first time into the ken of certain Philistines and got much whispered about. I met no artists but those who took it for what it is—a work of art—but

the misunderstanding in regard to it doubtless was at the base of the confusion in regard to Brancusi in the Customs House.

Money talks, in America; and when it does there is no occasion for any other agent to speak. The report is widespread and as yet uncontradicted that one of the John Marin water-colours in this year's exhibition in the Intimate Gallery has been sold for \$6000 to Mr Duncan Phillips for the Phillips Memorial Museum at Washington. Such an unlooked-for achievement in finance strikes my mind into numbness and it knows not what to think. I have always been used to trotting out my superlatives for Marin and I suppose I ought not to be surprised when collectors retort with superlative prices. But clearly Marin is no longer a misunderstood genius to be battled for. In my private capacity as Marin's friend I naturally rejoice at his rise to affluence, but in my Pooh-Bah position as a critic of art I must avow that I feel safer when my geniuses die in the garret.

The immediate cause for the \$6000 is the fact that Marin, the artist, found himself in a serener mood last summer than for several seasons past. Gone are the nervous zig-zags that suggested that transcripts from nature had been imprinted on paper by forks of lightning; gone are the emotional crises provoked in the artist by the sight of the city's skyscrapers. He has, *tout simplement*, been Wordsworthianizing up the river. All has been as peaceful, as bucolic, as pleasant, as Colin Clout could wish. The tempo remains a bit swift, however. It's the wind, I suppose, "The wind on the heath, brother." John Marin may have covered up his energy somewhat, for the moment, and to reassure the ladies, but the immense gusto with which he puts in a wash shows that he is but a Vesuvius quiescent.

Also, for the benefit of those who say that "modern art" is a thing of the past, it ought to be stated that the water-colour chosen by Mr Phillips is quite abstract. "It is the very image of life expressed in its eternal truth," yet I defy any custom-house official to explain to me precisely what it is about.

HENRY McBRIDE

MUSICAL CHRONICLE

THE English Singers revive forgotten springtides. Long since, spirit leaped from Byrd and Morley, Bennet and Dowland in gladness, sorrow, and worship. And as it was in doublet and hose these musicians heard life's meaning, an ayre, a madrigal, or a ballet began singing in them. And as they were Englishmen, the polyphonic intricacies of their forms were permeated with the coolness, melancholy, and fresh faint colouring of the northern spring, type of all their lives' renewals, and nurse to their feelings. The empiric men are dead. No one enquires after their persons. Their bodies have been nothing to any one living these last hundreds of years. All of their lovely and oppressive circumstances, the flowers and skies, the hearts that rested against theirs and gave reality to the conventional "Corinna, Daphne, and Amaryllis," the foes who hated them and were well hated in return, even "fair Oriana, queen of all queens renowned" whose glory filled their breasts with bugle-cries, are naught with them and the grass and trees and clouds of renaissance England. Still, through the art of Norman Stone and his five collaborators, finely compact of feeling, and practice in the articulation of lightly tripping rhythms and complex contrapuntal imitation, darling music gay with forgetful feet and warm with the throb of hearts knowing themselves strong to love, brings again the greenness and sadness of forgotten English Mays and the sweetness of unfolding pastoral landscapes; mysteriously intimating a kind of eternity not alone through art for that which hears and is heard, sees and is seen, touches and feels a touch, when men do not exist for their own finite selves.

In our age, the leap of spirit is somewhat lame. An autistic time indeed, my masters! Many of the awaker men guess the ineffableness of the life that begins when forcing and pushing are abandoned and things permitted to flower of themselves. Only a few know the way leading to this "kingdom of heaven," and of this minority the fewest are composers. One finds too many determined musicians, like the recent Strawinsky and the Milhaud of little old last-week's Salad, apparently convinced that through withholding themselves from their music and "playing around"

with movements and melodies that intrigue them, the narrowly personal is transcended and spirit achieved. Personalism can go no further, and went no further even in Tschaikowsky. Significant of the earthfastness of the group about Schoenberg is the fact that at no time has it thought to sing in adopting the forms of other men and periods, and sporting with superficial feeling. These artists at least have always listened at the bourne of music even though they have not always known the impersonal way. And hence it was unsurprising to hear at the first concert of the International Composers' Guild, the Fünf Geistliche Lieder, opus 15, by Anton Webern, an abstract, based on certain primitive "ghostly" lyrics, some from Des Knaben Wunderhorn, of the experience of the better, the unwillful life as it is known to himself and others of this select circle.

They are indeed songs of the spirit. There is sweat and anguish in the broken, stammering, piping sounds uttered by the seven instruments, flute, clarinet, bass clarinet, trumpet, harp, violin, and viola of Webern's accompaniment, and half spoken, half intoned by the singer of the childish-mystical verses. Desire has escaped the clutch of the bowels with half of its forces spent, and wavers haggard and blinded toward the projected goal, star or high ethereal flute-note. That is the day, inexpert in God, as it is the day from which the five ghostly poems stem: the closing Middle Ages racked by fears and obsessed by thoughts of pain, death, and the devil. Webern's light volumes, filigree forms, and great variety of tenuous sound; his bodiless melodies pale and simple as the inflections of nuns, children, and aged brothers; his movements that are fleet, even, and cheerful, as the paces of sisters-of-mercy, actually provoke comparison with certain of the naïve and mystically relaxed devotional pictures of the school of Cologne, so nakedly does the music communicate the state painfully freed from self-conceit and the tyranny of the individual will. The tone is simultaneously ethereal and popular. Like scars gape the wide intervals. The words march light and swift as in unemphatic speech. Not even the sudden dynamic volumes of Webern's other characteristic pieces break the even plane of humble sonorities. Since it is persistently the child, the virgin, the old man in the human breast that sings, intense feeling is present only for the few who know how to hear. But it is present, alternately meek and ecstatic, and sweet and warm as in no other composition of Webern's shown New York.

Could this medley of the prose and poetry of music, of the voice of speech and that of song have been created had not Dreimal Sieben Lieder des Pierrot Lunaire preceded it? Obviously not, the first minute replies. The expressions are closely related, and Schoenberg's came first. Probably, yes, the second, the more reflective one, joins in, so subtly removed from both the sound-quality and the feeling of his master's marvellous and corpse-green cycle are Webern's songs. It is very likely that had Webern never encountered Schoenberg he still would have given something equivalent to the German primitiveness of these Geistliche Lieder. What in the elder's characteristic rhythm verges on the hysterical, in the younger man's becomes simultaneously more ethereal and homely.

This demonstration of the perfect individuality of the disciple was, together with the performance of the strongly Varesian and none the less genial "H.P." by Carlos Chavez, the positive if unhappily slender result of the two modern concerts of November 27th and 28th. For on the evening before Mina Hager sang the ghostly songs at the International Guild, Serge Koussevitzky performed Webern's Five Orchestral Pieces opus 10; and this audition, had, it later appeared, laid the base for the impression the songs were to make. Here, too, form and feeling were individual. The form is concentrated beyond anything in Schoenberg, including the small piano pieces. It is entirely bare of repetition and symmetry, extremely diaphanous in orchestration and subtle in sound, plotted by shimmering combinations of harp, celesta, guitar, mandolin, and glockenspiel, by whispering phrases, instantaneous climactic volumes and elusive harmonies, and resembles a flame passed from single instruments or slight complexes of instruments across wide gaps to other single or discreetly combined pieces of the band. Epigrammatic, the pieces have the wide scope of some masterly epigrams. The feeling is likewise more birdlike, ethereal, and romantic than that of Schoenberg's Five Pieces, lacking in the older man's energy but free of his heavy sensuousness. In the words of our friend Aaron Copland, "the relation of Webern to Schoenberg resembles that of Ravel to Debussy"; with the difference that while like Ravel, Webern is the smaller inventor in his pair, unlike Ravel's, his may eventually prove a friendlier, robuster sensibility than that of his master.

PAUL ROSENFELD

COMMENT

IT was only a few years ago that I rediscovered what I had known very well at the age of ten: that a bad movie is less painful than a bad play. The movie does not have so many ways of hurting the spectator and it is better than the play in the same sense in which a fraudulent magazine agent who robs you but refrains from sending you the magazines you did not want is better than an honest one. And while I should not care to go so far as to say that a good movie is better than a good play, I do believe that you run a better chance of seeing something good at the movies. Furthermore although all the goods and betters in the sentences above are thoroughly qualified in my mind by relativelys, nevertheless I am shocked to see a very able paper in *THE DIAL* by Mr Craven¹ withering the movies root and branch, followed by an equally able but a so very modest apology by Mr Block.² If, as I believe, the movies are just about as "good" as other contemporary entertainments (arts if you like) why should they appear to critics to be so much more nil?

To begin explaining with another question: Why does one instinctively compare the movies first of all with the theatre? Superficially they are alike enough, with their audiences, actors, scenes. Commercially they are competitors. Profoundly they are quite different. But one *profound* disadvantage they share—that of being so almost entirely arts of non-religious collaboration. In both, the director is the only person who could possibly give real unity, and so difficult does he find it that, to quote Mr Gilbert Seldes, most of his energy goes into mannerism and compromise.

In the theatre this absence of unified control and effect, while just as grave, is not so much noticed as in the movies. One sees a play, and in a week, a month, six-hundred nights, it has vanished like snow. If revived it will be altered beyond recognition—indeed it is altered every night during a run, or so one hopes. One is

¹ Cf. *THE DIAL*, December 1926, page 483.

² Cf. *THE DIAL*, January 1927, page 20.

pleasantly conscious of this up-to-the-minute impermanence, and forgives in the play what one would not think of forgiving in a painting. Or rather one allows oneself to be pleased by scraps of acting or scenery.

The movies, however, offer us the perfunctory vaudeville sequence of the play, fixed for all time or at best for a bad half century, *celluloide perennis*. To-day one can, and if not warned in time, one does, as Mr Craven bitterly points out, go round the corner and see *The Four Horsemen* or *Dr Jekyll*—which may both have been fine shows when they were released.

Another advantage of the play is illusory, but has great influence with the critics, who are mostly writers, or should be if they are not. The play, however badly put on, may and often does have a first-class piece of writing behind it. This gives the theatre an undeserved but sanctified background. Alas, what background has the movie? A column of directions and titles, which in its practical moments resembles a cook-book and in its emotional moments, spirit messages received in Boston from beyond the tomb. When a movie tries to steal a literary background, the critics see through it immediately and laugh their heads off. They all do.

Another thing: The Theatre as an institution appears somewhat respectable to critics when it is not, because somebody centuries ago maybe in Greece is said to have put on a good show—although this can scarcely be proved. The movies have no grand tradition at all. The movies in fact suffer in their entirety at the hands of the critics what other arts suffer only in their more recent manifestations. It is the custom, for example, in talking about music and painting to select three or four names from a whole century and to ask if cubist music or jazz painting (whatever that is) imagined as a homogeneous mass, compares favourably with Beethoven or Rembrandt. They may, only nobody in his senses would ask them to. If one must talk in general about “modern art” one can find plenty of the bad work of other centuries to compare “in general” with it. The one or two or three painters or composers of this quarter century who will be used to bludgeon future generations compare no doubt very favourably with the dead masters—if anybody had insight to do the comparing. But all the bludgeons of all the arts are used against the movies. They have not even a Beethoven to fight back with.

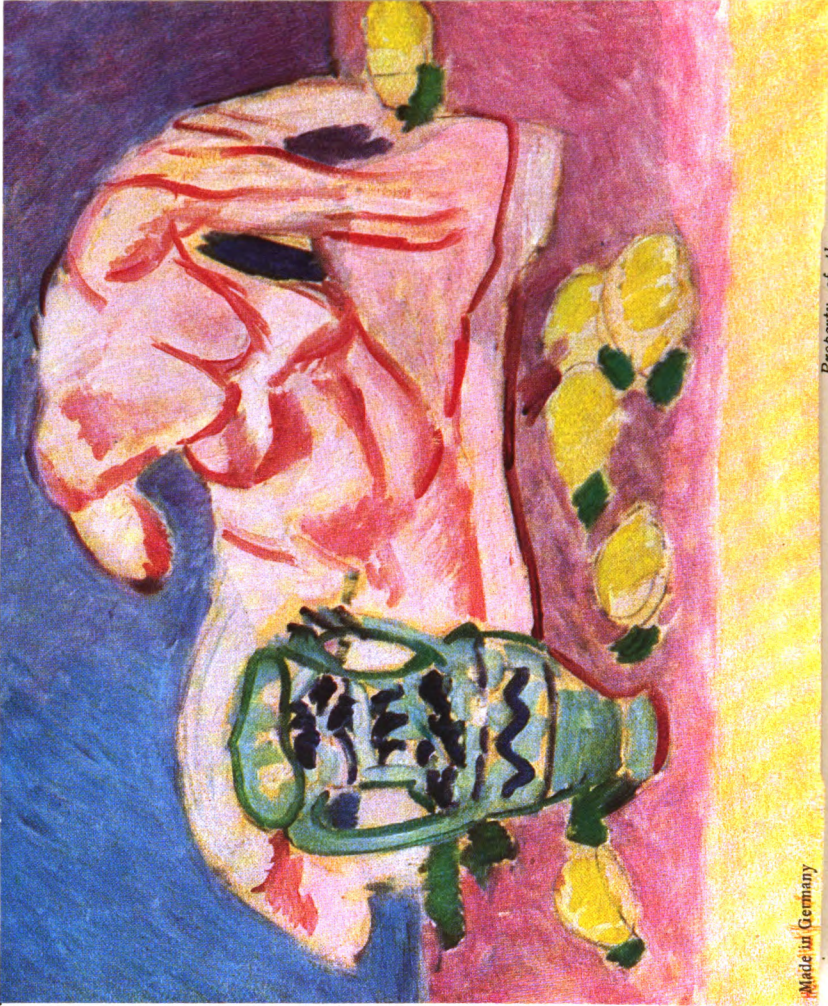
Somebody will here recall that William S. Hart was mentioned with Aeschylus by the Paris dadas. It brought him only bad luck, and Mix now controls the box-office.

As to whether the movies is or are an art, who cares? Aesthetic argument¹ seems to pivot about the question of the artist's control over his medium. The painter has more intimate control than the photographer—therefore painting is an art, photography a craft. This suggests that art is a matter of degree rather than of kind. Certainly the motion-picture camera gives more control over visually perceived motion than does the bellowing of the ballet director—that is, it adds camera control to direction. It cannot however be said to add much that is essential to the control of the individual dancer. Questions of this kind are highly impertinent and are generally asked solely with the idea of taking Alfred Stieglitz down a peg.

One point in Mr Craven's essay appears too insidious, too typical, to be passed over. He complains, possibly with justice, that in *The Big Parade* "the horrors of war do not come out" and adds, as I think, most unfairly: "Photography is far too thin a medium to carry such horrors. . . ." Obviously he is not here thinking of Photography as an art medium, the purpose of art media being certainly not to carry horrors. (*The Big Parade* by the way is a movie, not a photograph.) But if he is thinking of simple reproduction, what thicker media are available? Sham battles? Phonography? One would like to ask whether newsprint is too cheap a medium to carry the losses of a Wall Street panic.

¹ See *Photography and Painting*, by Thomas Craven, *THE DIAL*, September 1925, page 195.

J. S. W.



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THE DIAL

MARCH 1927

IRONY

BY GEORGE SAINTSBURY

I SEE that somebody has written a book, though I have not seen it as yet, about Irony. Some other body—a wicked one this—suggested, if I mistake not, some little time ago, that things were not generally written about in a serious manner until they were more or less obsolete, unless they were merely and vulgarly “fashionable” which Irony could never be. But it is less the present intention to draw inferences from the putting together of these two propositions than to have a little consideration of Irony itself.

The exact nature and meaning of the term for this formidable and exquisite Figure of Speech—perhaps the most exquisite and certainly the most formidable of the Cloud-Army of “figures”—do not seem to be universally understood. The term itself is no doubt originally Greek—if anything is originally anything: but even in Greek it seems to have been sometimes rather widely extended, and sometimes if not unduly rather particularly specialized. They called the fox an “ironic” beast—where there doesn’t seem to be much more special meaning than “sly” or “cunning” or at closest, “shamming.” On the other hand, the celebrated irony of Socrates consisted, chiefly if not wholly, in an affectation of ignorance, and an ingenious process of committing the interlocutor by insidious questions. Socrates, like Miss Rosa Dartle, only “asked for information” to begin with, though he was by no means satisfied—as the unamiable but rather unfortunate and certainly ill-treated Rosa was—with leaving an uncomfortable suggestion as a result of his enquiries. This process no doubt has the nature of irony: but it is only one kind—or rather one application—of

irony at large. Etymologically the word seems to mean "dissembling"—that meaning being itself connected ironically with the simple one of the verb εἶπω "I say." In other words irony gives you what is *said*—there is no doubt about that. But as to what you have got in or under that saying, why "God bless us all! that may be quite another thing" to alter very slightly one of the most famous and excellent examples of one kind of irony itself in English verse.

Thus the Greeks themselves—though they or their language possessed in Aristophanes earlier and Lucian later, two of the greatest ironists in the history of the world's literature—do not seem to have very strictly apprehended, or at least observed, the exact character of the thing. Sometimes—as in their intense passion for multiplying figures they were always doing—they impoverished it by specializing *out*. For instance the trick of understatement—*meiosis* or *litotes*—is ironic to the core. Sometimes, as in their application of the word to Reynard, they extended it pretty loosely: and sometimes again they used it in the mere sense of "slackness," "want of seriousness," or the like—the last of which misuses deprives the weapon of both point and edge, and still more of the quicksilver in the marrow of its backbone that drives it through breast or neck. As an opposite mistake to this, I myself met not long ago something like the following sentence. "He carried his irony so far that he would sometimes seem to be supporting what he was actually denying." This really gives not a bad definition of irony itself: and certainly no "far" or extreme example of it. To mean something different from, or additional to, what you ostensibly say is perhaps the very simplest, most universal, and most accurate description, if not definition, of what, in the European literature of the last two millenniums and a half or thereabouts, has been meant by Irony.

I suppose there has always been something like it in the East—for the beast-fable is irony incarnate: and what the Hebrew prophets in their more bellicose moments would have done without it is hard to imagine. Indeed the Jews "have it by kind"; there possibly has never been a much greater ironist than Heine. But Eastern languages and literature are not my trade. To revert to Greek, an elaborate comparison of Aristophanic and Lucianic irony, with an allowance for Eastern and Roman (that is to say

Latin in the Empire sense) additional influences in the Latin would be pleasant to write, and, with further allowances for the writer's insufficiency, perhaps not unprofitable to read. But there is room here only for a very little one. Perhaps as good, though not at first as obvious an illustration of the difference as in any other case may be found in the contrast of the first scene of the *Knights* with the tract, "How one should write history" and the *True History* itself, the one an ironical misrepresentation of life and character, the other two half and wholly ironical criticisms of literature. There is occasional irony in the *Orators* of course: and as *History* itself is only an ironical panorama of life, only very stupid historians can fail sometimes to bring the irony out, if they do not definitely insist on it. Thucydides very nearly if not quite does this latter at times. But on the whole the lightness (in no derogatory sense) of the Greek temper inclined it rather to the frankly comic variety—to something more like persiflage. The purest and strongest wine of irony is drier than this.

The Romans on the other hand, at least until they became in a manner cosmopolite, were not overdisposed to lightness: and their irony was not likely to be too *folâtre*. Perhaps there never have been two more terrible ironists—in one case if not in both of a peculiar kind—than Catullus in verse and Tacitus in prose: while Lucretius is packed throughout with a sort of subdued ironic force which crackles and sparkles almost electrically. The story of the occupations of *Lesbia nostra*, *Lesbia illa*; the never-to-be-hackneyed *capax imperii* with the dynamic or dynamitic pairs of words that precede, follow, and destroy it; the whole of the end of the Fourth book of the *De Rerum Natura*—are nugget-pockets or outcrop-seams of irony, allotropic sometimes in appearance but substantially pure. There is not perhaps much pure irony in Horace: he was too wholly serious when he was serious at all, and too "persiflagitious" when he was merry; while though Juvenal could not be without it, "ironical" is somehow or other not the first word which occurs to one in relation to him; it comes more naturally in thinking of Persius. In Martial of course there is plenty: but then Martial was a Spaniard. Indeed the barbarians did no harm to the worship of the goddess or demi-goddess Eironeia: but on the contrary made new shrines for her and vigorously filled her service books. Allegory and irony are sisters—indeed they may almost be said to be Siamese

twins: and every nation (except perhaps the Huns) which either in rebellion or independent invasion altered the state of Rome, brought fresh devotion to allegory with it.

It is not, however, I think mere besotted or insular patriotism which makes me think that not only in literary expression but in living character English blood (and I use English in the widest possible sense with no political or geographical limitations) seems to have secreted in its complex composition more of the ironic virtue or virus than any other. There are all sorts of interesting dependencies on this theory which might be worked out—for instance that the disposition to say one thing and mean another accounts for our notorious reputation for perfidy, hypocrisy, et cetera. But these sports must be forbidden here. It is only of literature I talk. Not to annoy people by going behind Chaucer, how saturated with irony Chaucer himself is! “Great translator” as he may be, I defy any one who knows his French originals well to say that the source of this saturation is wholly or even mainly in them. For every one per cent of irony that there is in the *Fabliaux*: for every two or three that there may be in the second part of the *Roman de la Rose*—there is ten, twenty, or more in Chaucer. The Italians had not lost this part of their Roman heritage: Dante can sometimes serve himself heir to the intensest quality of it, and Boccaccio is not disinherited. But the *Troilus* is the *Filostrato* thrice dipped in fresh irony, of the whole situation always and of individual passages sometimes. While if our specially and narrowly “English” fifteenth-century men were too weak, or too otherwise occupied to show much of it, the Scotch Chaucerians—especially Henryson and Dunbar—prevented any abeyance.

But I have no intention of fobbing off an old lecture in English Literature, or foisting in a new one, upon the readers of *THE DIAL*. It is not necessary to say that Swift, Fielding, and Thackeray are probably the three greatest masters of irony with us though Thackeray sometimes, especially in *Barry Lyndon*, allowed himself to “break pace.” It is only needful in passing to add that the indignation which constantly generates irony in Swift is almost absent from Fielding. But a very few words may perhaps be allowed on the most curious relations between Irony and Dickens—relations which it might be worth while to trace, but which I never have seen traced, in other artists, not merely in this particular connexion.

It is the simple fact that though Dickens could make characters who have no small command of Irony, he had no command of it himself and at first hand. If this seems an idle paradox, will the person to whom it so seems kindly compare Sam Weller (if not also his father, Mark Tapley, and perhaps others—all of whom have, as the livelier kind of London cockney usually has, a distinct touch of ironical outlook and expression) with that amazing history of the Chuzzlewit family at the beginning of their book which is a chain of back-fires and touch-hole explosions: or with not a few passages in *Bleak House*, *Little Dorrit*, and others?

However, it is rather on the nature of Irony than on the mass of its expositors that I wish to dwell. Perhaps there is no better description—though again you cannot of course call it a definition—of that nature than a phrase of one who has been already claimed as one of the greatest of those expositors—Lucretius. It is a phrase, too, which has been quoted by another great writer who may be called an ironist in suppression—Montaigne—though neither he nor Lucretius employed it in connexion with irony itself. *Abdita vis quaedam*—"a certain hidden force"—is the phrase in question: and it fits irony most admirably, connecting itself, also obviously, with the apparently original meaning of "dissembling." It is this characteristic of irony—its "working in the earth so fast" and so forcibly—that makes it such an uncomfortable thing to those who are not at home with it—as Hamlet was with the ghost. And it is this same quality which makes or seems to make definition or even recognition of it as difficult and imperfect as the thing itself is suspect and unpopular. "Unpopular?" someone may cry "and what is Gilbert, but irony treated in as many forms as the genuine Snark of his contemporary admitted?" To which one may reply, "He is also Sullivan." And besides the musical jam for the ironic bitter there are many other baits and bonuses to account for *this* popularity.

I have known instances where irony seemed to be confounded with humour—with which of course it holds an unbreakable *société anonyme*: but which is certainly not identical with it. An ironist without humour is almost inconceivable and if he could exist he would be not human but diabolic—intolerable also, I should think to his fellow devils. But many humorists manage to exist without being at all obviously ironical. And as Civiliza-

tion—perhaps a little losing that strict companionship with Christianity which the Bishopess of Barchester would have imposed on it—advances, encouraging education et cetera, it probably diffuses a lighter kind of irony, appreciative if not productive, very widely. As has been suggested above, the Book of History is the Bible of Irony: and, it may be added, the newspaper is a sort of key to that book though no doubt they change positions very frequently.

Some of the wicked creatures referred to at the beginning of this paper carry, I believe, their wickedness so far as to say that the comparative absence of perfectly expressed irony in England at the present day is due to the supersaturation of actual events with it in the twentieth century. It is certainly true that we have had—omitting a very few persons still fortunately living who had made their mark (your ironist “makes his mark” in a very decided manner) before 1900—nobody of at all recent birth to equal Gilbert whom everyone knows in drama, or my friend Mr Traill whom only too few people know, in journalism. But on the other hand ironic or ironisable *things* have multiplied in such a fashion that you hardly need ironisers. That is to say, you would be very glad to have them and they could do it no doubt much better than you can, but the pattern is everything. However far one may know that one’s imagination must fall short of these same patterns how pleasant it is to imagine Swift on the League of Nations! I think Fielding, at the beginning of one of his chapters or collections of chapters might have had something pretty to say on Daylight Saving: and on the remarkable transfer of force which, by putting a needle round—or not quite round—a circular plate from an inch or two to some feet broad, raises millions of human bodies from a horizontal to a perpendicular posture an hour before the change would otherwise have been effected. And I personally should like to have heard Carlyle upon the principle of conferring distinction, when a piece of mechanism carried somebody a long way—not on the carrier—not even on the maker of the carrier, but on the carried.

Doubtless all this is not only wicked but base (which not all wicked things are) and stupid—which they are perhaps more frequently. It is only put in to illustrate, what is perhaps not the least interesting thing about irony, that it is a sort of inevitable concomitant of life. *Vanitas vanitatum omnia vanitas* suggests and brings about *Ironia ironiarum, omnia ironia* though the sound

is not so good because of the unlucky superabundance of *ias*. But the corollary is about as true as the proposition: and is inevitably connected with it, so that one need not be surprised if *Ecclesiastes* which is one of the greatest books in the world for so many things, is the greatest also for this. Only there the *vis* is not *abdita*—the force is not “concealed”—except from the extraordinary persons who have sometimes found the Preacher’s work cheerful and almost funny.

ONCE I DID THINK

BY CHRISTOPHER SPRIGG

Once I did think I’d found fulfilment here,
A spacious age stretching along the hair
Which parts a point and point of Time.
It seemed I gazed from where stars teem
And saw Earth lying cold and pale;
Within each city’s fretted pile,
Men fixed as in Death’s calm pose;
I heard no steps in the streets pass,
But all in these, and house, and hall
Were froz’n, ecstatic, hair and heel;
Each swallow held its arch of grace;
The falling leaf touched not the grass.
My soul no more was dim with dross,
But steeped transparent like pure glass,
Her rich thoughts patterned in hard lace.

MEMORIES

BY LEON SRABIAN HERALD

IV

ARRIVAL IN AMERICA

I STOOD at the gate of Europe shouting with all the fervour of youth, "Give me knowledge, knowledge of beauty, beauty of life," and slept meanwhile with a fellow villager. He had been a carpenter in Constantinople and carpentry had brought him money that had taken him to women, though not to womanhood.

I stood at the gate of Europe. Intuition told me not to loiter there. "To America," it said. And I took the boat, my ambulance to the free hospital of America.

A prisoner changing his quarters—his bunk for the train. Life on the boat had indeed been miserable. I had been sick all the way, unable to eat or drink. Then when Ivernia entered port, everyone shouted, "The Statue of Liberty, the Statue of Liberty!" Alas, I could not see it, could not get a breath of this cherished Liberty. Perhaps it was because I was without its breath in me, that I was to drift in the land, suffocated. In the labyrinthine halls of Ellis Island—which were so to my dazzled eyes—I was almost in-existent. Passengers on the boat had told me that when the doctor looks at your eyes, he makes a chalk mark on your back if you are not to enter. I became terribly fidgety as I was passed from man to man; but if they marked me with chalk, I did not notice. No one stopped me. I went from window to window, on and on, to change my wealth into American money—asking questions. Someone spoke Greek to me. No, I was not that. He spoke French. That was a little better. He told me I was free now to go to America.

Then I found myself before a counter. A man handed me a box. I took it and started to go—nowhere as it happened, for the man called something to me as if he were there on purpose to say to immigrants that one thing only. I became embarrassed and my

face grew hot and hotter, as it always does when I do not understand a thing. Finally I got the drift of it; he wanted money. I turned my pockets out and put all my money on the counter, thinking that he was another official stationed there to see that no one slipped by without showing a sufficient sum of money. He raised his finger, and condensing his long speech into two impressive words which were easy to hear and keep in the mind, he said, "One dollar."

After looking at my ticket, someone motioned to me to sit down. I opened the box packed with fruit and food of strange quality. The long hours' waiting on the Island and the air of land had brought my appetite back. I remember that apple dumpling—the name came to me many years after the food. I bit it and put it aside. There was a piece of pie which received an almost bisecting bite and was put aside. (In those days a piece of pie was worth a nickel; now half a piece is worth two nickels.) People around me began to rush, picking me up as a flood a pebble. When I saw that I was to enter another boat, a revulsion came over me. Have I not come to America yet? Again going on a boat? Where is America?

I sighed. I had got on land, where trains were waiting, where the word Detroit, Detroit, was mixed with many other words coming out of the conductors' mouths. I arrived in Detroit at a night hour, to find that my brothers Nicholas and Aroutig to whom I was going, had not come to the station. I looked all around. People were leaving as if everybody wanted to turn away from me, as if this was a place to which I was not supposed to have come. I looked at the address in my hand. Solvay Avenue, Detroit, Mich., pondering words whose meaning was hidden from me—Avenue, Solvay. I knew Detroit. It meant the straits. I found myself on the street with my grip in hand. Ah, at last a friend had recognized me and beckoned from the seat of his horse-cart. I felt my ribs stir as if a bird had flown out of them. Is Nicholas doing work with horses even in this country! I disliked to see him doing it even though he had done it in the old country, and my eyes were used to seeing him with his horses, appear and disappear from our yard. I went to the friendly man. It was not Nicholas but another friend, unknown, waiting for business. He was there for that and of course would know an immigrant. He looked

at the slip of paper in my hand, talked, and almost gobbled up my hand-case, pointing to himself, to me, and then to the address. It was clear that he wanted to take me to my destination and he was as happy as I was, for otherwise he would be minus a dollar. He was so eager, afraid perhaps that I might know so much as to get home for a nickel instead of paying him a dollar. But such a thought was far from my head.

We stopped in front of a door. Gladsome voices sprang to me from inside and mingled together like billows made by soft winds. The house disclosed strange friends—labourers, with my brother Nicholas the only recognizable friendly stranger. I immediately asked for Aroutig, younger than myself. He was in bed. We would surprise him in the morning. Then again I asked in the course of the conversation, drinking and smoking, what was Aroutig doing? "He works in the poundry," answered the proprietor of the house. "He is clever." He should have said *foundry* instead of *poundry*, although it would have meant the same to me.

What a morning! The living monsters curling their arms, waving them in their sleeves, beckoning me. Their roaring and clanging is audible. They are calling for fresh wild blood. I am guided. The guide's pleasant speech sounds like the voice of a priest in a fantastic land where youthful people are sacrificed to fiery gods. I had read books of this kind. But had I not come to finish my education in this country? Where is this kind man leading me? That is another matter. Whether my advisers were right, or whether they got the best of me, I do not know. They said I did not have money and did not know the language well enough to go to school, and factories were good places to work in. So I bowed to the raging, fuming, fire-spitting faces of gods in their temple of the foundry, gods more awesome than those in books.

In the foundry on our way to the boss, men were scooping water that looked like fire, and carrying it away and coming back again. Most wonderful of all, these men had no faces with which to see, but black sooty things. How could they manage without eyes? My enthusiastic guide pulled my arm. "Don't go close; it will jump on you."

"Is this what I am going to do?"

"No," he said, "yours will be a softer job. You will mix sand

and oil out of which the Hungarian girls will make cores." How much these friends of mine knew, I thought. Will I ever be able to learn all of that—cores, poudry, all the rest?

My friend was right. He knew there was a vacancy. The boss had agreed, and the next morning when I went in, he showed me how to mix sand with oil: so much sand, so much oil, and putting my hands in, so much mixing. As soon as he went away, for I had already begun to dread him, I looked at my hands in disgust. "That's nothing," said my friend, with sincerity. I took his word and worked well. The boss came around now and then with "Good, John, good; you're all right." I already knew what good meant; I guessed what all right was. But why couldn't he give me my right name, which I had written legibly for him?

To be continued

THE LIGHTHOUSE

BY F. R. McCREARY

Where river currents twist and cross
Smoke-coloured as they join the sea,
Is a straight glare of whiteness on blue sky,
Naked finger of warning—
The lighthouse—
Clean from the rocks,
Inflexibly dominant.
Take care lest you look too long at it
Or try with the pallor of envious bodies
To prove that you are greater.
All the shattered white failure of dark winter water
Is fused in that glaring erectness.

THE DANCE OF POETRY

BY ALYSE GREGORY

HOW seldom, one speculates, is it possible to come upon a writer who combines the ready sensibility of the artist with the crafty, formidable patience of the scientist, the scientist who scrupulously pursues facts, detaching them one from the other, to place under prolonged scrutiny and analysis, in order at last to reassemble them into some structure of truth, illusory perhaps, but forming at least a temporary shelter for our vacillating minds. Vernon Lee, or Miss Paget, is just such a writer. One wonders why her name has been so often overlooked by students of aesthetics. She seems, in spite of the virility of her ideas and the animation of her style, for some reason, although mentioned with a certain respect, to be mentioned and nothing more. Does she perhaps belong already to a past generation? One recalls that she was won over to a kind of feminist humanism by Mrs Gilman almost twenty years ago, that she was during the war an irreconcilable pacifist voicing her sentiments with enviable audacity, that her early writings on eighteenth-century Italian literature, and on all sorts of historical characters and European landscapes, were full of graceful insight, that her three-volume novel exemplified most, if not all, of the faults she warns young writers against, and that in a sketch done of her by Sargent she is shown to be a woman, an English woman, whose serious, eager nature calls secretly to one from out of the conjuring virtuosity of the artist's rendering. Then one comes perhaps to her most important work on the psychological basis of art, a book entitled *Beauty and Ugliness*,¹ in which C. Anstruther-Thomson is her collaborator. Here is presented and elucidated the theory, a theory, be it said, which was originated in the nineteenth century by the German scientist Lipps, that we project our own inner experiences into the forms which we see and assimilate, and that this projection, which is termed empathy, this act of attribution of our energies

¹ *Beauty and Ugliness, and Other Studies in Psychological Aesthetics.* By Vernon Lee and C. Anstruther-Thomson. 8vo. 376 pages. John Lane, Ltd. \$1.75.

(one which precedes all sympathy) necessitates the revival of subjective states in our memory, and becomes either pleasant or unpleasant according as it facilitates or blocks our own vitality. This attribution of our movements, our wills, our characters, to certain arrangements of lines, certain harmonious or inharmonious sequences of sounds is, it would seem, what explains our liking for one form rather than for another, and it is just this choice among visible and audible forms which constitutes art. The theory is one which has been expounded, refuted, and defended frequently enough since Miss Paget first introduced it to English readers, but like almost everything to which she devotes her thought it is still vital enough to command consideration.

In *The Handling of Words*,¹ a book which should be in the possession of every student of literary composition, the author is concerned solely with the art of writing. Her method of criticism and analysis is exactly opposite to that of the impressionists. This latter type of critic is usually endowed with a singularly responsive susceptibility, a supple intelligence, and a ready memory stored with appreciations and aversions collected from countless notable impacts which have gradually formed themselves into a body of preferences, and have become the index of taste by which each new work of art is judged. Their approach to experience is, therefore, receptive and interpretative, although as they re-create for us their unique recoils, they may present us with a picture little resembling the original model. Their accomplishment is, according to their culture, brilliant, impressive, superb—as in the case of Pater—or merely dull, trivial, and insignificant.

Critics like Miss Paget, on the contrary, use their taste as a kind of sensitive needle for searching out universal laws. They come to everything with a lively scientific interest and are not content until they have dissected in all its parts, down to its most intimate essence, this select relic of a once living response to the universal predicament called life. Miss Paget even goes so far as to separate the verbs from the pronouns, the nouns from the adjectives, and to set them off against each other in neat aggregations, and though one's taste may differ from hers, as mine does in certain instances, yet one cannot fail to be rewarded by her fruitful and energetic researches into so obscure and controversial a field.

¹ *The Handling of Words, and Other Studies in Literary Psychology.* By Vernon Lee. 12mo. 315 pages. Dodd, Mead and Company. \$2.50.

Her conclusion, drawn from this especial study, namely that the art of writing is the "art of manipulating the mind of the reader" has been said perhaps, often enough in other ways. Yet how few writers really bear that simple admonition in mind. One remembers Matthew Arnold's insistence on "clearness of arrangement, rigour of development, simplicity of style," and Henry James's reiteration of "precision," "brevity," and "lucidity," as being most essential in the writing of fiction, but all these terms merely infer translating, or rather, transforming one's personal vision of life, one's most veracious insights, one's playful or burdened intensities, in a manner plausible and clear enough to secure for one the sympathetic co-operation of an audience, an audience whose instincts are as one's own, but the contents of whose minds may be of shapes and hues as various as a forest full of freshly fallen autumn leaves; an audience, be it also understood, automatically sifted according to the shallowness or penetration, the vulgarity or the grandeur, of the initial vision extended, and not according to a faulty method of presentation.

Now Miss Paget's latest essay falls into my hands, an essay entitled *The Poet's Eye*,¹ and while it may appear in its somewhat careless manner of writing (for no rigorous upholder of style should use such phrases as "of a much muchness," or "nose out") as well as in its tendency to repeat her former conclusions, like the departing echo of her old prosecuting vivaciousness, yet it holds within it, as does all her writing, much that is still challenging to the mind and stimulating to the imagination.

Her argument is as follows: Poetry is immortal only because as verse it survives in the memory, whereas prose slowly or rapidly fades away. Poetry itself has the power of turning him who employs it from a prose writer into a poet, since the mere composition of verse sets the brain into more complex activity and brings to the aid of the poet the virtues residing in artistic forms created by previous poets and valued by generations of readers whose sympathy and good-will outweigh their critical agility. Why, then, are the critical powers of readers less active in the case of poetry than in that of prose? Because, Miss Paget continues, rhythm "makes us expect repetition of a given effect and thereby prepare ourselves for making a given response"; this expectation and preparation if repeated "eliciting a degree of imitative activity on

¹ *The Poet's Eye*. By Vernon Lee. 8vo. The Hogarth Press. 1/6.

our part," we set to marching at that particular pace "surrendering our own initiative and receiving in exchange a sense of greater freedom and strength." Though this projection of ourselves into all forms, visual and audible, is, as the author has sought to demonstrate in her earlier books, at the bottom of all art, in the case of poetry metre persuades us to accept not only itself in its recurrence, but the meaning it happens to carry as well. This resolved to its simplest terms is Miss Paget's thesis.

But on the contrary, one protests, one reads poetry more critically, with more awareness than one reads prose. If it is into a dance that one is caught, it is a dance where the slightest misstep on the part of the poet leaves us disaffected. Coleridge's dubious definition of the difference between prose and poetry, namely that prose consists in "words in their best order" while poetry consists in "the best words in the best order" partially illustrates my meaning. Far from being caught into an uncritical assent in the metre of a poem, its very form, whether it be free verse, an ode, a rondeau, or the simplest ballad, as it involves us in its own mandates stirs our blood into quicker action, and whips our minds up to attend. We do not at all relinquish our initiative and become quiescent, but rather are endowed with an initiative more tensile and aggressive, and an imagination strange, prompt, and exigent.

Or perhaps Miss Paget should have elucidated her ideas further, supplying us as she did so with two categories, one for the person whose approach to poetry is inert and conventional, or, indeed, hostile to all but dull repetitions of the "mental rattle" of their childhood, a category into which would go most of the inhabitants of our globe, including the editors of our successful magazines, and the majority of our university professors; and another category for those true lovers of poetry, and Miss Paget herself would be included amongst them, whose critical powers shake off all apathy as they recognize a new note with the old beauty in it, who are never more passionate in their watchful responses than when participating with mind, heart, and body in this most divine pastime of a romantic and "ill-used race."

TWO POEMS

BY MACKNIGHT BLACK

MACHINE MOMENT

Think, and this bare
Wheel-flight will drift away
Like a petal.
Speak, and this hard splendour
Will vanish whole like a frost-flower.
Only watch; let this clear thing
Drain your breast;
Share this blooming.

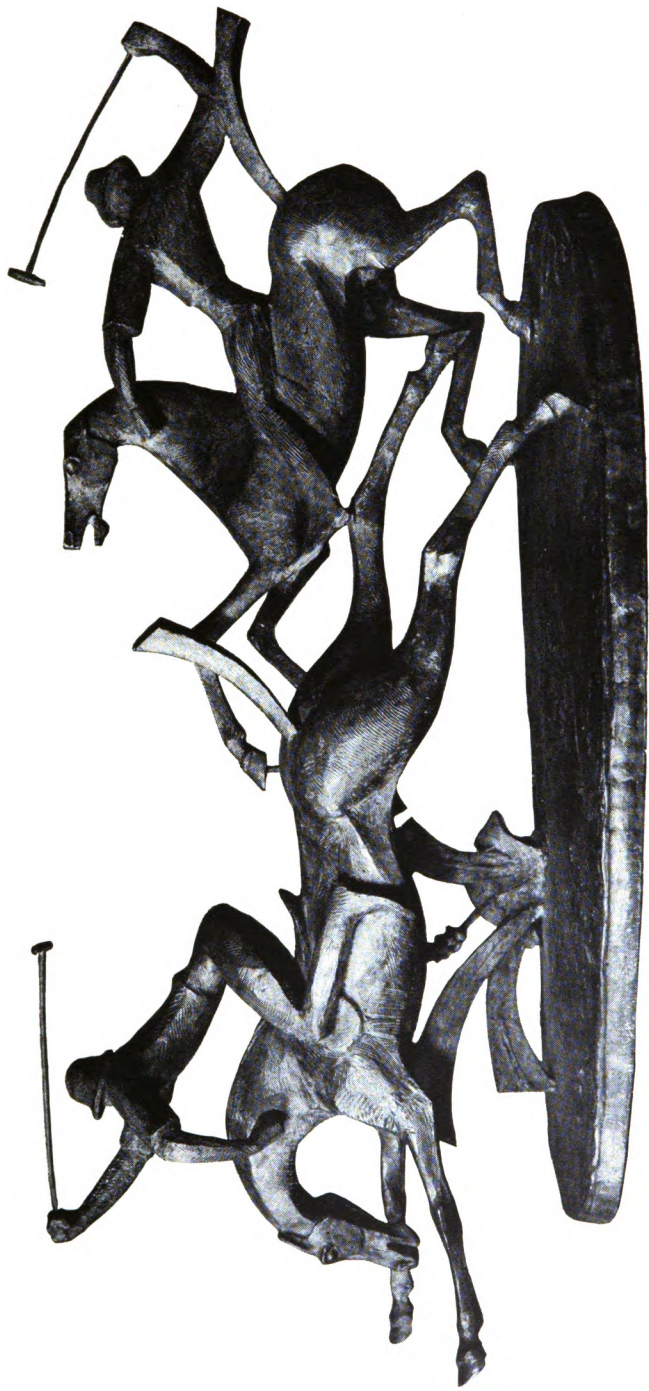
BESIDE A BALANCE-WHEEL

I watch the great spokes of this wheel
Club stillness with a might that churned the new stars,
And find the same labour under my breast;
I see the strokes fall and swirl away, soundless,
 impalpable,
On the wings of clean motion that father my pride.
This I shall remember when darkness comes to drown
 me at last;
I shall remember a rhythm deeper than blood; I shall
 hope
To enter the earth like a blow, and sweep clear in a flight.



BULL FIGHT. BY HUNT DIEDERICH

Courtesy of Marie Sterner



Courtesy of Marie Sterner

POLO PLAYERS. BY HUNT DIEDERICH



Courtesy of Marie Sterner

CATS. BY HUNT DIEDERICH

THE BOMB-SHOP

BY SEÁN O'FAOLÁIN

I HAVE flung my shoes from off my feet, I have let my hair down around my shoulders—I swear there are streaks of grey, but I have not seen them, and I shall not search for them—and I write at my heart's ease under the golden glow of their old reading-lamp. If I wished to raise my eyes to the window I should see the fireflies of the city, footlights to the velvet night, and even as I stoop over this page I smell the hawthorn in full bloom. But I have no wish, God knows, to look down into the hole of a city or at its thousand blinking eyes, for no city but a single house I should begin to search for in the mass: a house in the centre of the markets, vegetable-refuse around it, dogs barking in the yards behind, and the one occupant we left there behind us. God have mercy on her soul.

I can pity her now more easily, be sorry for the parting now that she is under the clay. They are indeed the lights of that same city that held us in its grasp, but this, is not this, too, the quiet of the dark night outside, and that the strewn hay that I might if I wished drink in to intoxication by just standing in the dark on the threshold of the kitchen below. There are hundreds of fields and boreens and roads between us and that house: and the darkness and sunlight of a quarter of days and nights between as well.

God pity her, she was an extraordinary woman. I can think of no other word but that. Like a slender statue from a Middle-ages porch—a spear carved into woman-shape. She used stare at me in a queer way, a merry sort of way. But as she looked at me her mouth was like a little pale daisy pursed in the centre of her grey face, and then who could tell whether it was merriness or bitterness that made her stare at you so? To look at the daisy—a hard brain, this: to look at the eyes—a great-hearted woman.

Och, I am glad to think of the space between us, to think that time between has demolished for ever that old-clothes shop in the centre of the markets below.

She used say she was praying God for us: that I needn't be worried that I couldn't go to Mass on Sunday—as if I minded much! She told the men that the hand of God was in the work—we were making rifle-grenades, bombs, incendiary and explosive, and filling cartridges—and she used bring us in her invalid-wine and fill it out slowly, laughing and saying, peering as she spoke—“for body and soul—Norah understands me. Doesn't she, Norah?” Daisy for the silence: grown to a poppy for the laughter. Every night she came to the door—oh, heart of mine listen to the wind in the pines outside—came with her oil-lamp in one hand, her glass of water in the other.

—Mind yourselves now, she'd say.

—Ah, we're fine, the three men would say. Except Tom who used not raise his head from his chess.

—And Norah?

—Cheerio, cheerio, I'd say, a good-night all to myself.

—King to knight's pawn, from Tom.

—Oho, would come from Sean like a cuckoo's cry in double note. And Liam would begin at some chant like, Rolling Home to Merrie England, or Sally Brown I Love Your Daughter.

—Liam! I would warn, then: and we used be quiet for a spell.

And anybody that went downstairs after that saw through the doorway her head over the top of her arm-chair, and the lamp on the mantel shining down on it through the gloom.

Then . . . here is how it goes in my diary. I must have been daft.

APRIL 22. Hair heavy with sweat: forgot to weave it before coming to bed. Sleep! Sleep! That binds up the ravelled sleeve of care. Come, come. Housmanns says—and so on. Breath's a ware that will not keep. Writing away because I like the candle-light. She so quiet, and not a stir from her no more than if she were dead. I stretched out my hand in the dark, the lamp was out though the ashes glowed still, and down it came on the cold head, and the night so still so still even as it is now, even if a dog would only bark, and the cat sleek against my calves in the dark. *Fonn ni thigeann am 'ghoire*. Damn Irish poetry! Then Liam came with light. Her jaw hung loose, her mouth white, bloodless, a single rib of hair lying on her cheek askew since I let my hand fall

on her head in the dark. Oh, God have mercy on the souls of the dead.

APRIL 22, still. And really it's the twenty-third past midnight. I can't sleep. A woman to my left and a woman right and they whispering, the grave give me the grave. Am I to be like this till the morning from kerb to kerb of the bed? Whisper. Whisper.

The first cock-crow. There are the carts trundling into market beneath my window, and I am too weary to rise on my elbow and look at them. I do see that the planets have not yet scattered. The Plough was over here last night, now it's gone. Do the planets, stars move? The baths of all the western stars—yes! Listen to the sound of the carts below on the cobbles. Cartloads of cabbage, wet from the rain, and glistening. Cartloads of fish? Or two or three loads of high hay and the rain down on them as from a sieve. And the carters envying the drawn blinds around them: if they only knew! It's they are happy: they think me happy in my warm bed. O! grass, tall, soft, wet, fragrant, cold, high grass! And the sun on its white nodding marguerites! Or the full moon!

APRIL 23. Tom has just said that we cannot risk leaving here as long as they are depending on us for the incendiaries for the attack on B. Rain ceased.

II

Three months gone since that night and the months have *not* demolished the clothes-shop. I hate to think of it: I see nothing but that cold grate, the jaw of the dead woman, the linen cloth they laid on her face to hide her from—nothing. And the joy in me the time they told me I was to go to help the men at the bomb-shop. The welling-up of joy. Poor little chicken: good name for me, God knows. Chicken!

The very first night I went, Liam set his gramophone going specially to give me pleasure. It was a song in which a single line had hitherto defied them: I was to interpret for them. The needle was coarse with rust. The records lay higgledy-piggledy on the table.

—Now, listen carefully at the second line, said Liam.

In the lag behind the hawlown
 Wheare the grath ith goldenn nred
 Awnd nthe

—Listen, listen, cried Liam. The others looked up amused.

Awnd nthe lumar umnn ngaefal ncearal aaawnnn.

—Well what was it? Did you get it? eh?

Liam would have been disappointed if I had, I think, but I hadn't a notion what the first two lines had said not to mention the mysterious third. He stood looking at me in triumph, a hand on the regulator.

—Slowly, now, this time.

Clearly it was a rite.

Wheare the grath ith goldenn nred
 Awnd—nthe—lungur—boom—themal—um—rur—oownnn.

—Did you get it? Liam stopped the machine and faced me again. Perpetually interested he was. He said it might be “And the grey grass blooming on the lawn” or “And the church bell booming in the dawn”?

—But wait. Twice as slow this time now.

Sean looked up from his chess-problem and said in a low voice of bitterness.

—Chuck it!

—Ah, one more little boureen: one more, Sean boy. All listen with the utmost attention and devotion! And in all moments of danger, temptation, and affliction—he was quoting in blasphemous fashion from the Catechism.

Wheare nthe grth ith ngolden nred.

Sean was at the end of his patience it seemed—even then when I arrived—and that was months before the end. That very first night he fought with Liam.

—For God's sake give it a rest, he cried.

Liam sent his eyebrows up in mock surprise: Sean's eyebrows

were curved tightly downwards: Tom was watching with mouth open ready for laughter if cause for laughter should be. I shiver to think of that gramophone and the obscenity that it pulled up out of Sean's heart. The poor kid!

It was on April the 24th that the sodium ran out: Tom could think of no alternative, and it left Liam idle. It was exasperating. I remember the day well, and the surprise with which I heard the noise of the traffic for the first time from within: the roar of the lamps held it at bay until that day when we suddenly silenced them at the dinner-hour. What a medley of noise: and it was a day of sunny parallelograms of light on the floor. Women's voices above every other noise—"fine fresh fish—fine fresh fish"—and in a torrent of words, "here's the herrings, here's the herrings, here's the herrings" screamed at the top of the voice. Liam began to imitate them, and I wondered at his good-humour at the time, and finally left us to go out to the front windows that we but rarely dared to approach, and when I followed him he was watching the kiddies playing in the sun around the pools of last night's rain. He at one side of the window, and I at the other, we peeped at them for a full half-hour. There I left him to prepare the dinner.

This was an old lumber-room, full of the most quaint lumber: trunks, hat-boxes, ornaments in glass and in marble stones, a pheasant under a glass case, piles of old books, books by Ouida, and Mrs Radcliffe, and authors gone into the darkness of a just judgement, newspapers of the 'eighties, trash of all sorts. Liam discovered there a photograph album, brass-cornered, velvet-covered, latched, and each page as thick as forty of these I write on. Half of the book was not a book at all but a box holding a musical instrument that ping-ponged out, when the book was opened, like a kitten's meow a plaintive monosyllabic tune, "there—is—no—place—like—home." Liam made it play again and again, mouth gaping with delighted laughter.

At last he came to me in the kitchen, an old bonnet on his head, an old wrap around his shoulders, happy as a school-boy.

—But I haven't the wasp-waist you know. Nor the puffed shoulders. If I had the waist it would be only after a month of pulling on the laces, the maid with her leg on the edge of the bed for leverage. Eh? Do you think?

Sean left his incendiaries to see him.

—No, you haven't the waist.

Tom left his work to look at his capers.

—The corset wasn't made that would circle your belly, he said coarsely.

—Of course women have narrower waists than men by nature, said Sean, and then he blushed.

—God knows who wore them last, said Tom like a fool, and broke us up like the first heavy drops of a lowering sky on a merry party.

A line from my diary:

APRIL 24, still. Liam singing after dinner.

Liam had a fine baritone voice. He reminded me always of a young fellow—shot dead a few days after—who sent his voice into every cranny of the high and huge old castle at Macroom the night we retreated from Cork: that was because Liam's favourite was the song he sang that night and hundreds of armed men around the courtyard and the moon flooding the countryside and the glorious mountains west. Liam used sing with passion:

Laugh! Pun—chin—ell—O, o, o!
 For—the—love . . .
 That—is—en—ded.

And that day after dinner, he stopped short in the middle of the song and his voice shaking. Turning to me he said: We'll go on till she begins to smell.

III

I never saw Tom since that night he went out and left us. All the evening he had been talking of the kids playing in the street, and the way he talked made us see the children racing and shouting around the lit lamps. And to make it the more mournful still some girls began to circle round the markets singing in harmony old sentimental numbers to the wail of a mouth-organ. Liam was all nerves. Sean stuck silent over a chess-problem: maybe the same one, for all I know, that held him the first night I came. He

said chess-problems were very hard and that two men might often take a year to work one out. When Tom asked Liam if he ever saw a little baby lying in a cot there was a row, and foul language and the Saviour's name taken in vain. I never spent so miserable a night, and I went to lie in bed with an aching tooth rather than sit listening to them bicker at one another. I wished it were a night for going on despatches.

When I came down again to prepare supper Sean was alone, and he had a roaring fire in the grate and immediately began to talk about the proof of the love of God. I asked whether the others were gone to bed and hoped devoutly that they were and asleep, but Sean said that they were gone out, and when I looked at him in amazement he said Tom was gone to arrange for a shift to another house, and that Liam was gone to accompany him. I sat down and stared at him, my two hands like dead things in the lap of my apron. Sean leant forward and caught my hands and said it did not make any difference: we had the house to ourselves for a few hours until Liam returned. But I rose and stared the harder and by degrees only was it that I realized the cowardice of their desertion. I realized what Tom's talk of kids and mothers and red floors to kitchens and curly-haired children meant. Sean stood up beside me and talked of the beauty of the driving moon, and said that it was many a month, and more, many a year since he had the peace of mind to look up at the sky at night and marvel at its beauty. I asked in a rage if he were sure that Liam would return, and called them cowards, and wished Ireland better than to be served by such soldiers. Liam would return in a few hours. Liam was a good fellow, and would return. The four squares of moonlight on the landing beneath the lobby window were good to look upon, and better to stand upon, I in one square and he in another: face to face. There was beauty in an ideal yet, and the Republic was an ideal worth suffering for, and liberty worth a man's blood. God was the God of Freedom, not the God of Love. Man was the true God of Love. Let us talk, let us talk. I could have hit the poor kid in the face that night so much did I feel that the ugliness of things was become unbearable; but I just left him to hold my temper in, and went upstairs and wrote in my diary for a few minutes, then leaning recklessly with arms akimbo on the moonlit windowsill, thinking that the dead woman below was

happiest of all; wishing to the dead Christ—I swore in my rage and despair—that I was lying on my hands and face on the green field that I could see across the city in the light of the moon. I wrote:

APRIL 24. 11.15 p.m. Am I to recall that “she was quick mettle when she went to school,” and now? Sean on the stairs-top standing in the squares of light: how long is it since I looked at the face of the moon, he said. The bells at the quarter: doh, soh, la, te, doh. They are playing a piano next door. This great, empty house seems full of little sounds that terrify me. Supper.

Sean talked on and on while I prepared supper. He insisted on drinking the remains of a bottle of invalid-wine last handled by the dead woman. So I sat by the fire while he ate and told me of his walks one summer to a little stream somewhere up in County Clare, some insignificant sewer-stream I made no doubt and said so; but he flowed on in a greater torrent at that, seeking to explain that things really exist: exist, Norah! A mighty word, that word. The bullrushes waved in the wind: the stream was undoubtedly insignificant: but is it in so far as it exists insignificant? What did I mean by “insignificant”? He was, and I was, and without us the world was not, at any rate was not the same. Yet we might well be insignificant. Why did that stream exist? The quarters and the halves and the three quarters struck and I listened to them with sinking heart, thinking of the men on the hills. Sean talked on and on. I saw the quarter-master trudging through the rain to his dumps, marking up his smudgy note-book by the light of a farmhouse fire, so few incendiary bombs, so few cartridges for the grenades, and cursing us and everyone else that we could do no better with the lives of men depending on our efforts, with the fate of Ireland in the scales. And, Norah, if you and I find a nook in that great organization of life it will be by finding out ourselves first. I rose and went wearily to bed, and I cried before I slept, sobbing in the dark of that lonely house.

IV

The following morning ended everything. Liam did not return. Sean and I were alone, and on us alone depended the attack on B.

The carts rumbling into the markets awoke me, and I decided to go out and steal in the dawn across to the monks' chapel. I needed the consolation of a Mass to save me for the work that waited our four hands.

I had to light a candle so dark was it in the dawn: that reminded me of Christmas time when one lights the lights even in the day-time over the Christmas dinner. I stole past the dead woman's door, listening. The white frost was on the grass, and through the morning mist the little Gothic windows of the chapel showed like little yellow windows in a toy house: the chapel lay at the end of a great sweep of grazing land. When I reached the chapel a stream of folk were passing in from the incurables' hospital across the road: blind, crippled, lame, maimed, people whose disease was not for the eye to see. All around the city lay in quiet sleep. Nobody seemed to speak as they hurried in to Mass: it was cold, and silent as the grave but for our feet on the wet gravel-path. We were like a meeting of the dumb and sleepless ones of Cork. The sky was still black and the larger stars shining, and a wind seemed to sweep the higher regions of the air.

The chapel was full when I entered, and as if Death were never to be avoided, there was that which would have filled it if no living person sat in the pine-wood benches—there was a coffin under a black and silver shroud in the centre of the flags. I sat in a bench that faced the pall, and peeped around slowly from head to head, half nervous for having ventured out. Two people attracted me for a long time, a young man and young woman who prayed so seriously for their youthful looks that I wondered at them in my heart. They seemed as if they had just been married, or not married for very long, but they were here at the earliest Mass in Cork, on a cold April morning, kneeling shoulder to shoulder and praying to what Sean had called a problematical God with an earnestness that frightened me. It was not beautiful to see in the body such young people so fanatically pious: it made one fear God. All this time the ceremony went on, the priest genuflecting as he passed the tabernacle, the acolyte tinkling his bell at the consecration of the Host. At last there was a general rising to approach the rails and I saw Sean among the rest.

He knelt at the rails and waited for the coming of the priest with the Host: then he raised his head and the old ceremony was

performed: Christ the God descended on earth and lay on the boy's tongue. I forgot everything then, and it was the organ playing softly, as I guessed on the viol d'amour and the tremolo, that woke me to attention again. I heard the old priest say that our prayers were requested for the repose of the soul of Brother Senan who had died at the age of twenty-three, and heard him invoke the mercy of God for his soul and for the souls of all who had departed from this world. I thought it best to slip out before the end of the Mass, and when I stepped on the gravel again the sky was not black, for the sun had risen and had made the east red. The stars were all gone. I went to my room again, for I did not wish Sean to think that I had followed him, and lay fully dressed, except for my shoes, stretched on the bed, listening to the city wakening by slow degrees out of its night's sleep.

When I descended Sean was at work, the lamps roaring, the potassium smelling in my nostrils over the smell of the bacon I was frying for our breakfast. But I noticed a change in Sean. He refused to speak at all even when I spoke to him, and when I asked a question or two, as for instance whether the incendiaries would be ready for B., he answered with a mere, no. Why not, I asked? How could they? He didn't care anyway. He was fed-up. He would do the grenade-cartridges. And when I protested that he had never done the grenade-cartridges before, he flared up and his tongue loosened and he became angry and argumentative.

—This is how you do it: I'll tell you. Empty the old Mausers first of all. Now listen!

As he spoke he jabbed his greasy fork in-the air so that I had to draw back from his gestures: the poor kid was all on edge I suppose. I wish now I knew better and had not fought as I did: but it doesn't matter any more.

—Weigh out the grains with the utmost care: I know what I am talking about. Clean the old cartridges in nitric, and when they are ready cut them round the top and file them down to a soft edge. Then he would punch little cardboard wads for them, and fashion little wads of cotton besides. After that you must coax in the little grains carefully, not losing a single one—one might make a difference of ten yards in the cast—ram down your wads of cotton and then of paper and use your tweezers on the case to close it tight. Then the caps. Listen. He knew. Damn it, was he a kid that had no eyes to see? Wasn't he at the tests in Ballyvourney?

Listen. They put the wind up the farmer: thought his prize bull was killed. I know, I know it: you need shellac to hold the powder in the cap, and a trick to dry them quickly is to row them out on a hot plate over a Bunsen. Yes, well, now; the caps. The caps. Oh, yes, they must be impressed in the base of the cartridge. And mind that's not all. No. For fear you'd mix them with ordinary blanks . . .

There we sat, the two of us, facing one another across the breakfast-table: around us lay saucepans, scales, bags of chemicals, roughly fashioned ovens and heating-trays, books of instructions, great jars of acid. Below us the dead. Without, the wakening city, and the risen sun. I rose and the quarrel began.

Knock, knock, knock-knock! Like cringing curs our tongues sank down in our throats, and we swallowed hard with fear, staring at one another and listening for the next bold knocking at the door below. Knock. And after it running a series of knock-knocks. I thought of "Here's the herrings, here's the herrings, here's the herrings," as the knocking took on the rhythm of the fishwives' cry. I thought of "Give me the grave, give me the grave, give me the grave." A silence was followed by a single knock.

We stole to the front window and looked out expecting to see scattered figures in uniform with rifles at the ready. A man passing to his work looked across at the door, and no more. After a while there was no more knocking and we returned and sat as before. Then Sean leaped up.

—This puts a finish to it, he said.

—I don't see that, said I.

—Are we to wait here to be surrounded? Who's that at the door?

—How can I tell you?

—Do you think they won't return? Do you think she hasn't any friends to come looking after her? Clear out quick. Come on, quick.

He caught up the sweeping-brush. He had some notion of leaving the house as we found it, the death lying below unexplained: heart-failure, perhaps?

—You are getting afraid, then, I taunted.

—Tom and Liam were right to go and leave you, with your bickering tongue.

—How soft the men leave their posts. Sean, are you thinking

of the attack on B.? The men waiting for the stuff? Aren't we going to give them something to fight with? Sean, are you Irish at all?

—In the name of God . . .

I laid my hand on his shoulder softly.

—Sean, do you not love Ireland?

—Oh! he burst out, vomit on top of Ireland. Vomit on her. Vomit on her. Vomit on her.

Oh, how I contemned him as I turned to do my little part for the cause, do it even if I had to risk sleeping and working all alone in this house. I began to ready the lamps for a morning's work, but he followed me packing away the things I needed, and even brushing the floor around my feet. He put the match-box in his pockets because they were his, and when I returned from the kitchen with more he snatched them and said that they too were his. He swept the dust of the room towards me where I stood, even knocked the brush-end on my ankles, and when I changed over to the table by the window he followed me and flung open the shutters and chanted some song out to the back-yards that had never heard a man's voice from this house as long as they could remember. I raged and turned on him at last. He turned to face me there in the sunny window, his back to the white shutters, half-face in shadow, half in sun. I caught the shutter to close it, he caught it too. Then he calmed suddenly and laid his hand on my hair, it slipped down around my shoulders, his hand followed to my wrist, and all the while he looked at me in a kindly way, and finally left the room.

I saw a woman's head looking up at the house from a slum-house window behind us. I closed the shutters and began to work at the cartridge-caps, dropping into each one its single drop of shellac. I had about twenty finished and in a row when Sean returned, clean and shaved, a collar on his neck, a cigarette in his mouth. He went into the front room and I heard him only a little while, and then silence.

But I saw it was hopeless to think of doing any work alone, and I became weary and dispirited. I listened to the low drumming of the city's traffic rising in the distance: one great hum. The room grew warm and I felt the sweat gather on my brow, and I saw the room grow darker and darker until my spirit-lamp was

throwing leaping shadows on the benches. Sean was very silent, I thought, straining to hear a whisper. But I wheeled around in terror because I felt something rustle behind me. Between the room and the noise of the traffic there seemed to hang a heavy curtain dulling all sound: I then heard the ping-ponging of the music-box tinkling in the silence. It ceased, and I began to arrange the caps with my forefinger: but I felt as if I could shake something from my shoulders, and I kept looking around and glancing at the door.

Then I heard steps come up the stairs and I raced in to Sean and cried out in fear:

—She's coming, she's coming.

—Who's coming? Who's coming?

—The woman of the house. Sean, Sean, Sean!

—What do you say?

A frightful rattle of thunder crashed over the roof as if mighty billiard-balls were cannoning in the sky. I clasped him to me and I began to cry. The steps came to the door: I could see the jaw hanging since the night of her death, her fish's eyes staring through the linen cloth.

The soft rain outside changed into a downpour so that I heard it on the iron roof in the yard. Sean flung up the blind and we saw the sun shining through the falling water. Then he kissed me right on the lips and I did not stay him: he was whispering to me that this was the best end of all. I grew calm.

A line from my diary:

APRIL 26. We have parted from her, thank God.

I am weary from so much writing, and I have no more to tell.
O dark night above, come, come, with the life that lies before me.

And now for a waltz in the kitchen!

THREE POEMS

BY WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

MARCH IS A LIGHT

upon the dead grass
and houses, the wind
retains its edge, let it—
A light has cut it off
it blows bewilderedly
The grass shakes, the houses
seem, by the lack of foliage
about them, to turn
their angles forward into
the wind to let it pass—

YOUNG SYCAMORE:

I feel that I must tell you
this young tree
whose round and firm trunk
between the wet

pavement and the gutter
(where water
is trickling) rises
bodily

into the air with
one undulant
thrust half its height
and then

dividing and waning
sending out

young branches on
all sides

hung with cocoons
it thins
till nothing is left of it
but two

eccentric knotted
twigs
bending forward
hornlike at the top

LINES ON RECEIVING THE DIAL'S AWARD

In the common mind a corked bottle,
that Senate's egg, to-day the prohibition
we all feel has been a little lifted

The sick carpenter fished up an other bottle,
empty, from his cellar
for me last week, an old ginflask—

What a beauty! a fat quartflask of
greenish glass, *The Father of His Country*
embossed upon one side of it
in glass letters capping the green profile
and on the other
A Little more Grape Captain Bragg

A noteworthy antithesis, that, to petty
thievery on a large scale: generous,
out of the sand, good to hold and to see—

It approaches poetry and my delight
at having been even for a moment shored

THREE POEMS

against a degradation
ticked off daily round me like the newspapers

An old, empty bottle in my hand
I go through the motions of drinking,
drinking to THE DIAL and its courtesy



THE CAT AND HER FAMILY. BY WILLIAM E. SCHUMACHER

A POET OF THE QUATTROCENTO

BY MARIANNE MOORE

IT was Ezra Pound's conviction some years ago, that there could be "an age of awakening in America" which would "overshadow the quattrocento." Hopeful for us at that time, "our opportunity is greater than Leonardo's," said Mr Pound; "we have more aliment," and never really neglectful of us, he has commended in us, "Mr Williams' praiseworthy opacity." "There is distinctness and color," he observed, "as was shown in his 'Postlude,' in 'Des Imagistes'; but there is beyond these qualities the absolute conviction of a man with his feet on the soil, on a soil personally and peculiarly his own. He is rooted. He is at times almost inarticulate, but he is never dry, never without sap in abundance."

This metaphor of the tree seems highly appropriate to William Carlos Williams—who writes of seedling sycamores, of walnuts and willows—who several years ago, himself seemed to W. C. Blum "by all odds the hardest specimen in these parts."¹ In his modestly emphatic respect for America he corroborates Henry James's conviction that young people should "stick fast and sink up to their necks in everything their own countries and climates can give," and his feeling for the *place* lends poetic authority to an illusion of ours, that sustenance may be found here, which is adapted to artists. Imagination can profit by a journey, acquainting itself with everything pertaining to its wish that it can gather from European sources, Doctor Williams says. But it is apparent to him that "American plumbing, American bridges, indexing systems, locomotives, printing presses, city buildings, farm implements and a thousand other things" are liked and used, and it is not folly to hope that the very purest works of the imagination may also be found among us. Doctor Williams is in favour of escape from "strained associations," from "shallowness," from such substitutes as "congoleum—building paper with a coating of enamel." The staying at home principle could not, he is sure, be a false one where there is vigorous living force with buoyancy of

¹ Cf. *American Letter*, by W. C. Blum, *THE DIAL*, May, 1921.

imagination—as there was apparently in Shakespeare—the artist’s excursion being into “perfection” and “technical excellence”! “Such names as Homer, the blind; Scheherazade, who lived under threat—Their compositions have as their excellence, an identity with life since they are as actual, as sappy as the leaf of the tree which never moves from one spot.” He has visited various places and studied various writings and a traveller can as Bacon says, “prick in some flowers of that he hath learned abroad.” In the main, however, Doctor Williams’ topics are American—crowds at the movies

“with the closeness and
universality of sand,”

turkey nests, mushrooms among the fir trees, mist rising from the duck pond, the ball game:

“It is summer, it is the solstice
the crowd is

cheering, the crowd is laughing”

or

“It is spring. Sunshine . . . dumped among factories . . . down a red dirt path to four goats. . . . I approach the smallest goat timidly. . . . It draws away beginning to wind its tie rope around the tree. . . . I back the creature around the tree till it can go no further, the cord all wound up. Gingerly I take it by the ear. It tries to crowd between me and the tree.” I drive it “around the tree again until the rope is entirely unwound. The beast immediately finds new violent green tufts of grass in some black mud half under some old dried water-soaked weedstalks. . . . To the right of the path the other goat comes forward boldly but stops short and sniffs, . . . It ventures closer. Gna-ha-ha-ha-ha! (as in a hat). Very softly. The small goat answers.”

“O spring days, swift
and mutable, wind blowing
four ways, hot and cold.”

Essentially not a "repeater of things second-hand," Doctor Williams is in his manner of contemplating with new eyes, old things, shabby things, and other things, a poet. Metre he thinks of as an "essential of the work, one of its words." That which is to some imperceptible, is to him the "milligram of radium" that he values. He is rightly imaginative in not attempting to decide; or rather, in deciding not to attempt to say how wrong these readers are, who find his poems unbeautiful or "positively repellent." As he had previously asked, "Where does this downhill turn up again? Driven to the wall you'd put claws to your toes and make a ladder of smooth bricks."

Facts presented to us by him in his prose account of The Destruction of Tenochtitlan, could not be said to be "new," but the experience ever, in encountering that which has been imaginatively assembled is exceedingly new. One recalls in reading these pages, the sense augmented, of "everything which the world affords," of "the drive upward, toward the sun and the stars"; and foremost as poetry, we have in a bewilderingly great, neatly ordered pageant of magnificence, Montezuma, "this American cacique," "so delicate," "so full of tinkling sounds and rhythms, so tireless of invention."

One sees nothing terrifying in what Doctor Williams calls a "modern traditionalism," but to say so is to quibble. Incuriousness, emptiness, a sleep of the faculties, are an end of beauty; and Doctor Williams is vivid. Perhaps he is modern. He addresses himself to the imagination. He is "keen" and "compact." "At the ship's prow" as he says the poet should be, he is glad to have his "imaginary" fellow-creatures with him. Unless we are very literal, this should be enough.

OF THE PHILOSOPHIC CRITICISM OF LITERATURE

BY RAMON FERNANDEZ

Translated From the French by Montgomery Belgion

ALBERT THIBAUDET used to distinguish three kinds of criticism: academic criticism; the criticism of artists; and spoken criticism, that of the *salons* and of professional circles, a sort of literary stock exchange. Above, below, or beside these three criticisms, is there not room for a fourth, which, examining with a more frankly philosophic method the problems dealt with by the three others, would not be content with studying works for themselves in their historical or technical significance, but would seek to pick up and follow the spiritual dynamism which they reveal and then situate them in the human universe? Of course anything is possible in this order, in which it is enough to demand that a thing should be for it at once to come into being; but I should like to establish here that a philosophic criticism may be as useful to the development of philosophy as to the development of literature and art.

In considering things distantly and superficially, it appears natural to wish to apply to the analysis of works of art methods which have been so brilliantly successful in the domain of science; and one must indeed be surprised that the timeliness of such a measure should not already have been felt.¹ Philosophy to-day no longer consists of an independent discipline *in so far as its content is concerned*. It is a form of which the material has already been elaborated a first time, a form, so to speak, at the second power. It can no longer overtake the mind which it pursues unless it watches for it at a moment when by a particular activity it is revealed to itself. The old metaphysics caught up man's works with her long, star-spangled mantle; modern philosophy is like a sort of transparent gauze, subtle, shapeless, revealing itself as it reveals and modelling itself as it models the spontaneous

¹ The value of these methods has in fact already been recognized in *Principles of Literary Criticism*, by I. A. Richards. Harcourt, Brace and Company.

products of the human mind. That it should so far have been limited almost exclusively to reflex analysis of the productions of the laboratory means simply that the typical vicissitudes of the mind are discovered through science and also that philosophers are ordinarily not very familiar with artistic creation or contemplation.

More than that. Art and literature are operative in the world of quality. The more things are qualified, diverse, irreducible one to another, the more the artist feels at ease and breathes freely. Now the aim of science is known to be to establish measurable relations between these same things. In science to understand is to measure, that is to say to eliminate objects in order to consider only the relations of size which are incorporated in knowledge. To draw imaginative conclusions from a scientific theory is to do something anti-scientific, for it is to project into an immovable absolute what is essentially movable and relative. Art likes to put us in contact with images of objects expressed in themselves and for themselves: what interests science is not at all contact, it is the to and fro of the mind to the object and of the object to the mind.

I know well that the relations between objects play an eminent part in the work of art; but two remarks will suffice, I believe, to reveal the abyss which separates the latter from the scientific work. The work of art forms an isolated whole which is sufficient to itself and *stands up alone*, so to speak, in the spiritual universe. This assumes the pre-existence and the pre-eminence of the whole in relation to the parts, and therefore that the relations of the parts to the whole are determined by consideration of the latter. What is this saying but that that whole is an *absolute position*, like the God of the scholastics or the being of the post-Kantians? Thus, while scientific relations are anterior to a total conception of the universe, which, by the way, remains a purely hypothetical limit, artistic relations are posterior to the unity of the whole, being composed according to finalist exigencies of convention or combination. Allowing that the visions of art are by definition imaginative, we can say that *aesthetics must be an imaginative ontology, that is to say that the fundamental problem of aesthetics is no other than the metaphysical problem of being, but transposed to the plane of the imagination.*

If now we consider the psychological springs of the work, the relations of expression to the expressed, we meet with the same

difference. "The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art," writes T. S. Eliot, "is by finding an 'objective correlative'; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that *particular* emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked." This is a way of proceeding the reverse of that of science: the latter, which, in so far as it has found it possible, has dissolved the object into an "algebraic dust," to employ Mr Bergson's expression, seeks to represent emotion by movements which may make it intelligible, and *uniquely intelligible*, I mean utilizable through an act of the intelligence. The affective shade of emotion is not communicated by these movements any more than by their objective causes. Art on the contrary, in order to create a suitable objective correlative, evokes almost exclusively the purely qualitative states of objects, as they are given in an immediate sensible and affective experience. For that is a mediocre art which demands from us an effort of *reflection* in order that we be in a position to apprehend its images.

Scientific work offers to the philosopher a plan of studies and a sort of rational ready-reckoner, vast, complex, and satisfying. As philosophy no longer dares to adventure alone in search of truth, it is natural that philosophers should study the disciplines providing incontestable guarantees. As Mr Brunschvicg¹ has well said: "The philosopher is not a man who calculates or experiments; and yet you would have such a man, in the solitary colloquy of his brain with his sheet of paper, forestall those solutions which the progress of mathematics and experimentation, notwithstanding how rapid and disconcerting they are, has not yet been able to supply!" That no doubt could not be better said, but it would be dangerous to allow these words to express the philosopher's entire thought. Through so much considering of quality, Mr Meyerson's irrational,² as a strange body which must be acknow-

¹ Mr Leon Brunschvicg (b. 1869) is the author of *Causality*, of *Stages of Mathematical Philosophy*, and of a study of Spinoza. His is the standard edition of Pascal's *Thoughts*.—Translator's note.

² Mr Emile Meyerson (b. 1858) is considered the foremost epistemologist of France (for, though born in Poland, he has lived in Paris for forty-six years). He is the author of *Identity and Reality* (1908), *Explanations in the Sciences*, and *The Relativist Deduction*. He thus describes his *irrationals*: "At all times, whether as Hellenic atomism, as the peripatetic

ledged but which remains external to thought, one runs the risk of diminishing that thought itself when perhaps it is not reducible to its philosophico-scientific expression. In enlisting as the servant of science, philosophy is in danger of becoming the slave of a mode of thinking which perhaps represents only a part of the mind's tendencies, or if you prefer, only one of its directions. Here is a square whence several roads extend: one cannot declare *a priori* that they all end in the same place without shocking our most thoroughly justified habits: yet that is what philosophers do when, taking the scientific road, they affirm that thus they will attain more surely and no doubt more rapidly to truth. But what of all the other roads? Who knows what surprises these roads would have had in store for them, what divergencies would have been revealed to them, if they had gone along them for their full length? The philosopher's real place of residence is at the cross-roads whence he must adventure in *all* the directions he sees available.

This is, for example, a hypothesis at least worth considering and one that cannot be verified by rationalist philosophy alone: the hypothesis of a dualism of the mind's activity, according to which, to all that constitutes the beyond of scientific knowledge, the thing properly so-called, the irrational, irreducible to reason, there would correspond an *intention* of the mind, a mental activity *sui generis*, analogous yet opposed to the rational activity whereby we are led to the discoveries of science. How worth while is such a hypothesis, if it can be consolidated by precise analysis, is obvious: it would tend to do nothing less than enlarge indefinitely the field of mental activity by integrating with it that part of reality which so far has seemed to escape its jurisdiction. The irrational, an opaque body which science carries along with it and which clouds its course, then appears susceptible to a certain transparency of the mind, and the affinities observed between certain of the latter's tendencies and what one might call the reverse side of rational knowledge, would then make it possible

science of the Middle Ages, as Newtonian physics, or as Einstein's physics, science essentially supposes the existence of *things*; it implies an ontology, and, further, far from being content with *laws*, it seeks in every instant for *explanation*, it tends to know *causes*. In this constant exercise of 'the causal tendency,' the action of reason is limited only by the resistance of nature, which is displayed in the form of *irrationals*." His next book will be entitled: *Of the Progress of Thought*.—Translator's note.

to transport into the interior of the consciousness the dualism, or rather the old, desperate duel, of subject and object.

Now, art alone can furnish for such a research a sum of experiences equal in objective value to that offered by science to rational analysis. In our opinion, the mistake of those who for a century have been striving to make philosophical analysis more supple, to subtract it from the absolute, though often disguised, sovereignty of science, consists in presenting their efforts as attempts at conquest, the success of which would mark a victory over reason. If one rids oneself of all apologetic anxiety, one sees indeed that there is no question of a battle. The progress of aesthetic analysis will not hinder that of rational analysis in the least, for they do not develop on the same line. The radical defect of a religious philosophy in so far as it would oppose to rationalism a coherent spiritual discipline is the impossibility for it to be given an independent and stable object. The reality which it is thereby claimed to apprehend vacillates and is reabsorbed incessantly in the ideas postulating it. The object, like the shadow of a body at the different hours of the day, at one time extends in front of the subject, at another vanishes within it. The proof of this is that it is always easy to translate the principles of such a philosophy into a subjective language, to transform a metaphysics of the religious object into a psychology of the believing subject. A similar operation applied to the things of art would be as ridiculous as it would be vain. The artistic object resists all attempts of assimilation to the fancies of the subject. It is an independent complex of which the organic unity and cohesion result from a synthesis ensuring to it a life of its own. The aesthetic image is irreducible to the psychological image, just as scientific representation is irreducible to the images of common sense. The work of art therefore offers a solid basis, an authentic piece of data, to analytic investigations. In it the mind seizes itself as having accomplished itself in an object.

II

As it would not be timely to draw here the consequences of the preceding remarks, we shall set aside the problem of aesthetics to say a word about the method I propose to adopt. I think I have

sufficiently indicated the reasons which we have for coming before the works of literature in a spirit rather different from that of routine criticism. The latter is essentially descriptive; it sees and tells of what it has seen, it associates the work to a series of more or less similar works, composing abstract figures and historical scenery: very rarely does it study the philosophic substructure of the work it is considering. What should be understood exactly by philosophic substructure? Something very simple and altogether essential. Take the example of Balzac. Opinions on Balzac must vary infinitely so long as consideration of him is confined to a purely literary point of view. One will exalt his genius while another will vilify his style; a third will call him the poet of money, the bard of worldly success, while a fourth will not see any distinction between him and his sensational-story colleagues, and a fifth will respectfully adopt the academic opinion, admiring and unjust simultaneously. Really all these judgements are far from exhausting the intelligence of the Balzacian work, and in any case they do not explain it. Like every descriptive operation they leave thought in a painful disorder without giving to it the means of regrouping reading impressions, of constructing them according to satisfactory intellectual indications. Our judgement is steadied by historical analogies without being enlightened by them; as for psychological hypotheses, their grave defect is that of substituting one discipline for another by going round the aesthetic problem proper. I certainly do not pretend to have furnished a definitive interpretation of Balzac's method, but I believe that in the drawing of the distinction between the conceptual plane and the dramatic plane in Balzac, in the remarks on the substitution of a mosaic of facts for the living synthesis of individuals, and in the analysis of the conditions of movement in the novel, there is at least supplied, pending something better, a provisional explanation of Balzacian creation, an explanation seeking to group and render intelligible those traits which strike us on reading the *Comédie Humaine*. The philosophic substructure of a work *is the body of ideas, which, organized by a hypothesis, supplies an explanation of the essential characters of that work by relating them to the problems of general philosophy which may be implied by them.*

A philosophic criticism cannot be rigorously positive because it is founded on intuitions which present no other guarantee than their own evidence. As its task consists in translating these intuitions into

ideas, it belongs at one and the same time to the aesthetic register—a freely formed and yet necessary intuition—and the philosophic register—an internal cohesion of ideas. To link up the ideal plane with the intuitive plane, the philosophic critic disposes of means which cannot be translated into formulae, and we are compelled to rely on his good faith and on the concentration and discipline of his thought. A man of science is allowed to make adventurous hypotheses so long as he has first learned his trade as a man of science; a metaphysician is allowed to pursue his logical dream to the full extent of his most extravagant caprices; but the philosophic critic, precisely because he must base his hypothesis upon an experiment eluding all positive control, cannot measure or brake his thought too much. He must inspire in us a confidence in two kinds of different though conjugated affirmations, because he must convince us in one and the same mental act of the reality of his relations with things and of the truth of the interpretations of them which he proposes to us.

The part played by experiment in scientific work, by the internal necessities of dialectic in pure philosophy, is played in philosophic criticism by the intuitive plot. It is an indemonstrable postulate that there are in the spiritual universe—in the ideal city erected by the mind, or at least according to its plans—perfectly distinct and perfectly identifiable living unities and that this mind produces beings which become detached from it to lead an unforeknowable and personal life, but if it is an indemonstrable postulate, it is also one essential to any superior form of human life. It must even be added that the superior life begins really only at the threshold of intuition. Whatever dialectical or decorative power an intelligence may dispose of, if it does not collide with resistances which are at first inexplicable, and if it is not guided in its work of adjustment by a sort of *self-prescience* which notifies it of its successes, it cannot escape from the narrow corridor of an impersonal and verified logic. An intuitive thought can be recognized by the way in which it naturally conjoins an equally extreme freedom and necessity, for the inflexible laws of its own curve can be imposed upon it by itself alone. Preceded by that mysterious accomplice who already possesses, without delivering, the key to the things which it is considering, it is familiar with, before understanding, its object, an object which it recognizes rather than discovers. Its lucidity is, as it were, at the second power.

Finally, and this is an infinitely disturbing circumstance, *no description of the object can communicate to us the impression which that thought receives from it*, and which is as the astral body of that object, perceptible by intuition alone. From this result the differences between descriptive thought and intuitive thought. The first tells of the object as it is revealed by a methodical and normal observation. It makes a tracing of the object and shows it through the description. The second seeks to captivate and cultivate the subtle emanations of the object, but as the latter's external traits give it only indirect help, it turns to images, associations, emotions, ideas, which summon one another into the mind. While descriptive thought tends to concentration on the object, and actually to reduce itself to it, intuitive thought displaces the centre of interest from the object and situates it in consciousness: it remakes the object with psychic material.

Three conditions are required for a philosophic criticism to work well: he who practises it must first have undergone a strong rational preparation so as not to confound genuine intuition with the phantoms of the imagination. There must be also a public, an *élite* capable of understanding, and especially of feeling, what the critic has felt. The world of intuition is a sort of atmosphere of the sensible world exacting from those who would perceive it a special suitability, a refined culture, and a perpetual training. And this public is necessary because its approval guarantees both the intuition and the objective. Finally *the objects of intuitive thought must be very sharply delimited and defined in the language of common experience*: this is an essential condition, for the greater the angle between the interpretation of the object and its appearance, the more easily accessible must the latter be, so that each may measure for himself the relation of one to the other. Through failure to respect this principle, certain modern artists have betrayed their splendid talents. Their anxiety to dissimulate or eliminate the object, an erroneous consequence of a legitimate intention, revealed both the excellence of their principles and the inadequacy of their technique. They went round the difficulty instead of solving it; this is always characteristic of the infantile period of a discovery. Having understood or felt that a masterpiece is not in the least the copy of a thing, they forgot that it was that thing's transfiguration, and that it shows itself to be a masterpiece only because it has placed the mind, if one may

say so, in possession of the object. If one of the two factors of the relation is suppressed, what becomes of this re-creation of the world by the mind, a re-creation both free and regulated, the source of all artistic joy? A thing once vanished cannot be possessed: it must resist and its resistance must be the measure of our sovereignty. We must not even be left with too much margin: a certain artistic necessity is at the origin of any masterpiece, a necessity made partly by the pressure of the object. A purely formal art recalls those stage swaggerers who perform daring deeds only when the enemy is not there. It degenerates into the hackneyed even more quickly than academic art, and one cannot see how in any case it can avoid being brought to grief by the decorative. There is in every masterpiece all the absorption and strong silence of spiritual concentration. It must never be forgotten that artistic creation is, in its way, a knowledge.

The relations of expression to the expressed justly constitute one of the crucial problems, a *pons asinorum*, of philosophic criticism. For, preoccupied as it is with the essential interests of man and anxious to group them into a solid sheaf, it cannot be confined to the formal considerations of purely aesthetic criticism. That the work is incommensurable with the author's idiosyncrasy is a fact whereby this criticism cannot be induced to detach the things of art from their human roots. On the contrary the analysis of a technique will appear in this criticism as the graphology, not of an individual character—which would be absurd—but of an ideal will, of an attitude in the face of life, of a spiritual effort. If it seems vain to the philosophic critic to seek to reconstitute the work with psychological elements, he will at least want to gather these together and bring them to the point whence the leap into the void is taken. On the other hand, an attentive study of techniques will reveal to him that art is, as we said above, a way of expressing human experience. He is therefore entitled to erect the theory of aesthetic knowledge and to make us aware of the particular logics of each art. Thanks to the two registers which philosophic criticism possesses, he is able to embrace the problem with a vision both clearer and more complete than is possible for the partisans of pure art and the partisans of representative art, crouching in their entrenchments.

This work of linking-up has never seemed more timely than

to-day when the debate has assumed the form of an irreducible opposition between psychologists and aestheticians. Last year in one symbolical day, a celebrated poet asserted to me while at luncheon that literary psychology was a simple piece of deceptive scenery, and a young analyst insisted at dinner that this same psychology was barely emerging from a long childhood. The first could find no essential difference, so far as the human contribution was concerned, between the *Comédie Humaine* and Georges Ohnet's *Maître de Forges*. The second thought that Stendhal was very *naïf*. Do you not feel that for opinions so radically irreconcilable to be gathered in the small space of Paris and the small time of a day indicates only too well that there is something out of gear in our judgement? I will admit that judgement is not essential to the production of works, but after all it is something. Intelligence orders as much as it reveals: its task is not confined to understanding: one also expects it to distribute suitably what it has understood. My poet and my analyst cannot both be right, and if the pleasure of explaining to myself their motives leaves me unsatisfied, then I must make them meet beyond themselves on a plane where their opinions will appear reconcilable, thanks to the right perspective. Supported by Dante, by Racine, and by poor Stendhal, I shall then succeed in convincing myself that the celebrated poet retained from pure tradition only aesthetic composition and discipline, and that if he denied psychology it was perhaps simply because he was not a psychologist, or at least sensible to the human material which it pleases him to work upon so marvellously. And, on the other hand thanks to the same authorities, I shall have to conclude that the young analyst could not yet perceive the abyss separating dramatic analysis from rational analysis: a psychical synthesis is certainly the equal of a correct dissociation so far as it is intellectual knowledge, and so far as it is *aesthetic knowledge* it is very much its superior. Here are two pure derivations originated in happy and precise individual limits. That a creator should not perceive the spiritual regions which he is not called upon to enrich is well; but if he wants to judge, he raises immense problems seemingly insoluble only because the distinction between the individual's instincts and the authentic act of reason has been neglected. In short, the contradictory assertions of poet and analyst assume that a capital and still pending question has been settled: is literary psychology

an instrument of discovery, and if so in what measure and under what conditions?

There is another essential point which is related to the previous one and with which philosophic criticism alone is suited to deal: I mean what may be called the two registers of creation. To-day thanks to the confusion of doctrines, to the encroachment of instinct upon judgement, to the absence of a comprehensive and satisfactory theory, to the faculty now hereditary among our contemporaries of hastily translating more or less their sensations into ideas, and thanks finally to the more and more clearly political organization of literary life, many artists and writers work in two registers at the same time, not without arousing deplorable equivocations. On the one hand, the artist accomplishes his work of artist, on the other he comments upon it, builds up its theory and relates it to the master works which have aroused the public's attention or the specialists' attention: he "talks" the work at the same time as he carries it out. Soon a confusion fatal to common sense has occurred between the work *as it is created* and the work *as it is explained*, that is to say, imagined and willed by the author. The latter extends, completes, and perfects his creation by his conception, he stops holes, dissimulates fissures with ideas, calls to his rescue the masterpieces to which he claims relation; he seeks to make us admire in the work just what he has not succeeded in incorporating therein and to prevent us from perceiving that his mountain-theory has been delivered of a mouse-work. There is no natural affinity between an artistic reality, the product of a creation, and the commentary, however intelligent, which it pleases the author to supply with it. The one cannot serve to measure the other, and certainly the commentary can in no way be substituted for the artistic reality. When words take the place of the thing and the intention, the accomplishment, it is a sign that one is trying to apply to the spiritual life the methods of advertising and politics. The critical consciousness of a work is not the work of its author: such should be, such certainly has been, the principle of all sane criticism. The silence and mystery around a masterpiece infinitely exceed all definition. And besides we know that an idea is valid only if it has not been produced from the same mould as the reality which it interprets.

I have stressed this little defect of our period, a defect which is really a target for satire, only in order to insist once more on the

timeliness of a philosophic criticism. All these sandbanks of ideas deposited by modern art threaten to poison us, so that one may ask: is it not time to entrust sanitation and growth to some pioneers of good-will? That to-day at every turn, at every moment, and often in spite of ourselves, we raise problems belonging to philosophic analysis, is a *fact*; and as nothing is more confusing and disturbing than a beginning of thought, it is by way of being good method to draw completely what we cannot prevent ourselves from sketching.

III

Impressionism sets us afloat, the artificial intermediaries between reality and ourselves are suppressed, and by being maintained constantly in the presence of life we are forearmed against the sophism of cause and fact. Further, because we are brought back to the hither side of common-sense perception, and as it were to its source, we are invited by impressionism to a revision of the ideas guiding us; but this latter work becomes possible only if first this world of sensibility with its mirror-like facets is integrated by intelligence. Note that the required effort is not superhuman. The state of anarchy is not so serious as one would be tempted to believe. In spite of our worst extravagances we are moving towards unity: I mean that in us the unity of the dislocated and scattered object is remade, *this time in a purely sentimental form*. For all subjective reactions, affective or otherwise, through which common-sense perception has been deformed, are nevertheless grouped around a specific unity of reaction and depend on that undefinable and global shade which warns us that we are in the presence of one thing and not of another. For the interpretation of such a thing the dictionary is of but little assistance: we seem to be solicited by I know not what more substantial and more subtle reality. Thus are formed in us *psychic equivalents* of things containing within themselves the principle of their elucidation. Through the concentration of impressionism reality is translated into human tendencies and these in turn have to be translated by analysis. The thing to be understood is displaced and situated between common-sense reality and intelligence: that is the astral body of the object.

No one has felt this sliding of reality more intensely than Proust

did in sight of the steeples of Martinville. It may be that in these celebrated pages one should discern, with Charles Du Bos, the start of a Platonism which the author failed to develop later, but I believe that from that moment of suspense when he no longer recognized in the traits of things what he divined about them confusedly, Proust allowed himself to be guided by a sure instinct: the venue of his ideas is assuredly that mixed zone of being in which the phantoms of the affective world pass one after the other. Be that as it may, Proust's essential effort has consisted in transporting to the plane of clear and distinct consciousness those impressionist formations which I have named psychic equivalents of the object and in transforming them into intellectual equivalents. Hence the extreme originality of his analysis: for it bears not on things in so much as they are pretended independent of us, but upon ourselves in so far as we integrate our reactions in the face of things; he raises to the full light of consciousness what seemed to be eluding him by definition. Thus Benjamin Crémieux has had good reason to make of Proust the model impressionist: indeed, see how he went about it: instead of seeking to render an account of the object, he succeeded in *defining* the affective states corresponding to it, and I need not recall in detail to the reader with what richness of imagery of association, with what exquisite passages from motive to motive, what a surprising dosage of the ineffable, what a superhuman memory of the frames of experience. Proust's gift cannot be estimated: he seems to have created concepts of the lived, the organic, the vegetable, and the inconceivable, and to have succeeded by a unique miracle in having made time stand still in front of him; and as he never went outside the text offered to him by his sensibility, he deciphers only that text, so that he reinforces and sculpts our impression even while he elucidates it, instead of dissolving it as so many analysts have. He has established a close reciprocity between intelligence and sensation from which the latter has benefited. He has extended nervous tissue into the imponderable regions of the intellect.

Such is, in my opinion, Proust's title to glory and his *exeat* to eternity, but his greatness must not be allowed to mask his inadequacies. However great he may be, he is only the last and the most complete subjectivist, the last and most sincere of those self-confessors of whom Rousseau is the eponym. The Proustians' sophism—less gratuitous certainly than that of cause and fact,

but not less deceptive—consists in the translating of their master's experience into objective terms which relate to the object, to truth, to *what is*, a testimony which one suspects of being effected by some radical vice. Now, it seems that beside the positive gift which I have recalled, Proust suffered from an impotence to become conscious of life otherwise than in purely passive conditions of receptivity. This impotence has been considered an advantage, as if the tension of will and imagination must inevitably confuse truth for us. Here we reach the core of the problem: after having been rendered by impressionism the immense service of being united with life, must we be asked to deliver up to it the very objective impassibility which we had refused to yield to the theorizers of fact? If the spiritual world is not a procession of ordered and ineluctable causes, is it then only a kaleidoscope of impressions, the incoherence of which constitutes the foundation of things?

Please consider that Proust's example does not in the least compel us to accept this lazy interpretation of life; his passivity is a defect, not a quality; it *facilitated* his analysis, but nothing allows us to conclude that it *enriched* it. In short, he is not passive in order better to know things and by method, he is passive because he cannot be otherwise, because the creative parts of his mind, imagination, will, and intellectual combination, *do not in him resist the first attacks upon sensibility*. In other terms, Proust suffered from a fundamental and irreducible discord between his imagination and his sensibility, between his prevision and his vision, and this prevented him from applying to the treatment of reality the spiritual forces which he had spent in imagining the latter. Reread those significant pages: the discovery of Mme de Guermantes' face and the discovery of Balbec church: never better nor with a more hallucinating power has there been expressed the negation of the subject by the object, the brutal obliteration of the imaginary figure, the mind's stupor in the face of that Beyond of itself which it had not been wise enough to foresee. Solitary, and following his subjective dream to the point of making of it a sort of mysticalness of the word and of association, Proust charged his sensibility with a living force which multiplied infinitely the shock of experience, tore down at a blow all the veils interposed between reality and us, and made himself believe for a moment that the latter was absolutely impenetrable. After this

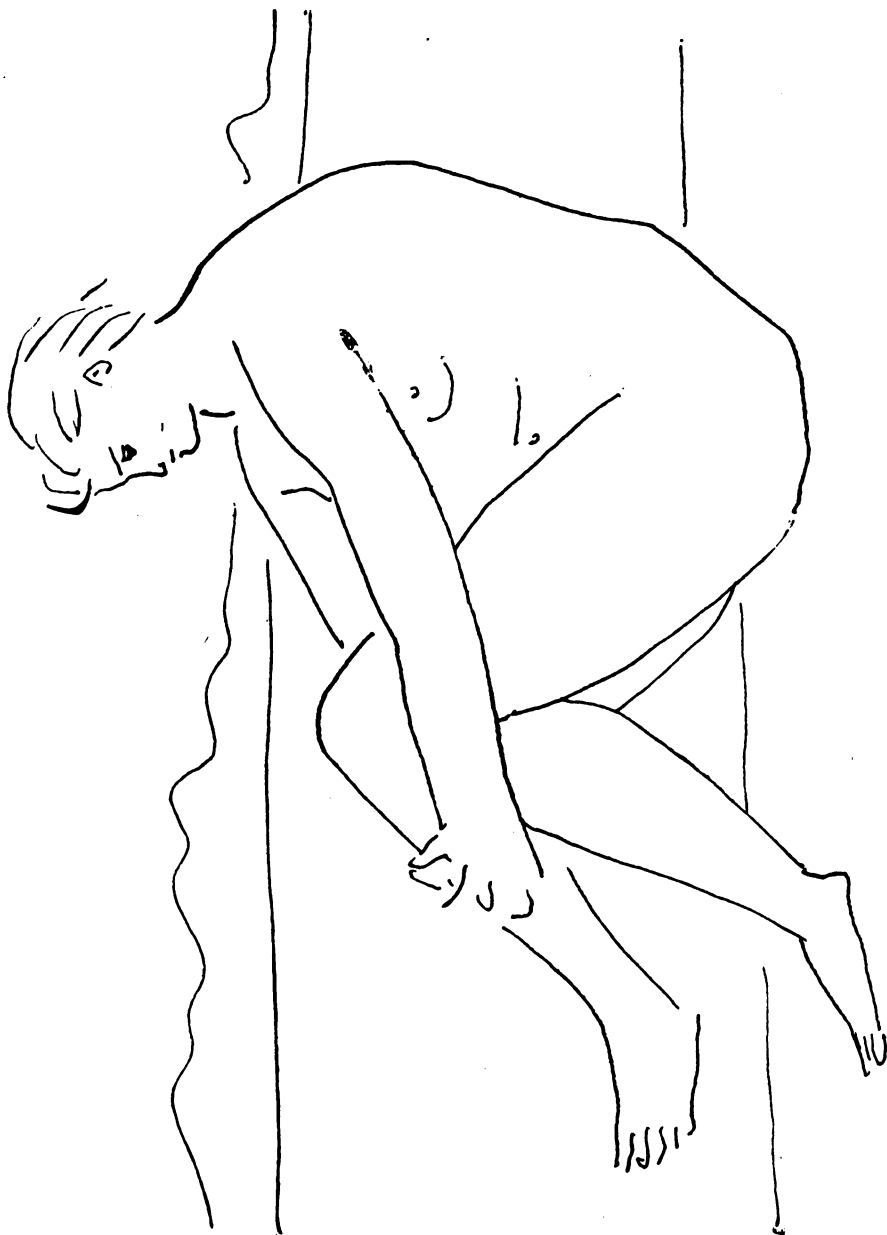
sort of explosion nothing solid, nothing valid subsisted, except the mere passive data provided by sensibility. By this brusque and fatal fall into sensation, Proust was naturally brought *to question thought afresh*, and it was by going over, line by line, the model which he had drawn before experience, by making a scrupulous tracing of it over the object, that Proust, through the detour of the intelligence, recovered his vital equilibrium. Thus the progress of Proustian thought consists in a transfer of mental activity from the future into the past, the past always winning spiritually over the future, memory being supplied with a precise method for correcting the fanciful forms which imagination had at first traced anyhow. Consequence: there is no direct effect of spiritual activity on life, but only one on the memory of life embalmed in sensibility alone: intelligence serves only itself, so to speak, and imagination serves only to help intelligence to define the almost ineffable shades of affectivity. Even as in the philosophy of fact, in the Proustian psychology intelligence, by relation to life, is allowed only a *retrospective* function, which distinguishes it clearly from reality, which, being fixed by memory, it analyses patiently. The work of Proust is a genealogy of the intellectual consciousness. Hence the illusion of duration given by his painting of beings: it is he who is enduring in fact, or rather it is his experience; but imagine a psychologist beginning to write at the moment in which Proust ends his book, and you will agree that such a psychologist might very well replace time by space, I mean that it would be possible for him to contract their story into portraits in the manner of La Bruyère's.¹ I need only, in proof of this, that capital remark which he makes regarding Swann, that observation is unnecessary in psychology, it being possible to deduce a man's acts surely, once the circumstances are given. This is a mechanism which neither Mr Bourget nor Charles Maurras would disavow. The subjective character of impressionism, which he so marvellously interpreted but did not surpass, the dissociation of the intellectual and the spiritual, and the realism of sensation, such are the reasons which reduce Proust, once he *conceives* life, to the factitious objectivism of those who have no immediate commerce with it.

¹ To put it more precisely: the duration of subjective experience in Proust is revealed by the clearly distinct analysis of the evolution of the characters, which evolution describes a rather Balzacian curve.

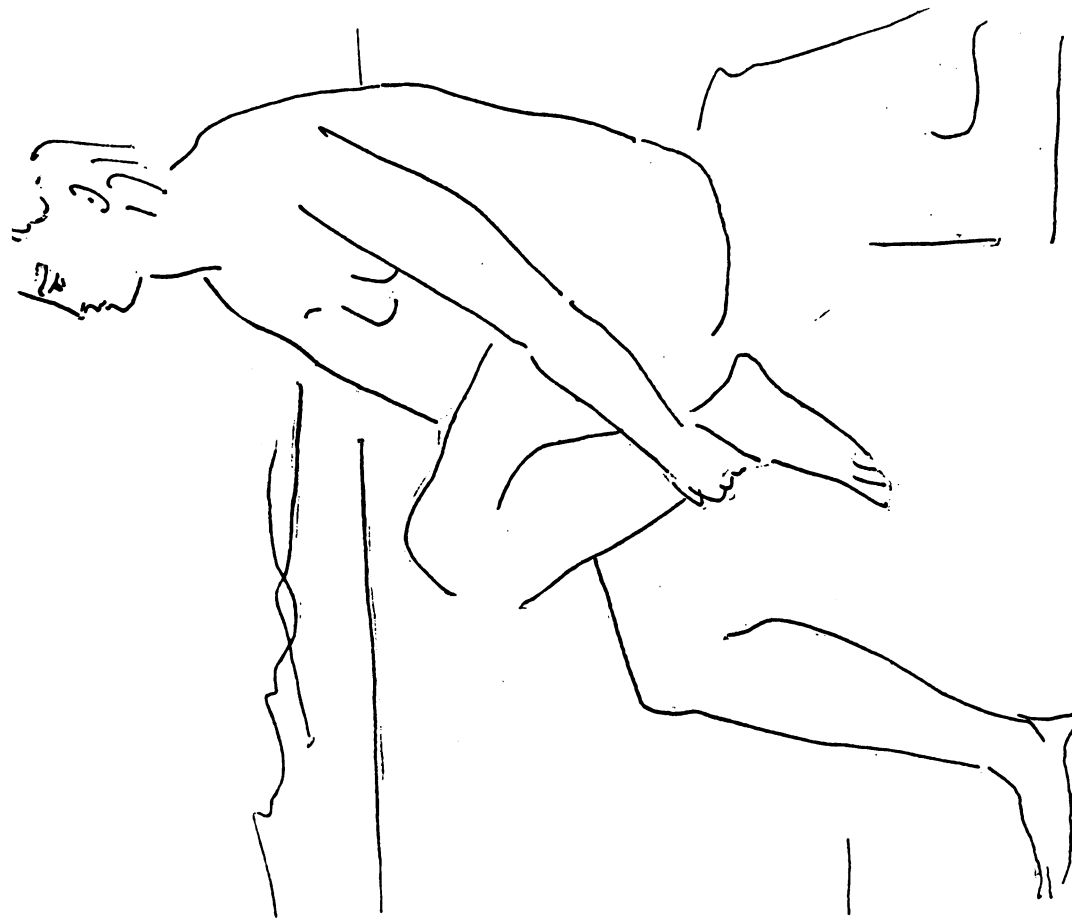
Proust's disciples tend to erect into a system what in him was an accident, a kind of spiritual defeat, and it is partly to dissuade them that I have tried to sum up for them the message of Meredith. Those two names have often been brought together, and with very little reason, for between the intellectual demands of Proust and Meredith the differences are infinitely more important than the resemblances. While Proust, in order better to undergo life, relaxes and stretches, Meredith becomes aware of life only thanks to a tension and an orientation of his whole being, so that experience is for him simultaneously an affirmation and a test. In him sensation, imagination, will, and intelligence are closely bound up and *contemporaneous*: he creates, if one may say so, what he understands, in such a way that his creation incessantly modifies reality without betraying it. But this reality is not at all the reality of Proust, which reminds us appositely that in the things of life the nature of the known depends greatly on the nature of the act of knowing. Meredith's world is not an illusion any more than is Proust's: at any moment its psychic existence and breadth may be verified; only it cannot be *given* to a passive sensibility, it can only be attained by the conjugated efforts of all our faculties. Indeed, does not Meredith lead us forthwith into an ideal universe, and one must add that we penetrate this in his wake only rarely and as if by a miracle: even as Jacques Rivière profoundly remarked, with human depressions and exaltations he was able to compose a new heroism. But the participation of will and intellect in experience is sufficient to modify our perspectives of reality, to make us sound from it another note. Far from wanting to make Meredith say more than he had the intention of saying, more than it was suitable for an artistic psychologist, who was not a philosopher, to have said: I contend simply that the *artistic* success of his work renders possible an infinitely fecund rational interpretation of life, thanks precisely to the close harmony seen in him between creation and judgement, two faculties which rarely get on well together. For the possibility of such a work is a revelation of the existence of two conditions for a veritable spiritual liberation: in the first place, that a concrete authentic experience of life can be realized, one that overflows the confines of a purely passive sensibility; in the second place, that in order to deepen reality one must not relax in the face of it, but, quite on the contrary, go towards it armed with an active *intention* and a

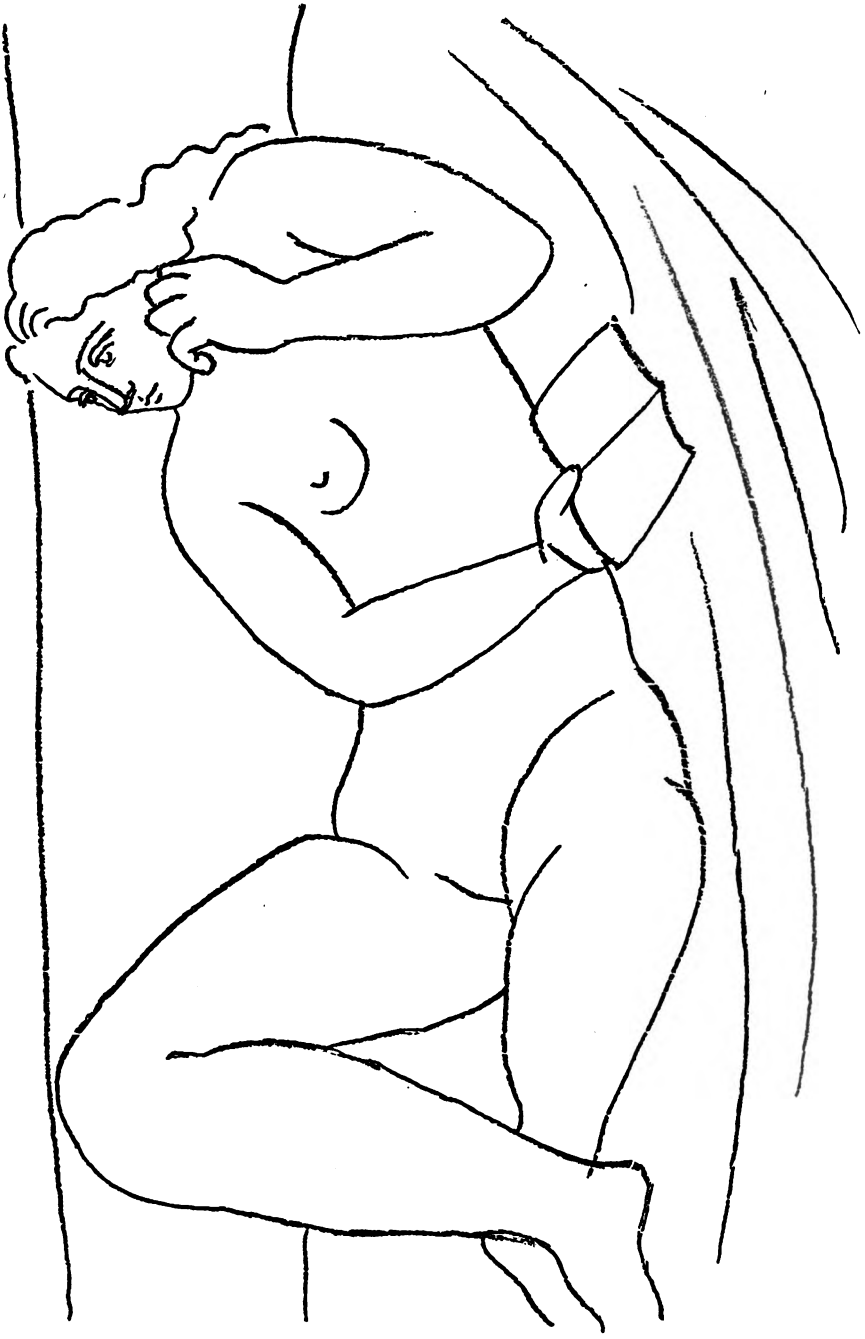
will ever on the alert. Thanks to both the instinct of a novelist of genius and the intellectual intuition of a highly cultivated psychologist, Meredith was able at one and the same time to create living beings gifted with an intrinsic unity and activity and to bequeath to us a first conscious interpretation of his creation; he succeeded in the passage from the ego to the non-ego while furnishing us at the same time with the means of utilizing his success psychologically. Thereby his message is unique; let us not forget that he only starts and orients an effort which it is for us to accomplish. His work is a reality, an act which his rather miraculous character renders it difficult to generalize. He has integrated an impressionism more complex than that of Proust, and he has done it more correctly than he did, but he has not sensibly surpassed the latter's philosophical level. Meredith is one of those rare and splendid creatures who facilitate the philosopher's task without rendering it useless, simply because their instinct inclines them to live in the right direction, and their sensibility is pregnant with a sane and fecund thought. So does he give to us the courage to offer the following remarks rather than supply us with arguments to verify them.

The philosophy of fact and analytic impressionism both lead alike to a spiritual past-ism, the first by an arbitrary cut in the forest of causes, the second by its passivity and its choice of sensation as the unique medium of knowledge. Psychologically it is admitted by both that a thing can be known only when it is given and caused, that is to say, past and already detached from us; artistically their practitioners, professing themselves incapable of immediately "setting" an imaginary being, affirming his unity and then abandoning him to his own duration, can but compose sorts of mosaics, some of concepts, others of subjective impressions, destined more or less to replace living syntheses. This impotence to render their work independent, either of their ideas or of their ego, reveals to us the fundamental life of their analysis and incites us to seek its origin precisely in this psychological past-ism which they offer to us as the best method of discovering truth. The work of the theorizers of fact is so evidently worthless that we may abandon it to its fate without further attending to it, but we cannot deal thus with impressionism—the only outlet on life we have. It is upon its capricious waves that we must navigate as best we can.



A DRAWING. BY PABLO PICASSO .





A DRAWING BY PABLO PICASSO

PARIS LETTER

February, 1927

IN the December number of *Vanity Fair*, Theodore Dreiser has devoted an article to *The Paris of 1926*. He had not seen Paris since 1912; and the Arc de Triomphe, as well as the Panthéon, reverberated with his distress. Paris is no longer what it used to be: attracted by the fall in the franc, tourists of the bargain-hunting variety have destroyed the delicate and subtle Paris of pre-war days. France is invaded by the wave of egoism, mercantilism, and ugliness which is submerging all Europe, protests the celebrated author, who might have called his article *A French Tragedy*. Dreiser is not wrong: it seems at the present time that people and cities may do one of two things. Either they may suffer ruin and neglect, like Petrograd; or, as the prey of persons seeking vulgar amusement, they may, like France, succumb to success. The French Riviera, for instance, has certainly become one of the most repellant things on earth: it is noisy and dusty, the large estates have been split up, and there are many suburban villas. Also, it is undeniable that the Paris of foreign population—a continual coming and going at full speed in those colossal buses which, as one of my friends has written, “resemble sections of an amphitheatre on wheels”—has all the inconveniences of a large American city without any of its advantages. But this is merely a juxtaposing of cities, just as—if I may venture a comparison with the cities of Asia—the native quarters lie side by side with the cantonments of the Europeans. Had Dreiser been a little less hurried, I could have shown him—within an hour of Paris—provincial districts which are as backward, as deserted, and as quiet as they were in the thirteenth century. He would have found here the workers whom he speaks of, with their “wide seated corduroy trousers drawn tight about the shoes.” Even the light upon the Seine or the Marne, with its mauves and its rose-blues, and the faint gold of the poplars, is the very same that brought profit to the Impressionists. The influx of crudity and sight-seeing reached its high-water mark

this year and will abate as it has abated in Germany, now that we have a sound monetary basis. And already—everything being always change—the Paris of this season no longer looks in the least like the Paris of last spring. But I cannot share at all the opinion of Theodore Dreiser when he says that the evident disfigurement of Paris and a lowering of moral values entail a corresponding retrogression in that level of pure art which, with Matisse, Gauguin, Corot, Zola, Rostand, Rolland, and Flaubert, made Paris incomparable. French values no longer have exotic charm, because like all values, they have become a medium of international exchange. France is not responsible for this phenomenon, which is world-wide. There has been established, we might say, an arbitration of exchange whereby an economic “good” becomes immediately negotiable everywhere. Painters or writers have a value which I shall call a gold value which subjects them to universal quotation, clearly at the expense of their local savour. Aside from this, though I do not in the least believe (since it would be absurd) that all eras are of equal worth, I feel nevertheless that we should be running a great risk of unfairness were we to admit the same criteria in judging two generations which differ from each other as greatly as, for example, our own differs from that of Anatole France. French painting has never been more brilliant in its influence than it is to-day. Derain, Picasso, Braque, Utrillo, Vlaminck, Segonzac, Bourdelle, Luc-Albert Moreau—these names hold their own, I venture to say, with those of Le Page, Monticelli, and even Gauguin. It matters little that Picasso comes from Malaga, or that Van Dongen is Dutch, and Brancusi Roumanian; the fact remains that Paris formed them and that they are indebted to Paris for their talent. And Matisse can just as reasonably be called a painter of to-day and to-morrow as a painter of yesterday. In literature, does one believe that our intellectual prestige is harmed by the disappearance of the old bleak and pessimistic naturalists whose traces still survive in the Académie Goncourt? On the other hand, it seems that we must credit post-war Paris with the rise of Proust, the greatest French writer since Flaubert; it is in the depiction of the new generations that a Gide, with his *Faux-Monnayeurs*, found in 1926 the most adequate expression of a talent which had for many years been marked by incertitude and penance. Then there are Giraudoux, a new Gérard de Nerval; Valéry Larbaud, our Stendhal; the sparkling Jean Cocteau, the

Diderot of modern art; Paul Valéry, as great a poet as Mallarmé; Paul Claudel, still at the height of his genius and productivity—all of whom one can cite, over against the names which Dreiser cites with regret. Finally, there is an entire public which is more intelligent, more alive to things throughout the world, and which reads and knows, good heavens, Dreiser, for instance. Whereas thirty years ago, even granting him genius, no one would have heard tell of him. And behind them, what an excellent group of young original writers, who are under thirty or are barely thirty, and whose international reputation is either firmly established or is rapidly becoming so: Joseph Delteil, the author of *Joan of Arc*¹; Martin du Gard; Bernanos; Drieu la Rochelle; Montherlant; Soupault; and the foreigners, the Swiss Cendrars, the Roumanian Panait Istrati, the American Julien Green, and the Russian Kessel, who have made new contributions to France and have enriched her with alien modes of feeling. In music, the group of the Six maintains such cohesion, and has been so assiduous in both study and production, that it has procured a distinct position for itself within a few years. Arthur Honegger; Darius Milhaud, at present in the United States; Georges Auric; Erik Satie; Poulenc—the success of these composers abroad, and even in the Germanic countries which resisted and still resist the charm of Debussy and our Impressionistic music, does not allow it to be said that, in music either, the intellectual value of Paris in 1926 was in decay. Everywhere, despite the demoralization, the struggle for life, the congestion, and hindrances to advancement, I see on all sides of me nothing but work, research, conscientious effort, which promptly manifest their results abroad, no longer requiring fifty years and the Academy, for a gaining of general attention.

Which does not keep us from being in agreement with Dreiser, on several points. I myself saw enough of the years before the war to know that the amenities of living in France at that time, even without much money, were incomparable. But I despise regrets; I cast my lot with the present. I admire it for its new virtues, its love of truth, its modesty, its force, its vitality: I pity it for its sadness, its neuroses, its pessimism; and I try to extract those elements which are best and most interesting.

Thus I turn to Paul Claudel, appointed French Ambassador at

¹ *Joan of Arc*. By Joseph Delteil. 8vo. 266 pages. Minton Balch and Company. \$3. Reviewed in *THE DIAL*, October 1926, page 337.

Washington. The United States already knows that France is sending, in Claudel, one of her great men. French literature has been distinguished by great poets, from Ronsard to Paul Valéry, who have everything in their favour except genius: a kind of ecstasy, of constant communication with super-terrestrial powers, a prophetic inspiration which is certainly what is meant by pure poetry, and what differentiates it, after all, from versification. I can cite three exceptions to this; namely, Victor Hugo, Rimbaud, and Claudel. Claudel owes much to both Hugo and Rimbaud, not only by reason of his personal romanticism, but also by the accident of his generation. He resembles them, for he is like a swollen stream, formidable in its charge, bearing down treasures, tree-trunks, clouds which either help or hinder. After *Tête d'Or*, after his early works written while he was vice-consul at Boston, in prose poems, dramas, satires, and comedies this man, who has remained an early Christian, a fervent Catholic, and who has passed his life in China, in Brazil, in Germany, in Denmark, and in Japan, while retaining something of the Burgundian rustic with the smell of the earth about him, has displayed energy, abundance, a continuous and profound self-renewal. The study by Jacques Rivière which appeared in *Etudes*, and the earlier book by Duhamel, are so far the two best critical essays on Paul Claudel, who—together with his work—will represent at Washington a France which is intense, staunch in its faith, and intimate withal, and which we are proud to present to the United States.

Claude Monet has just died. I learned of this to-day, as the sun was sinking, upon such an afternoon as Monet would have loved. I was on the Mediterranean, in the Rade de Toulon, in a twilight refined and made silken by winter, without any of the vulgar tints which summer gives to southern sunsets, and I regarded enviously, this long and beautiful career as a painter—the most beautiful and the most joyous of trades when it is crowned with success—the peaceful end, prolonged at Giverny, amidst flowers which, with animals, are our one refuge from the sorrows and malice of men. I did not always like his works of the last twenty years, and I had been unjust to him. But one day Vuillard reproved me with such calm eloquence, such cogency, and so communicative a respect, that I have never since failed to see in Monet the supreme master of landscape in the nineteenth century—an

artist who became part of the history of art while he still lived, being placed alongside Cézanne, whom he indeed surpassed. Manet alone is his superior, and Renoir alone is his equal. But he was recognized as the master of pure Impressionism, although he had never sought after this title, nor after any other honour for the matter of that. And thanks to his long life he found himself, along with Guillaumin, its last representative. What a noble and enviable existence, from the *Femme en Vert et Noir* of 1866, the *Déjeuner sur l'Herbe* of the Cassirer collection, down to the *Nymphéas*, passing through the *Meules*, the *Peupliers*, the *Falaises*, the *Cathédrales*, a sort of vast colour epic of France, to which may be added the beautiful series from abroad, Venice and London. Success came to him after 1890, when the intelligent public began to understand the connexions between the new school and such romantics as Bonington and Constable and even Turner, and beyond that, the Dutch and in particular the Venetians. Light centralized and absolute giving unity to the picture, colour used pure, the suppression of black and of "muted" shadows—what an enrichment, what necessary cleansing after the ooze and bitumens of the Romantics! Certainly it was no longer a matter of re-creating nature by thinking it, but simply of rendering nature by feeling it. Each generation has a task of its own. The task of Impressionism was immense, and it has been marvellously performed, making way for the enquiries of Cézanne, and later of the Cubists. We cannot categorically exclude any one. In art everything is inevitable. The last canvases, like the *Nymphéas*, are the most contestable, the early merits of Impressionism being diminished here, while we have a corresponding manifestation of defects—absence of contours, excessive play and vibration of light, confusion of planes, an intoxication no longer kept under control, the blended, the diaphanous, the coloured fog. Yet even these will remain as extraordinary studies, arpeggios of a virtuosity which goes beyond the paintings of either the Sungs or the Japanese. This art is safely on a footing with that of Mallarmé and Debussy, and already these names have become inseparable.

Edouard Bourdet is now in the United States. One knows the prodigious success of his drama, *La Prisonnière*, which has been playing continuously in Paris for a year and which is meeting with similar good fortune in New York under the title of *The*

Captive. Bourdet is assured of being favourably received in the United States. He is a Frenchman of my generation—a little more than thirty-five years of age; intellectually, he is lucid, realistic, and well-informed, emotionally he is profound and reserved. Bourdet is as far removed as possible from the French dramatists of pre-war days, from the turbulent, sensual, and Messianic romanticism of a Bernstein, or the mincing corruption and false art of a Bataille. The subject which he has dealt with is quite novel—nor has he tackled it either with the facile violence of a pre-war writer whose sole aim would have been to scandalize the public, or by the hypocritical use of innuendo, a method which we designate as “suggestive.” He has handled it reputably and in objective good faith, purely by imparting to the public everything human and moving contained in a case wherein there is so little conformity to nature. The public has understood and responded, has been touched just where Bourdet aimed to strike, and the result is the very harmonious success of this beautiful piece which is valiantly making its tour of the world and which is a feature at this moment not only in New York but also, thanks to Reinhardt, in Berlin and in Vienna.

PAUL MORAND

BOOK REVIEWS

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND DOGMA

SCIENCE AND POETRY. *By I. A. Richards. 16mo. 96 pages. W. W. Norton and Company. \$1.*

MR I. A. RICHARDS is both a psychologist and a student of literature; he is not a psychologist who has chosen to exercise his accomplishments at the expense of literature, nor is he a man of letters who has dabbled in psychology. One might expect, in our time, to come across numerous individuals of his species; but the double gift, rarer than the double training, is rarely given; and Mr Richards is almost alone. The *Foundations of Aesthetics* and *The Meaning of Meaning* (works of collaboration) are books which will certainly gain in importance and estimation. His first wholly original book, *The Principles of Literary Criticism*, is a milestone, though not an altogether satisfactory one. Mr Richards had difficult things to say, and he had not wholly mastered the art of saying them; it is probable that what he has there said with much difficulty, he will be able to say better. The present little book marks a distinct advance in Mr Richards' power of expression and arrangement. It is very readable; but it is also a book which everyone interested in poetry ought to read.

The book is notable not because of providing the answer to any question. Such questions as Mr Richards raises are usually not answered; usually they are merely superseded. But it will be a long time before the questions of Mr Richards will be obsolete: in fact, Mr Richards has a peculiar gift for anticipating the questions which the next generations will be putting to themselves. And the question which he asks here is one of the greatest moment; to realize this and kindred questions is almost to be unable thenceforth to keep one's mind on any others. Exactly what these questions are will cause us some trouble to explain. This book of ninety-six small pages is, first of all, an enquiry into a new and un-

explored aspect of the Theory of Knowledge: into the relation between *truth* and *belief*, between rational and emotional assent. It is an essay in *The Grammar of Belief*; the first intimation that I have met with that there is a problem of different types of belief. It touches on the immense problem of the relation of Belief to Ritual. It sketches a psychological account of what happens in the mind in the process of appreciation of a poem. It outlines a theory of value. Incidentally, it contains much just observation on the difference between true poetry and false. One cannot swallow all these concentrated intoxicants in ninety-six small pages without becoming a little dizzy.

Mr Richards' importance—and I have suggested that he is indeed important—is not in his solutions but in his perception of problems. There is a certain discrepancy between the size of his problems and the size of his solutions. That is natural: when one perceives a great problem, one is the size of one's vision; but when one supplies a solution, one is the size of one's training. There is something almost comic about the way in which Mr Richards can ask an unanswerable question which no one has ever asked before, and answer it with a ventriloquial voice from a psychological laboratory situated in Cambridge. Some of his faiths seem to be knocking each other on the head. “. . . Our thoughts are the servants of our interests,” he says on page 22: it is the up-to-date psychologist speaking. But as we read on we find our thoughts turning out to be very poor servants indeed. For it appears to be to our interest (what *is* to our interest, we ask) to hold some kind of belief: i.e. a belief in objective values issuing from objective reality. One would expect Mr Richards to maintain—and he does maintain in part—that “science” is purely a knowledge of how things work, and that it tells us nothing of what they ultimately *are*. “Science,” he says (p. 63), “can tell us nothing about the nature of things in any *ultimate* sense.” In that case, we should expect that science would leave “the nature of things in their ultimate sense” quite alone, and leave us free to “believe,” in the “ultimate” sense, whatever we like. Yet science *does* interfere with the “ultimate,” or Mr Richards would not have had to write this book; for his view is just that science (restricted though it be) has squashed the religious, ritual, or magical view of nature upon which poetry has always depended.

I think that Mr Richards will have to re-perend this matter: the objection is not so petty and frivolous as it looks. If one is going to consider philosophically the nature of Belief, it is as dangerous to be a scientist as to be a theologian; the scientist, still more—in our time—than the theologian, will be prejudiced as to the nature of Truth. Mr Richards is apt to ask a supra-scientific question, and to give merely a scientific answer.

In his theory of value, again, Mr Richards asks the supra-scientific question, and gives merely the scientific answer. His theory of value appears to be the same as it was in his *Principles of Literary Criticism*. Value is organization (p. 38): "For if the mind is a system of interests, and if an experience is their play (*what does "play" mean?*) the worth of any experience is a matter of the degree to which the mind, through this experience, attains a complete equilibrium." "Interests," for Mr Richards, tend to be atomic units; a difference of strength between interests tends to be merely quantitative. The difference between Good and Evil becomes therefore only the "difference between free and wasteful organization": Good is Efficiency, a perfectly working mental Roneo Steel Cabinet System. The best life (p. 42) for "our friend" (whom we wish well) is one "in which as much as possible of himself is engaged (as many of his impulses as possible)." St Francis (to take a figure in the public eye at the moment) might have chosen a life in which *more* of his impulses were engaged, than in the life which he did choose; he might have chosen a life in which his impulse toward fine clothes (not in itself a bad impulse) might have been included. The goal is the avoidance of "conflict" and the attainment of "equilibrium." The Buddhists have a different name for "equilibrium."

I am not so unsophisticated as to assert that Mr Richards' theory is *false*. It is probably quite true. Nevertheless it is only one aspect; it is a psychological theory of value, but we must also have a moral theory of value. The two are incompatible, but both must be held, and that is just the problem. If I believe, as I do believe, that the chief distinction of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him for ever, Mr Richards' theory of value is inadequate: my advantage is that I can believe my own and his too, whereas he is limited to his own. Mr Richards' faculty for belief, in fact, suffers, like that of most scientists, from too specialized exercise;

it is all muscle in one limb, and quite paralysed in another. When I peruse Mr Russell's little book, *What I Believe*, I am amazed at Mr Russell's capacity for believing—within limits. St Augustine did not believe more. Mr Russell believes that when he is dead he will rot; I cannot subscribe with that conviction to *any* belief. Nevertheless, I cannot "believe"—and this is the capital point—that I, any more than Mr Russell and others of the more credulous brethren, get on for one moment without believing *anything* except the "hows" of science.

Mr Richards seems to me to be the dupe of his own scepticism, first in his insistence on the relation of poetry to belief in the past, and second in his belief that poetry will have to shift without any belief in the future. He admits that "even the most important among our attitudes can be aroused and maintained without any belief entering in at all" (p. 72) and goes on to say that "we need no beliefs, and indeed we must have none, if we are to read *King Lear*." *King Lear* is after all a pretty huge exception; but the statement is very questionable. I do not know whether Mr Richards meant to imply that Shakespeare must have had no beliefs in writing it; but I cannot for the life of me see that I need any more belief to read *Paradise Lost* than to read *King Lear*: and if yielding oneself to works of art fostered beliefs, I should say that I was more inclined to a belief of *some* kind after reading the play of Shakespeare than after the poem of Milton. I wish, in any case, that Mr Richards had given an example of a work of art which could not have been produced without belief. Throughout this chapter (*Poetry and Beliefs*) Mr Richards seems to me to be using the word "belief" very hazily, usually with the intimation of *religious* belief, though I do not see why he should limit himself to that. I do not suppose that he imagines that Homer believed in the "historicity" of all the monkey-shines of the Olympian troupe; and Ovid, who rather specialized in anecdotes of divinities, could hardly be cited as an example of Roman fundamentalism. Of the Roman poets, the one with the most "belief" was (I venture to suggest) Lucretius, whose beliefs were precisely of a scientific kind, and whose belief in his phantom Venus is very attenuated indeed. But even if we take the poet who might seem the aptest for Mr Richards' purpose—Dante: what right have we to assert what Dante actually believed, or *how* he believed it? Did he

believe in the Summa as St Thomas believed in it, and did even St Thomas believe in it as M Maritain does? And how dependent is Dante upon the "magical view of nature"?

The whole problem turns on the question whether emotional values can be maintained in a scientific universe. Mr Richards is very well aware—as I know from conversations with him—and I know no one who is more aware—that emotions and sentiments appear and disappear in the course of human history, and rapidly too; that certain sentiments of the late Middle Ages, which we should be glad to have if we could, have completely disappeared, like the secrets of the best stained glass or Byzantine enamel-work. It seems quite possible, as Mr Richards suggests, that a future increase in scientific knowledge may be accompanied by a steady deterioration in "spirituality" (the word is mine, not Mr Richards'). Mr Richards thinks that the only thing that can save us from "mental chaos" is poetry, a poetry of the future detached from all belief. What this poetry will be I cannot conceive. If his description of the "poetry of belief" were clearer, we should also have a clearer idea of what he means by the poetry of unbelief. If there is such a distinction as he draws, between the poetry of all the past and the poetry of all the future, then I do not think that he is justified in making exceptions of such poems as *King Lear*. If he is right, then I think that the chances for the future are not so bright as he hopes. Poetry "is capable of saving us," he says; it is like saying that the wall-paper will save us when the walls have crumbled. It is a revised version of *Literature and Dogma*.

The chief fault of the book is that it is too small; the subject is immense. In the ninety-six pages Mr Richards covers so much ground that I have had to leave some of his most interesting theses, and all of his penetrating and highly valuable criticism of contemporary poetry, untouched. He has worried and tantalized us, and we demand a bigger book.

It is a pity, by the way, that the seventh line of Wordsworth's sonnet (p. 19) by which Mr Richards illustrates his theory of the process of appreciation of poetry, should have been printed with one syllable omitted (for *to* read *unto*).

T. S. ELIOT

SPONSA CHRISTI

THE STORY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. By *Cuthbert Wright*. 10mo. 315 pages. *Albert and Charles Boni*. \$2.50.

MR CUTHBERT WRIGHT has assimilated the methods of T. B. Macaulay and J. R. Green, and without undue obligation to these masters, evolved an historical method of his own, "swift without haste and calm without delay." If his style has spirit it has body as well; nor can the critical onslaught on the decencies of English prose, with its contention that style is assumed only to conceal a want of material, cite *The Story of the Catholic Church* as an example. Here is matter enough; the vast subject is compressed into less than three hundred pages. To present it clearly and elegantly confirms the achievement.

The core of the matter is that Mr Wright—and this is a rare quality among historians—credits his reader with some intelligence. The obvious fact, the platitude of the chroniclers, he sums up in an epigram, devoting the space he has gained to the brilliant exposition of some episode more important in the career of the Church than the familiar schisms. Also, in this new scale of proportion, there is a place for numerous character portraits which show the author's powers as stylist and humanist, at the same time personifying events that might otherwise confuse the reader. And most important, Mr Wright has scope for the development of his central thesis: the fatal shift of emphasis within the Church from the *credo ut intelligam* of Anselmian mysticism, the device of Catholicism at its zenith, to the doctrine of a reasonable apprehension of God, the doctrine of its nadir.

Thus, the book is a threnody of the Bartered Bride, of the *Sponsa Christi*, once borne up in the hands of faith lest she dash her foot against a stone; now impelled to tread the cobbles of fact like any mortal. She cannot prove the historical existence of Jesus; she cannot prove her Gospels to be factual testimony. Yet these bodily weaknesses have, in her robust and glorious days, heartened her as a spiritual athlete sinewed by faith alone. Never has she been called upon to lay her dogmas and mysteries before the

tribunal of reason. As Cardinal Newman once pointed out, there can be no conflict between the Church and, for example, Science; because on no territory do their interests clash; on no possible battlefield can the ghostly cohorts of faith and the regiments of fact engage each other. But since the Reformation, the Church has stooped in the attempt to conquer. Assuming a humility not meet for a divinely founded religion, she has remade herself from within to please the Calvinists, dropped her other-worldly arrogance to please the patriots, and, relinquishing Excalibur altogether, has declared through Pope Gregory XVI in 1834 and reaffirmed through the Vatican Council in 1870 that a certain knowledge of God can be obtained by reason alone. "The only trouble with the Catholic Church in this country," says Mr Wright, "is that it is nervously attempting to be a department of the American Defense Society or the Purity League. No one can read its history without realizing that its true function in this world is something very different. It is an international and everlasting Church, lifted high above our little systems and pruderies." He would doubtless agree with Mr Arthur Machen that "its priests are called to an awful and tremendous hierurgy; its pontiffs are to be the pathfinders, the bridge-makers between the world of sense and the world of spirit. And, in fact, they pass their time in preaching, not the eternal mysteries, but a twopenny morality, in changing the Wine of Angels and the Bread of Heaven into gingerbeer and mixed biscuits; a sorry transubstantiation, a sad alchemy, as it seems to me."

In discussing these matters at length, I would not give the impression that Mr Wright bends his facts to his thesis. His history is temperamental but seldom prejudiced. If from time to time he permits himself an ironical thrust at the priggishness, the chauvinism, the bad music, the corrupted ritual—the Protestant taste, in short—of the modern Catholic Church, it is because he loves so well the indwelling glory of the Age of Faith. In the reflected glow from "the fiery pageant of the Mass" we observe the procession of saints, kings, popes, and martyrs, evoked by Mr Wright's lively and touching prose to symbolize the human qualities of that personage greater than them all, the Church herself. In this noble enthusiasm for Catholicism, Mr Wright will probably give offence to modern Catholics.

For to-day, the Catholic will defend all the sad compromises

of his church, by which she has disarmed herself before her enemies, rather than admit the need for a sturdy yea-saying in faith. Some years ago I was extolling the haphazard beauties of St Gatien's Cathedral at Tours to a man who lived in its shadow. It seemed to me, from its Roman base-wall to its rounded sixteenth-century towers, rising like two gigantic poplars above the poplars beside the Loire, a document in stone, a record of so many ages of undeviating faith. My friend dismissed St Gatien's with a wave of his hand. If I would see Catholicism, I must visit the basilica of St Martin, a modern "Byzantine" horror, a hubbub of imitation mosaics and plaster statuary.

It is the historic church which Mr Wright would rebuild for us, stone by stone, that we may comprehend the way it is designed and fashioned, the laughter and tears which have accompanied its rise from the primal rock, the chants and praisegivings, the wars fought for its sake and the poems written to its triumph. His commentary, directed by a mind sensitive to the nuances of human feebleness and aspiration, might well, were it not for Catholic touchiness and Protestant bigotry, reawaken a zest for departed splendours and prepare the way for their return. For above all else, the work is devoted to the cause of Faith, which alone can quicken the Catholic religion and the arts which are the handmaidens thereof.

"I have tried to make my book simply a picture, or rather a series of pictures; to give away their whole case to the agnostics at the start; to employ all their pet weapons against myself; to state at the outset that the Church exhibits all the scars of human imperfections, violences, and compromises; that Christ for whose sake the Church exists cannot be *proved* even to have lived historically; that nothing can be proved; that the basic axiom of religion is faith, and nothing but faith."

In measuring the Church by the rule of faith, Mr Wright has rendered judgements against which reason cannot prevail.

ROBERT HILLYER

THE ART OF VISIBLE THINGS

GAUTIER AND THE ROMANTICS. *By John Garber Palache. Illustrated. 8vo. 186 pages. The Viking Press. \$3.*

IN the preface to his collected poems, Gautier denies that art has any other aim than itself. "The author of the present work is of no political party . . . he is nothing. He writes poetry in order to excuse himself for doing nothing, and does nothing in order to excuse himself for writing poetry. . . . In general, he thinks that as soon as a thing becomes useful, it ceases to be beautiful. Art is freedom, luxury, the delight of the soul in the midst of idleness. Painting, sculpture and music are absolutely devoid of utility." This, in its earliest form, is the doctrine of art for art's sake, which Gautier originated and to some degree personified.

His poems themselves were the basis of other doctrines, not by what they said, but by what they definitely excluded from the art of verse. They are without ideas, and almost without emotions; or rather, their emotions are always implicit in *things*, in visible objects which are sometimes employed as symbols; more often Gautier describes them for their own sake. He speaks of himself as "seeing nothing of the world except what is seen from a window"; and again, in talking to the Goncourts: "All my value consists in being a man for whom the visible world exists." Everything else—facts, theories, admonitions, aspirations, or mental agony—was left for prose to express.

He preferred to treat small subjects in limited forms, "sometimes on plaques of gold or copper, with the bright colours of enamel, and sometimes with the wheel of the engraver of precious stones, on agate, cornelian or onyx." Enamel-work and Cameos—the English title is not so definite, nor so graceful, as *Émaux et Camées*, but it is quite as effective in describing the limited perfection toward which Gautier toiled patiently. "The artist is like a day-labourer. . . ."

His poems have been admired more than they were read, and imitated more than they were admired; that is, they are imitated

even to-day, at third or fourth hand, by writers to whom Gautier is only a name and a rose-coloured waistcoat. More directly, they formed the style of Leconte de Lisle and Hérédia; they foreshadowed the whole Parnassian school; and some of their features, such as the rigorous exclusion of ideas and the use of things to express emotion, can be found even in authors like Mallarmé and Valéry, in general so hostile to all the theories of Gautier. His influence extends to such a recent volume as the *Anthology of Pure Poetry*; for there, in the introduction, one finds Mr George Moore searching for poems without "the subjective taint"; without "ideas, thoughts, reflections," and based instead on "admiration of the only permanent world, the world of things. . . . I ask myself, and reproachfully, how many years went by before the seed sown by Gautier rose from the dreams of its wintry nest."

His attitude to art in general, which I began by mentioning, has had an even more curious history. In France it very nearly became a religion. I do not know who introduced it to England, but it can certainly be found in Oscar Wilde's *Intentions*. Either from Wilde or his French sources, it spread to all the poets of the eighteen-nineties, and was not affected by their permanent or temporary oblivion; it passed from poets to novelists, from novelists to the daily papers, and is perfectly familiar to the man in the street. Like ripples in a pool, it has changed its shape as it advanced. The unprovable, but possible, theory that art is entirely useless, has been turned into the theory that art has no effect whatsoever on conduct. This, in turn, has been applied to ends which Gautier could hardly have anticipated. Every time the Watch and Ward Society condemns a book, or the United States Post Office bars it from the mails, or a bill is introduced at Albany to forbid its publication, art for art's sake comes forward, in its revised and strictly modern form, to state that no harm was intended, that morality still reigns unchallenged, that the book in question, being a work of art, could have no possible effect on what people think or do. "See!" its determined friends proclaim, "we have clipped the wings of art, and flea'd its rump, and pared its claws; it makes outrageous noises, but is guaranteed to be ineffective; it is a perfectly tame griffon, trained to amuse and raised for a household pet!" . . . But Plato, when he banished poets from his commonwealth as being dangerous to the established order, was paying them a less ambiguous compliment.

These remarks will serve to show that Gautier is still a living force. Mr Palache was wrong to describe him as "an island in the stream of development, or rather a fragment of the seventeenth and eighteenth-century formalism . . . washed down in the torrent and left along the bank somewhere in a quiet pool or back-water"; instead, he is part of the stream itself. There are features of modern literature and literary theory which cannot be understood without reference to his work; and it deserves less casual treatment than it receives in the present volume.

Gautier and the Romantics belongs to that urbane and rather impure type known as "literary studies"—a name which is generally applied to mixtures of fact, opinion, character, atmosphere, friendships, quotations from other critics, and more or less entertaining anecdotes. This heterogeneous material is difficult to arrange, and a central character does not always take the place of a unifying idea. It results that the principal fault of the book is a lack of composition which extends from the whole to the separate chapters; sometimes each paragraph sets out in a new direction; each sentence may be a detour leading, through picturesque landscape, to a point a little more distant from an always uncertain goal. What Mr Palache has written is a passable guide-book, whose interest lies almost entirely in its describing a period which has long been neglected, buried in theses, or unjustly damned.

MALCOLM COWLEY

POETRY AND POLITICS

THE ROAD ROUND IRELAND. By Padraic Colum. Illustrated. 10mo. 492 pages. The Macmillan Company. \$4.

TO those who admire the genius of Mr Padraic Colum this book will be at once a disappointment and an encouragement; a disappointment in that many of its pages are nothing better than hack-work, an encouragement in that, now here, now there, throughout the volume, there appear, like the shimmer of glow-worms in unilluminated grass, the delicate appreciations of a poet capable of lightening our darkness. It seems to me that Mr Colum fails in this book, as far as he does fail, from attempting to combine under the same cover poetry and political speculation. The volume contains, however, so much of the first that we are tantalized to think how fine a book of lasting literary merit he might have written had he been content to confine himself to recapturing those fleeting impressions which stirred his imagination as he wandered up and down the lanes and roads of his natal land.

He observes for example the particular lingering beauty of a September twilight and is able to evoke its sad loveliness by the charmed rhythm of a single line of verse:

“No herds have I to drive through the long twilight.”

The same service he does for the wet autumns, so common in Ireland:

“There are three very desolate things, oats lying, hay lying, turf lying, and turf lying is the most desolate of them.”

By a thousand unaffected references he re-creates for us the intimate atmosphere of an Irish village “where the hearth is still the centre of life in the cottages.” Who should know if not Padraic Colum the look of these interiors with their fiddles and fowling-pieces? How he delights to treasure the simple utterances

of their inhabitants, simple with the humorous simplicity that is characteristic of these ambiguous Iberians! "Do I know him, do I know him? Do I know my oul' shirt? Aye, I know him as well as I know bread." That is exactly the kind of remark that Mr Colum cherishes as in the murmur of conversation it reaches his ears across a room odorous with the earthy incense of peat.

On one occasion as he was approaching just such a cabin he came upon an old woman surrounded by goats who was singing "a slow old song." "She was good enough to sing it over for me—an old true-lovers song, she said it was, and she had heard it sung at a wedding in Termon Feckin forty years before." Do you not catch in the cadence of the prose of this "true Catholic" an echo of the prose of a good old "Protestant Catholic" buried at Winchester long years ago, but also in his day a lover of a "smooth song" and the "great and ancient pieties"? Mr Colum's interest and curiosity in all the wayside lore of his beloved country are insatiable. Now he is enquiring into the craft of the wheel-wright who uses for his carts "deal for the body, larch for the shafts, ash for the rims of the wheel and oak for the felloes," now treasuring the delicate sensibility of an ignorant farmer who takes pleasure "in the smell of the bushes that is lost in the heat of the day," now relishing the exasperation felt by "the tinkers" or gipsy wanderers when with "windy hats" on their heads they fling back their curse upon the sober householders passed by them on their unpremeditated wayfaring.

"You live man and wife, you say—like the goats, two and two a-tether

For fear ye should reach to the hedge-tops, and the wild taste get in your blood."

One of the finest passages in the book occurs in his description of a village funeral. Here Mr Colum's imagination, as is the prerogative of the imagination of all poets, escapes from the immediate constraint of the passing moment to contemplate with tender pity the story of the generations born to life under the bright stars. With grave attention he observed all that went on in the village churchyard till suddenly there rose from the hallowed enclosure, the wild and desolate *caoine*. "It was the veritable cry that has

gone up from every field in Europe and Asia, the cry that has the memory in it of all grief."

Perhaps it is a limitation engendered by an unconfessed racial hostility which makes it difficult for the present reviewer to appreciate as he should the Irish Renaissance. How the elbows of these Irishmen do twitter when they begin tuning up their own fiddles! The Abbey Theatre, what a coil from first to last there has been made about it! And if the truth were for once to be blurted out we would find that much that it has contributed is the veriest make-believe, an altogether artificial recrudescence of fairy-stories in which not one of these clever frequenters of fashionable London drawing-rooms really believes. "We are all seeking to-day for some glimpses of the Fairyland our fathers knew," writes A. E. and does not realize how hazardous to the health of true poetry such an occupation is. And with what incredible chat they regale each other now and again! Listen to this: "‘Sophocles, Raphael, Shelley’ George Moore had said, running his hands through his blond hair ‘what have they done compared with A Doll’s House?’" Even that great poet, W. B. Yeats, is reported once to have remarked to James Joyce, "I do not know whether you are a fountain or a cistern." Meanwhile that celebrated son of chaos "indifferent as a herring bone" shuffled off in his tennis shoes to a more unaffected environment bequeathing to the literary leaders of the Island he was leaving a valedictory poem that includes the two famous lines:

"And though they spurn me from their door;
My soul shall spurn them ever more."

LLEWELYN POWYS

BRIEFER MENTION

THE THIBAULTS, by Roger Martin Du Gard, translated from the French by Madeleine Boyd (2 vols., 12mo, 631 pages; Boni & Liveright: \$5) is a prose panorama of contemporary life—rich in observation, vivid in characterization, and objective in treatment. These two volumes trace the ascending arc of an ambitious programme—a rounded picture of certain phases of French civilization—and there is every indication that the author is equipped to carry it forward to a notable conclusion. The work has that sustained glamour which only a first-rate imagination can impart to fiction, together with unflagging pace and dramatic sense. The strength and rhythm of his style have been admirably caught in the translation by Madeleine Boyd.

THE VALLEY OF THE KINGS, by Marmaduke Pickthall (12mo, 295 pages; Knopf: \$2.50). The Valley of the Kings is slight in scope as compared with the author's *Saïd the Fisherman*, a book which has more fulness of character and episode than any novel published in English in the past twenty years. But it is vivid in character and background, and it is so truly of the Orient that through it we get another understanding of Oriental patterns and the *Thousand and One Nights*; we understand, too, why the Arabic-speaking people, Moslem and Christian, shrink from and cringe to European civilization. Very strange and very fateful European people and their manners appear as we see them through the eyes of Iskender's mother, Iskender, Elias, and the old priest Mitri. But hasn't there been some compromise made in the present edition of the book as regards the presentation of these fateful Europeans? Kûk, in the other edition, has a more talismanic look than the Cook whom Abdullah serves in the present edition, and Brûtèstant looked more acclimatized to Syria than the Protestant which now appears in the book.

JOANNA GODDEN MARRIED, and *Other Stories*, by Sheila Kaye-Smith (12mo, 464 pages; Harpers: \$2). Like most follow-ups, this contains the essence of its predecessor in somewhat diluted measure, but even so it is much more pungent and pervasive than four-fifths of current fiction. Readers of Joanna Godden are said to have "persuaded" its author to write a sequel, but the motivation is stronger than that. The short stories which fill more than half the volume maintain a high level of excellence.

CIRCE'S ISLAND and **THE GIRL AND THE FAUN**, by Eden Phillpotts (12mo, 238 pages; Macmillan: \$2.50). "There is a deep gulf between what every man is and what he would have you believe him to be," says the serpent in *Circe's Island*. Mr Phillpotts is a prolific and successful novelist, but—occasionally—he would have one believe him to be a seventh son of one of the seven sages. So he writes stories which are half mythology and half Dr Frank Crane, brimming with classical allusions and syndicate truisms. Both of these tales fall in that category.

LORD RAINGO, by Arnold Bennett (12mo, 393 pages; Doran: \$2). "There was a speechless poet hidden somewhere in Mr Raingo, that died often and came back to life, and was authentic." Thus Mr Bennett on the first page of his novel, and what he claims for his central character is—in a sense—equally true of himself. But in this instance, Mr Bennett's creations are more significant than his treatment of them; he loses his quarry in the jungle of British politics and stalks, heavy-footed, through the underbrush. Lord Raingo belongs in the serious column of Mr Bennett's fiction, but far down on the list.

STRANGERS, by Dorothy Van Doren (12mo, 275 pages; Doran: \$2). In one of the Central African tribes, an accepted practice—during a visit—is the interchange of wives. Mrs Van Doren has imported this quaint custom, giving it a New York application. The experiment is premeditated by one pair; the other two more or less reluctantly adopt it. The author disagrees with Bernard Shaw's greengrocer, who affirmed that marriage "doesn't bear thinking about"; her characters do little else, and although their actions are incredible, one puts up with them for the sake of a novel which is in other ways sound and discerning. If Mrs Van Doren will bring the same facility and the same power to her next novel—and change the subject—it should be a book of notable merit.

FAR END, by May Sinclair (12mo, 201 pages; Macmillan: \$2). Novelists in novels—like clergymen in novels—are rarely endowed with an adequate share of ordinary intelligence, and Miss Sinclair's exhibit is no exception. To make matters worse, the novelist's wife—in this instance—has to get along with an even scantier allotment than he has. Between them, they lend themselves spinelessly to support the writer's extravagant thesis, and if the reader could only do likewise, no doubt this would be an imposing book. But the reader can't—and it isn't.

THE CASUARINA TREE, by W. Somerset Maugham (12mo, 288 pages; Doran: \$2) indicates, perhaps, that dramatic and fictive gifts are not necessarily identical. These six tales of tropic passions and downfalls among British planters in Borneo lack nothing of dramatic competence in the depiction of their violent actions. Yet they seem not to come home to the business and bosoms of readers, for the reason that the author's sympathies, and consequently the reader's, are only spectacularly engaged. The persons and moods of the tales are designed to be tragic; but one is obliged to think them merely somewhat histrionic. The persons, perhaps, are less persons than "parts"; good actors might make much of them; but as they stand they lack a certain warmth of presence.

Perhaps as a prelude to a book on the Forms of Parody, **THE COLLECTED PARODIES OF LOUIS UNTERMAYER** (10mo, 324 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$2.75) have been issued. The actual volume will make it easier for Mr Untermeyer, in the hypothetical volume, to choose his examples all from one book. Some of the examples will be witty and appropriate; some, like the Heavens section, rather dull. The parody of Eddie Guest is superior to that of William Butler Yeats.

SCARABAEUS, by Elizabeth Shaw Montgomery (12mo, 40 pages; Harold Vinal: \$1.50). That Miss Montgomery is subject to the dolours and delights visitant upon a sensitive and responding nature cannot be doubted. She has yet to learn, however, that the greatest poetry must soar on the wings of an imagination intense, singular, and fecund. This book is charmingly bound and printed.

HUMILITY AND PRIDE, by Amy Spingarn (8vo, 88 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$2.50). One admires Mrs Spingarn's sentiency, her power of keeping alive in herself her desire to seek and to understand new experience. But poetry requires imagination and restraint, and merely to mention "rapturous swoons," "burning kisses," and "colorful gardens," is hardly to convey the inner quality of these things. Mrs Spingarn is best when she writes of her singular and troubled race. Then certain lines capture for a fleeting second the suspended intensity of authentic poetry.

THE BEST PLAYS OF 1925-1926, and **The Year Book of the Drama in America**, edited by Burns Mantle (10mo, 637 pages; Dodd, Mead: \$3). The season covered by this excellent year book of the stage exceeded all previous Broadway records in total number of productions, yet less than one third of them were rated successful, even by box-office standards. Artistically, of course, the ratio is even less. The laws of demand somewhat govern the editor's selections, but his "ten best" are fairly representative, although one could have done without *The Green Hat*. Other dramas not of native vintage are *The Dybbuk*, *Young Woodley*, and *The Last of Mrs Cheyney*. Most of the choices are good entertainment, and most of the choices are little else.

THREE PLAYS, by Edna St Vincent Millay (12mo, 147 pages; Harpers: \$2). To those who admire the work of Edna St Vincent Millay it will be a satisfaction to have her three plays published together under one cover. True it is that her fragile genius appears less impressive in this medium than it does when revealed to us in the form of her lyrics. However, it would be impossible to read *Aria da Capo*, with its peculiar tone of dainty, tragic irony, like porcelain shivering under the dance of forked lightning, and not realize that even as a playwright her distinction must remain unchallenged.

CRASHING THUNDER, *The Autobiography of an American Indian*, edited by Paul Radin (10mo, 203 pages; Appleton: \$2.50). According to the editor, this narrative is a literal translation from the syllabary which the Indian set down after three years of reluctance; he was afraid that "what he had to say would not look nice if white people subsequently read it." He seems to have much the same soul maladies as Mr Sherwood Anderson's thwarted whites, and his narrative style is not dissimilar. No doubt the book has a certain value as a document, but one would rather have the confessions of one who was not quite such a sodden savage. A nobler and more lyric Indian speaks—by popular proxy—in **FROM THE LAND OF THE SKY-BLUE WATER**, a collection of songs for music by Nelle Richmond Eberhart (12mo, 71 pages; Harold Vinal: \$1.50).

TAR: A Mid-West Childhood, by Sherwood Anderson (10mo, 346 pages; Boni & Liveright: \$3) is a poet's ball of yarn—youthful impressions and grown-up phrases wound round and round until they form a soft sphere of recollection. In style, the book reflects the studied simplicity of his later novels rather than the fine economy of his earlier short stories; it is saturated in Mr Anderson's Hegelian mannerism—all about being, and not being, and becoming. Yet for all that, it has many moments of beauty and many passages of vivid and unerring reality.

THROUGH MANY WINDOWS, by Helen Woodward (10mo, 387 pages; Harpers: \$2.50) is filled with wise and discerning comment on life and business and people, skilfully embedded in chapters of autobiography. It is a searching, first-hand study of "the harsh white noon of our modern day . . . the advertising business in the United States," done in a tempo which makes it as fascinating as fiction. The psychology of the buying public has rarely been so entertainingly diagnosed.

HOW MUSIC GREW, by Marion Bauer and Ethel Peyser (illus., 10mo, 602 pages; Putnam: \$4.50) is a world-history of music and musicians set down in anecdotal style. The full index makes practicable its use as a short encyclopedia of musical information. The scope is broad and includes a commendable list of the most recent composers. An effort "to attract and stimulate the novice" results in much irrelevant "enlargement," of which the reference to "bluff King Hal's" "eight wives" is an unfortunate example. It is deficient in musical examples, which, well chosen, would be more instructive than vivacious description.

MY ADVENTURES IN THE GOLDEN AGE OF MUSIC, by Henry T. Finck (8vo, 462 pages; Funk and Wagnalls: \$5) is as laden with enthusiasm as its title suggests; in his autobiography—as in his criticism—Mr Finck was not sparing with "the yeast of humor and jesting." Music was a continuous excitement in his life, and so were musicians; his attitude toward the art was predominantly impressionistic—never academic. He was a good journalist and an intelligent commentator, and he has rolled his many recollections into rather a formless bundle, but one which the reader may unpack and find therein no dullness.

A VICTORIAN AMERICAN: Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, by Herbert S. Gorman (illus., 8vo, 363 pages; Doran: \$5). Mr Gorman has brilliantly removed Longfellow from the flat security of the fumed oak frame which he has so contentedly occupied as one of the benign six of "Our Poets," and has given him three dimensions. The biographer is quite certain that Henry, as he calls him, is not an "authentic genius" capable of "autochthonous achievement," but almost in spite of himself, he finds the New Englander fastening upon his imagination and spurring him to a notable essay in interpretation. Mr Gorman presents the poet and his background with extraordinary vividness and insight; his book is a keen analysis of American culture in the last century. If Longfellow had possessed the superb self-criticism of Henry Adams, he might have written it himself; it has the immediacy of autobiography.

RAMBLES WITH ANATOLE FRANCE, by his secretary Sándor Kémeri (8vo, 335 pages; Lippincott: \$5). "All your statues are exposed to light in the most advantageous position," said Rodin when he came to lunch with France after a separation of thirty years. And all his vagrant thoughts are exposed with similar care in these reminiscences by his secretary. Fragments of art criticism and comment on people and places are laid end to end to make a book, but the man who uttered them fails to come alive in the pages. His mind is much more vividly felt in **GOLDEN TALES OF ANATOLE FRANCE** (8vo, 352 pages; Dodd, Mead: \$3) which contains upwards of a score of his short stories—a first-rate *apéritif*.

GEORGE MEREDITH, by J. B. Priestley (12mo, 204 pages; English Men of Letters New Series, Macmillan: \$1.25). There can be but little question that Meredith is one of the most difficult literary figures of the nineteenth century for neat and final critical disposition, and the more one studies such earnest but plodding appraisals as this, the more is one convinced that the job should be left to brilliant supporters or equally brilliant dissenters. A painstaking survey, such as Mr Priestley's, leaves the subject exactly where it was before; it is a thesis which smells of the lamp. More especially is this true when the author announces (on page 60) that "whatever else these novels may be, they are certainly a rich feast of story-telling," and yet affirms (on page 144) that Meredith "is not, by nature or by inclination, a narrator, and hardly pretends to tell a story." Occasionally there is a sharp and accurate verdict, as when—in discussing the author's lapses into over-ornamentation of style—he suggests that "there being no Meredithian marble on hand, he is giving us super-Meredithian stucco, preferring to parody himself rather than to lapse into plain speech." But it takes more than a few of these bricks to make a book.

TWELVE MODERN APOSTLES AND THEIR CREEDS, with introduction by Dean Inge (10mo, 209 pages; Duffield: \$2.50). Written independently of the series and of each other, these contemporary creedal apologia constitute much useful comparative data and much tolerance. It is, one hazards, not a loss to be able to identify as Baptists—Defoe, Milton, Bunyan, the first President of Harvard, the John D. Rockefellers, Senior and Junior, David Lloyd George, and Secretary Hughes. As writing and as thought, however, the presentment of Unitarianism, that of Quakerism, and the book's firm preliminary pronouncement, seem most nearly hyper-physical. Dean Inge is, in this introductory essay, "outspoken" and commanding. In **LAY THOUGHTS OF A DEAN** (8vo, 366 pages; Putnam: \$2.50) he is not so homogeneous, not so august. Certain of these "strong convictions," literary, political, social, and religious, seem more fixed than strong. But one sees no occasion for carping or caricature—and surely no excuse for misquotation. Despite informal phrases such as "on the brain," and "let off steam," these essays are good reading. In parents and teachers, one is familiar with a certain narrowmindedness, a narrowmindedness of the great; but pre-eminently one associates with this author, that saying of his, "unworldliness based on knowledge of the world is the finest thing on earth."

THE THEATRE

A FEW years ago, when *THE WILD DUCK* was admirably produced by The Actors' Theatre, under the direction of Dudley Digges, it became evident that something new could be done with Ibsen—in the particular instance a play which had been previously exploited for its psychopathic content was produced for all its elements of comedy and drama. The result was superb, but it proved a dangerous lesson, since the same treatment applied to *GHOSTS* turns out utterly deplorable.

In addition, there is Mrs Fiske. At the beginning of the second week of the short run of *GHOSTS*, she talked incessantly through the entire play. I mean this quite literally. In spite of the fact that I am fairly familiar with the text of *GHOSTS*, I found myself unable to follow it in this production; I actually was unable to hear what any other character was saying so long as Mrs Fiske was on the stage. By the time the first act ended I had discovered the reason why. A constant stream of interjections, repetitions, and, I suppose, downright gags, issued from Mrs Fiske whenever Pastor Manders or Oswald was speaking. In the second and third acts all interest in the play was destroyed by this method; toward the very end, when Oswald reveals the full extent of the horror of his disease, Mrs Fiske, with Oswald seated so that only one-third of the audience could see or hear him, took stage centre and uttered hysterical cries at such rapid intervals that practically nothing of Oswald's speech was effective. Mr Theodore St John, being a good-looking and apparently talented young actor, has now gone through the hardest school in the world: he has played with an actress whose sole interest in the play seemed to be the destruction of every other actor.

I have always believed that the most effective way of communicating an emotion across the footlights is the indirect way, that is, for one character to be so affected by another that the audience is doubly moved. It is, of course, entirely right that Mrs Alving should grow hysterical when she finds that her son is threatened with paresis. But the stage has its essential conventions, and one of them is that the audience shall know what all the characters are talking about. If Mrs Fiske had not babbled and

shouted through the rest of the play, her violent hysterics at the end, properly timed, would have been extraordinarily affecting. Actually, they became part of the system which ended in the ludicrous tableau of Oswald sitting in obscurity crying for the sun, while Mrs Fiske posed magnificently in the baby spot which should have given Oswald the cue for madness.

I once saw Paul Orleneff play **GHOSTS**.

Mr Howard's play is rather like **GHOSTS** in many ways. A complex takes the place of a physical ailment, and modern terms are used instead of the old-fashioned ones about morality. But in act one you have a frozen lake with weak spots in it and that is where all good Ibsen heroines eventually land. The direction of **THE SILVER CORD** is either excellent or terrible, depending on the precise nature of the text, which I have not seen.

I will not attempt, therefore, to distribute rewards and punishments. Taken as a whole this Guild production is of the hammer and tongs school; I have never seen the obvious so laboured, nor have I listened to so many speeches which were dramatically in the wrong place. In the first act we are made aware, by touches subtle or crass, of a mother's brooding passion for her sons, and of her determination to break the marriage of one and the engagement of another. In the second act the same methods are used to convey a considerable insight into the soul of the mother. At the end of this act the *fiancée* of one son, having been broken by the mother and betrayed into an hysterical outbreak, leaves the house (goes out into the night?) and is seen crossing the dangerous lake. The two sons rush out to save her. The mother runs to the window and calls out their names. It is a magnificent second act curtain, conveying fully the theme and contents and purport of the play. But the curtain fails to descend until the mother has called to her boys to come back and get their overcoats.

I went into the lobby at the end of this act slightly sick, a little ashamed of belonging to that superior and intelligent section of the community which produces, and for which are produced, plays in this manner.

But at **THE SILVER CORD** it is not enough that your cup should run over. Nothing will do but a good solid drenching. The wandering girl is saved, and in the third act you are suddenly treated to a brilliant defence of the mother's psychology. It re-

quires a long speech, the whole substance of which ought to have been woven into the action of the play hours before. This, in turn, provokes a long, scientific, Shavian speech on the Oedipus complex, which serves no purpose, since that subject at least has fully come out in the play, but it permits the introduction of a few brutal statements on the identity of mother-love and sexual love. The American theatre, intellectually twenty years behind the time, as usual, has spoken its piece on Freud. The end is not yet. The rescued girl leaves. Drained and broken by her experience, she stands at the centre doorway and, from the depths of her heart, she utters a nifty. Yes, seriously, when they ask her what she is going to do, she says she is going to marry an orphan. I was a little surprised that the production did not require Miss Margalo Gillmore, at that point, to break into the old song of which her line is the tag.

It would seem, then, that this is as high as the American theatre has risen. For, obviously, the Guild wants as good American plays as are written, and produces with all its talents the best that it can get. It has a permanent company, which in this play at least is admirable. Miss Gillmore's hysterics are actually moving; I say "actually" because most hysterics on the stage annoy me more than they move me. Miss Gillmore has the capacity of taking her characters sincerely—which has very little to do with the advertised quality of sincerity in an actress. She plays her characters as if they were real to themselves, and consequently they have a certain passion and integrity. The other member of the company who understands acting in this way is Miss Laura Hope Crews. A year ago she was roundly condemned because, in the character of a bad and silly retired actress, she "over-played"—although it was perfectly obvious that over-playing was the essence of her job. In *THE SILVER CORD* she has, after all, to utter that appalling curtain line at the end of the second act, so that nothing she does before or after can be considered extravagant. Actually, she has the good lines in the play and some which would be extremely high comedy if they were let alone. She does her business with an exquisite tact, a liveliness, and a passion; she has always been a delightful comedienne and she carries her delicacy of touch into this spoiled and thwarted play.

GILBERT SELDES

MODERN ART

THE Henri Matisse pictures in the Valentine Dudensing Gallery aroused the first flurry of genuine interest in painting of the season. Matisse after all these years still has the power to waken people up. Doubtless he will guard it to the end—which is nowhere in sight—in spite of the perturbations as to health which, I'm told, the artist indulged in last summer. There was the usual percentage of individuals in attendance who do not as yet "see it," but the percentage of those who do is now so much in preponderance that baiting the Philistines in regard to Matisse is no longer much fun. They, poor things, seem to be completely cowed, and though they still ask questions, do it in small voices that are easily quelled.

This was a retrospective exhibition of the sort that used to incite academicians to special fury. It contained one or two specimens of the very early work that shows that Matisse could have been a Beaux Arts man had he chosen to stoop in that direction; but by now the artist is so definitely known not to be a Beaux Arts man that his original docilities are completely swamped by the later rebellions. That he still defies the world was shown by his large *Odalisque* which slightly troubled a few of his admirers, but which had an undoubted success just the same. Vigour for vigour this work ought to hold its own in comparison with the powerful Picassos shown last summer in the Rosenberg Galleries in Paris; and it also has something besides vigour. This *Odalisque* sits upon the floor crumpling one leg beneath herself to do so, and Matisse has been amused to make a straight line out of the profile of her back, much as Verrocchio made a straight line out of the neck in his portrait of a Lady, balancing it or hiding it, with most flamboyant patterns in wall-paper and textiles that are magnificently painted. This piece would make a gorgeous item in a Luxembourg Museum had we such an institution, but there was no opportunity to see if there were an American collector with courage enough to place it in a private collection, for, it seems, the *Odalisque* was not for sale. Perhaps the wily Matisse intends to test the courage of the real Luxembourg with it. Logically that is the place for it.

I have before this accused Matisse of being an incorrigible bad boy and so it is not a surprise to find that the artist is again up to his pranks in this *Odalisque*. I stand for the whole thing, however. I accept the pranks not only without horror but without protest. When the sum total of a work of art is acceptable I never quarrel—except amiably and just to make conversion—with a detail. But there are plenty of others who will quarrel with the fact that when Matisse came to paint the head of this figure he used a different set of conventions from those employed on the rest of the composition and changed his brush stroke so completely that four hundred years hence the Bernard Berensons of the period will swear it to be a flagrant case of re-painting and that the sainted Matisse could never have seen it. Contemporary evidence is not of much avail against the arguments of archaeologists, but still one must always do all one can in the cause of truth, so I herewith testify and assert that Matisse did see it and did paint it—but in a mischievous moment.

Upon the eve of *THE DIAL*'s going to press, Miss Georgia O'Keefe, the feminine ace of the Intimate Gallery, exposed in that sanctum forty of her new canvases. It is too soon to report, therefore, the response—always very hearty hitherto—that Miss O'Keefe is to receive from her own sex, but two of her gentlemen admirers who had been permitted to see the pictures in advance of the show, put no limit to their enthusiasm. Mr Charles Demuth, who weighs words well before he uses them, said: "In her canvases each colour almost regains the fun it must have felt within itself on forming the first rainbow," and Mr Oscar Bluemner, who may not be so particular about words but who weighs them nevertheless, said: "And now O'Keefe steps forth as artist—priestess of Eternal Woman—I may say, as imaginative biologist of all creation-form on earth; extending, perhaps by way of analogies, the classical conception of life—the Dionysian cult—beyond the confines of the human body."

Miss O'Keefe's subjects remain the same, flowers and buildings. She has enlarged her sizes. She always drew large petunias, but now she makes them the size of pumpkins. The petunia occupies the entire canvas, almost, with just a little blue at the far edge to indicate sky or water. Decorators accept them willingly and seem to know how to place them so that they become doubly attractive.

Certain others obtain hidden meanings from them. It is clear that Mr Oscar Bluemner does, with his reference to Dionysian cults and the Eternal Woman. Miss O'Keefe is fond of gradations of tone, and with infinite patience pursues a purple down a petunia's throat until she arrives at the very gates of—I was going to say hell, but I mustn't say that, though the mere fact that I was going to say it shows that this priestess of mystery known as Miss O'Keefe almost had me in her power. Ladies said last year that gazing into Miss O'Keefe's petunias gave them the strangest imaginable sensations and as the petunias are larger and better this year than ever before, I shall await an account of a ladies' day at this exhibition with real interest. A novel feature of the advertisement of Miss O'Keefe's show announces that the hours from ten to twelve in the morning on certain days of the week are to be "hours of silence." If Llewelyn Powys ever hears of this he will be more than ever convinced that the Stieglitz Group is a religious organization.

Young Mr Richard Wyndham, of London, recently came across the seas, and after a considerable fanfare of trumpets, gave a small exhibition in the Anderson Galleries. He bore a recommendation from The Sitwells which got him into Society at once, but not, as yet, into our Hall of Fame. It was given out that Mr Wyndham wore red flannel shirts and corduroy trousers in the evening and when a visiting Englishman does the like of that, Society has but one explanation for it—the man is genius. Artists who went to see the show, however, were not so sure.

HENRY McBRIDE

MUSICAL CHRONICLE

IT has become essential to distinguish several sorts of new music.

An order dominates in those nature-poems, the symphonies of Sibelius, opposed to the fundament of the mechanistic, metallic compositions of Strawinsky, Varèse, and others. It is agricultural, the thought of men directly grappled to the slow cyclical processes of earth. The complement is megalopolitan, in best Spenglerese: the thought of men in an environment relatively detached from the cosmic revolutions, and issued from the metaphysical mind. Material facts appreciably differentiate the two conceptions. The qualities of sound are dissimilar; in the first looser and softer, in the character of air and soil and water, in the second harder and more precise, in the character of metals and concrete. Likewise the qualities of rhythm, in the first more irregular and free, in the second more rigid and iterative. Both orders exist in us, the one more, the other less familiarly; the first probably a waning, the second a waxing, root-feeling.

Simultaneously with this schism, a second division spreads across music from another direction, reawakening a famous aesthetic feud of the Paris of Marie-Antoinette. Again Piccinists and Glückians battle over the method of making music; and we have, side by side, composers holding their art an independent phenomenon, to be practised only in reference to itself, and appreciated only by the refined superficial sense, and composers relating it directly to the sensibility, the passions, and the understanding, and shaping it to bring the various spiritual faculties into play. Under the hovering spirit of Satie, Strawinsky and young Victor Rieti lead the clan of those striving to satisfy themselves with formal relations and movement in itself. The leaders of the poetical party, following Glück and attempting to express the cries of ecstasy, fear, and despair through unusual harmonies, broken melodies, unprepared changes, and violent transitions, are in Vienna about Arnold Schoenberg.

A third difference in the contemporary musical orientation, became plain to this chronicler hearing de Falla's concerto for harpsichord. Later, looking backward, he recognized that the basis for

the distinction discovered through the second movement of the delicious little work, had been laid in him first by the Concerto Grosso of Heinrich Kaminski and second by Night in the Gardens of Spain by de Falla. The German's composition is startlingly opposed in spirit to most of the music made during the last epoch. It is not without kinship to solemn passages in Wagner, to the prelude of Die Meistersinger Act III, and to the polyphonic pages of Parsifal. It is even more closely related to music by Bruckner and Reger. None the less, its Gothic severity and characteristic combination of massiveness, of spirituality, and of sentiment divorced from sensuousness and married to solemnity and ecstasy, constitute a new birth and place it in a fresh category. Part of the Concerto Grosso's quality indubitably flows from its archaicizing polyphonic and elaborate style. Kaminski in this score is said very deliberately to have aimed at "a further development of Bach's polyphony by the contrapuntal treatment not only of single voices, but also of different orchestral groups; by a working together not merely of melodic but of rhythmic and harmonic patterns as well." The scheme of this work for double orchestra with piano and percussion is indeed "an immense elaboration and extension of the classic orchestral form of Bach and Handel"; in place of the classic concertino, Kaminski has used a duplex concertino of string trios, and his conception of tonality is liberal. And yet his music pipes with modern nerves, and the mood is both newer and older than that of the early eighteenth century. The excessive feeling of mass and weight is modern, and the grinding and ornate woodwind passages, the darkly coloured volumes, the strident fugal close, are deeply racial, deeply *Teutsch*, and metaphysical. More uncompromisingly than Bach, Kaminski sets us amid the aspiration of Gothic arches and the unearthly twilight of a northern church; while the Philadelphia Orchestra performed him, one almost saw tapers stare in the darkness and heard an organ moaning of doomsday.

In contrast to the sheerly upward-streaming, unearthly feeling of the Kaminski Concerto Grosso, that of de Falla in Night in the Gardens of Spain was wondrously involved with palpable things. One heard the textures of satin and of flesh. Cellos and horns in the final section sang afire with elegant melodies and relaxed, slow-breathing rhythms delineative of the body's immortal poses. The iridescent orchestration, brilliant and none the less reserved in the

Spanish temper, disclosed the strange pricking earthy timbres of the instruments and tasted of oranges and nuts, oily and tart at once. Arabesque in the first section, In the Generalife; popular and brutal with its gongs, shrieking violins, and stuttering, shattering trumpets in the second, Far-off Dance; sumptuous and lyrical in the finale, Night in the Gardens of the Sierra of Cordova, the music sang the earth, and concluded in the tone of the easy rapture and happy eloquence that glorify the elegance of the flesh and the whiteness of starry skies. And yet this composition, worthy follower of Wagner and Rimsky and Debussy's sensuous pages; and art of the sort which twenty years of experience of the concert hall have accustomed us to think of as fundamental, on the December days on which the Philharmonic performed it no longer seemed exclusively central. Not that it dated; or that its indebtedness to Rimsky—the young Prince and the young Princess from Scheherazade expire in one spot of de Falla's score—or its traditional themes, synthesized from the popular Spanish expressions, detracted materially from its magnificence. Its orientation was merely plainly one of two; and the marshalled evidence of the third division spreading athwart contemporary music began urging a conclusion.

Then, at the concert of the Boston Symphony, while Mme Landowska and the accompanying flutist, oboist, clarinetist, violinist, and cellist sounded forth the churchly music of the second movement of the harpsichord concerto, the conclusion descended. The simultaneously dry and tinkling sounds had evoked a candle-lighted eighteenth-century interior; a *concert spirituel* was plainly in progress among lace ruffles and abbatial black; and it was quite easy to see that again to-day music has fallen into categories of sacred and profane, spiritual and worldly. Only a little while since, we could all chime in with Walther von Stolzing answering Kothner's query, "*Wählt der Herr einen heil'gen Stoff?*" with "*Was heilig mir, der Liebe Panier, schwing' und sing' ich mir zu Hoff!*" But to-day we have two kinds of beauty. Doubtless, the churchly, the purer and more perpendicular feeling was present already in Parsifal, and in passages of Franck and Bloch. But it was still fused with the profaner, more horizontal and outspreading feeling; and it is only through the ultramoderns, Kaminski and Webern, and in individual works such as the harpsichord concerto of de Falla and the Three Choral Preludes for Organ by Roger Sessions, that it has arrived at its old independence.

PAUL ROSENFELD

COMMENT

AS is observed by a writer upon St Francis in a recent article in *The Spectator*, humility is a quality which attracts us—though not to imitation. One is impressed to-day by the assured manner of the writing world, by the disfavour into which “we” has fallen—by a bold omitting and by an equally bold, supercilious much using of the designation, “Mr”; by the piquant or predatory as one likes to look at it, transparent utilizing by novelists, of story and style as found ready made in the lives of their friends. Far from being a disgrace, awkwardness is often an excellence and the Downright Scholar is not resented, whose “mind is too much taken up with his mind . . . who has not humbled his meditations to the industry of compliment.” But literary “neatness” implies a certain decorum of manner as of matter. A theme had, like a house, better not have “the appearance of having been thrown out of its own windows.” Egotism is usually subversive of sagacity. Critical remarks at all events, which are uncongenial to the object of them, are often uncongenial to others, and having had a great deal of such careless grandeur, we seem now to require a corrective—as sick dragons, wild lettuce; that is to say, care and uninflation.

Pressure of business modifies self-consciousness and genuine matter for exposition seems to aid effectiveness; in for instance, Darwin’s scientific descriptions. A similar faithfulness to the scene—to the action and aspect of what makes the scene important, alive or stationed there—rewards one in the writings of Audubon, the ornithologist.¹ A certain method of “gentility” may annoy one—an allusion to “the wild luxuriance of untamed nature,” or to “the husbandman cheerily plying his healthful labours”; but “*The American Woodsman’s*” delineation of America a hundred years ago, is an able one. Quite as opportune as the American Turkey Cock, the Great American Hen and Young, as the Trumpeter Swan turning upon the surface of the glassy ripples

¹ *Delineations of American Scenery and Character*. By John James Audubon. With an Introduction by Francis Hobart Herrick. 8vo. 349 pages. G. A. Baker and Company. \$4.50.

it has made, to snap at an unwary insect—is his portraiture of places, animals, and persons. “Its gait, while travelling,” says Audubon of the opossum, “and at a time when it supposes itself unobserved, is altogether ambling: in other words, it, like a young foal, moves the two legs of one side forward at once.” He sees or rather experiences a hurricane in such a way that we also seem to feel its impact. Ice in *The Mississippi* when beginning to break, “split,” he says, “with reports like those of heavy artillery,” the congealed mass breaking into large fragments, “some of which rose nearly erect here and there, and again fell with thundering crash.” Reminiscences of turtles, “turtlers,” birds, and “egggers,” are no more precise than those of persons—of “Colonel Boone,” of Thomas Bewick, and of the mild, gruesome, Poe-Beardsley-like, exotically ignorant Monsieur de T., who is ceremonially present as an “eccentric naturalist.”

Francis Hobart Herrick has assembled, with an introductory biography, and the omission only of Remarks on the Form of the Toes of Birds, what now that we have it, seems in Audubon’s *Delineations of American Scenery and Character*, indispensable. These “episodes” written to relieve the tedium of descriptive ornithology and to accompany the four-hundred and thirty-five double elephant folio plates published in London during the years 1826 and 1838—do relieve tedium. The cut-throats, the barbecues, the “coon” and ’possum hunts, the Cane-Brakes, the loneliness and discomfort of pioneer life in Audubon’s America, seem strange to us; and in a way, since we are not quite free or improved, so does his saying:

“Large roads are now laid out, cultivation has converted the woods into fertile fields, taverns have been erected, and much of what we Americans call comfort is to be met with. So fast does improvement proceed in our abundant and free country.”

But there is apparently a consensus of opinion that we are “rapid,” an adjective much used by Audubon in alluding to his own actions. Paul Morand¹ accuses our trans-continental railway system of

¹ Rien que la Terre. Par Paul Morand. 255 pages. Bernard Grasset, Paris. 15 francs. Reviewed in *THE DIAL*, January 1927, page 59.

having shot him through America like a surgical needle, aware as he is at the same time, of our fifty-story modern Chaldean architecture; of the little anonymous way-station with its old Ford—the new world's one ruin; of our wheat-fields undulating like music, of snow overhead on the sides of *Les Rockies*; of what seems, one infers, our attention to business in hand at the expense of perspective—our ostrich-like concentration and would-be emancipation from consequences. And a study of our domestic manners provokes not unprofitably, enquiry into this analogy of the ostrich.

Bertrand Russell has reminded us that the Puritan was concerned with happiness; the contemporary man, with pleasure. The progress, if one may so speak of it, of manners, fashions, sport, and art, recurs to one. An aesthetic agrarianism, humanitarianism, society's permission to play an instrument, to paint pictures, to act, and dance, prevail: and various infamies—the competitive spirit in undertakings which should be spontaneous, a supplanting in baseball, football, tennis, walking, and swimming, of the amateur spirit by the professional spirit. Even in the province of good looks, we are brow-beaten. It is insisted upon by cities, states, and countries, that we have them—our embarrassment in competition being mitigated only by the superlatively similar humiliation of sister nations. All these “developments” are irrelevant so far as one can see, to happiness, very much as provincially exaggerated collegiate interest in athletics has always seemed to the undergraduate with literary tastes, irrelevant to reading.

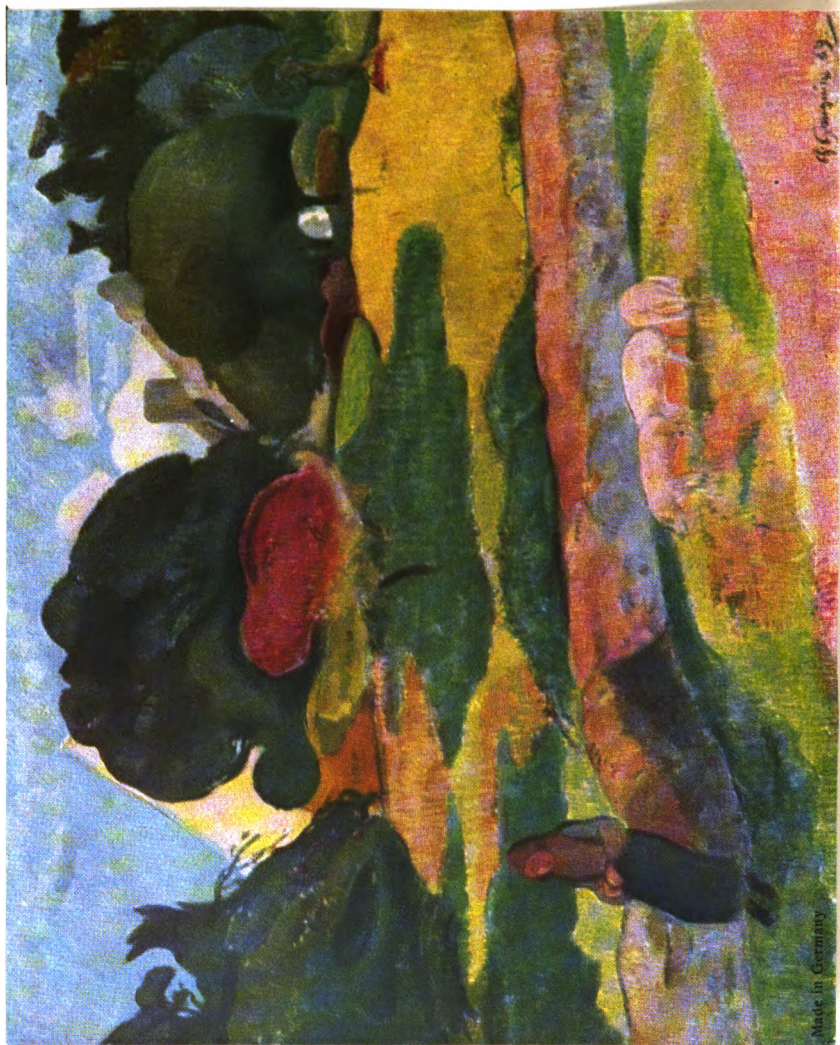
In *Our Times*, Mark Sullivan¹ has presented to us, songs, clothes, vehicles, and town talk which we had almost forgotten; and in *The Elegant Eighties*² by Henry Collins Brown, we have further moments of amused incredulity with as it were, the brought-to-light collection of photographs and stereoptican, or the album with hasps. New York “still had” in the 'eighties, “a strong frontier atmosphere about it—half mining camp and half May-fair,” says Mr Brown. How curiously preserved to us both ap-

¹ *Our Times: The United States 1900-1925*. Volume I: *The Turn of the Century*. By Mark Sullivan. 8vo. 610 pages. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$5. Reviewed in *THE DIAL*, November 1926, page 446.

² *New York in the Elegant Eighties*, Valentine's Manual No. 11. By Henry Collins Brown. Illustrated. 12mo. 394 pages. Henry Collins Brown. \$5.

pearances are to-day, with the Columbus Circle monument jacked protectively out of the way of the new subway, and peculiar to ships' rats and migratory birds, a residentially changing polarity among our florists, dress-makers, and art dealers. "The charming old home-town feeling" which prevailed in the city as it then was—that city between Maiden's Lane and "the goats"—may still be felt by the superstitious among us, in the region about Trinity Church and in the streets near Washington Square. The elbow in Broadway caused by the importance of the apple orchard in "an old farm owned by Henry Brevoort," is preserved to us by Mr Brown, as are various notable contests—the fight to remove women's hats in the theatre, the crusade against wearing feathers, the battle to compel shop-keepers to provide seats for their clerks.

Henry Bergh's founding of The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the courts, the theatres, the hotels, homes, streets, torch-light processions, tally-ho excursions, "the crack Lawn Tennis Players, Sears, Dwight, Beekman, and Taylor," the prides, misfortunes, and whims of one-time New York, are richly present in this book. One values Mr Brown's "observatory nerves" as Audubon would say. Indeed, as Greek architecture rendered domestic by Thomas Jefferson, seems colonial, New York seems as one reads of it in Valentine's Manuals, national; and although an occasional rococo facetiousness scarcely augments vividness, one's rhetorical ear pardons to enthusiasm, incidental offences.



Made in Germany

LANDSCAPE. BY PAUL GAUGUIN

THE DIAL

APRIL 1927

A.E. AND HIS STORY

BY JOHN EGLINTON

DOUBT, though often a devout mental attitude, is a spiritual malady, for not only is it painful in itself, but it has a tendency to develop malignant symptoms of denial, which, as Goethe taught, is of the devil. The great Victorians, as is well known, suffered intensely from this malady, but there was nothing diabolic in Tennyson or Matthew Arnold, though I am not sure that in the later Victorians (Swinburne, Rossetti, William Morris) there were not some disquieting diabolistic symptoms. The rude physician of that age, Thomas Carlyle, certainly thought that the arts as practised in his time were not a little devilish; but though he said some stupid things about the poets, Carlyle was as much their true friend as Plato (whose criticism of poetry was almost equally petulant) when he declared that the solution of doubt lay in action only: spiritual action—what Blake called “mental fight.” English literature is not an affirming literature: I will go so far with A.E. as to admit that in English poetry there is no consistency of vision; it is a profane literature in the sense that it is not in general prompted from behind the veil, like, for example, the mediaeval literature of Persia. On the other hand it is full of “mental fighters,” from Chaucer with his “Lat thy gost thee lede!” to Kipling, with his “I paid my price for findin’ out!” They are all believers in action, in life, in effort, and in its transcendental reward. Perhaps they are only the mouthpieces of the *élan vital*. Certainly they carry with them the authority of no robed priesthood.

There is a saying of some Frenchman, which Yeats used to be

fond of quoting: "It is the problem of literature to produce a sacred book"—a specious saying, but one which will hardly bear to be considered closely; for if this were really the goal of literature, literature would surely show a progressively confident and sacred character, which is far from being true. No, sacred books are produced by races which have never parted with the beliefs of their childhood; and whatever moral earnestness has been developed in modern races, and whatever examples of individual illumination they can point to, there is no instance of any body of scripture, of the character which we call ethnic, coming into being in a race which has lost sight of its early beliefs, and has accepted an exotic religion. The mysterious wisdom which presides over the birth of races, allotting to each a special character and perhaps function, has in some instances been preserved in a living tradition, of which individual but for the most part nameless sages have been the mouthpieces; and though it may well be that in forgetting the sacred lore of childhood, and in discarding all that trammelled free development, the modern races to which we belong have entered on transmutations which shall yet work out their spiritual justification, we have still to seek in the ancient wisdom for clues which we have at least temporarily lost. The feeling of liberty inspired by modern literature has achieved an intuitive expression which has almost oracular authority, and I for one am for the most part satisfied with the confidence which it gives me. Yet certitude is our birthright, the faculty of belief craves its objects, and the "solemn note of certainty" is still heard only out of the past.

Any acquaintance with the doctrines of Brahmanism and Buddhism suggests that mankind might have developed along other lines than have been chosen by the Western races. We talk of our scientific conquest of nature, but power over nature might conceivably have been achieved in some other way, and the tradition has always existed, and is far too widely diffused to be altogether ignored, that by the practice of austerities and of intense concentration faculties may be developed, in the first place of complete self-control and next of control over nature, wherever nature limits or obstructs the ascendant spirit of man. If this belief were not ineradicable in man, our European civilization would have thrown over Christianity long ago, but even our scientific men often surprise us by avowing their continued belief in the religious at-

titude towards nature, which cannot altogether exclude the possibility of miracles and magic. There might be as much difference, spiritually, between human beings developed on different lines as there is physically between different species of the same group of animals. Anyhow, the divine beings assumed in Oriental scriptures are even now not less congenial to us than the implicit ideal of modern science, the being to whom the processes of the universe are no longer mysteries. From this point of view, the older races, who stood at the parting of ways, and some of whom entered on the true path, were wiser than we, and remain still to instruct us and recall us to the true path; while those races which have lost their primitive beliefs have been guilty of a fatal backsliding. We are now fully in the thought of A. E., who is less I think a natural mystic of the order of Blake, than one who received most wholeheartedly those Oriental doctrines which found so remarkable a welcome, in the late 'eighties of the last century, among a little group of Anglo-Irish youths. I say Anglo-Irish advisedly, for the belief in the peculiar spirituality of the Gael, the "Celtic Twilight," and the rest of it, was another matter, a kind of afterthought, to which I shall come presently. How well I remember, in the High School, the stir caused in that company of haughty adolescents then getting ready for their flight into the universities and the great world, by the circulation amongst them of a book which had been lent to one of them by W. B. Yeats, then a student in the Art School; I should hardly care to look at the book now: it was Sinnett's *Esoteric Buddhism*. Though a junior, I shared in this spiritual exaltation through my elder brother, who with a novel condescension lent me the book: I read it and believed! What there was of the merely neanic in this exaltation I cannot even now guess. Necessarily, we found ourselves lifted above the wisdom of our elders, but we were I think quite nice about it, and were none of us offensively priggish, though we had now our own views of what the universities could teach us, and those of us who grappled with modern philosophy found that it was groping after those truths of which we had entered into possession. Several converts were made, one of our apostles being especially distinguished by his audacity: he would engage in dialectics with policemen and courtesans, and on one occasion, at the booking-office of a railway station, directed searching questions to the astonished clerk who sat within.

A branch of the Theosophical Society was founded, which, if all were told, was as truly the nucleus from which the Irish Literary Renaissance originated as were the contemporary Gaelic and literary societies. I soon began to hear of George Russell, whom Yeats had brought in from the Art School, and I readily made friends with him: a tall well-formed youth, with shoulders stooped in the eagerness of perpetual talk; high Slav cheek-bones; grey and kindly-quizzical eyes twinkling behind his glasses, occasionally in alliance with a certain curl of the prominent upper lip which, however, was presently hidden behind a benevolent-looking beard, now slowly whitening; but not so the changeful-shaped mass of mouse-coloured hair which to this day retains its youthful hue and glossiness. At that time he was engaged all day as a clerk in a large Dublin warehouse, and most of his evenings were given to "the lodge," where, as the original apostolic group began to disperse, he became the life and soul of the little community. He lived near me with his parents outside Dublin, and I began to see him constantly. I did not in those days think of him as a poet, nor do I think that it was as a poet that he regarded himself, though it was often to recite verses which he had just composed that he hailed me out of my late train as I was passing his little station; breaking at once into a sonorous chant as we walked methodically to a little cemetery about a mile away, where on the slab of a certain tomb we would sit till near midnight. Mundane achievement of any kind, even poetic achievement, was far from the thoughts of any of us; and when one of our number, Charles Weekes, told me one day that he had persuaded Russell to publish a volume of poems, my first feeling was one of surprise, almost of disappointment: similar to the feeling with which I heard later on that he had married (and very happily married, as it turned out). My feeling in the first case he himself would have understood and even shared, for at that time he was torn between two ambitions, one of which was as yet hardly realized by himself: the spiritual ambition which is sufficiently evident in his poems, and the ambition natural to a man of so much power and energy, to distinguish himself in the world of action, art, and literature. Had I heard that he had suddenly taken wing into the Orient and assumed the yellow robe of a Bikkhu in a Burmese forest, it would have seemed a more appropriate translation from Pim's warehouse than that which the destinies had prepared for him.

The poems appeared, and the favourable reception they met with proved how widely diffused was the interest in those beliefs and doctrines, some knowledge of which, one would think, was necessary for their comprehension. There is no doubt about Russell's poetic gift. I remember a remark of George Moore, containing a discouragement for those of us who from time to time have the notion of writing poetry ourselves: "What is the use of writing verse unless verse is your natural instrument—as it was, for instance, with Swinburne?" Well, verse is Russell's natural instrument. What is essential in his mind can only find expression poetically. The gift has remained with him all through life, and in the new volume of his *Collected Poems*,¹ which I have before me, I seem to find a progressive mastery of the noble diction which he has elaborated for himself. The workmanship is not always fine: the "inevitable" word is often avoided, and facile epithets like "mystic," "dreamy," "diamond," "starry," often produce the effect of hurried rhetoric rather than of intimate realization. But as a poet of ideas there is no poet of his time like Russell. Sometimes his verses are the expression, almost crude, of the beliefs which have rooted themselves in him: the best of them are the embodiment and often perfect expression of moral intuitions; and not seldom he has been moved to utterance on public matters, as in the lines *On Behalf of Some Irishmen not Followers of Tradition*, which Ireland must carry in its memory like an arrow in the wound. The poems tell of spiritual agonies and triumphant spiritual perceptions, and often the impression one receives is of a terrible sadness, for the attitude with which this proud soul confronts the universe has not infrequently drawn upon him a response which would have crushed all but the most pertinacious conviction. Outside of his own mind his gift is powerless. Russell is a painter as well as a poet: and here I am tempted to a divagation on the question whether in an artist, versatility is not rather a weakness than a strength. As a painter Russell is sensible to natural beauty: as a poet it escapes him. This may seem a hard saying, for there is a great deal about beauty in the poems; and indeed it is a characteristic of our Irish poets to exalt Beauty into an abstraction, as in a much-admired line of Yeats: "Eternal Beauty wandering on her

¹ *Collected Poems*. By A.E. 12mo. 373 pages. The Macmillan Company. \$3.75.

way"—a conception to my mind without meaning, for beauty lives and has its being in the present moment, and to make beauty an abstraction is to make it an object of belief rather than of apprehension. I prefer Wordsworth's line: "Beauty, a living presence of the earth," which tells us all we know about beauty and all we need to know.

The publication of Russell's early poems was the first important transition in his life. The next was his introduction by W. B. Yeats to Sir Horace Plunkett, and the beginning of his connexion with the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society. Neither in his first nor in his second volume of verse was there anything to show that he was an Irishman, but I think that even before his association with Plunkett's Cooperative Movement he had begun through vision to enter into the Druidic world of ancient Ireland and of the divine beings whose memories are perpetuated in the names of her gods—Mananaan, the Dagda, Lir, Lugh, Angus, and the rest. I never could quite make out whether he regarded these beings as actual entities or as thought-forms with an existence of their own in the world of imagination; anyhow—to the enrichment at all events of Ireland's spiritual inheritance—these forlorn figures of Irish folk-lore took shape in his mind as a lucid company of immortals, akin to the Greek and Hindu divinities. Hints remain throughout Gaelic folk-lore of a symbolism, fragments possibly of the ancient Druidic system—enough at least for Russell, whose poems now began to teem with Gaelic instead of Hindu names and images. But there was a further belief, spontaneous in Russell: a form of it appears among the speculations of the German philosopher Fechner, of which William James has given an account in *A Pluralistic Universe*. It has never ceased to animate Russell's whole thought and is nowhere stated with more quiet audacity than in the poem named *The Virgin Mother*:

"Who is that goddess to whom men should pray,
But her from whom their hearts have turned away,
Out of whose virgin being they were born,
Whose mother nature they have named with scorn
Calling its holy substance common clay.

Yet from this so despised earth was made
The milky whiteness of those queens who swayed

Their generations with a light caress,
And from some image of whose loveliness
The heart built up high heaven when it prayed.

Lover, your heart, the heart on which it lies,
Your eyes that gaze and those alluring eyes,
Your lips, the lips they kiss, alike had birth
Within that dark divinity of earth,
Within that mother being you despise.

Ah, when I think this earth on which I tread
Hath borne these blossoms of the lovely dead,
And makes the living heart I love to beat,
I look with sudden awe beneath my feet
As you with erring reverence overhead."

This earth is a Zoon, a divine being, the Mighty Mother; and there are places where this divinity has been specially recognized: Central America, for instance, ancient Greece, India, and certain other localities amongst which some mystical authorities have mentioned Ireland. It was by way of esoteric belief, then, that Russell gradually became a nationalist. He had entered on his new work with many misgivings, but now a plenary belief in the sacred mission of Ireland proved an ample compensation for the life of private illumination which he had regretfully abandoned. The belief in a "Holy Ireland" has always given a religious fervour to Irish patriotism, but the Ireland envisaged by Russell was not quite the same as the Ireland in which P. H. Pearse and Arthur Griffith believed, though both these men were I think influenced, whether directly or not, by Russell's ideas. Pearse in my hearing avowed his belief in the semi-divine inspiration of the Epic of Cuchullin; and I remember, during an expedition to Tara in company with Griffith and another friend, how as we sat on the top of the hill Griffith left us, and as we watched him standing motionless under a group of trees my companion murmured, "I think, you know, Griffith sees visions like Russell!" But what Russell, at least at that time, contemplated for Ireland was a resurgence of the old heroic spirit which would overthrow amongst other powers the dogmatic religion now in possession of the Irish intelligence: would do the work, in short, which surely ought to have been done

by the Druids themselves, when they succumbed with such inexplicable weakness to the first assault of St Patrick.

My own failure to enter into the poetic idealism of the Celtic Renaissance has been due partly, as I have confessed, to my inability to conceive of beauty as an abstraction; and that other great abstraction of Irish idealism, nationality, has, I am rather ashamed to say—for it has been my privilege to be associated with several remarkable men with whom it has been an inspiration—remained for me little more than an abstraction. Still, I really think that if events had promised to move a little differently I might have shared in this generous fervour. For a moment it did seem as if there were the stir in Ireland of a new spiritual departure, a purging tide of oblivion of all rankling historic obsessions, and a remarriage of mind with nature. That was the kind of renaissance for which the Anglo-Irishman had always been ready enough, and if he could have believed in it now he might for the first time have entered into his inheritance and have thrown off that languid detachment which in his own country has been his congenital curse and for which he has had to pay dearly enough. For a moment it seemed as if Russell himself might be the champion destined to slay the dragon of old unregenerate Irish nationalism which once again began to creep out of the bogs. Now this dragon was a very potent enchanter, and could change itself at will into the likeness of a beautiful woman known as Kathleen ni Houlihan, who by her seductions could allure the young men of Ireland back into the dragon-world; and in this lovely transformation it would naturally be on the look-out for Russell, as his new work took him, on his bicycle or on outside-cars, into every part of Ireland. Certainly his mind became more hospitable to what seemed to my Unionist prejudices the politics of the dragon-world. What had really happened was that he had begun to think politically, and his work, first as a travelling organizer and soon as editor of *The Irish Homestead*, proved an invaluable schooling in national economics. He soon became the literary spokesman of Plunkett's movement, and expanded marvellously in his knowledge of the world and of literature, for he saw every new book and every distinguished stranger that came into Ireland. There were now two remarkable journalists in Ireland: Griffith, inspired directly by dragon-worship, and Russell, who, as I have suggested, was now a familiar of the dragon in its dazzling manifestation as Kathleen ni Houlihan, but re-

puddled utterly any suggestion that his aims had anything in common with the dark propaganda of Griffith. And yet the secret identity of Griffith's dragon and Yeats's and Russell's Kathleen was patent to most people; and to a general consciousness of this identity is attributable the slight degree of ridicule which, for some otherwise undetermined reason, Sir Horace Plunkett's movement has always encountered, in spite of the recognized disinterestedness and beneficence of his aims. The problem, in fact, which Sir Horace Plunkett and A.E. proposed to themselves appeared as hopeless as it would have been to bring about a *rapprochement* between Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde: namely, to create in Ireland an economic initiative and to unite this with the spirit of nationalism. Plunkett, a visionary only in a political sense, and temperamentally a Unionist, supposing that the sentiment of nationality was mainly an inspiration for poets, succeeded, with the help of Russell, in attracting to his cause a good proportion of the writers of the new literary movement. Russell, of whose religious idealism national feeling was now an essential part, began to formulate the doctrine finally embodied in his book, *The National Being*, a philosophical justification of Irish nationalism elaborated with much skill and beauty, but which no longer pointed to the drastic transformation in Ireland's thought and religion which he had contemplated in the fiery pamphlets of his youth. He no longer seemed the knight appointed to slay the dragon.

In the political readjustments which followed the Great War, the secret hiding-places of the dragon were at last exposed, and the dragon itself either slain outright or mortally disabled: the supernal beauty waning at the same time sympathetically from the face of Kathleen ni Houlihan. The transformation, which happened under our eyes, of a formerly obscure and felonious organization into a paternal government, probably at least as good now as any other, afforded most of us a profoundly instructive and perhaps disillusioning insight into the way in which history is made, and we Irish are wise politically—preternaturally wise—for the rest of our days. The garish light of clear reason now beats upon every region of the island; the lazy Shannon will now have work to do, and captains of industry—German, Saxon, Irish-American—are already concentrating their thoughts upon problems as interesting commercially as till yesterday they were politically; soon factories will rise beside round towers and ruined crosses, and

electrified towns cast a gleam over lonely inland waters and rocky solitudes. Has Russell been disappointed? If so, I do not think he would acknowledge it, indeed I do not think he would know it, for it is part of his superb philosophy to accept with more than equanimity the results of our actions and to believe that a just Karma brings to each man his friends and to each country its destiny. But in truth he has no cause for disappointment, for on the whole it is his ideas which have prevailed rather than those of Arthur Griffith, although it was Griffith to whom an astonishing turn of events gave the proud title of Father of his Country. Had Russell wished, he might no doubt have held high office under the new government, but he has chosen to sit apart as a commentator, and as editor of *The Irish Statesman* has rallied round him the broken forces of the Irish Literary Movement. His dream of an independent Irish nationality and culture, in which the Gaelic leaven will work more and more, may now in the course of a generation or two quite possibly be realized. The survival of the Gaelic language, however, would seem essential to his whole principle of a spiritual continuity (the National Being) reaching down from the earliest ages, and his most difficult cultural problem is that of placating or putting in its proper place this rather disconcerting *revenant* from Ireland's dragon-world.

I should give a very faulty notion of Russell if I should leave the reader with the impression of a visionary with his eyes fixed on the past. On the contrary, his belief in the divine origin of man and of the divinity in store for him, quickens his interest in every new achievement of the wit of man, whether in literature, sociology, or scientific invention, and his journal is quite remarkable for the eager interest it displays in scientific theory and discovery. Perhaps his interest in the individual soul has waned. He has listened so long to the high politics of the gods in their conduct of human affairs that he too contemplates mankind in race-groups and nations rather than individually. His thought has grown mainly sociological, and in this he has followed the tendency of his age, so full of "a number of things" that its thinkers seem now fairly cured of introspection and of their former preoccupation with the individual destiny. The ideal of "unworldliness" is down and out: it has perished with the individualism of the now despised nineteenth century. It is perhaps too early to conceive of a dialogue between the tutelary spirit of the nineteenth century and that of our own,

which so far has exhibited a bewildering complexity of radical and conservative instincts; but it is possible that in such a debate the nineteenth century might make good its claim to have contained at least one moment in which the true distinction between social and individual destiny disclosed itself with unique clearness. It might even bring home to us in this age a certain muddle-headed confusion of social and individual ideals, in which, as Tennyson prophetically said, "The individual withers and the world is more and more"; a capitulation to the ideology of the newspapers, in which whole communities figure as souls to be saved, and moral intuition is no longer sure of itself until it is formulated internationally. Inheriting the malady of the nineteenth century, doubt, I am not in the least sure of what I am talking about, and Heaven help me if the ultimate choice should lie between the cynic tub and the parliament of ideologues. When I first knew Russell, the nineteenth century had still ten years to the good, and he has moved forward with the times, whereas—

REDEMPTION

BY GEORGE WHITSETT

See how firm the statue stands,
 She wears the garland that Peter wore.
 The denials are pearls on glassy strands,
 The holy rain has caught in her hands.

When the sheep and the rams run up from the sea,
 She levels the master's horn at me.
 Her bronze forehead wrinkles and forgets
 That lanes of fish come home in nets.

My father would baptize her but for the waves
 That sadly wash her hair.
 He would lift from the font the drop that saves,
 Would give her pious thorns to wear.

OVERHEARD IN SEVILLE

DURING THE PROCESSIONS ON MAUNDY THURSDAY, 1913

BY GEORGE SANTAYANA

I

A street where a procession has halted, carrying an image of Our Lady of the Seven Dolours.

A HAWKER: Fighting-cocks! Lovely present for little children.
Two lively tin fighting-cocks for one penny!

2ND HAWKER (*unfolding a strip of paper with highly coloured prints*): The life and passion of Our Lord, given away gratis for one penny! Take it home and make the children happy!

3RD HAWKER: The latest thing from Barcelona! Sure method of overcoming any woman's resistance within half an hour! Every detail! One penny!

4TH HAWKER: Rubber rings for umbrellas! Keep good ribs from breaking! Keep broken ribs from showing! Only one penny!

A YOUNG MECHANIC (*throwing away his cigarette and taking off his cap*): I am going to sing.

In her crown and rays of gold
comes the weeping Queen of Heaven.

In her heart the swords are seven,
sin in mine is sevenfold.

All my sorrows in a sheaf
I will bind and cast before her;
angels too and saints adore her,
for what grief is like her grief?

A FOND MOTHER (*plunging into the procession of men and boys, in black gowns and high peaked hoods, from which a black cloth with holes for the eyes hangs down over their faces*):

Isn't this the Fraternity of Penitents from our parish? Periquito my son must be here somewhere. There he is, the darling, the cherub! (*She hugs a small boy and lifts his hood.*) A little kiss, my little angel, my own precious! But you've got your scapular all awry. You always were a trial to your poor mother. (*She tugs at the scapular and pulls it straight.*) There! Now you're perfect. What a little dear! Kiss me again. But what's this nasty black thing in your mouth? The foul end of a cigar picked up in the mud! You snivelling brat, you filthy guttersnipe! Heaven knows who your father was, but he must have been born a pig. My own family at least was always decent. In the presence, too, of the Blessed Virgin! (*She crosses herself and boxes his ears.*) You'll yet be the death of me, you shameless little devil. As if I hadn't suffered enough in bringing you into this world!—Holy souls in Purgatory, what have you been doing to your gown? Ruined, and it's to be my best dress! (*She beats him harder.*)

PERIQUITO (*between blubbering, whining, sobbing, and scolding*): It wasn't my fault—you did it—not a drop would have touched it, if you'd only let me alone—women don't understand things—processions stop—for refreshments—but up you must come—with your kissing and hugging—just as I was quietly—watering the roses.

II

A YOUNG MAN (*standing outside a grated window*): You were looking at Antonio.

A YOUNG WOMAN (*sitting within*): What nonsense.

HE: I saw you looking at him.

SHE: May I not cast my eyes down the street? May I not look at the procession?

HE: You don't care for me as I care for you.

SHE: If you cared for me, you would trust me. You are all suspicion.

HE: Because I love you.

SHE: If I didn't care for you, should I have waited for you all these years? Couldn't I have married Antonio long ago, or any one of them? Hasn't my mother always wished me to give

you up? It's only that I'm so great a fool as to love you, when you don't deserve it. But I can't help it, else I might have been a happier woman.

HE: Your mother is right. You ought to give me up. If you married me and I found you with him, I would kill you both.

SHE: Always the same madness! I am afraid of you sometimes. What can there be about such a wild crazy man, that I should sacrifice my life to him? I confess it is a mystery to me, but all the rest seem like lay figures, painted on the wall, and all their talk but chatter and vexation. You alone seem alive. You alone say anything that reaches my heart.

HE: You were looking at Antonio.

III

The grand stand in the Square

A SEVILLIAN GENTLEMAN (*accompanying distinguished foreigners and speaking in Andalusian French*): Later, later. In Spain we are not in haste. Our life is spent waiting. All the morning we wait at the office, in case anything should arise. At home, we wait for the hour to go walking in the Park. In the Park we wait for the time to go home to supper. Afterwards we wait at the Casino for the time to go home to bed.—The procession will arrive later. They are waiting in the narrow streets until dusk. They wish to pass through the Square when their tapers and embroideries will show to better advantage. The images are beautiful, but old. The vestments are a bit faded and stained, the wax flowers a trifle dusty, the liveries nondescript. The tinsel and the true gold will sparkle better together in the twilight.—Later, a little later, they will crawl into view.

A STOUT TOURIST (*speaking in German French*): Why then bring us here so very much too early, to sit for a whole hour in aimless idleness? We might have spent this time at the café having cream-cakes and coffee, or rather chocolate and whipped cream—because your coffee is *not* coffee.

A TALL THIN LADY (*speaking in English French*): If only the tea here were tea!

THE SEVILLIAN: I am so sorry. Tea for us is a medicine, and as for coffee, it never has the genuine flavour except at home. Evidently the chicory of different countries is not identical.

THE LADY (*who has not understood*): Not that we really mind for ourselves. We born travellers *love* adventure and hardship. But we are so sorry for *you!* You might have such a fine country, if you were only worthier of it! And how cruel some of you are! I have seen a wicked little boy here throwing stones at the birds. Of course he didn't hit them—even my husband doesn't when he goes shooting—but it's no wonder you have so few birds in your treeless country. If your constabulary is so efficient, why wasn't it there to stop it?

THE SEVILLIAN: Yes, our poor people are often cruel to animals. We are very inhuman. We keep all our pity for mankind.

THE TOURIST (*climbing ostentatiously on a chair, and adjusting his field-glass*): At last something seems to be moving. (*Aside in German to his wife, whose view he has completely cut off*): Be quiet! I will explain to you everything that is to be seen.

THE SEVILLIAN: First, probably, will come the Virgin of Triana.

THE TOURIST: No, you are wrong. Hardly likely, was it, that in Seville the first-comer should be a virgin? (*He laughs loudly.*) It is a group of figures altogether realistic, altogether tasteless.

THE SEVILLIAN: Yes, one of the *pasos*: Christ Scourged at the Pillar.

THE TOURIST: Also altogether unhistorical. The Christ is Michael-angelsesque, an anatomical study, a mere academy. The Roman soldiers have helmets of the sixteenth century. This is not art. There comes from it no pure aesthetic satisfaction, no higher religious feeling. Here all is only manual tricks in the service of superstition. I said so already in my earlier philosophical article about Spain even before I had come into the country, and now scientific investigation entirely confirms my view.

THE SEVILLIAN: How could it do otherwise? The arts with us are a heritage; we take them as we find them. And we give what we have. There comes Our Lady of Triana. Belmonte has lent her his diamonds for the occasion. Our other favourite bull-fighter, Joselito, has lent his to Our Lady of a Happy End.

THE LADY: How shocking! How dreadful to accept such things from such people! It is all so gross, so material! You mix your religion up with everything.—Who is that singing in the crowd?

THE SEVILLIAN: Who knows? Someone.

THE LADY: What a pity that such a voice should be wasted. It might almost do for Covent Garden.

THE TOURIST: Not at all. It shows no true musical feeling, like our soulful popular German chorals. This unrefined street-singing is proper to all primitive cultures. Its appeal is merely sensational, like that of fireworks and advertisements, and it can interest only uneducated people. (*They all come down into the Square to listen.*)

A VOICE (*singing*):

Earth and heaven lived apart
bliss above and anguish here,
till one day God shed a tear
and his heart became my heart.

Then his spirit in my breast
burned and burned away the dross:
I am dying on his cross,
and in dying I am blest.

THE LADY: What did the words say?

THE SEVILLIAN: Nothing, some pious conceit. We call it a *saeta*.

THE TOURIST: Yes, and a *saeta* means an arrow. But he sang it all wrong. My thoroughly reliable guide-book describes the *saeta* quite differently.

THE SEVILLIAN: It is a loose tradition. They improvise more or less.

THE TOURIST (*severely*): You have wholly corrupted the early Arabian melody.

THE SEVILLIAN: Shall we walk on? The thing is of no importance.



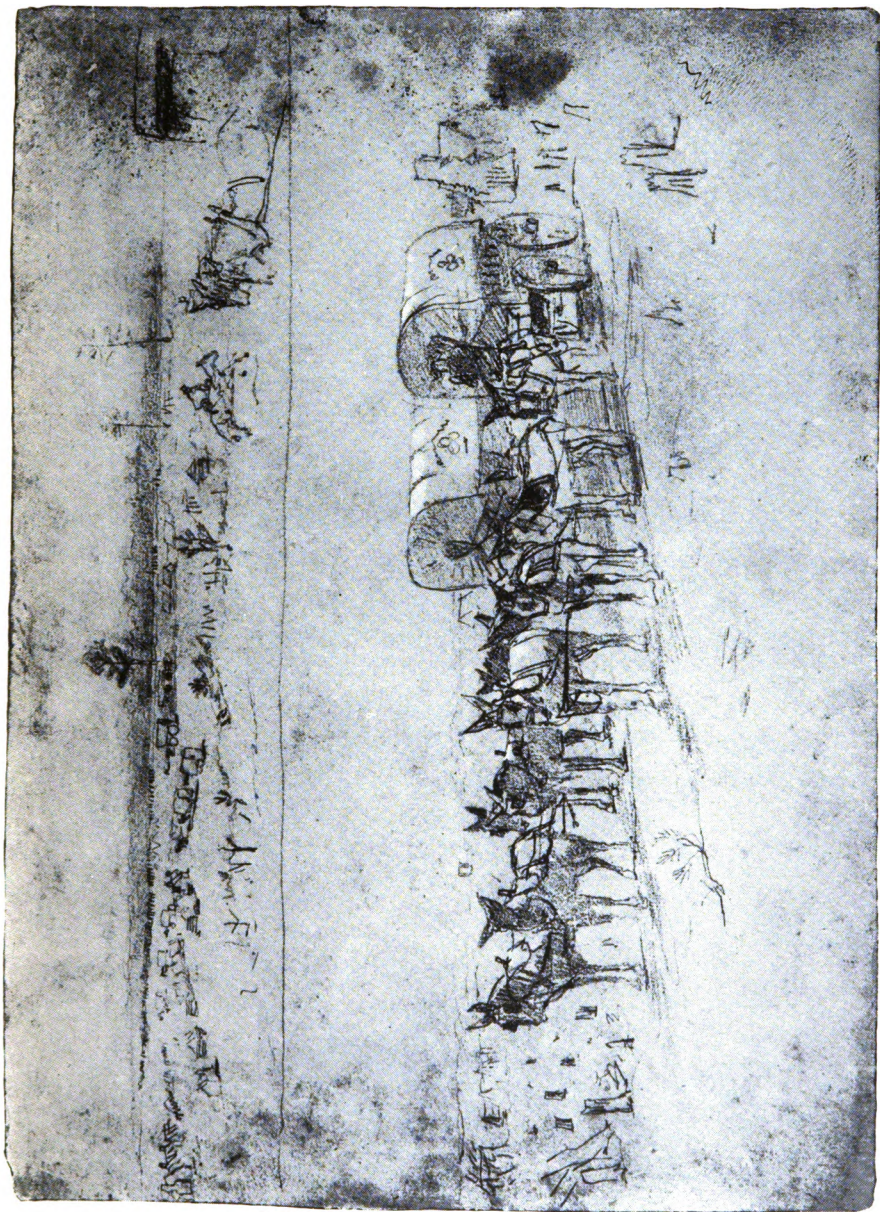
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FROM ALEXANDRIA TO SHIP POINT—1862, April 2. BY WINSLOW HOMER



Property of the Hon. Simon L. Adler

SUTLER'S TENT, 3RD PENNSYLVANIA CAVALRY. BY WINSLOW HOMER



Property of the Hon. Simon L. Adler

SUPPLY TRAINS. BY WINSLOW HOMER

TWO BLUE BIRDS

BY D. H. LAWRENCE

THERE was a woman who loved her husband, but she could not live with him. The husband, on his side, was sincerely attached to his wife, yet he could not live with her. They were both under forty, both handsome, and both attractive. They had the most sincere regard for one another, and felt, in some odd way, eternally married to one another. They knew each other more intimately than they knew anybody else, they felt more known to one another than to any other person.

Yet they could not live together. Usually, they kept a thousand miles apart, geographically. But when he sat in the greyness of England, at the back of his mind, with a certain grim fidelity, he was aware of his wife, her strange yearning to be loyal and faithful, having her gallant affairs away in the sun, in the south. And she, as she drank her cocktail on the terrace over the sea, and turned her grey, sardonic eyes on the heavy, dark face of her admirer, whom she really liked quite a lot, she was actually preoccupied with the clear-cut features of her handsome young husband, thinking of how he would be asking his secretary to do something for him: asking in that good-natured, confident voice of a man who knows that his request will be only too gladly fulfilled.

The secretary, of course, adored him. She was *very* competent, quite young, and quite good-looking. She adored him. But then all his servants always did: particularly his women-servants. His men-servants were likely to swindle him.

When a man has an adoring secretary, and you are the man's wife, what are you to do? Not that there was anything "wrong"—if you know what I mean!—between them. Nothing you could call adultery, to come down to brass tacks. No, no! They were just the young master and his secretary. He dictated to her, she slaved for him and adored him, and the whole thing went on wheels.

He didn't "adore" her. A man doesn't need to adore his secretary. But he depended on her. "I simply rely on Miss Wrexall."

Whereas he could never rely on his wife. The one thing he knew finally about *her*, was that she didn't intend to be relied on.

So they remained friends, in the awful unspoken intimacy of the once married. Usually each year they went away together for a holiday, and if they had not been man and wife, they would have found a great deal of fun and stimulation in one another. The fact that they were married, had been married for the last dozen years, and couldn't live together for the last three or four, spoilt them for one another. Each had a private feeling of bitterness about the other.

However, they were awfully kind. He was the soul of generosity, and held her in real tender esteem, no matter how many gallant affairs she had. Her gallant affairs were part of her modern necessity. "After all, I've got to *live*. I can't turn into a pillar of salt in five minutes, just because you and I can't live together! It takes years for a woman like me to turn into a pillar of salt. At least I hope so!"

"Quite!" he replied. "Quite! By all means put them in pickle, make pickled cucumbers of them, before you crystallize out. That's my advice."

He was like that: so awfully clever and enigmatic. She could more or less fathom the idea of the pickled cucumbers, but the "crystallizing out," what did that signify?

And did he mean to suggest that he himself had been well pickled, and that further immersion was for him unnecessary, would spoil his flavour? Was that what he meant? And herself, was she the brine and the vale of tears?

You never knew how catty a man was being, when he was really clever and enigmatic, withal a bit whimsical. He was adorably whimsical, with a twist of his flexible, vain mouth, that had a long upper lip, so fraught with vanity! But then a handsome, clear-cut, histrionic young man like that, how could he help being vain? The women made him so.

Ah, the women! How nice men would be if there were no other women!

And how nice the women would be if there were no other men! That's the best of a secretary. She may have a husband, but a husband is the mere shred of a man, compared to a boss, a chief, a man who dictates to you and whose words you faithfully write

down and then transcribe. Imagine a wife writing down anything her husband said to her!—But a secretary! Every *and* and *but* of his she preserves for ever. What are candied violets in comparison!

Now it is all very well having gallant affairs under the southern sun, when you know there is a husband whom you adore dictating to a secretary whom you are too scornful to hate yet whom you rather despise, though you allow she has her good points, away north in the place you ought to regard as home. A gallant affair isn't much good when you've got a bit of grit in your eye. Or something at the back of your mind.

What's to be done? The husband, of course, did not send his wife away.

"You've got your secretary and your work," she said. "There's no room for me."

"There's a bedroom and a sitting-room exclusively for you," he replied. "And a garden and half a motor-car. But please yourself entirely. Do what gives you most pleasure."

"In that case," she said, "I'll just go south for the winter."

"Yes, do!" he said. "You always enjoy it."

"I always do," she replied.

They parted with a certain relentlessness that had a touch of wistful sentiment behind it. Off she went to her gallant affairs, that were like the curate's egg, palatable in parts. And he settled down to work. He said he hated working, but he never did anything else. Ten or eleven hours a day. That's what it is to be your own master!

So the winter wore away, and it was spring, when the swallows homeward fly: or northward, in this case. This winter, one of a series similar, had been rather hard to get through. The bit of grit in the gallant lady's eye had worked deeper in, the more she blinked. Dark faces might be dark, and icy cocktails might lend a glow, she blinked her hardest, to blink that bit of grit away, without success. Under the spicy balls of the mimosa she thought of that husband of hers, in his library, and of that neat, competent but *common* little secretary of his, for ever taking down what he said!

"How a man can *stand* it! how *she* can stand it, common little thing as she is, I don't know!" the wife cried to herself.

She meant this dictating business, this ten hours a day intercourse, *à deux*, with nothing but a pencil between them: and a flow of words.

What was to be done? Matters, instead of improving, had grown worse. The little secretary had brought her mother and sister into the establishment. The mother was a sort of cook-house-keeper, the sister was a sort of upper maid: she did the fine laundry, and looked after "his" clothes, and valeted him beautifully. It was really an excellent arrangement. The old mother was a splendid plain cook, the sister was all that could be desired as a *valet-de-chambre*, a fine laundress, an upper parlour-maid, and a table-waiter. And all economical to a degree. They knew his affairs by heart. His secretary flew to town when a creditor became dangerous, and she *always* smoothed over the financial crisis.

"He," of course, had debts, and he was working to pay them off. And if he had been a fairy prince who could call the ants to help him, he would not have been more wonderful than in securing this secretary and her family. They took hardly any wages. And they seemed to perform the miracle of loaves and fishes daily.

"She," of course, the wife who loved her husband, but helped him into debt, and she still was an expensive item. Yet when she appeared at her "home," the secretarial family received her with most elaborate attentions and deference. The knight returning from the Crusades, didn't create a greater stir. She felt like Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth, a sovereign paying a visit to her faithful subjects. But perhaps there lurked always this hair in her soup: Won't they be glad to be rid of me again!

But they protested No! No! They had been waiting and hoping and praying she would come. They had been pining for her to be there, in charge: the mistress, "his" wife. Ah, "his" wife!

"His" wife! His halo was like a bucket over her head.

The cook-mother was "of the people," so it was the upper-maid daughter who came for orders.

"What will you order for to-morrow's lunch and dinner, Mrs Gee?"

"Well, what do you usually have?"

"Oh, we want *you* to say."

"No, what do you *usually* have?"

"We don't have anything fixed. Mother goes out and chooses the best she can find, that is nice and fresh. But she thought you would tell her now what to get."

"Oh, I don't know! I'm not very good at that sort of thing. Ask her to go on just the same; I'm sure she knows best."

"Perhaps you'd like to suggest a sweet?"

"No, I don't care for sweets—and you know Mr Gee doesn't. So don't make one for me."

Could anything be more impossible! They had the house spotless and running like a dream: how could an incompetent and extravagant wife dare to interfere, when she saw their amazing and almost inspired economy! But they ran the place on simply nothing! simply marvellous people! And the way they strewed palm-branches under her feet!

But that only made her feel ridiculous, as if she were the ass, and the Crucifixion was next week.

"Don't you think the family manage very well?" he asked her tentatively.

"Awfully well! Almost romantically well!" she replied. "But I suppose you're perfectly happy?"

"I'm perfectly comfortable," he replied.

"I can see you are," she replied. "Amazingly so! I never knew such comfort! Are you sure it isn't bad for you?"

She eyed him stealthily. He looked very well, and extremely handsome, in his histrionic way. He was shockingly well-dressed and valeted. And he had that air of easy *aplomb* and good-humour which is so becoming to a man, and which he only acquires when he is cock of his own little walk, made much of by his own hens.

"No!" he said, taking his pipe from his mouth and smiling whimsically round at her. "Do I look as if it were bad for me?"

"No, you don't," she replied promptly: thinking, naturally, as a woman is supposed to think nowadays, of his health and comfort, the foundation, apparently, of all happiness.

Then, of course, away she went on the backwash.

"Perhaps for your work, though, it's not so good as it is for *you*," she said, in a rather small voice. She knew he couldn't bear it if she mocked at his work for one moment. And he knew that rather small voice of hers.

"In what way?" he said, bristles rising.

"Oh, I don't know," she answered indifferently. "Perhaps it's not good for a man's work if he is too comfortable."

"I don't know about *that!*" he said, taking a dramatic turn round the library and drawing at his pipe. "Considering I work, actually, by the clock, for twelve hours a day, and for ten hours when it's a short day, I don't think you can say I am deteriorating from easy comfort."

"No, I suppose not," she admitted.

Yet she did think it, nevertheless. His comfortableness didn't consist so much in good food and a soft bed, as in having nobody, absolutely nobody and nothing to contradict him. "I do like to think he's got nothing to aggravate him," the secretary had said to the wife.

"Nothing to aggravate him"!—what a position for a man! Fostered by women who would let nothing "aggravate" him. If anything would aggravate his wounded vanity, this would!

So thought the wife. But what was to be done about it? In the silence of midnight she heard his voice in the distance, dictating away, like the voice of God to Samuel, alone and monotone, and she imagined the little figure of the secretary busily scribbling shorthand. Then in the sunny hours of morning, while he was still in bed—he never rose till noon—from another distance came that sharp insect-noise of the typewriter, like some immense grasshopper chirping and rattling. It was the secretary, poor thing, typing out his notes.

That girl—she was only twenty-eight—really slaved herself to skin and bone. She was small and neat, but she was actually worn out. She did far more work than he did, for she had not only to take down all those words he uttered, she had to type them out, make three copies, while he was still resting.

"What on earth she gets out of it," thought the wife, "I don't know. She's simply worn to the bone: for a very poor salary, and he's never kissed her, and never will, if I know anything about him."

Whether his never kissing her—the secretary, that is—made it worse or better, the wife did not decide. He never kissed anybody. Whether she herself—the wife, that is—wanted to be kissed by him, even that she was not clear about. She rather thought she

didn't. What on earth did she want then? She was his wife. What on earth did she want of him?

She certainly didn't want to take him down in shorthand, and type out again all those words. And she didn't really want him to kiss her: she knew him too well. Yes, she knew him too well. If you know a man too well, you don't want him to kiss you.

What then? What did she want? Why had she such an extraordinary hang-over about him? Just because she was his wife? Why did she rather "enjoy" other men—and she was relentless about enjoyment—without ever taking them seriously? And why must she take him so damn seriously, when she never really "enjoyed" him?

Of course she *had* had good times with him, in the past, before—ah! before a thousand things, all amounting really to nothing. But she enjoyed him no more. She never even enjoyed being with him. There was a silent ceaseless tension between them, that never broke, even when they were a thousand miles apart.

Awful! That's what you call being married! What's to be done about it? Ridiculous, to know it all and not do anything about it!

She came back once more, and there she was, in her own house, a sort of super-guest, even to him. And the secretarial family devoting their lives to him.

Devoting their lives to him! But actually! Three women pouring out their lives for him day and night! And what did they get in return? Not one kiss! Very little money, because they knew all about his debts, and had made it their life-business to get them paid off! No expectations! Twelve hours' work a day! Comparative isolation, for he saw nobody!

And beyond that?—nothing! Perhaps a sense of uplift and importance because they saw his name and photograph in the newspapers sometimes. But would anybody believe that it was good enough?

Yet they adored it! They seemed to get a deep satisfaction out of it, like people with a mission. Extraordinary!

Well, if they did, let them. They were of course rather common, "of the people," there might be a sort of glamour in it for them.

But it was bad for him. No doubt about it. His work was getting diffuse and poor in quality—and what wonder! His whole

tone was going down—becoming commoner. Of course it was bad for him.

Being his wife, she felt she ought to do something to save him. But how could she? That perfectly devoted, marvellous secretarial family, how could she make an attack on them? Yet she'd love to sweep them into oblivion. Of course they were bad for him: ruining his work, ruining his reputation as a writer, ruining his life. Ruining him with their slavish service.

Of course she ought to make an onslaught on them! But how *could* she! Such devotion! And what had she herself to offer in their place? Certainly not slavish devotion to him, nor to his flow of words! Certainly not!

She imagined him stripped once more naked of secretary and secretarial family, and she shuddered. It was like throwing the naked baby in the dust-bin. Couldn't do that!

Yet something must be done. She felt it. She was almost tempted to get into debt for another thousand pounds, and send in the bill, or have it sent in to him, as usual.

But no! Something more drastic!

Something more drastic, or perhaps more gentle. She wavered between the two. And wavering, she first did nothing, came to no decision, dragged vacantly on from day to day, waiting for sufficient energy to take her departure once more.

It was spring! What a fool she had been to come up in spring! And she was forty! What an idiot of a woman to go and be forty!

She went down the garden in the warm afternoon, when birds were whistling loudly from the cover, the sky being low and warm, and she had nothing to do. The garden was full of flowers: he loved them for their theatrical display. Lilac and snowball bushes, and laburnum and red may, tulips and anemones and coloured daisies. Lots of flowers! Borders of forget-me-nots! Bachelor's buttons! What absurd names flowers had! She would have called them blue dots and yellow blobs and white frills. Not so much sentiment, after all!

There is a certain nonsense, something showy and stagey about spring, with its pushing leaves and chorus-girl flowers, unless you have something corresponding inside you. Which she hadn't.

Oh, heaven! Beyond the hedge she heard a voice: a steady,

rather theatrical voice. Oh, heaven!—he was dictating to his secretary in the garden. Good God, was there nowhere to get away from it! She looked around: there was indeed plenty of escape. But what was the good of escaping? He would go on and on. She went quietly towards the hedge, and listened.

He was dictating a magazine article about the modern novel. "What the modern novel lacks is architecture"—Good God! Architecture! He might just as well say: What the modern novel lacks is whalebone, or a teaspoon, or a tooth stopped.

Yet the secretary took it down, took it down, took it down! No, this could not go on! It was more than flesh and blood could bear.

She went quietly along the hedge, somewhat wolf-like in her prowl, a broad, strong woman in an expensive mustard-coloured silk jersey and cream-coloured pleated skirt. Her legs were long and shapely, and her shoes were expensive.

With a curious wolf-like stealth she turned the hedge and looked across at the small, shaded lawn where the daisies grew impertinently. "He" was reclining in a coloured hammock under the pink-flowering horse-chestnut tree, dressed in white serge with a fine yellow-coloured linen shirt. His elegant hand dropped over the side of the hammock and beat a sort of vague rhythm to his words. At a little wicker table the little secretary, in a green knitted frock, bent her dark head over her note-book, and diligently made those awful shorthand marks. He was not difficult to take down, as he dictated slowly, and kept a sort of rhythm, beating time with his dangling hand.

"In every novel there must be one outstanding character with which we always sympathize—with *whom* we always sympathize—even though we recognize its—even when we are most aware of the human frailties—"

Every man his own hero, thought the wife grimly, forgetting that every woman is intensely her own heroine.

But what did startle her was a blue bird dashing about near the feet of the absorbed, shorthand-scribbling little secretary. At least it was a blue-tit, blue with grey and some yellow. But to the wife it seemed blue, that juicy spring day, in the translucent afternoon. The blue bird, fluttering round the pretty but rather *common* little feet of the little secretary.

The blue bird! The blue bird of happiness! Well I'm blest!—thought the wife. Well I'm blest!

And as she was being blest, appeared another blue bird, that is, another blue-tit, and began to wrestle with the first blue-tit. A couple of blue birds of happiness, having a fight over it! Well I'm blest!

She was more or less out of sight of the human preoccupied pair. But "he" was disturbed by the fighting blue birds, whose little feathers began to float loose.

"Get out!" he said to them mildly, waving a dark-yellow handkerchief at them. "Fight your little fight, and settle your private affairs elsewhere, my dear little gentlemen."

The little secretary looked up quickly, for she had already begun to write it down. He smiled at her his twisted whimsical smile.

"No, don't take that down," he said affectionately. "Did you see those two tits laying into one another?"

"No!" said the little secretary, gazing brightly round, her eyes half blinded with work.

But she saw the queer, powerful, elegant, wolf-like figure of the wife, behind her, and terror came into her eyes.

"I did!" said the wife, stepping forward with those curious, shapely, she-wolf legs of hers, under the very short skirt.

"Aren't they extraordinarily vicious little beasts?" said he.

"Extraordinarily!" she re-echoed, stooping and picking up a little breast-feather. "Extraordinarily! See how the feathers fly!"

And she got the feather on the tip of her finger, and looked at it. Then she looked at the secretary, then she looked at him. She had a queer, were-wolf expression between her brows.

"I think," he began, "these are the loveliest afternoons, when there's no direct sun, but all the sounds and the colours and the scents are sort of dissolved, don't you know, in the air, and the whole thing is steeped, steeped in spring. It's like being on the inside, you know how I mean, like being inside the egg and just ready to chip the shell."

"Quite like that!" she assented, without conviction.

There was a little pause. The secretary said nothing. They were waiting for the wife to depart again.

"I suppose," said the latter, "you're awfully busy, as usual?"

"Just about the same," he said, pursing his mouth deprecatingly.

Again the blank pause, in which he waited for her to go away again.

"I know I'm interrupting you," she said.

"As a matter of fact," he said, "I was just watching those two blue-tits."

"Pair of little demons!" said the wife, blowing away the yellow feather from her finger-tip.

"Absolutely!" he said.

"Well, I'd better go, and let you get on with your work," she said.

"No hurry!" he said, with benevolent nonchalance. "As a matter of fact, I don't think it's a great success, working out of doors."

"What made you try it?" said the wife. "You know you never could do it."

"Miss Wrexall suggested it might make a change. But I don't think it altogether helps, do you, Miss Wrexall?"

"I'm sorry," said the little secretary.

"Why should *you* be sorry?" said the wife, looking down at her as a wolf might look down half benignly at a little black-and-tan mongrel. "You only suggested it for his good, I'm sure!"

"I thought the air might be good for him," the secretary admitted.

"Why do people like you never think about yourselves?" the wife asked.

The secretary looked her in the eye.

"I suppose we do, in a different way," she said.

"A *very* different way!" said the wife ironically. "Why don't you make *him* think about *you*?" she added, slowly, with a sort of drawl. "On a soft spring afternoon like this, you ought to have him dictating poems to you, about the blue birds of happiness fluttering round your dainty little feet. I know *I* would, if I were his secretary."

There was a dead pause. The wife stood immobile and statue-like, in an attitude characteristic of her, half turning back to the little secretary, half averted. She half turned her back on everything.

The secretary looked at him.

"As a matter of fact," he said, "I was doing an article on the Future of the Novel."

"I know that," said the wife. "That's what's so awful! Why not something lively in the life of the novelist?"

There was a prolonged silence, in which he looked pained, and somewhat remote, statuesque. The little secretary hung her head. The wife sauntered slowly away.

"Just where were we, Miss Wrexall?" came the sound of his voice.

The little secretary started. She was feeling profoundly indignant. Their beautiful relationship, his and hers, to be so insulted!

But soon she was veering downstream on the flow of his words, too busy to have any feelings, except one of elation at being so busy.

Tea-time came: the sister brought out the tea-tray into the garden. And immediately, the wife appeared. She had changed, and was wearing a chicory-blue dress of fine cloth. The little secretary had gathered up her papers and was departing, on rather high heels.

"Don't go, Miss Wrexall," said the wife.

The little secretary stopped short, then hesitated.

"Mother will be expecting me," she said.

"Tell her you're not coming. And ask your sister to bring another cup. I want you to have tea with us."

Miss Wrexall looked at the man, who was reared on one elbow in the hammock, and was looking enigmatical, Hamletish.

He glanced at her quickly, then pursed his mouth in a boyish negligence.

"Yes, stay and have tea with us for once," he said. "I see strawberries, and I know you're the bird for them."

She glanced at him, smiled wanly, and hurried away to tell her mother. She even stayed long enough to slip on a silk dress.

"Why, how smart you are!" said the wife, when the little secretary reappeared on the lawn, in chicory-blue silk.

"Oh, don't look at my dress, compared to yours!" said Miss Wrexall. They were of the same colour, indeed!

"At least you earned yours, which is more than I did mine," said the wife, as she poured tea. "You like it strong?"

She looked with her heavy eyes at the smallish, birdy, blue-clad, overworked young woman, and her eyes seemed to speak many inexplicable dark volumes.

"Oh, as it comes, thank you," said Miss Wrexall, leaning nervously forward.

"It's coming pretty black, if you want to ruin your digestion," said the wife.

"Oh, I'll have some water in it, then."

"Better, I should say."

"How'd the work go?—all right?" asked the wife, as they drank tea, and the two women looked at each other's blue dresses.

"Oh!" he said. "As well as you can expect. It was a piece of pure flummery. But it's what they want. Awful rot, wasn't it, Miss Wrexall?"

Miss Wrexall moved uneasily on her chair.

"It interested me," she said. "Though not so much as the novel."

"The novel? Which novel?" said the wife. "Is there another new one?"

Miss Wrexall looked at him. Not for worlds would she give away any of his literary activities.

"Oh, I was just sketching out an idea to Miss Wrexall," he said.

"Tell us about it!" said the wife. "Miss Wrexall, *you* tell us what it's about."

She turned on her chair, and fixed the little secretary.

"I'm afraid—" Miss Wrexall squirmed—"I haven't got it very clearly myself, yet."

"Oh, go along! Tell us what you *have* got then!"

Miss Wrexall sat dumb and very vexed. She felt she was being baited. She looked at the blue pleatings of her skirt.

"I'm afraid I can't," she said.

"Why are you afraid you can't? You're so *very* competent. I'm sure you've got it all at your finger-ends. I expect you write a good deal of Mr Gee's books for him, really. He gives you the hint, and you fill it all in. Isn't that how you do it?" She spoke ironically, and as if she were teasing a child. And then she glanced down at the fine pleatings of her own blue skirt, very fine and expensive.

"Of course you're not speaking seriously?" said Miss Wrexall, rising on her mettle.

"Of course I am! I've suspected for a long time—at least, for some time—that you write a good deal of Mr Gee's books for him, from his hints."

It was said in a tone of raillery, but it was cruel.

"I should be terribly flattered," said Miss Wrexall, straighten-

ing herself, "if I didn't know you were only trying to make me feel a fool."

"Make you feel a fool? My dear child!—why, nothing could be further from me! You're twice as clever, and a million times as competent as I am. Why, my dear child, I've the greatest admiration for you! I wouldn't do what you do, not for all the pearls in India. I *couldn't*, anyhow—"

Miss Wrexall closed up and was silent.

"Do you mean to say my books read as if—" he began, rearing up and speaking in a narrowed voice.

"I do!" said his wife. "Just as if Miss Wrexall had written them from your hints. I *honestly* thought she did—when you were too busy—"

"How very clever of you!" he said.

"Very!" she cried. "Especially if I was wrong!"

"Which you were," he said.

"How very extraordinary!" she cried. "Well, I am once more mistaken!"

There was a complete pause.

It was broken by Miss Wrexall, who was nervously twisting her fingers.

"You want to spoil what there is between me and him, I can see that," she said bitterly.

"My dear, but what *is* there between you and him?" asked the wife.

"I was *happy* working with him, working for him! I was *happy* working for him!" cried Miss Wrexall, tears of indignant anger and chagrin in her eyes.

"My dear child!" cried the wife, with simulated excitement, "go *on* being happy working with him, go on being happy while you can! If it makes you happy, why then, enjoy it! Of course! Do you think I'd be so cruel as to want to take it away from you?—working with him? I can't do shorthand and typewriting and double-entrance book-keeping, or whatever it's called. I tell you, I'm utterly incompetent. I never earn anything. I'm the parasite on the British oak, like the mistletoe. The blue bird doesn't flutter round my feet. Perhaps they're too big and trampling."

She looked down at her expensive shoes.

"If I *did* have a word of criticism to offer," she said, turning

to her husband, "it would be to you, Cameron, for taking so much from her and giving her nothing."

"But he gives me everything, everything!" cried Miss Wrexall. "He gives me everything!"

"What do you mean by everything?" said the wife, turning on her sternly.

Miss Wrexall pulled up short. There was a snap in the air, and a change of currents.

"I mean nothing that *you* need begrudge me," said the little secretary rather haughtily. "I've never made myself cheap."

There was a blank pause.

"My God!" said the wife. "You don't call that being cheap? Why, I should say you got nothing out of him at all, you only give! And if you don't call that making yourself cheap—my God!"

"You see, we see things different," said the secretary.

"I should say we do!—*thank God!*" rejoined the wife.

"On whose behalf are you thanking God?" he asked sarcastically.

"Everybody's, I suppose! Yours, because you get everything for nothing, and Miss Wrexall's, because she seems to like it, and mine because I'm well out of it all."

"You *needn't* be out of it all," cried Miss Wrexall magnanimously, "if you didn't *put* yourself out of it all."

"Thank you, my dear, for your offer," said the wife, rising. "But I'm afraid no man can expect *two* blue birds of happiness to flutter round his feet; tearing out their little feathers!"

With which she walked away.

After a tense and desperate interim, Miss Wrexall cried:

"And *really*, need any woman be jealous of *me!*"

"Quite!" he said.

And that was all he did say.

THREE EPITAPHS

BY ALFRED KREYMBORG

TRAVELLER

Here is one
who could never afford
a trip around the earth
and now the earth
is kind to him
and takes him round
the sun.

WHITE IN THE DARK

One
stark night
the snow
regarded her
and so
regarded her
it made
and laid
a blanket
till it shone
in the dark.

CHANGE

There's many a word
I've used carelessly
and some I'll abuse to the end,
but as I grow older
I'm colder and careful
in the presence of the strange word,
friend.



Courtesy of the Kraushaar Galleries

WOMAN'S HEAD. BY GASTON LACHAISE

MEMORIES

BY LEON SRABIAN HERALD

V

CURVES ON THE ROAD

HE was a foreigner—in Detroit—where destiny had brought him, an immigrant boy, his emotions in play like the lightning. His nation had been wiped out and these fellow-countrymen among whom he found himself, were labourers. He was with them but not of them, understanding what they said to him, but not able to explain to them, himself.

Taking an untrodden road he left his compatriots and thrust himself into loneliness, which at first like a dark museum, gradually revealed its monuments. Then with a desire to plunge into American life after this purgatory, he sought refuge, shelter, and guidance, in a Protestant church where he could at least shake hands with people, sing, and talk with them after service.

On a Sunday morning's walk as he passed a church which was attended by youths from a neighbouring mechanical college, and saw all young men—no elderly people or young women—entering the church about twelve o'clock, he mingled with them and entered also. These young men and their leaders, however, were discussing the undiscussible with such precision, with such definiteness, with such detachment from the body with which they argued, that he found himself losing rather than gaining. Any discussion the roots of which did not spring from the body, that infinite body with all its senses, he thought groundless. No subterfuge in his experience had been so quickly abandoned as this one.

Again he thrust himself into loneliness as a sword into its proper sheath.

Having found no moment of home life in this vast and at the same time devastating land, he had still his own memories of home. Though that home was now no more, nor were any of his relatives alive, memories were memories—even more real to

him than the recent news that his land had perished with every single soul. However, as the news grew mature, it expelled gay childhood memories. *His native land had perished, and with it, every soul.* Each pulse of his body kept repeating this.

Then, new to him though not as yet much loving him, America entered the World War.

Propaganda had acted upon him like a powerful chemical. He flamed and boiled to go to war. Several times he went to Headquarters to enlist, but was an alien and could not be accepted. His prayers at last were answered: the law was changed and he was permitted by the army to become an active part of it.

He was full of longing to say good-bye to someone—to any one. He must give his secret to someone, but in the whole city there was no one to whom to entrust it. Then he thought of a small town about twenty-five miles away in which he had gone to high school, when it had seemed beyond his power to struggle all alone in a large city. This was Pontiac, Michigan. He had made friends there and a poem of his, *Meditation*, had been published in the high-school monthly.

In that town lived Melanie, a girl who had been nice to him although he had been so shy, his vocabulary so short, that he had not dared to approach her in more than monosyllables. Miss McWilliams, who taught algebra, had arranged her class alphabetically, and since Melanie's last name began with H, Herald sat next to her. Melanie had often explained to him things he did not understand, had corrected his spelling, and when the teacher said anything amusing, would look at him with contagious humour. He had been indeed fortunate to sit next to her, for she was the prettiest girl in the class and very popular.

How clearly he could visualize that day on which a poem of his had appeared in *The Tomahawk* and how Melanie came up to him in the school cafeteria and said, "You are an author now, aren't you? We are so proud of you." Then she and Sidney, the editor of the paper, sat with him to eat their lunch—a true encomium, this distinction. Melanie must have liked him or she would not have been so cordial. She was the only girl who had even as nearly as that, come to participating in his life.

Another eager memory occurred to him and seemed to justify his making a visit to that memorable town which was to him the

flower-pot of America. The soul of this incident was Sidney. Once when Herald had been out of work for a long time and had told Sidney that he would have to give up attending school in order to support himself, his wing-heeled companion had, on the spur of the moment, said he would ask help from his father—and his father gave help, good help; but what was it compared with the son's gift, of himself—the incomparable expression and ideal of America? With money which Sidney's father lent him, he bought a pair of shoes—first-class, expensive. Had he been a little wiser, more clever and not shy, he could perhaps have been an author. As it was, he had not in his pocket enough money to live on.

Making up his mind to go back to Pontiac, he started as soon as he could and when he arrived, went directly to the office of the high-school annual, *The Quiver*. There he found Sidney, its editor, and promptly as if she had been summoned, Melanie appeared. When she caught sight of Herald as she stood in the door, smiling and beautiful in her spring clothes, she exclaimed, "Look who's here!"

Herald had been away for several years and Sidney, fearing that Melanie might have forgotten him, introduced them; then saw his error, for they were looking at each other in a trance of attentive enthusiasm. She asked him about his life in the city and he told her—nothing of the truth. He had been poor but would not admit it, at least not to her. When he told them that he expected to enlist, they sympathized with the plan so eagerly that he was filled with pride and dreams of future success. He was successful now. These people were glad to have his secret which he had given them without reserve, and what he had given was nothing compared with what he had received. He asked Melanie to write to him when he was in the army and she said she would be only too glad to. Why not? Sidney promised to send him books, and the annual. This was victory. Exalted with a prince's pride, he went away proclaiming his joy from a height.

The trains in Detroit were packed; the air was beautiful with waving handkerchiefs. There was not a person on the platform that Herald knew. His spirit flagged and he wished that Melanie were in the crowd. But immediately he felt as if there

were after all, no special bond of union between himself, Melanie, and Sidney. Once more, he seemed to himself utterly detached from the world and its blood—its people. Nevertheless, when the train started, he brought out his handkerchief and waved it. If only one person had been there to wave to him!

Sitting then took the place of looking; calm and retrospection, the place of exclamation. The superintendent of the Sunday School of which Herald had become a member, appeared just then—Mr Hasbrouck, and “Three cheers” to him, and many more—diverted everyone’s attention.

“Well, Johnson! Hello, Smith! Hello, Herald! I am proud of you all, boys!” exclaimed Mr Hasbrouck, turning to right and left. “If you need anything or want to ask any questions, don’t hesitate to come to me.” Herald felt sudden pleasure because Mr Hasbrouck had mentioned his name and had put his hand on his shoulder. He thought his old officer was to be his new officer, and it was something to feel that he knew someone to whom he would be able to go with questions, until he had become accustomed to the new life.

The train stopped occasionally and beverages, sandwiches, and cigarettes were served by beautiful aristocratic women, in the prime of life. Beautiful women, serving young men! The meaning of this was obscure to Herald, but why insist upon a meaning. The fact was plain: beautiful women serving unknown, never-to-be-known young men. He had never in his past life, in America, experienced anything like this, and wished that he might go on travelling in order to continue to receive from the hands of beauty.

The train reached its destination—Camp Wheeler, Georgia—late at night. Mr Hasbrouck had disappeared and the non-commissioned officers fell upon the new recruits as on so much booty. Stiff voices and the occasional glitter of a sword or gun brought the new quota to the tents where each man was given a bag and told to fill it with straw and use it as his mattress.

By putting on uniforms, by being inoculated, by drilling and smoking picked-up cigarette-stubs, plain citizens were in a few days turned into brave soldiers. But such was not the experience of all. Herald was poisoned by the first inoculation; his arm began to swell and fever assailed him, which is even now one of his strongest memories—his lips rising like dough. He was not

bothered by duties nor by medical care, but was left to himself like a farmer's old horse. Then finally with his blanket around him, he sought an open, quiet place in the sun. His legs were shaky and uncertain as if he had been given them for the first time, to experiment with. The sun seemed scarcely warmer than the shade; he shivered. A new sun would have to appear in the sky of his life—a new antidote.

And it did. If those who saw him that morning thought he had with him merely a letter, they were mistaken. There was with him one whom only he could see: the letter was as a warm hand in his, the words of it were not only in writing but audible, captivating, healing. This first letter to him from Melanie, he read and reread; and each time it meant more to him; each time he understood it better. He magnified its meaning, made a glorious world out of it, and lived in it, hardly able to think back to the time when he had longed to be what he was now—receiving such letters from such a person. The moment was ineffaceable. To enlist in the army it seemed, was like inheriting a vast estate and he was to receive it. A mere letter made him feel that he was somebody. It aroused him to action. He went about trying to make friends and everyone responded as if he had received not a letter but a universal reference.

After three weeks when recruits had been assigned to various regiments, Herald was made clerk of one of the companies. This was indeed a piece of luck. If Melanie had not written to him God knows what would have become of him. In the Intelligence Test, to the question, Occupation? he had answered, Writing. He had been writing since the year after he had come to America. A poem of his had been published in the high-school monthly and another in the city's best newspaper, on the art page; he had also some knowledge of typewriting. All of these things had perhaps helped him to become company clerk.

As recruits in this one gigantic organization, there were professional men, salesmen, labourers, students, loafers. Men who were undoubtedly leaders of the community at home were mere children in this much talked of, as yet unknown life of the army. To pick up cigarette-stubs, match-stems, cuds of chewed tobacco, to hold a dish and stand in line was bad; but was it not good, very good to know what an army is and the glory it stands for?

Any prince whose preaching of peace is worth the hearing must be a student of war. An army goes to war, but comes home to peace.

On the other hand, the camp was exactly the place for a certain type who cared not what they ate or did so long as they were free to use their fertile lingo, their little dotted bones, lose money, or make others lose it.

And there was yet a different kind of soldier in no way connected with any other type or class—the foreign born, without chauvinism, patriotism, or even self-interest. And how could they be otherwise when they neither knew the language of the country nor the purpose of the war! not being sure whether it was here they wished to live or go back to their homes. Consequently their attitude was considered by everyone, unfair to the country, and their complaints were regarded as cowardice. The native born discussed their misgivings more intelligibly and were the blind discussing the elephant whereas the foreign born were dumb, unable to say head or tail.

One morning, that is to say at daybreak, a razor misunderstood the use for which it had been made and cut deep. A voice struggled hard to create words, but was hindered by blood and could not bloom. Hurrying soldiers saw on the floor a defeated pair of arms and legs. "Go!" shouted the feet; "Reach!" exclaimed the arms; "I can't!" moaned the head.

"He cut his throat just like that!" said one.

His tent mates said, "He is a Lithuanian. He couldn't speak English."

"I'll be damned!" said the sergeant in the flannel shirt, as he buttoned his pants.

That morning when Herald went to the swamp back of the camp to look for flowers, an early crane in the water was searching for its food and he turned elsewhere. A cluster of architectural may-flowers accosted him. "Man dead; we must die!" they said, and a rusty vegetable can which had been thrown away, became their bier. On the floor of the tent the sun fell like an outstretched hand. He put the can of flowers in it.

He was solitary—of no class—a combination of the native and the foreign understanding; he was full of aspirations. But like a fruit-tree laden with treasure under which its weak system comes asunder, he knew not as yet how to keep the body perfect. He

had been taught and therefore knew, only the care of the mind apart from the science of the body. He did not as yet know how to keep shining this master-key to the infinite. He was so unaware of what builds and of what wrecks the body, that his ignorance was equal to that of a physician—of many physicians. Accordingly, the food he had been eating, had been eating him—rusting that golden key instead of shining it. A damp, dank period this—of his life in the army. A suspicion of difficulty had begun to dawn upon his mind, but scientific perception is shy, not introducing itself gallantly, and to have to analyse a problem was tedious to him.

He took sick, or rather recognized his incapacity, and went to the doctor, saluting as he entered the tent in an unsoldierly manner. The doctor suppressed a smile, but ordered him to salute again. He saluted properly but could not as yet stand like a soldier. Finally when he had done both tolerably well, the officer began to question him, asking everything, and invariably the soldier blushed, as when asked, "Don't you feel something when you see a girl's legs?" Then he was asked about his digestion and answered that it was perfect, for like the doctor he knew nothing about it. He was given some pills and told to come again. The second time he went, but not a third time.

One morning while in charge of recruits who had been appointed to police the street, he was given orders by a corporal who relieved him, to go to an unknown destination. He went, asked, asked again, and went—to hospital-ward number twenty. As he stopped in front of another ward to ask directions from within this prison-like building, violent cries—screams smote his ears. He looked at the building again, saw heavily barred windows, looked ahead, saw ward number twenty, and became dizzy with apprehension. It was not a horror of jails that inspired him with fear, but a forgotten incident of which the memory now poignantly assailed him.

In Pontiac when he was attending school with a friend named Bert Lyman, with whom he also lived at the Y. M. C. A., Bert asked him one day to take a walk. As soon as they had started, his companion told him that they were going to see "the deer" and they found themselves presently at the rear of the insane asylum. Herald had almost forgotten Bert's remark about the deer, when

a group of girls from the windows of an upper story began to shout, sing, and address them. Bert laughed, slapped his knee, and gazed at Herald with a childish exuberance. Nearly every word the girls had said was branded on his memory: "That's him, look! That's my sweetheart's cap! O come! Take me! Have another kiss!" and many other frantic, unhealthy exclamations. Not to fall short of his promise, Bert had then shown him in the woods the real deer which gazed at them as Herald had been gazing at the unfortunate girls. The boys went home by another road, passed several men near the asylum, who were walking about aimlessly, who called out to them. When Herald stopped to answer them, Bert chuckled again.

The company clerk looked at ward number twenty and dismissing the past from his mind, walked in alone, tense with fear. He went up to a lieutenant, the only person in the room, and told him he had been sent there he did not know why, could the lieutenant please tell him? The doctor told him—for the lieutenant was a doctor—that he was to stay there, and showed him a bed not far from the desk.

Nothing happened that day except that he wrote something—a poem. That is, he could not see that anything was happening. The next day he asked the doctor to be so kind as to tell him why he was there, and the indirect answer which he received, invaded him like a disease. Not knowing himself a peculiar patient, he asked the third day for permission to take a walk. The refusal intensified his suspicion, the more that he was shown a heavily wired balcony all for himself. Standing in his cage, he waited for such sounds as he had heard from the asylum when with his high-school companion, Bert Lyman. No such words came from his own lips, but a sufficient number came *to* him. To walk the length of this spacious cage, was to attain the climax of life—to be met face to face by insanity. Adjacent to him, at one end of this great promenade, was a smaller cage and it was a group of men in this cage—men convicted of abnormality—who told him, as doctors had not told him, what and where he was. Not seeing or feeling any sudden stroke of lightning, he was charred. The living tree had by this sudden metamorphosis become a burnt thing—charcoal.

Feeling that they had been intruded upon, his new neighbours

looked at him uneasily as he stood watching them, then resumed their discussion of war and of the army. Some, who were talking about themselves, were under the impression that they were generals from whom power had been usurped by envious officers. They thought these enemies of theirs had put them behind bars and explained how they would get even with them as soon as they were out. Some crouched on their haunches, confused and confusing, with a faraway look in their eyes. The new inmate looked at them, seeking among them, a parallel to himself. Which case was similar to his own? Was his behaviour just like that of any one of these? Was he really insane? But he was not put with them. Theirs was a regular prison with heavy bars—and small, while his was large; he was by himself, and there were only heavy screens to shut him in. This thought resuscitated him.

Soon the men were summoned from inside; whereupon they leaped to the door on top of each other like dogs, with growing eyes, and a great noise; except the brooding ones who remained as they were, frothing. Although they came back incredibly soon, it must have been a dinner call for they brought portions of food out into the cage. A patient whom he recognized as the man who thought he was a general, tried to force food into the mouth of one of the men who could not eat. His victim neither rejected the food nor accepted it, but sat like a stone, his back to the wall. The general then beat him persistently and ordered his assistant generals to open the unconscious mouth. The food was pushed in but came out like a slow-moving land-slide—awesome, terrifying. And again the unmerciful beating began.

“You must not do that, they can’t eat!” exclaimed the insane neighbour. The general ceased everything, gave a histrionic look around, and perceiving the source of the insulting voice, came toward the offender, swearing. Iron bars, a hair dividing hell from heaven, stopped him. He shook his fist, and then the bars, growling contumaciously, “You damned spy! You’ve found me again, have you?” Herald shrugged and retreated, fearing the authorities might catch him in this brawl.

Relying on letters which he had received from Melanie, to relieve his bitterness, the prisoner fumbled in his pocket till he found one and read it standing, for there was nothing in the cage on which he could sit down. He protested to Melanie with blur-

ring eyes that he did not know why he was in this place. He had himself walked to it to find himself a prisoner, perhaps insane; that is all he knew. An insane companion even, would have been better to him than solitude. The second day the doctor had said good morning, to test him of course.

Encouraged to hope that perhaps another word might come, he took a step forward, but the doctor had already turned his back. The company clerk turned his back also and looked beseechingly into space as if to find there, a human being. The doctor was the only person he was allowed to see and he could not talk even to him.

The first night there had been a guard to watch him; the first morning the doctor had greeted him; the second night no guard watched him; the third day the doctor came and sat with him, and talked to him. How could he know that this kindness was mere medical diplomacy? He accepted it all in good faith. It was not so terrible after all except that another doctor came and cross-examined him, asking questions that it was hard work for the prisoner to answer, harder than labouring. His mouth answered in words, his body in perspiration.

“What is your occupation?”

“I have never had one. I have worked at nearly everything but have had no regular job.”

“Why not?”

“I have always wanted to write. No job interested me very long.”

“Did you come into the army with that spirit?”

“No, sir. I enlisted because I wanted to go across.”

“What do you write?”

“Poetry.”

“To what school do you belong? What is your style?”

“In structure I should say that my work follows Whitman’s; in feeling, Poe’s.”

The doctor raised his eyebrows and stared expansively at the company clerk, who thought he had made a mistake.

“Have you specimens of your work that I could see?”

The patient gave the doctor *In Your Eyes*, a piece later published in *Poetry*, *A Magazine of Verse*.

“May I keep this to consult with my colleague about?” enquired the doctor by way of command.

"Are you in love?" he continued.

Herald's face dropped with shyness, his heart beat and pressed, without volition.

"Yes," like a bird from the infinite, shot into the trap of the questioner's mind.

"Does she love you?"

"I do not know."

"Have you asked her?"

"No."

"I will talk this over with another doctor," he said, leaving, "and see what we can do for you."

The prisoner was not now so depressed for he had just received a letter from Melanie which he went to the balcony to read in safety. "Dear Leon: What you say is beautiful. We have read it over and over, Sidney and I, and don't think we could let you be lonely. You must look handsome in uniform, do send us your picture. . . . Mother is improving. She thanks you, and sends you her best wishes. We are sure you will be advanced and be a great success. You are fortunate to be a company clerk helping doctors and lawyers, while others who have had greater success in civilian life are still privates. We look forward to hearing from you. Melanie."

He lived on a height not realizing that the words of friends are passing clouds on one's horizon, that friends are of all persons, those least able to prophesy; the very opposite of what they predict seems usually to happen. Melanie's letter was a drug, inducing dreams that were swift and clear, and sleep that was fast and deep. In the morning he woke early and relived the visions of the past night, permitting them to go deeper—to include Melanie herself. But such thoughts were like affected lungs, sound in spots and dotted all over. Memories of home and the recent army experience alike, were bespattering evidences of disease. The world of body, the world of mind, were in the hands of doctors. The patient was better acquainted with the world of the imagination than with that of the body, but could he prove it when doctors said no?

Two corporals came in, saluted, handed some papers to the doctor, talked with him a moment, and left. Soon they came back, leading half a dozen men, saluted, and left. The doctor beckoned to him to add himself to the miscellany, and the clerk,

thinking he had been set free, cheerfully said good-bye to the doctor. But a black curtain was to let itself down before his eyes, for his greeting was ignored. Perhaps the doctor had not noticed the good-bye. In any case he refused to be daunted, and hope was high though chained. Could a mind fed on imagination, accept such reality? Perhaps he was going to be free. There was nothing the matter with him. Perhaps he was to take charge of his duties—distribute the mail, and dispense good news again, to his lonely associates. Perhaps he was soon to go to Europe; to face devastation and die there. No, not that—to come back with victory.

He was imposing shadows on reality. They had taken only a few steps when the guards halted them in front of a tent. One of the corporals went in, came out, stood the men in line, and ushered them in. Herald brushed his eyes. Never had he seen so many generals and officers. The fact that the guards were armed suggested to him the terrifying truth, and he shrank from it dumb-founded. As the men were questioned, he finally realized that this was an insane platoon. He was the last to be examined and understood little of the diagnosis which was made by the doctor before the officiating generals, and which was concluded by a reading of the poem. Glancing sarcastically at the perplexed patient the doctor said, "It is a beautiful thing," and the generals who had not been listening to the poem, nodded—looking at him also. This too was doctorial diplomacy for studying the patient's reaction. He was not informed of the particulars of the case, but was told that he was discharged.

Outside the tent, alone, unidentified, indefinite, infinitesimal, he found himself at a crisis of his life, wrecked, discredited, without power to walk. His manhood gone, his soldiery taken from him, where could he go? The lad burst into tears. Someone from the tent came out, one of the generals, no doubt, and told him there was nothing much the matter with him, but that he could not stay in the army. The outcast replied, "If—if I am like that why don't you take care of me? Where can I go in this condition? I have no place, no one to go to," but the man had disappeared.

The disclaimed one moved as though dead—conscious only of being that. He heard the band play—it was his dirge, his funeral march. He was himself, the sole follower of his dead self. Would

that dead self now go to Heaven, a Heaven of self-discovery, where one is not bound by what others have to say? Was this earth now renounced, to have resurrection and become an Elysium without precedent? The dead walked with dead thoughts. With dead wings he flew. The touch of his feet to the ground was that of one who walks in sleep. On a distant hill, a place still known to the living by the name of The Hundred and Eighteenth Field Artillery Headquarters, was a stopping-place for the dead, such dead as he, and he went there to rest. On the hill another band was playing; another regiment was drilling—to further remind him that he was no longer a part of such vividness—that it was all remote from him.

Next day—the dead himself received the report of his death. He read the strange document for hours and two words were like smoking sticks in his eyes, like the sharp steel piece which darts into the whale's body in its death sea; two words: *Dementia Praecox*—smoke to blind sight, harpoons for killing a whale. He could not before God, save himself; he was caught. What did *Praecox* mean? Perhaps it was one of the best words in the language, an antidote to the evil of the word *Dementia*. Perhaps, combined with the first word, it meant only a temporary, mild attack of some passing affection. He was aware of a heaviness in his head, a phenomenon unlike sleeplessness, unlike being beaten, tired, starved, or even worry. In reality it was like a piece of paper wrapped around a green bush, soon to be torn away by the wind. But his knowledge was as limited as that of the Pilates who had passed sentence on him. He stood mute, in prayer, that they be forgiven for casting him out as insane.

He presented his discharge to the lieutenant, who did not know the meaning of the word *Praecox*, and sent him to the Chaplain. "Chaplain"; it was a good name. He presented the paper, entreated an explanation, and asked if he could not remain in the camp and perform some other duty, for his longing to stay and be of service was like a hunger. But as soon as the Chaplain had read the two words, he quickly shut the door again to be safe from the insane man—protected, free. The Chaplain was there to help the soldiers, but this one was after all, no longer a soldier. It seemed a literal interpreting of the Bible text: From him that hath not, even that which he hath, shall be taken away. The

seeker of enlightenment was shut like a plague from the door of the representative of mercy, shut out by a door which was meant to be open.

Herald knew of no other door on which to knock and left the camp like a beaten dog—yelping—running through children he had played with, without even wanting to look at their faces. Or have you seen a tree, uprooted by a convulsive storm, its roots in the air, a hollow beneath, a fallen tree closely clasping its shadow? O jealous shadow, passionate shadow, bearing its own tree to the ground that it may have it in its arms! O jealous death, beckoning, enticing life into its arms! O jealous death, dancing like a shadow until life is prostrated on the ground!

As nature's wind to nature's tree, so is man's decision to his fellow-man.

To be continued

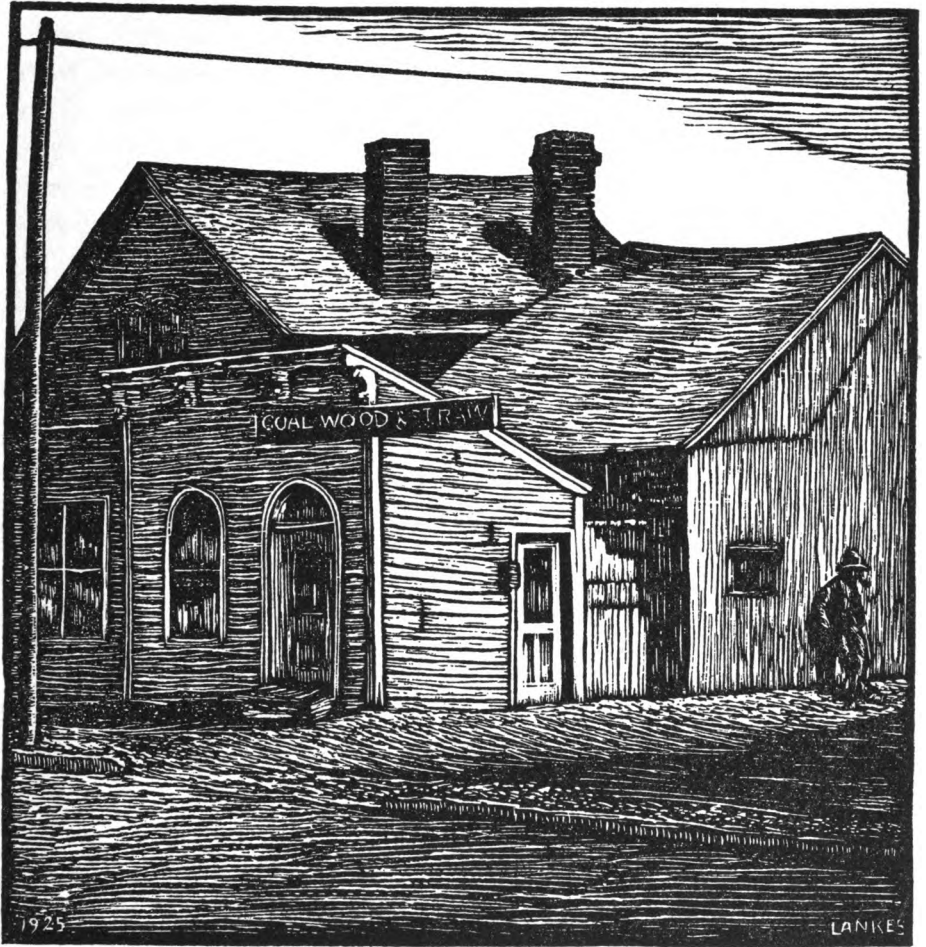
ELEMENT

BY STERLING NORTH

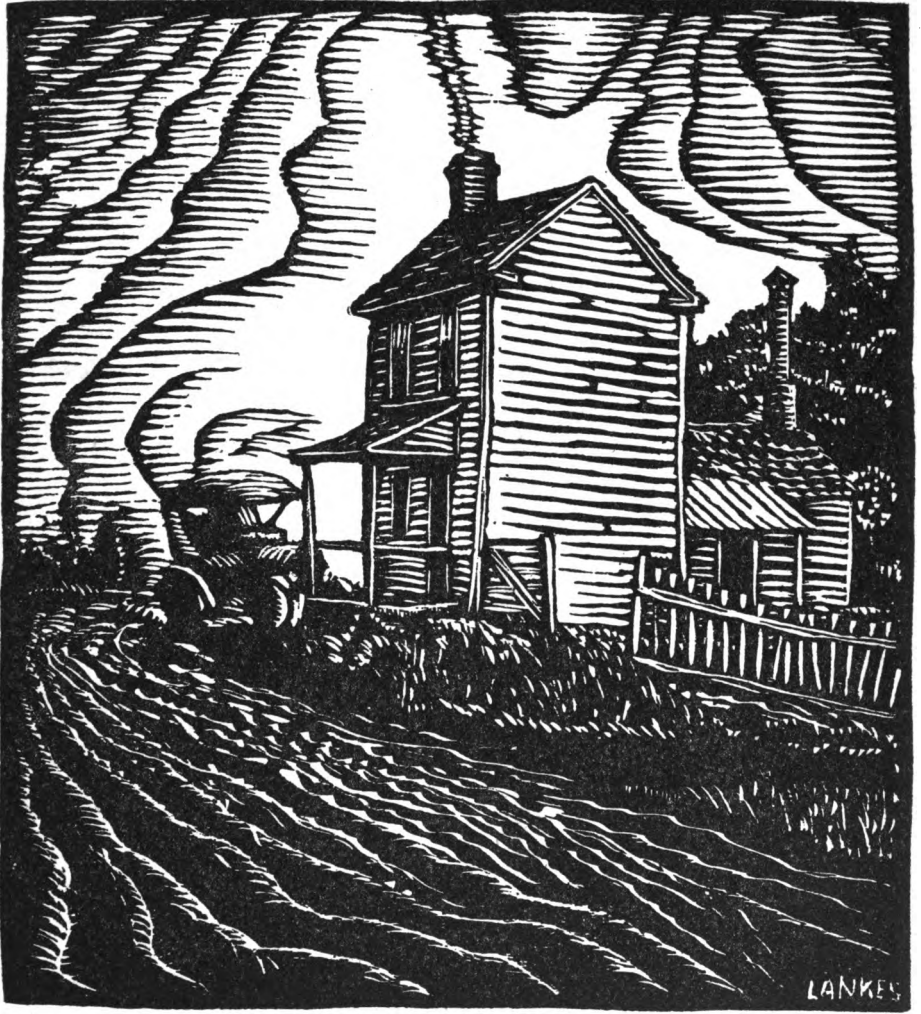
Beneath your momentary mask
The wind lies drowsy on the sea;
No sound of waves along the sand
Gives access to the mystery.

The waters of my life run swift
In curves that follow either shore;
Above the rushing silvery swirl
The grey gulls cry and soar.

Oh we may meet, with passion merge
And lash the cliffs in autumn weather,
Or fall like rain in some deep pool
And lie down quietly together.



COAL-YARD. BY J. J. LANKES



A NEGRO'S HOUSE. BY J. J. LANKES



RUTH AND NAOMI. BY J. J. LANKES

ITALIAN LETTER

March, 1927

FUNDAMENTALLY, there are two ways of approaching poetry. There are minds which are incapable of ever going beyond the word or the line, beyond that which in poetry is sensuously pleasing and gives rise in us to the kind of satisfaction which is afforded by any highly skilled product of dexterity; to these, poetry is but a sort of verbal magic, it is a craft consisting merely in the combination of verbal sounds. And again there are minds which have the power of passing immediately from the word to the thing, from the sound to the soul, from the sensuous appearance to the spiritual substance, to the human wisdom or folly which is, after all, not only the root, but the whole tree of poetry.

Therefore every poem is written in two distinct languages, can be apprehended according to two different meanings; of which the first, however, is hardly a true language, hardly a significant meaning. Therefore the humanities have, and have always had through the centuries, two separate aspects, and now appear as mere grammars, or rhetorics, or poetics, and now as histories, philosophies, moralities, sciences of life and of the soul. To the grammarian, a word, or a line, or a poem is a solid mechanical reality, to be described and classified in conformity with certain laws which are abstracted from, and verified by its material structure; to the historian and the philosopher, and, more simply, to the ideal *candidus lector*, a word, or a line, or a poem is a transparent spiritual symbol to be understood and relived in its absoluteness and individuality, obedient only to the *creator spiritus* which has placed upon it the stamp of its power.

I believe this distinction to be not only true, but almost obvious. Yet, if we should try to examine the facts of the most recent literary history in its light, it would lead us to conclusions of a singularly paradoxical flavour. The grammarian has undergone a strange metamorphosis, and though he may still be met with in his original shape in the universities and academies, he will be found more often among the literary reformers, posing as a pure

poet, and advocating the most complete release from all the laws and rules which it was his business, in his former incarnations, to establish and enforce. Not being altogether stupid, he has succeeded in understanding that those laws and rules were not what they pretended to be, the essence of poetry, nor even indispensable to its growth. He understands this only in relation to the laws and rules of the past, which have been specifically criticized by the philosopher and the historian; any thought of the absolute uniqueness and spirituality of poetry, however, is far above him, and essentially contrary to his nature. If he is to subsist at all, he must have some sort of law or rule: he cannot live in the rarefied atmosphere of the high peaks, nor stand the strain of an intellectual life in which his judgement should be guided no longer by recognized standards, but only by the immediate contact with, and the direct experience of spiritual reality. Between the particular, concrete, ineffably individual, historically determined word, or line, or poem, on one side, and the universal idea of poetry on the other, he must build his little bridges, or rather, he must convert that universal idea, which he is unable to apprehend in its purity, into a definite material pattern. And the pattern is easily drawn, by a mere process of inversion: if neither morphology, nor syntax, nor prosody, nor any kind of poetics is poetry, then poetry is that which has neither form, nor order, nor metre, nor composition; and that which shows any trace of the old form and order, then ceases to be poetry.

Such is the common origin of our many attempts in the last twenty-five years to create, programmatically, a "new" poetry. It would be superfluous to name schools, to point to patterns, but Futurism is a good name for all the schools, a name pregnant with unconscious irony; and *vers libre* may stand for all the patterns: a contradiction in the very terms of the expression. A Futurist may also be a poet, or a true poem may be written in what is called *vers libre*; as a poet, however, the Futurist places himself irremediably in the past, and, as poetry, the *vers* ceases to be *libre*, submitting itself to a metre, though different from any other, yet not less strict. But do our Futurists—as fanatically opposed to anything that does not conform to their particular brand of freedom as the old grammarians were opposed to any kind of freedom—do they honestly believe that there was ever a poet who was

not a new poet, who was not, when compared with the poets who had preceded him, a poet of the future? Or that any poem was ever written in a metre which was not a new metre, which was not the metre of that particular poem, and of no other poem? If this is what they believe, then the identity of the Futurist with the Grammarian is irrefutable.

These considerations apply to modern poetry, and to a certain extent, to modern music, and all modern art, throughout our Western world. They apply with greater force, however, where, as in the case of modern Italian poetry, no outstanding personality succeeds in solving the riddle of the times with the apparition of an unpredictable and yet necessary synthesis of old and new, such as every original aesthetic creation inevitably is. We are going through an age of transition, a twilight of poetry; and perhaps the new grammarians, with their experimenting curiosity and their unreasoned intolerance, perform a function which is ultimately an emphasizing of the poverty of contemporary inspiration and of our desperate craving for poetry.

I can well remember those first years of the century in which the publication of Carducci's collected poems, of d'Annunzio's *Laudi*, of Pascoli's *Poemi Conviviali* gave us constantly the sense of drawing breath in an atmosphere in which the translation of reality into the music of myths was a normal happening; an atmosphere which seemed to be still that of the third great season of Italian poetry, after the Trecento and the Cinquecento, the season of the Risorgimento, inaugurated by Parini and Alfieri, and reaching down to us, through Foscolo, Manzoni, and Leopardi, with Carducci and his two disciples. But looking back on those years, the perspective is now not a little altered. Carducci is still to us the last poet of the great lineage, the last great *maestro d'umanità*, a classic both in the narrow and in the wider sense of the word: in his strict and voluntary adherence to the models of the past (his deepest note of originality was struck in the imitating of classical metres) and in his devotion to a task entrusted to him by generations of poets—a service far transcending our brief span of mortal life; above all, in the purity and clearness with which he gave expression to a powerful and passionate poetical personality, exquisitely and almost romantically sensitive to the pathos

of its own history and destiny. But d'Annunzio was already of another age, of an age which was losing, with all its other religions, the religion of poetry as well; with him the *ars longa*, though in words still pretending to be a dedication to immortality, becomes in fact but an ornament of the *vita brevis*, when indeed it is other than the vicarious satisfaction of a thoroughly earthly lust. (This age, in European Literature, begins with Byron, who shifted the centre of gravity from the poem to the poet, as, with Napoleon, the Empire became but the shadow of the Emperor.) D'Annunzio was no longer a classic, only a dilettante and an archaeologist; his work, like Tennyson's, is a vast cemetery of illustrious forms, and like Wilde's, a museum of brilliant and pompous masks and costumes to be employed, not on the tragic stage, but for the daily performances of life. The disproportion between the magnificence of the phrase, the incomparable wealth of literary trappings, and the merely personal contents is abolished only when in his moments of self-oblivion and of harmonious inspiration, the *lussuria* is no longer dominant either as an overpowering immediate interest or as the subtle corruptor of the poetical into the oratorical (practical) word, but is at last fused and dominated in the sphere of musical contemplation and myth-creation. After each visitation of grace, however, the disproportion returns increased by the necessity of constantly replacing with a new and greater magnificence the materials rapidly deteriorating, the words and rhythms and phrases emptied of all meaning by the strain of the inhuman uses to which they have been put. The great hour of his life, in fact, found this spendthrift a beggar.¹

It is not quite so simple to explain in what way Pascoli also helped to bring the classical tradition to its close, and to produce that feeling of hopeless poverty which prevails to-day. Between Croce's partly negative verdict, and the unintelligent, indiscriminating admiration of devotees, as fanatic as Browning's, and as they—and even less justifiably—looking for the sage in the poet, one feels somehow that the whole truth has not yet been said, and that

¹ Italian literary criticism has been constantly at work on the d'Annunzio problem—especially during the last twenty years. After Croce's essays, and the books of Borgese and Gargiulo, Flora's recent D'Annunzio (Napoli, Ricciardi) may be regarded as the conclusion of this long discussion, reached through a keen and vigilant consciousness of both the distinction between and the coincidence of moral and aesthetic values.

there is something in him that still eludes the critics. But this elusive, still undefined something is to be looked for where, through all his weaknesses and his mannerisms, he succeeds in striking a clear note of song, of a quality which had not been heard before in Italian poetry. As in d'Annunzio, Pascoli's felicities also gleam through a dense foliage of superfluities, not magnificent and high-sounding, but humble, good, charitable, painful, and at times exceedingly irritating. Readers of Latin ought to see his *Carmina*: he is probably the only original poet in the Latin tongue which Europe has had since Politianus and Pontanus; his Latin, though impeccable, is a language of his own—but what a minutely wrought, exasperated, and perverse language! Latin, after Pascoli, might well be given up in despair. To the same minute, persistent, perverse elaboration he submitted Italian words and metres, pursuing an ideal which ought to be called onomatopoetic rather than poetic. Poetry which, according to his explicit theory, is the work of the *fanciullino* in the man, becomes with him a highly complicated game, and a very earnest one, as all children's games are; and you feel all the time that in his opinion there are substances and qualities, objects and aspects, which are poetic in themselves, and which it is the task of the poet to capture in the craftily contrived nets of his words and metres. The more the word and the metre strive to simulate, and almost to identify themselves with, the poetic thing, the more they lose in genuine expressive power, in that truly poetic quality which cannot be recognized through any of their abstract material attributes, being, each time that it reveals itself, the sudden, irrevocable, eternalizing flash of a new creative act. The only poetic thing in the world is a poem.

Though in every respect as different from each other as two men and two poets can be, d'Annunzio and Pascoli converge into a sort of poetic materialism, *a parte subjecti* in the former, *a parte objecti* in the latter, but equally remote in both from the classic conception of poetry. It was hard, after their experience, to keep one's faith either in the transcendence of poetry or in the spirituality of metrical language.

Other influences were at work at the same time; particularly that of French decadentism and symbolism. Verlaine, Mallarmé, Laforgue, Maeterlinck, Jammes, and a few years later Rimbaud, Péguy, Claudel, were successively hailed as the inventors of pre-

cisely that kind of poetry which was entirely adequate to the needs of the times. In each case, the individual poetic tonality, that which made each of them, in greater or lesser measure, a poet, was felt in a vague way only; but peculiarities of content, mannerisms of form, were closely observed, and more or less precisely imitated. It was somewhat tacitly admitted that the new poetry had to be distinguished by clearly definable characteristics: new subjects, new words, or at least words new to the language of poetry, new metres. The extra-temporal values were lost sight of in the exclusive search for the *frisson nouveau*: it was mainly through these influences that poetry came to be considered a mere function of the age, a fashion, as fleeting and impermanent as all fashions are.

Marinetti and his followers, with their frank denial of the survival of poetic, and therefore of all spiritual values, were the most logical exponents of this crisis. Only those aspects of modern civilization which are peculiar to it: machinery, and the life of the great industrial city, the airplane and the mechanical war, were worthy of the new song. The human element, as the one which shows a deplorable tendency to maintain certain fundamental characters through all ages, was to be suppressed altogether: for the "psychology of man" the "obsession of matter" was to be substituted. The materialism implicit and concealed in d'Annunzio and Pascoli exploded here in all its nakedness, defeating the ends which it was supposed to serve: a piece of machinery, detached from the mind which has forged it and uses it, is but a fragment of matter, and therefore more timeless, more incapable of receiving a date, than the most elementary movement of the human soul. And history had its revenge, since it is impossible to be modern except in relation to and by contrast with that which is apprehended as old or ancient, and yet acknowledged as being somehow identical with ourselves: there can subsist no difference without a similarity. To suppress all—even formal—similarity, however, Marinetti preached the suppression not of man alone, but of all verbal tenses except the infinitive, of all adjectives and adverbs, and of the signs of punctuation. Substantives were to be placed "*a caso, come nascono*," and always in couples, each being regularly followed by the one to which it is bound by some arbitrary analogy. Such was the rhetoric of the *parole in libertà*, with which Marinetti, deducing with Alexandrine ingenuity the extreme consequences of

the French literary movement before they were ripe on their own soil, foreshadowed Dada and German Expressionism.

In one thing at least this new rhetoric was a complete success: the works which it produced were so essentially modern, so much of and for the instant, that at the distance of a few years they are all buried and forgotten. They had what life they ever possessed only through the *viva voce* of Marinetti himself, who is to-day the oldest man I know, being still, now that he is almost fifty, that which he was at twenty-five. As to his followers, even their names are lost, except for a few, like Palazzeschi and Govoni, who were associated with him through purely extrinsic and practical motives. Palazzeschi and Govoni belong in fact to the *Crepuscolari*, the Twilight Poets, and their place is by the side of Corazzini, Moretti, Martini, and Gozzano. They all move in a different world, not of energy and mechanics, but of childish and childishy described emotions, of small and stuffy provincial interiors, of abandoned gardens, of *béguinages*, of convents, of hospitals, of Pierrots and marionettes, of little comic tragedies, of the constitutional invalidity and the early death of poets: a second-hand world, obviously and even unashamedly, Verlainian, Laforguian, Jammesian; yet, for some of them at least, not without some personal justification, since both Corazzini and Gozzano died of consumption, the one being little more than a boy, the other still a very young man. Their method is the reverse of Marinetti's: not the brutal acceptance of extreme deductions, but a hopeless despair of poetic values consoled by the semi-ironical contemplation of a thoroughly fictitious, and even to the poet himself quite unimportant, poetic content. The poet is continually asking to be forgiven for spending his time on trivial matters, and assuring you that he is quite aware of the futility of his vocation. Do not be hard on him: he cannot escape his grotesque destiny! He is a child who shall never grow up.

To this childish world a mock-childish language is thoroughly adequate. The *Crepuscolari* speak it *piano*, as if abashed at the sound of their own voice. Govoni recites endless sequences of free verse, wary of music, poems beginning and ending nowhere and everywhere, like those inferior organisms whose life is equally diffused in every cell of their bodies. Palazzeschi complicates his own free verse with a multitude of comic inflexions, of naïve

rhymes, of verbal quips and cranks. But Moretti, Martini, and the most interesting of them all, Gozzano, employ the traditional metres with a wilful negligence, with a conscious irony, which is the exact formal counterpart of their slender and ironic, provincial and old-fashioned, poetic substance: they do not attempt to conceal the fact that to write lines of a constant number of syllables, and to adorn them with regularly recurring rhymes, is the most foolish occupation in the world, unless you succeed in showing that you are aware of your own foolishness even while persisting in it.

This metrical scepticism was increased, in some of the more intelligent young writers, by a mistaken interpretation of Croce's aesthetics. His concept of lyrical intuition, his discussion of technique, seemed in a way to discourage every conscious effort of poetical composition. It seemed that poetry could be found nowhere but in the most fugitive, most fragmentary, flashes of imagination, and almost of sensation; and that, on the other hand, the most simple, the most trivial word or phrase should be anyhow, by definition, a poem. If these inferences were logically correct, Croce's aesthetic theories would stand condemned by them; but it would not be difficult to prove that they misrepresent the very doctrine which they profess. Moreover even correct particular inferences of a general theory become false when converted into dogma or precepts: the aim of aesthetic science is not to guide the poet in his work, but to understand poetry in all its forms. Though mistaken, however, this interpretation helped poetry, in the years immediately preceding the war, to take refuge in prose and in prose fragments. Papini's *Cento Pagine di Poesia*, Soffici's *Giornale di Bordo*, which are deliberately fragmentary, Slataper's *Il Mio Carso*, Serra's *Esame di Coscienza*, and many scattered pages in Cecchi's, Boine's, and Jahier's books, contain all the lyrical fire to which the literary movement centring round the Florentine paper, *La Voce*, was able to give birth.

After the war, it is from the neo-classics of the Ronda that one should have expected an attempt to rehabilitate poetry and its language. But in fact they were all incongruously afraid of metre, with the only exception of Bacchelli, whose *Poemi Lirici* is one of the most unlyrical books ever written. It was their professed in-

tention to be writers and not poets, and even recently one of the most gifted among them, Baldini, has regretted his own early disaffection from the singing word: a vain regret, after all, since he only sings who cannot help singing. So it happens that the one who figures as the poet of the neo-classic group is now Ungaretti, in whose very scanty poems, not unlike some of Tzara's or Soupault's, words are raised from their mere written value by an enormous implicit emphasis and, eventually, by the good-will of the reader.

Older men, while these metamorphoses were taking place, silently cultivated their secluded poetical gardens. Adolfo de Bosis, a devoted friend of both Pascoli and d'Annunzio, a lover of Walt Whitman, a translator of Shelley, leaves, in his *Amori ac Silentio*, the noble legacy of a life dedicated to the disinterested service of the Muses. Enrico Thovez, whose critical activity was a continuous battle against his contemporaries, not always succeeded in freeing his otherwise remarkable creative work from an obvious polemic and pedagogical bias. Riccardo Balsamo Crivelli, innocent of any programmatic sin, avows in his long poems in *ottava rima*, Boccaccino and Calugino, his spiritual affinity with and his technical dependence upon the Florentine poets of the fifteenth century, Lorenzo, Poliziano, and Pulci, singing his little song of "melancholy mirth" in a quiet, subdued, unequivocal tone. Francesco Gaeta has transferred into Italian words and rhythms, the voluptuous and melodious spirit of the Neapolitan *canzone*. (Nor should it be forgotten that the dialects of Naples and Rome preserve enough of their original vitality to give us two of our most notable poets—the Neapolitan Salvatore di Giacomo, and the Roman Cesare Pascarella.) Finally Vincenzo Gerace, who but a few weeks ago was crowned with the Mondadori Prize for Poetry, also belongs to the older generation, and is a disciple of Leopardi and Carducci.

The continuity of poetic tradition may therefore appear to be less in danger now, than it was amid the clamours of the Futurists and the pathetic dirges of the *Crepuscolari*. The prodigal sons are now coming home: Papini's *Pane e Vino*, published last year, is a collection of poems in the traditional metres, and Soffici's *Elegia dell'Ambra*, which is just out, is written in regular blank verse. If it were not that one feels somehow that even orthodoxy may at times be but a new experiment in non-conformism (*vide* Cocteau's

recent conversion to Catholicism and the traditional metres); and also, that it is impossible for a poetic language to be spoken with a true native accent except by him who has never conceived the possibility of employing any other, one might almost believe that a laborious crisis has reached here its solution, and that more favourable conditions for poetry will henceforth prevail beneath our skies.

As for myself, when I am not thinking of poetry as a literary problem, but am tortured by that thirst for the divine music of the human soul which is one of the deepest needs of these our arid and unmusical times, I open a little, forgotten book by my unfortunate friend of other and more luminous days, the composer Giannotto Bastianelli, in some of whose poems the purity of the image is equalled by the liquid grace of their rhythm:

*“Cuordigioia, per la festa settembrina
della vendemmia
chiede la vigna
il tuo giovin viso d'oro;”*

or I listen to a voice from the underworld, that of the philosopher Carlo Michelstaedter, the little known author of that metaphysical masterpiece, *La Persuasione e la Retorica*, and once more I hear his solemn and not vain invocation to Death:

*“purchè alla mia pupilla questa luce
che pur guarda le tenebre si spenga,
e più non sappia questo ch'ora soffro
vano tormento senza via nè speme,
tu mi sei cara mille volte, o morte,
che il sonno verserai senza risveglio,
su quest'occhio che sa di non vedere,
sì che l'oscurità per me sia spenta.”*

But the student of contemporary literature would not find these two names in any discussion on modern Italian poetry, nor in the official anthology, Papini and Pancrazi's *Poeti d'Oggi*.

RAFFAELLO PICCOLI

BOOK REVIEWS

“WORDS! WORDS!”

WORDS ANCIENT AND MODERN. *By Ernest Weekley.*
12mo. 163 pages. E. P. Dutton and Company. \$2.

“WORDS” is itself a word which enjoys to the utmost the magnificent privilege of the English language in respect of multiplicity of interpretation and application. I am not sure whether one popular instance of this in England itself has continued in America: the instance in which “having words” with a person means having more or less of a quarrel with him. But it is certain that books on words have not always been written in a pacific spirit: and have still oftener—whether their writers meant it or not—been the occasion of battles. Nobody, however, need be afraid of breaches of the peace of letters in or because of this book of Professor Weekley’s; for it is a thoroughly good-blooded, good-natured, and good-tempered book: and perhaps there is only one point about which a possible glove might be found lying half *perdu*, or a suspicious gesture as of thumb-biting imagined. And what this point is nothing shall induce the present reviewer to say. That Mr Weekley suggests a philologist-guard to prevent poets or writers generally from making such blunders as Spenser’s over “derring-do” lays him open to no reproach: and is certainly not an undue magnification of his office. In fact, though he does not suggest this particular case, a very pretty picture might be made of a philological Greatheart gently removing the slug-horn from Mr Browning’s hero’s lips and pointing out that it was not a musical instrument. Of course there is room for slight difference of opinion now and then: but that only adds to the interest of the book. I have myself some difficulty in swallowing the suggested Arabic origin of Marchpane or Marzipan: and though I do not pretend to know that of Sedan-chair I do not think the local explanation “absurd.” How about Landau? Even *sedes* has in its favour that perhaps in no vehicle is the *sitting* position of the traveller

more conspicuously contrasted with the *walking* of his or her fellow-creatures and -carriers before and behind. But this approaches a wrangle: which we have refused.

And certainly it would be a very ill-conditioned person who would wrangle with Mr Weekley. He thinks that some of his articles, such as that on "anlace" may be "tough for general consumption"; but if they be found so it will not say much for the general's teeth. The word seems always to have been a puzzle: and Chaucer himself, in using it, seems pretty certainly to have thought that it was, in the actual phrase that he uses elsewhere, a dagger "on a lace," i.e. hanging on the girdle. Some took it as having to do with the ring (*annulus*) by which it would be so suspended: and others with the Provençal *laz*, a rather curious form of *latus*—"the sword *at the side*" which phrase again actually does occur in no less important a connexion than that of Saint Peter's striking at the arrest of Christ. But there seems no doubt that the word really is nothing more than a representative (by the very common process of metathesis or "change over" of letters) of the also common Old French *alenas*, a dagger, still represented in the modern language by *alène* applied to awls and perhaps other pointed things. This is one of the best examples of a first-rate etymological "hunt and kill" that one has recently read. Another of the same kind—though possibly the "kill" may seem to some more doubtful—is the chase of "Oriël," which has been sometimes denied strict right as the name of a famous Oxford College, but which has, recently at any rate, been a godsend to the poets as an exceptionally beautiful word for a window. Whether one accepts or not the proffered origin from *aureolum*, corruption of *auleolum*, diminutive of *aula*, and meaning rather a chapel, side-shrine, et cetera—the "window" being thus not strictly necessary—does not much matter. I own that it commends itself to me rather less than the "anlace." But the hunt is fun even if one thinks that the quarry has got to ground and has not been "bolted and killed."

There is an agreeable miscellaneousness about these word-hunts which rather reminds one of the stories that old East Indians used to tell of actual hunting in those regions. The hounds, they said, were such curious mongrels between dog, wolf, jackal, and what not that there was a kind of free-masonry between chased and chasers, and when the hunted animal got a little tired he would

fall back into the pack, some member of which would obligingly take his place. All sorts of side issues turn up in Mr Weekley's enquiries: though he generally sticks to his main quest. We shall probably never know whether our "orchard" is the strictly English "*wort-yard*" or a half-Latin reduplication of "*hort* [*hortus*] yard." In discussing a certain picturesque but inelegant intensive, which has sometimes of late emerged into what is called literature, Mr Weekley does not mention an interesting use of it by Dryden in his Essay on Satire with regard to the great "Zimri" picture of Buckingham in Absalom and Achitophel. It was not, he says with evident gratification, "bloody." Now did he mean by that "savage," "intending to wound," or merely "violent," "excessive"—a use which the word at the time certainly had? Probably there was a little of both: and the mixture would certainly fit Dryden's peculiar satiric manner of what has been called "keeping the upper hand"—never scratching or screaming or losing temper.

One may not be quite so positive as Mr Weekley is that the old explanation of the word "pagan" as meaning "a villager" is wrong, and the more modern one of "civilian," right. Gibbon certainly (as is admitted here) knew both: and one may feel rather inclined to admit both. The Christianized "cit" might very well regard the unchristianized villager in one light, and the clergy with the more pious of the laity, regard one who was not a soldier of Christ as a *pékin* in another.

Cavillers may perhaps say that "democracy" and "monitor" (in the warship sense) are rather out of place in such a book as this. Merely as a word, "democracy" has no puzzles: though of course one might write, not an article but a book or half a score of books, as to its historical and political applications and associations. If on the other hand "monitor" though still used in pretty much its original sense during the late war, has had that origin forgotten in England, why the sarcasm that "the wider the extension of education, the narrower the contraction of knowledge" must have some truth in it.

But this is not quite the sort of thing we want to talk about. I wonder whether Mr Weekley is right in identifying the verb to "dicker"—which he quotes from, and which I have seen in, American books—with the substantive of the same spelling which I have never before heard of or seen in English use outside of dictionaries.

Here it seems to mean specially a (decade) bundle of hides: and Mr Weekley attributes the American sense of "swapping" or "bargaining" to the former prominence of the fur-trade in the States. But does it not also mean to quarrel? Of course bargaining does often pass into quarrelling. But one would like more positive information about uses on both sides. That the passing of substantive into verb is one of the properties and privileges of English wherever it is spoken is an undoubted truth: and one constantly and most properly asserted in this very book. But the jump in the present instance seems rather a wide one.

However, as I have confessed a good deal of ignorance on both sides of this question, I will not be positive about it. I feel more rebellious to Mr Weekley's demand that we should trace "codling"—the apple name—to *coeur-de-lion* because it has (*if it has*) a hard heart. The apparent absurdity and what has just been called the wide jump—in spelling now—would not much matter. But *is* the codling's heart particularly hard? And does the famous epithet refer to *hardness* of heart or to *braveness* of it? ¹ The derivation used to be "coddle" in the sense of "cook," with perhaps a further reference to the coddled or crumpled surface of the fruit when cooked: and this seems quite sufficient. Of course there is the old maxim of classical scholarship—the more difficult the reading, the likelier. But that is not quite indisputable in itself and in etymology it is very likely to tempt boldness to be too bold.

Still, as has been said already, one is loath even to appear to quarrel with Mr Weekley, for his book is full of pleasant things. He quotes in a note an egregious novelist (mercifully unnamed) who wrote of "an Oxford gyp." I can balance it with another who, in my earliest reviewing days, made his hero, a Cambridge undergraduate, "have a few holidays because of the death of the Greek Professor"—an event which, though it might cause a decent sorrow, could at neither University have the very slightest effect on the working-days or holidays of anybody *in statu pupillari*. I am on the other hand a little puzzled by his note on Jersey (the garment) "so called because originally knitted in Jersey—an *island without sheep*." There is, or was, a cryptic joke between the two

¹ In Romance, of course, it means neither: but commemorates the actual wrenching out of the lion's heart.

chief Channel Islands about certain animals, but this would hardly fit in. Besides, the original fisherman's outside garment was surely called Guernsey not Jersey? "Jumper" from *jupon* is not impossible and no doubt the sterner folk among etymologists would highly reprobate the suggestion "a garment you can jump into." But "pull-over" which I do not think Mr Weekley brings in, may be thought to support this levity. I confess I did not know that the shorter form, "Jump," was in Johnson.

If this seems a desultory way of writing, it must be remembered that the book itself is and ought to be a place to browse over; one on which to pick up new pieces of information and to ruminate them with older knowledge and further suggestion all combined. That there must needs be not a little guess-work is certainly no objection to the game—games with no chance, no guess, no uncertainty about them are perhaps respectable but, at any rate to some unregenerate minds, rather uninteresting. There *is* interest in wondering, for instance, whether "plat" or "plot" is, in whatever way it may be spelt or pronounced, originally two words or one. That the spelling or pronunciation does not, of itself, make the difficulty need not, of itself, matter. The confusion of *a* and *o* sounds in English is a firmly established license: and one doubts whether even Mr Weekley's learning and ingenuity could produce any reason for the fact that in England, we invariably pronounce the -addle of "waddle" with the one sound and the -addle of "paddle" with the other. On the other hand it is certain that "plat" and "plot" in the sense of superficial space are indifferently used in sense but with the commoner sound of each vowel; while "plot" in the sense of the French *complot* has no historical exemplification of the *a* sound except in Titus Oatis's "pla-a-t" though my Lord Foppington's "stap" for "stop" and "marality" for "morality" approach it. Now, can these things be worked into support for a theory that there really *are* two words—the flat-space "plat" or "plot" deriving from the well-known Teutonic *platt*¹ and the other scheme or conspiracy "plot" from something else, perhaps *not* Teutonic? Mr Weekley thinks they can: and selects the French *pelote*—ball, or twist of string—for the purpose. The *e*

¹ The Greek *πλατ*-words and their Latin children may be left alone, without prejudice in any way.

is not really in the way of course: and the sense of "winding" will do perfectly. But there is a confirming fact of a most curious character, an exact parallel to which the present writer cannot at the moment remember. We have the phrase "the plot *thickens*"—the French have the phrase "*la pelote se grossit*": this latter being taken by Littré as based on the growing of a snowball as it rolls. Now whether one of these phrases is a mere translation of the other, and in that case which is the original: whether the interchange of "plot" and "pelote" rested merely on the close similarity of sound or on something older and *more* original: these and some other questions cannot fail to suggest themselves, and are much easier to ask than to answer. Some faint light may be derived from the fact that the earliest date given for our phrase is 1671, when French was being a good deal translated with us. The earliest instance of the French Mr Weekley does not give. But it may be observed that 1671 is before our famous or infamous "pla-a-t."

If these delights and others like them can move any one, he should certainly provide himself with this book. Purposely or not, there are several blank pages supplied at the end. But it is eminently a book for the good old practice of interleaving, which, somehow or other, one fancies to be rather less common, in England at least, than it used to be. The right sort of possessor would not find much difficulty in filling the interleaves even if he had thoughtfully expanded them into foolscap quarto—perhaps the most elegant and agreeable *format* among the many that books take.

GEORGE SAINTSBURY

THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE ALIVE

THE VESPASIANO MEMOIRS. Lives of Illustrious Men of the Fifteenth Century. By *Vespasiano da Bisticci*. Translated from the Italian by *William George and Emily Waters*. London: G. Routledge and Sons; New York: Lincoln MacVeagh, The Dial Press. 8vo. 476 pages. \$5.

FRANCO SACHETTI invited his fellow men of letters twice a year to his villa. "For the history of literature" Vespasiano gives their names, with a brief note of each, and adds: "As a scribe I was included in the list of men so distinguished." These few words at once characterize the Florentine bookseller and sum up his peculiar claim. Booksellers have often shown themselves likable. Though they have rarely come through in their own persons into literature, their living not only with books, but with the people—a select group in any age—who buy literature, has often ripened in them a humane dignity. Fifteenth-century Florence made a bookseller also a book-hunter and a publisher. The great Cosimo de' Medici, as other men of wealth before and since, wished to have a library—a whole library. Impossible, in the opinion of Vespasiano, to buy it; it would have to be made by transcription. Since his commission was promptness without regard to cost, the expert bookman took on forty-five scribes and in twenty-two months finished two hundred manuscripts, a collection patterned on the library of Pope Nicholas. In everything but sheer size the case is typical. As publisher and literary agent Vespasiano lived at the centre of the Renaissance.

Thus the most obvious value of his book is documentary. His mere acquaintance with everybody of consequence, strewing his pages with names, has often guided historians to locations or has supplied missing links. The translation makes these more widely available in itself and by foot-notes adding dates and occasionally suggesting other references. To the same end it should have a better index. Under Argiropolo, for instance, and even Petrarch the references are short by at least half. Aurispa, Dante, Marsiglio,

Pontano, and Vergerio are left out. Grisolaria, Guerino, Trabisonda, entered in the forms used by Vespasiano, should also appear as familiar Chrysolaras and Guarino and at least as the Trapezuntios of page 138, if not as George of Trebizond. Nor will it readily occur to many readers to look for Poggio under Fiorentino, for Lionardo under Arezzo, or for William Gray under Ely. In such a book the index is peculiarly important.

Though Vespasiano is sometimes too confused, often too canny, to help us far into fifteenth-century politics, he conveys surely the local pride of the Italian city state, the magnificent conception and practice of hospitality, the fine art of social intercourse, and above all the fame and the character of learning. He adds something even to that immortal composite Il Cortegiano. The gentleman-and-scholar there summarized here walks in the habit as he lived. An apostolic protonotary might be handsome and elegant; he also felt the need of literary style (204). The courtier Count Camarlingo, even as the Florentine banker, had to have a library (331). Narciso, Bishop of Miletus, had such fame for learning and dialectic that the Greek Argiropolo visited him to discuss the Platonic idea (202). The expertness of Pandolfo Pandolfini as ambassador is explained by his literary training (265). To be thoroughly a grandee, one had to show some serious interest in letters.

Quite evidently this is not the illusion of the man who sold him books. It is abundantly confirmed by other testimony. What the bookseller has added is exact detail. To our sense of a high society permeated by learning he adds an expert's information both as to the directions of study and as to the books themselves. Though the translators have unwisely omitted some of his lists, they give enough for a fair estimate. In his precious review of the Urbino library Vespasiano notes among "the modern writers," most significantly for our understanding of the Renaissance, "all the works of Petrarch, both Latin and vernacular; all the works of Dante, Latin and vernacular; all the *Latin* works of Boccaccio" (103). In the survey prefixed to the life of Alessandra de' Bardi he says: "Centuries after came Dante, and was a very great philosopher and theologian, as appears in his references to Latin literature; came Petrarch and Boccaccio, and through these three the Latin language began to revive after so many centuries of neglect" (442).

That such an estimate was evidently commonplace then, opens vistas of the preoccupations of his time.

These are still largely medieval. The crude notion that the Renaissance was a revolution might be dispelled by this book alone. Aquinas is a matter of course; and for the Duke of Urbino's library Vespasiano was careful to include also Hugh of St Victor and Bonaventure. Writers on medicine are the same as those mentioned by Chaucer. Barlaam and Josaphat is still going. The usual formula for proper education is: "He was master of all the seven liberal arts." But logic, apparently medieval in programme and in general aim, seems to be widening in application; and rhetoric, though still bent on the cadences and elaboration of ceremonious letters, appears more characteristically in the oratory of occasion. Here, perhaps, is at once the most specific revival of antiquity and the clearest departure from the middle age.

Beyond amassing this wealth of material has the bookseller achieved any significance of his own, any appeal fairly to be called literary? The translators, repeating Mai's aspersions, add on their own account: "worse prose than Vespasiano's has rarely been written" (5). Vespasiano's own disclaimer, "such work is foreign to my calling" (15) though humble enough, gives more hope. He reminds us now and again that we must not expect Latin elegances of his vernacular; "but here," he adds (90), "I have left out nothing of the truth." He does not, indeed, write logically. Beside Macchiavelli's his composition is childish. But though inconsequential, he is not incoherent. Each item taken separately is easily intelligible. His sentences are those of the chroniclers, not those of the philosophers and orators. They run on rather pleasantly; they run down less often than might be supposed from this translation. Composition in the larger sense he specifically disclaims. But though what he offers as material is not composed, neither is it merely listed; it is often very effectively conveyed.

For writing is not all composition; it is also style, and Vespasiano's style, in spite of obvious faults, has certain achievements of its kind and of his own. "Not only did men tremble, but also the walls around them" (263). "The state is in a bad way when the citizens are more powerful than the laws" (322). In a few such epigrams he imitates his learned patrons. More characteristic is a certain discreet suggestiveness, as in his demure summary of

Cosimo's conscience. "Now Cosimo, having applied himself to the temporal affairs of the state, the conduct of which was bound to leave him with certain matters on his conscience . . . awoke to a sense of his condition, and was anxious that God might pardon him, and secure to him the possession of his earthly goods" (218).

What is above all his own is picturesqueness, a relish for the colour and gesture of his time. He had an eye. The Duke of Urbino on his entry into Florence received from the Signoria two pieces of gold brocade and two bowls. His books were bound in scarlet and silver. Cardinal Branda's nephews stood at table with napkins over their shoulders. Nicolao Nicoli, merchant and scholar, was connoisseur enough to see at a glance that the chalcedony on a boy's neck was a "Policreto." "Alessandra and the most beautiful and noble of the young women walked on either side of the chief ambassador, she holding his right hand and her companion his left. . . . The ambassador took from his finger a beautiful ring and gave it to Alessandra" (452). Piero's triumphal return from his embassy to France (312) is equally bright with telling detail. Again and again *Vespasiano* makes us more keenly aware of the pageant of the Renaissance. At his best he can even make this art of immediacy flash with character. "Two big dogs," said Cosimo to an opponent, "when they meet, smell each other and then, because they both have teeth, go their ways: Wherefore now you can attend to your affairs and I to mine" (225). Zembino had the courage to be a scholar. Dismissing his noble pupils, he went to his little Pistoia farm at harvest, laid up wine enough for a year, sold the grain, brought the cash back to Florence in a purse, hung this on the hat-rack, and took out of it every day his allowance, "which was two loaves and a bit more." The translators make him sell the wine too; and they withhold *Vespasiano's* addition: "'For this year I have nothing to think of but study and writing.' And he did it too. He was a second Diogenes." The Portuguese Velasco, "what with his learning, his insolence, his eloquence, and a voice that would have thundered round the world" (435), turned a consistory into melodrama.

The British printing is excellent, the large octavo not too heavy to hold comfortably, the sixteen illustrations well chosen and well reproduced. In view of the extent and detail the proof-reading may be pardoned for the errors in the quotation from Caxton (3),

as for Dionisias (50), Siera (126), and pronotaio (204). Gregory of Nice (for Nyssa), however, must be charged to the translators; for elsewhere they have nodded over their long task. Pope Nicholas is said to have "overlooked" (*vide tutto*) Peter Lombard (33); Roberto, to have "slighted" (*guastare*) the country (98). *Leggere* and *lezioni* do not always imply "lectures." Vittorino da Feltre was much more than "a professed Christian" (411). The loftiness of Pandolfo Pandolfini might have suggested happier rendering than "had truck with," "confronted with lofty ideals," and "escape the troubles and deterioration such cares may bring" (265). That last quite flattens Vespasiano's "He was at constant pains not to debase his mind." "In certain cases," says the introduction, "a slight concentration has been deemed legitimate." Perhaps, to the end of bringing Vespasiano within one volume; but paraphrase has hardly gained space enough to warrant the sacrifice of flavour; and actual omission should always have been indicated.

Such slips will hardly impair the gift of most of Vespasiano in English. Students of history must still resort to the edition of Ludovico Frati,¹ not only for its collated text, but for its preface and index. But readers whose intellectual pleasure does not include Italian will be well content with what this translation gives abundantly, immediate contacts with the Italian Renaissance.

CHARLES SEARS BALDWIN

¹ Bologna, 1892, 3 volumes, in the series *Opere Inedite o Rare*. This edition is strangely ignored by the translators.

HELP FOR THE AGED

BEFORE THE BOMBARDMENT. By *Osbert Sitwell*.
12mo. 344 pages. George H. Doran Company.
\$2.50.

TO begin reading a book with a slight degree of scepticism, to realize after two pages that the reading is not to be a task, to suspect after two more pages that one has been amused, and to settle down comfortably in one's best chair, after two more—the first little flourish of a chapter has but six—convinced that one is in for a good evening, is not a usual experience with the newer novels, but so it was mine with Mr Sitwell's *Bombardment*. It gave me two memorable evenings, in fact, and caused me even to steal daylight hours that belonged to others, for once caught in the slow movement of the story there was no going on with one's ordinary affairs until the fates of Miss Waddington and Miss Bramley (two old ladies, who, before this reading I should have passed unnoticed in the street, but who now are as vivid to me as Mrs Gamp, Miss Havisham, and certain other English friends) were decided; and long before these fates were decided, I recognized gratefully that the full-length portraits of these ladies were only outwardly mocking and that underneath or rather between the lines was unmistakably the deep sympathy that Baudelaire recommends as a basis for satire. When I rushed out, however, to tell my friends the interesting news that a slightly *méchant* and immensely entertaining book had arrived from England, all about a pack of incredibly old ladies, one of whom was the perfect incarnation of all the "paid companions" that ever had been or were to be, my friends said, smilingly, "Oh, so you've read it, too?" As a news-monger I was a failure. On every reading-table the book lay uppermost. Not every reading-table, perhaps. I don't think I am to be committed to the ignominy of having inadvertently admired a best-seller, but it is safe to say, in the contagious language of the people of the *Bombardment*, which for the moment is almost my language, that "the right sort of people" were reading the book. As a reviewer I shall, of course, be equally inadequate, not to say superfluous, for there seems to be no point in

praising a work that seems perfectly capable of making its own way.

The scepticism with which I began, and which was so speedily overcome, came from the fear that this author was too clever by half. My preparation for the Bombardment was the reading merely of the Discourses on Travel, Art and Life, which seemed to me amazingly skilful in spots—the little essay upon the art of Henri Rousseau is a miracle of discernment—but remaining, upon the whole, spotty. The writer's gift for detail seemed positively abnormal and alarming. The capacity for seeing every blade of grass, and the shadows of individual grasses, and the gestures of all the little insects in the grass, suggested a wind-up—if the possessor of the faculty dared to cultivate it—in a mad-house. Having only a limited memory myself for the names of things, I naturally distrust the quality in others when carried to excess. I suspected Mr Sitwell to the extent of imagining he must have been born and brought up in one of our vast department stores where an indefatigable nurse relentlessly named the million shiny and attractive objects and one by one imprinted them upon the tender tissues of her charge's brain. I could make no other explanation of the phenomenon he presented. At the same time, and on the other hand, this mental furniture, to an envious onlooker who didn't have it, appeared unquestionably modern. It might possibly be exactly the thing that these Montessori pupils and children of Bertrand Russell would have—a complete and workable possession of everything past, present, or conjecturable. Mr Sitwell's complicated art, as seen in the Discourses might be the future staring us in our face, to become in its turn a simple language "*du peuple*," as Cubism is said to be already in France, or Herr Schoenberg's music in Germany—but just the same, as a means of expression, it seemed, at first glance, laden with dangers. The canoe in which Mr Sitwell had embarked upon the sea of life was a marvel of scientific construction and quite evidently he had been drilled in the uses of its mechanisms, but the old ocean to which the frail equipment was entrusted still had a way, I remembered, of laughing at science now and then. As an insurance risk I should not have thought Mr Sitwell safe. Not that I am altogether averse to endowments. I like my geniuses to have gifts—but not too many. At most, I said, Mr Sitwell would write bearable essays. . . .

But it seems I was completely mistaken and unduly alarmed. One always absurdly is about the young. The world is theirs, when they grow up, and it is theirs to do as they wish with. . . .

Mr Sitwell, I should say, has joyfully taken possession of a planet that seems almost too small for him, and in doing so, has not dropped a single one of his stylistic trinkets. He still sees everything that a humorous rabbit might see, or perhaps I had better say squirrel, since Mr Sitwell not only looks up at a steeple but down upon it, too; but as a novelist he makes it clear that the time-old traits of humanity survive and shine through any Montessori upbringing whatever. Octogenarians might just as well resign themselves to the fact that the world is going to go on about as ever—and more particularly since Mr Sitwell arrives bearing special and amazing gifts for octogenarians. This young man flatters them in a way that is new in history. He laughs at them, true. There is nothing he doesn't know about them. He turns their poor old hearts and still poorer old heads inside out, and—this is the odd part—finds them fun. *He likes old people.* I italicize the point, but should emblazon it in capitals. The fact should be more widely published than it has been that old people are not necessarily uninteresting even to the young. Millions of the middle-aged, once they get the idea, will now be encouraged to go on. So many in the fifties and sixties have of late been flinging themselves from lofty windows in New York solely because they felt they had lost their "allure." They never lose it, Mr Sitwell says, but gain in attractiveness right up to the very end. Miss Waddington did not stop even at death—but shone more resplendently than ever after that slight interruption. Unfortunately now that I think of it this gospel is not for the million. Mr Sitwell's book, as I said, is not to be a best-seller. It is for special people who are very special about their reading and it will be lucky if there are twenty thousand such. It would be luckier still, and a great economy of means, if all the twenty thousand were over fifty. Think what it would mean to conserve indefinitely the *amour propre* of the élite of the literary world—and how it would return in dividends of love to the masses—for of course the élite would wish to pass the idea on, in a sufficiently diluted form to make it acceptable to those who cannot take their Sitwell straight.

HENRY McBRIDE

THE ROAD TO CALVARY

THE WAY OF THE CROSS. The Stations of the Cross.
By Alfeo Faggi. Poems. By Padraic Colum. 16mo.
36 pages. Ralph Fletcher Seymour. \$1.

IF it is true that no profounder works of art have been given us than those conceived under religious inspiration, it is also true that the religious subject has been more frequently conducive to mediocre than to good art. The two emotions, the religious and the aesthetic, may achieve unity, however. One thinks of St Francis whose life was itself a work of art, and of that school in Siena which achieved it as spontaneously as an apple orchard brings forth blossoms in May.

Personal revelation, as in the work of Giotto, is independent of time and we are permitted to know the flower of Christianity no less in Alfeo Faggi's vision of the road to Calvary than in the frescos of that other primitive describing the life of St Francis. Indeed, not since Giotto paid homage to the "*Jongleur de Dieu*" has the marriage of the sensuous and the spiritual been more auspiciously consecrated to the way of the Christ—to embody the actual and the universal being as Roger Fry says, "the severest strain on the power of expression."

Asking "not how many facts about an object an artist can record, but how incisive and how harmonious with itself the record is," we perceive the entire apocalyptic world of the Passion, in the austere fecundity of Mr Faggi's bas-reliefs—in the repose of hands, in a single swirl of drapery, in the curving head and shoulders of grief, leashed pride leaping in the vertical body drawn in upon itself. Earth, fire, air, and water commingle in the sculptor's conception of Jesus in that spheric quality of peace which is a fusion of conflicting forces rather than the absence of force. We grasp "what furnace" lies beneath that mobile mask, and striding with the Christ as with a consuming wind we know more profoundly what tragic tension is the poet's joy.

Throughout these fourteen stations, Mr Faggi so preserves that balance between the Word and the Word made flesh, between the

spiritual and the sensuous, the divine and the human, that our intuition of the one is made concrete by our experience of the other. Pilate and the Roman soldiers are revealed as passive instruments of a destiny, "who know not what they do." The second station, that in which Jesus assumes the Cross

"that he assumed
Flesh to take on—"

his body over against the tree a single flame whirling within a swirl of flame, is essentially mystical in conception, as is the meeting between Jesus and Mary, and the *Pietà*, wherein the broken body of the son is that of a child cradled in the ample lap of the earth mother. The third, seventh, and ninth stations portray flesh and blood fainting under its intolerable burden. The entombment, the final station, suggests by the bared simplicity of its arrangement, an altar; the three Marys are here joined in understanding; the body of the Christ voyages forth into infinity like a ship slipping from the harbour. We have, in the sculptural integrity of this station, the pure line of music.

Turning to the poems of Padraic Colum which accompany these reproductions, we are struck with this same purity, reminiscent of the polyphonic chants of the early church. Gothic in architecture, Mr Colum's stanzas form the precise poetic analogy to Mr Faggi's bas-reliefs. We are disarmed by their simplicity and armed by what is, in corporate humility, a mediaeval panoply of technical accomplishment.

Adequately to comment upon this technical accomplishment, which is not only the result of research upon Mr Colum's part but of his intense sympathy with the particular emotions evoked by the stations, would require an essay in itself. One is moved to admiration by the subtlety with which the poet's line continues that of the sculptor. Where Pilate's court is,

"None may clatter or call;
Each stands as still as
Stone in the wall."

When Jesus falls for the first time, the rhythm pants as

“The heart pants
Beneath the load.”

Mr Colum, who is essentially a poet of pity and of compassion, moves us deeply to feel with him the immediacy of the Passion. With Simon

“We take
Our hearts being moved, the Cross up for Thy sake!”

and with the holy mother we draw near the cross

“Considering in our Hearts what Man is here!”

In their profound quiet and their profound emotion, we have in Mr Colum's poems that which is timeless:

“The birds are flying home,
Now darkened is the sky,
And he hath given up
With that great, bitter cry
The ghost.”

EDWIN SEAVER

BRIEFER MENTION

The eight Indian tales in **INDIAN TALES AND OTHERS**, by John G. Neihardt (12mo, 306 pages; Macmillan: \$2.50) seem less Indian than generally human in an embodiment poetically Indian. Thus *The Singer of the Ache* figures the destiny of the poet in the story of an Indian youth cast out by his tribe for singing the songs of his dreams. In the end, however, "women weeping over fallen braves, found his songs upon their lips. And when the hunger came his strange wild cries went among the people." *The Look in the Face* commemorates compassion. *The White Wakunda* is a fine "mural," of the reception of an Indian Immanuel among his people. The nine concluding pieces, however, are short stories such as Bret Harte, Ambrose Bierce, and Jack London have taught us to expect. Still the reader is aware in these stories of a basal humanity somewhat different from the humanity of Bret Harte and wholly foreign to the eerie cynicism of Bierce and the primitivism of London. It is as if the poet had not yet given up the thought that men are continuous one with the other and with more than themselves.

HARMER JOHN, by Hugh Walpole (12mo, 411 pages; Doran: \$2) is a combination of the novel of microcosmic view with the novel of extraordinary character. The view is of Polchester, an English cathedral town, figuring in the author's previous novel, *The Cathedral*, accessories of which now reappear. The extra-ordinary character is that of Hjalmar Johanson, Harmer John, a Swedish physical instructor who sets up a gymnastic school in Polchester and entertains disturbing dreams of civic improvement. The story is written in the vein of pleasant fluency usual with the author, but suggests, as is usual too, that he has acquiesced in his flow of narrative rather early and unenquiringly, and perhaps at the expense of origination, for one finds not many things here of an unusual sort.

SPANISH FOLK-SONGS OF NEW MEXICO, collected and transcribed by Mary R. Van Stone, with foreword by Alice Corbin (brochure, 4to, 41 pages; Ralph Fletcher Seymour: \$1.50). In these love songs, shepherd songs, and lenten hymns—with English words, Spanish words, and the music—we have a legacy of primitiveness authentically transmitted from person to person in the manner of ballad-descent; and we have in the foreword, besides information, a notably contagious presentment of southwesterly American primitive scenery—of men threshing wheat with goats, of black-shawled women, whitewashed walls, and candles in tin sconces, of *penitentes*; of burros laden with cedar, of music in the plaza; of the blind man with a guitar, leading to dance, wedding, or christening, the blind man with a fiddle. To translate verse into verse is not easy and it is apparently impossible to achieve perfect typographic and perfect musical presentment, but one wishes—one is indeed persuaded—not to find fault. A collection such as this, is greatly welcome.

APOSTATE, by Forrest Reid (8vo, 235 pages; Houghton Mifflin: \$4) recaptures the bewildered, poetic perceptions of an imaginative boy with the accuracy of a sensitized plate, but the author has blurred the outlines by re-touching. Incidents are worked over until they lose their vitality, and what was intended as "spiritual autobiography" is constantly hovering on the edge of the ethereal. The Irish writer has re-set his gems of childhood in a ring of afterthoughts.

JESTING PILATE, An Intellectual Holiday, by Aldous Huxley (8vo, 326 pages; Doran: \$3.50). When Mr Huxley landed in America—which provides him with the top layer of his travel cake—reporters asked him for his opinion, and "I gave them my prejudices." It was an admirable substitution, and the author takes advantage of it whenever he feels so inclined in the course of his jaunt through the East. Fortunately, his prejudices are neither those of the returned missionary nor the conventional Britisher; they are distributed irregularly among the poet, the satirist, and the sad young man. The chapters are fragmentary in their impressions, but not in their thinking.

THE OUTLOOK FOR AMERICAN PROSE, by Joseph Warren Beach (8vo, 285 pages; University of Chicago Press: \$2.50) is a sane and salutary attack on slovenliness, affectation, and sentimental violence, which the author conceives to be the three dis-graces of current fiction. While his weapons are inclined to be academic—the pedagogic pointer, for example, rather than the critical rapier—he presents his case soundly and with good temper. He does not ask what is the matter of our novels, but what is the manner of them, building a grammarian's fire and raking Mr Dreiser and Mr Hergesheimer and Mr Van Vechten over the coals of it until their affectations are properly singed.

AMERICAN CRITICISM 1926, edited by William A. Drake (10mo, 368 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$2.50) ranges from the sarcasms of Sinclair Lewis to the reveries of Agnes Repplier, from the scholarly Logan Pearsall Smith to the epithetic—but never apathetic—Mr Mencken. Its boundaries are vague enough to include book reviews, essays, *causerie*, and literary skits—a truly catholic selection and one which, on the whole, testifies to an alert, urbane, and stimulating body of criticism in the periodical press. Three of the papers—by Alyse Gregory, Charles K. Trueblood, and Logan Pearsall Smith—appeared in **THE DIAL**. One wishes that the editor had found space for a biographical note on the various contributors.

RIP VAN WINKLE GOES TO THE PLAY, by Brander Matthews (12mo, 256 pages; Scribner: \$2). The veteran critic begins by listing ten plays of recent vintage which he has sampled, then—like an uncle unused to modern children—gives them an approving pat and turns from them with transparent relief to talk once again of Bronson Howard, Clara Morris, and Scribe. Professor Matthews may or may not have heard that terse admonition out of current slang—"Be your age"—but with the courage of his Victorian preferences, he adheres to it, proving that it is—on the whole—a wise and gracious thing to do.

ITALIAN SCULPTORS, by W. G. Waters (illus., 12mo, 285 pages; Doran: \$4) is a new and enlarged edition of a book dealing with the workers in stone and metal who were active in Italy from Pisano to Bernini. It would be difficult to imagine a work better done or more useful to students in search of an encyclopaedic summary of the sculptors of this period. Mr Waters' handbook is a little dry perhaps—a labour of this sort could hardly escape being so—but his authority is beyond question, and his immense knowledge, not only of the lives of artists but of their aims and methods, has been set down clearly in the minimum of space.

THE FIRE OF DESERT FOLK, by Ferdinand Ossendowski (10mo, 354 pages; Dutton: \$3). Professor Ossendowski has produced an interesting book on Morocco perhaps spoilt a little by a tendency to indulge in light gossipy accounts of the accidents of his own wayfaring. He has some excellent things to tell us of Mulay Ismail, the founder of the present dynasty, a ruler who used to justify his arbitrary methods by declaring, "My state is a bag filled with rats. If I were to cease shaking the bag, the rats would gnaw holes and jump out of it."

TOM-TOM, by John W. Vandercook (illus., 8vo, 258 pages; Harpers: \$3). A most admirable book treating of the magic and folk-lore of the African race as represented by the bush negroes in the jungles of Dutch Guiana. Mr Vandercook writes always with sympathy and intelligence. The accounts he gives of the various slave rebellions which won freedom for the ancestors of these people make interesting reading. The strongest support is given to the contention of Sir Harry Johnson who once wrote, "The negro does not really like to be idle. When he is accused of idleness by the white man it generally means he wants to work for himself."

THE ORIGIN OF THE NEXT WAR, by John Bakeless (10mo, 318 pages; Viking Press: \$2.50) is a forcible but slightly tautological development of the thesis that the world is working into the same kind of diplomatic slow topple as that which began in 1904 and ended in the appalling crashes of 1914-18. There is cause enough for pessimism, as we know, but with 296 pages devoted to so despondent an anatomy of international folly, two or at most three paragraphs seem very little for constructive sides of the question, for exposition of that "strenuous intellectual endeavor," which as the author hints, but only hints, is the single salvation of our balkanized world.

THE BOOK OF THE ROGUE, edited by Joseph Lewis French (8vo, 399 pages; Boni & Liveright: \$3) contains fifteen sketches of divers pattern wastrels, with whose annals, however, any tolerably read person is already long familiar. There are the trite Borgias—by Alexandre Dumas, of course—Stevenson's Villon, Wilde's Thomas Wainwright, Thackeray's Barry Lyndon, Balzac's Vautrin, Carlyle's Cagliostro, and others. But there is also the history of the ingenious Jonathan Wild, Thief-taker, who had such twentieth-century ideas of sales-management; who, though his industry was a thought oblique, was every inch a captain thereof.

PERSONAL REMINISCENCES OF AUGUSTE RODIN, by Anthony M. Ludovici (8vo, 204 pages; Lippincott: \$3). Besides being an account of the Rodin household, in which the author sojourned for seven months as private secretary, these reminiscences are a brief description at close range, sometimes in Rodin's own words, of his subtle technical scholarship, and of the general methods of his genius. He tells his secretary, for instance, that in order to make his sculpture look as if it had grown from within out, after the fashion of life, he taught himself the difficult trick of seeing the surfaces of natural objects not as plane surfaces, but as "the ends of diameters pointed at him." He was twenty-two years attaining command of the several such secrets of his mastery; yet, as the author is explicit in pointing out, he never studied technique except as a means to an end—that of communicating his insight to the plastic splendours of the human form. The concluding pages of the book, indeed, are an essay in elaboration of just this point, that here Rodin parted from his contemporaries, the Impressionists: he took the path of vitality in art; they stultified themselves among technical sterilities.

TURGENEV: The Man, His Art, and His Age, by Avrahm Yarmolinsky (illus., 8vo, 386 pages; Century: \$4). Dr Yarmolinsky's critico-biographical proceedings are conceived in a different spirit from Henry James's appreciation of Turgenev. But if they are intimately aloof and appear to set out on the assumption that a man shall not be a hero to his own biographer, they also show a mature estimation of the value of the biographic fact—in search of which, as the author tells us, he occupied, among other times and places, unnumbered arctic hours in the "reading room of the Pushkin house, not far from the ice-blocked Neva." And to the assiduous methods of his research he adds some of the more useful modes of exhibition characteristic of prose fiction. Thus it is not Turgenev singly who is shown, "wry cherisher of his own ego"; it is Turgenev and his "matriarchal" mother; Turgenev and Bakunin; Turgenev and Pauline Viardot; Turgenev and Dostoevsky; Turgenev and Tolstoy; Turgenev and his Russian public; for to paint a man in his relations is to paint him as he lived. And few men, one gathers, formed and were formed by, their fellows more truly than Turgenev, will-less Hamlet of the steppes—as he is here, not indulgently, set down.

A STUDY OF SWINBURNE, by T. Earle Welby (8vo, 289 pages; Doran: \$5). Dissenting alike from considerable sections of the Victorian judgement of Swinburne, and wholly from current views that Swinburne's was a mind "too simple to be worth analysis by the subtle young critics of today," the author develops a well-taken though not impeccably stated account of his subject. Swinburne, he submits, was a poet of love who was sensual in an intellectual manner; a religious poet who was yet hostile to theism, believing only in liberty and the collective divinity of men; a political poet whose politics referred chiefly and forcibly to that "illimitable republic" the citizens of which all free intelligences should be; and in general a poet who was original in a major sense, though he derived his "experience" nearly exclusively from literature.

VICTOR HUGO, The Man and the Poet, by William F. Giese (8vo, 315 pages; Lincoln MacVeagh, Dial Press: \$4). The attitude of Baudelaire toward Victor Hugo when he remarked to Sainte-Beuve that he was an "ass endowed with genius" seems mild if compared with Mr Giese's estimate of the celebrated romanticist. Surely only a mind with an unmistakable Anglo-Saxon bias could write of so great a poet, "he is a poet in act of prowess eminent and great exploits, but of true virtue void. A great decorative artist, impervious to thought and only superficially stirred by feeling." But let it not be supposed that Mr Giese fails to give us exhaustive and often cogent reasons for his judgements. Would, indeed, that there were fewer of them and that this conscientious study were more condensed. As it stands it will be of especial interest to the admirers of and detractors from, the illustrious egoist whose name is even to-day in France more honoured than that of any other man of genius of his generation.

THE MAKING OF THE MODERN MIND, A Survey of the Intellectual Background of the Present Age, by John H. Randall, Jr (10mo, 653 pages; Houghton Mifflin: \$5). Mr Randall belongs to that group of writers, of which there can never be sufficient, who bring to whatever subject they may scrutinize an enlightened intelligence and a scrupulous judgement. In the present study he approaches his subject more from the angle of the historian and sociologist than from that of the psychologist. That the mind of the average person of to-day is a kind of reservoir of deposits from the past is Mr Randall's thesis, and he depicts the stages of thought through which our Western civilization has passed including its historical setting from early times up to our own industrial age. Whether or not, as Carlyle states, the end of man is "an act," certainly one feels in reading this scholarly and absorbing book that the salvation of man lies in his power of contemplating and appraising his own place in the universe.

EUROPE AND THE EAST, by Norman Dwight Harris (10mo, 677 pages; Houghton Mifflin: \$5). A scholarly setting forth of the relations of western powers with eastern states, and a detailed analysis of Asiatic politics and development between 1850 and 1923. "Ignorance in international politics," Mr Harris says, "is a crime." In this book, he does much to dissipate ignorance and to substitute for popular myths, the actual facts. There is in some instances possibly, too hard and fast an interpretation of these "facts," but in each case detailed evidence is given for one's appraisal. British rule in the east, German and French colonial expansion and policy, the Korean snarl, Soviet influence in China, American civil administration in the Philippines, and post-war finances in The Pacific, are problems here dealt with in clear, readable style, by one who bespeaks fairness and non-coercion where possible, in the enlightening of dependent peoples. The author appears an international missionary, so sure is he of the soundness of his advice. His findings are practical and from the excellent data presented, some writer or civic leader may gather the material for a greater, less traditional idea of world government.

THE THEATRE

I WAS slightly irritated to find my first report on The Civic Repertory Theatre quoted almost entire in the programme of that theatre last month. As I recall it, my reservations concerning Miss Le Gallienne and her enterprise were not serious enough to discourage patrons; in a whole page of praise they might have been included.

The reason I mention this personal matter is that I am again in a state of great admiration; the production of *THE CRADLE SONG* gave me a deep and sustained pleasure. But the reservations I now have to make are graver than my earlier ones which were concerned with Miss Le Gallienne's inconsistencies of make-up and attitude; she now exhibits faults in directing her company. The simple drama of the intrusion of a foundling into a nunnery and the departure of the same foundling eighteen years later was done with tact, delicacy, and rhythm. The production had a wit of its own; the scenes were managed with an easy mastery. No one could have been more apprehensive than myself at the opening of the play; it promised to be so sweet and so sentimental. And in the end it was sweet and sentimental, but not *so*; the qualities were right. And it does not detract from the direction to indicate that the play itself avoids almost all of its own pitfalls. With the exception of a rather silly interlude, the text has an agreeable quality throughout; it carries along a tiny plot of action and a great emotional charge, without ever losing itself in uncertainties; it has humour. I should say—never having seen the play produced before—that nothing essential was lost, that everything in the play was allowed to become explicit.

This is a triumph which was properly acclaimed by the audience and by the critics. My reservation has to do entirely with the way in which Miss Le Gallienne directed, or permitted, Miss Josephine Hutchinson to play. Briefly, she allowed an imitation, sometimes amounting to a parody, of herself to appear; and the only excuse I can find for it is a tribute, in itself, to Miss Le Gallienne's intelligence. Miss Hutchinson was repeating the gestures and movements and tones of her preceptor, but not as those gestures and movements and tones appeared in that production. She was imitating the Miss

Le Gallienne of nearly all the other plays while Miss Le Gallienne herself, with one of her inspired flashes of creativeness, was acting quite differently. None of her tricks appeared; she found a new range in her voice; actually she had been on the stage nearly half an hour before I was certain that I had discovered which one of the novices she was playing. And then, as if fearing that her public would desert her if she did not let these tricks appear, and being too thoughtful an actress to spoil her own creation, she transferred them to another.

The Civic Repertory Theatre continues to be a supremely interesting experiment, with more character at the moment, than any similar enterprise. More character, I suppose, because the direction is so centred, so intensified by the narrow channel through which it must run. I suspect that the director needs a director, needs criticism while production is going on. And I am glad that I saw *THE CRADLE SONG* in all its beauty before I knew, as a certainty, that Miss Le Gallienne proposed to revive *THE INHERITORS*, and possibly *THE VERGE*. Presumably these revivals are a proof of courage; from what one remembers they prove nothing else.

Mr Robert Sherwood's first play is decidedly a hit, and is another instance of the axiom that knowing all the elements in advance does not very much diminish your pleasure in a play. The elements in this case are Shaw's *CAESAR AND CLEOPATRA*, a touch of Erskine, and a burlesque of *MONNA VANNA*. The sly entrance of familiar dramatic lines ("Why are you saying all this to me?" "Won't you—sit down?") and the neat parallel to the soldiers of *WHAT PRICE GLORY?* are additional bits, as also the repetition of the old stage convention in which the play begins with a discussion among the servants. I suspect that the audience does not get its chief satisfaction from these bits in *THE ROAD TO ROME*; they get more from the exposition of Fabius as a hundred per cent Roman, and the local hits about our domestic concerns during the war are effective. All of these are, however, decorations on two themes, one of which is entirely successful and the other, in my opinion, a failure. The failure, to dispose of it, is in the intellect. The voluble arguments of Amytis, the half-Greek wife of Fabius, against war are confused in themselves and have nothing to do with her actions. I suspected, at the beginning, that they were satirically intended, that they serve

only as a cloak for Amytis' definite desire to seduce Hannibal. For in that ambition lies the successful portion of the play. It is, essentially, a play about a young wife of an aging husband whose "hard day at the Forum" leaves him neither interest in nor capacity to cope with a somewhat libidinous, and easily predominant, desire. This subject is treated mockingly, broadly, pointedly, crudely, wittily all through the first act, and the overlay of social satire is skilfully used to allay whatever puritanic iles may rise. Some good jokes and a satire on military men through the ages carry the second act, in Hannibal's tent, to the point where Amytis arrives with the intention of waiting until the ravishing begins. Here the number of words a minute, all about the futility of war and human ambitions, and about the value of personal relations, is very great; the execution of Amytis is handled cleverly in the manner of the buzz-saw in the melodrama, and ends in a black-out.

It is precisely in such scenes that Shaw scores. The way he belittles and "humanizes" history can be copied by any one; but the way in which, at the indicated moment, he says something passionate and important about human existence, needs more than imitation. There was passion in Mr Sherwood's speeches, but they lacked clarity and significance, and they were not involved in the action of the play.

DAMN THE TEARS passed rapidly from the stage amid universal condemnation. It was a play, roughly, in the expressionist manner and the technique seemed a little beyond the author's grasp. That he knew what he wanted—almost that he was aware of his failure to get it—one gathered from his scattered successful scenes. The weakness which weakened everything else was the narrative, the plot; it was meant to be unimportant, but the author never quite managed to throw it off, and for an audience which lives on plot as the nourishment of its plays, the indecision was fatal. The play should have been a sort of *revue* with tragedy instead of comedy as its tone; the comparative success of PROCESSIONAL was due to managing this difficult transposition more often than it failed. DAMN THE TEARS had intensity which led to incoherence; and at moments one felt that incoherence was being asked to prove intensity.

In connexion with this play I think that the critics acted badly. It was not a good play; the critics would have served their public ill

if they had advised them to rush to the Garrick Theatre. But in addition to the general public there is now in New York a special, limited, but sufficient public for plays wholly outside the ordinary (I need not say commercial) theatre. This public, I think, would be interested to know the nature of an experiment, even if it is a failure. Again, I do not think the critics should have urged support of this play as a successful use of new methods or materials; but if they had to any degree recognized the intention and the talent in the play, it might have run another week or two—which is not important—and might have given the author instruction and encouragement. One thing *DAMN THE TEARS* certainly was not—a legitimate object of ridicule. The fact that author, producer, and director all wrote lengthy explanations inserted in the programme, is not important; other producers send similar matter to the press, and get it printed. The play failed of its own purpose, it had long periods of boredom; it had, let us say, every fault. But it also had virtues; and those virtues might, with entire candour, have been reported more fully.

For that reason I am glad to hear of the organization of a new theatre group which will begin its work with the production of two plays, one by John Howard Lawson and the other by Em Jo Basshe. The habit of seeing experiments in the theatre—again without assurance of their immortal merit—is a good one.

The American Laboratory Theatre has been experimenting for several years and recently addressed itself to cultivated New York for further support. Instantly after this appeal, it produced *GRANITE*, by Clemence Dane. It happens that I found the play a little tiresome; it classed itself rapidly and only occasionally rose above its category. What surprised me was that the production was so commonplace. It was “all right,” but it lacked distinction, in the sense that it could have been done anywhere in the past five years in the same manner. I had the illusion of seeing one of the Guild’s plays which I had missed during the war. The only novelty I discovered was the entire absence, in a rather realistic production, of all off-stage noises, including those mentioned by the characters.

GILBERT SELDES

MODERN ART

THE singular and beautiful sculptures of Elie Nadelman, recently shown in the Knoedler Galleries, had a good press and much private commendation, but whether or not they had the other and still pleasanter success of selling, I have not heard. Probably not. Mr Nadelman is far from being a Barnum. On the contrary he has been rather secretive in regard to his work, having been engrossed, first, in the finishing of it and then in the plans for showing it soon in Paris. What will be its fate there? In Paris as in New York a bit of Barnum is necessary to the artist who commands a shouting success and though it is true you cannot keep a good man down permanently, it is equally true that good art unaided is a long time in making its own *réclame*. The Nadelman carvings are as yet in plaster and covered stunningly and in a new way with thin sheets of beaten copper. Just as decoration I should have thought them acceptable, but it happens that they have qualities that speak to the mind also. The artist has occupied himself in a study of acrobats, paltry people of the stage and circus, but he has known how to invest them with a background of philosophic protest, much as did the author of *He Who Gets Slapped*. In New York, it seems, we are not yet old enough to accept satire and look upon it as a manifestation of treason towards humanity and us in particular. Nor do we weep with Pierrot. Our only clowns are the absurdly comic ones. It is true that Pagliacci is one of our standbys at the opera, but Americans pay no attention to the story and consider the sob in the "Ridi" an extra flourish in the art of Caruso—the thing they pay additional dollars to hear. In Latin Europe where every man is a potential actor of the first order, and where the laugh that conceals despair is practised to perfection, it is not likely that the sober phase in Nadelman's apparently light work will pass unnoticed. Nor will all the excellences of execution. Nadelman is post-cubistic without, I believe, ever having been particularly cubistic in the past. He has a sure-enough knowledge of form, but doesn't hesitate to sacrifice a muscle or two for the sake of the greater rhythms—which, Europeans will feel, are in glorified jazz. There is startling vivacity in the arrested motion of his figures and when they are seen through a doorway or in any other

fashion that isolates them, they must strike the unprejudiced as elegant expressions of modern feeling. It would be unfortunate if Europeans appreciated them too much, for after all, we wish them returned to us. It seems likely that a public place may be found for them—possibly in the new opera house that Mr Kahn talks about—or in the museum of modern art which, some say, is on the brink of trembling into existence—but I should prefer the opera house were I Mr Nadelman.

Czobel's painting, it has just been shown to us in the Joseph Brummer Galleries, is the direct antithesis of Nadelman's sculpture. It is outwardly gay but with a submerged and unmistakable singleness that gives it eloquence. It has the yearning joy in pageant that a prisoner might have who gazes on the scene through prison bars. Czobel's prison was merely the mansarde of an impecunious student, but he fled from it in his early days before the war when his first tentatives for a career failed to attract attention. It may be that the period of the war—Czobel is Hungarian—added length to his exile, but at any rate his recent return to the City of Light was something in the nature of a resurrection, for it was not known that he had continued painting in the far-away asylum he had found for himself. Whatever his early canvases may have been his present ones are strongly painted documents, only superficially gloomy, and revelling in the oily pigments almost to the point of sensuality. Even such an unlikely street as the Avenue du Maine suggests bold and lyric decoration to this artist's mind, so it may be judged how glad the artist was to get back to his ancient haunts. M Roger-Marx, who writes the introduction for the American catalogue, speaks of Czobel's youthful serenity and calm, and looks forward to the time when the re-assured artist will regain these qualities. Well, perhaps! But confronted with the present group of rugged pictures the spectator is almost persuaded that savagery is Czobel's chief stock-in-trade, and that the tampering success that might soften his style would be dangerous. At all events, we ought shortly to know if it is to effect a change—for success has come. The money has been paid down. New York repeats the verdict of Paris that Czobel is a strong man; and keeps the pictures. Czobel, jingling the dollars in his pocket, must paint some more. What will they be like?

The sale of the John Quinn Collection provided a full week's diversion to artists and collectors alike. The sensational plums had already been plucked from the tree, but there was unexpectedly good picking in what was left. Matisse's Still Life, Derain's Cornemuse, Puvis' Beheading of St John, Marin's water-colours, Prendergast's Promenade, Augustus John's Portrait of Arthur Symons, Pascin's Portrait of Hermine David, et cetera. The total realized from these pickings was ninety-one thousand, five hundred seventy dollars. One of those connected with the dispersal of the estate assured me that the previous private sales had amounted to five hundred thousand dollars, which I thought a nice fat figure that had been possibly rounded out a bit by my informant; but The Art News, which prides itself upon its exactness, rounds it out still further to seven hundred thousand dollars. There seems no good reason why the facts in regard to the sale of the collection should not be given out, and perhaps they will be later. They are sure to be instructive. In the meantime, it seems abundantly clear that Mr Quinn's plunge into modern art was not the wild Irish exploit that some supposed it, but a matter of sound business. It is doubtful, for instance, if Mr Quinn's investments in stocks and bonds yielded him so much. This, too, in spite of the fact that he was far more sentimental in buying pictures than in buying bonds. He bought quantities of pictures from Mr Kuhn just because he liked him personally and found him useful in the politics of art. He bought incessantly from George W. Russell, "A.E.," because in addition to being a writer of renown, Mr Russell was "also Irish." Mr Quinn, it must be conceded, indulged in many whims, which however, did not in the end cost him too much. The buyers in attendance at the auction displayed excellent judgement in their purchases and there were few real bargains—unless you call Mr Wyndham Lewis' things, which sold for trifling sums, bargains. The English Cubists have not as yet obtained a footing in precarious New York.

HENRY McBRIDE

MUSICAL CHRONICLE

A CAPACITY for the creative combination of popular material with the classical idiom was common to most late-romantic composers. Wagner in *Die Meistersinger* and Moussorgsky in *Boris Goudonow* and *Khovantschina*; Strauss in *Aus Italien*, *Til Eulenspiegel*, and *Feuersnot*, Chabrier in his *España Rhapsody*, and Debussy in numerous piano compositions, incorporated demotic norms in the substance of imaginative works. In Satie's "realistic" ballet *Parade*, this capacity found a new exploitable material. Previously, it had been Russian and German, French and Spanish folk-tunes that had been incorporated into their pieces by the masters, or used as models of style. Of American materials, only those associated with the negro and the Indian had been placed under contribution; and while Dvorak had suggested to the Americans themselves the ores buried in the negro tunes, the attitude of Charles Martin Loeffler, quoting with elegant irony the *Dies Irae* in *La Villanelle du Diable* and the famous Lorraine marching song in *Music for Four Stringed Instruments*, symbolized the general attitude of this country toward its own opportunity. But in *Parade*, Satie incorporated a section strongly imitative of ragtime; and with it there commenced the recent efforts to mint values for art from the polyrhythms and colourations of commercial jazz which Strawinsky, Milhaud, Hindemith, and other Europeans have been showing us. None the less only in the piano concerto of Aaron Copland, played by the composer with the Boston Symphony in New York, February third, has the new situation borne music. If it was necessary for a European to point out the opportunity in America, it has been an American who has been able to profit by it.

There was no imaginative utilization of the popular American idiom in the experiments of Satie and his group, with their fox-trots "Adieu New York," their "Shimmies et Rag-caprices," their ragtimes, bostons, sliding trombones, and syncopations. Because jazz sounded exotic to staid European ears, they were content to transpose the synthetic American (half negro and half Jewish) idiom bodily into their compositions. The Ragtime passage of *Parade* is a cross-section of most rags, rather more than an abstraction of their characteristic elements; and the authenticity of most of

the experiments is well below that of the commercial American musical product. The constructive attempts of Gershwin are without style or homogeneity, hash derivative elements together, and never long transcend the plane of things made to please a public incapable of discrimination. Less compromising and more respectable experimentations with jazz idiom for imaginative purposes have been made by Still, a pupil of Varèse's. But Copland in his piano concerto has daringly utilized jazz polyrhythms and colourations in an interest entirely transcending that of the commercial jazz composers; and it is this usage that really concerns the musical, and makes the production of the composition displaying it a red-letter day.

As Copland has pointed out in an extremely significant technical article recently published by him, the best of the popular composers make only a timid use of the characteristic jazz polyrhythms. To make them palatable to the great public, always averse to rhythm, they sandwich them between worn-out conventional ones. It is not, however, necessary for us to analyse what is known as "jazz" to ascertain its tendency. One has but to scrutinize its appeal and feel its effect to recognize that it tends to bring into play the most undifferentiated strata of the human being in its animal and mechanical manifestations. Born out of the American's desire to escape individuation and the choice, values, and responsibilities of the individual existence, it periodically permits him to become the blind integer of a crowd, or the will-less twitching piece of a machine he needs to be. Copland's concerto, on the contrary, liberates the characteristic jazz rhythms, letting them develop fully in their own spirit. Part of his first movement is based on the fox-trot rhythm—slow $3/8$ plus $5/8$; and part of the second on the Charleston rhythm—the same $3/8$ plus $5/8$ considerably speeded up; but in each instance the rhythms are freely permitted to develop. The polyrhythms are daring. In one passage $3/4$ are beaten against $4/4$; and in another $3/4$ go against a Charleston. Both the orchestral rhythms and those of the short piano cadenza are passages of invention comparable to the rhythmically most daring pages of Stravinsky. The spirit is burlesque in the grandiose, Rabelaisian sense. The "I don't give a damn" of jazz remains, releasing feeling instead of confining it on the undifferentiated, automatic plane. The trombone slides; the saxophone whines and chuckles; but all the machinery of vulgarization sounds forth wild tremendous

laughter that lets spirit free above the massed vulgarities of life. As in certain writings by contemporary Americans, the demotic idiom is so combined with the traditional means of communication that it sustains ultimate values.

His concerto is Copland's strongest work, an expression of formative power beyond *Music For the Theatre*, the *Serenade* for violin and piano, and the choral setting of Pound's *An Immorality* which justified the poem of its title. (Though rose-leaves die of grieving!) The new work's outline is bold and decided, edged with threefold brass. The music is filled with teeth. Copland's two personal veins, his plaintiveness, hitherto given form in the first movement of his symphony and the third of his suite, and his motor-rhythmic style, apparent in the scherzo of the symphony and the dance-movements of the suite, have acquitted themselves of clangorous pages. The first has contributed the nostalgic music of the commencement and the recapitulation of the concerto, with its almost painful brassy climaxes; and the second is responsible for the dizzy Rabelaisian scandal and burlesque of the body of the work. One got the communication of a great, almost painful struggle for feeling and a release in Rabelaisian laughter; perhaps the contrast and inevitable suite of the opposing inertia and frantic activity of American life. And while Copland's gift remains a little spotty and still in pieces, or like a colt unsteady on its stilts, it has at twenty-seven placed him among the important figures of the country.

Concerts of new music revealed 1. that the two last acts of *Les Malheurs d'Orphée* by Milhaud are moving through music really felt; 2. that the prelude and second movement of a symphony for orchestra and pianos by Charles E. Ives besides being literary are badly orchestrated as though Schumann had done the instrumentation, doubling all the parts; 3. that Ernst Krenek's *Symphonische Musik* is clearly constructed and at times original in its sombre colouring; and 4. that Hindemith in both *Der Dämon* and the *Concerto for Wind Instruments* is a composer with an extraordinary grasp of rhythmic flow and sequence. They also revealed 5. that there is an unnecessary extremeness in the character of Alfredo Casella. For here he was with an *Adieu à la Vie*, whereas all that any one would think of demanding of him would merely be his *Adieu à la Musique*.

PAUL ROSENFELD

COMMENT

ORIGINALS are better than replicas and a modern book got up to look precisely like an old one inspires no veneration, though like a photograph of an old binding or book page it may be informing. Real fondness for the unique copy will not however pretend indifference to one of Arber's reprints, to the publications of The Early English Text Society, or other redeeming of what only the nation can afford to own.

In a recent book on William Caxton,¹ the author has appended Caxton's prologues, epilogues, and what she names—significant interpolations. The antique strengths and refinements of speech and thought in these originals, kindle by their substance and manner, enthusiasm for exactness of production and depth of learning—far removed as we may feel ourselves to be from the composite cunning of this original and originating—editor, translator, illustrator, printer, and author.

Some while ago The New York Times recorded the fact that a writer in The Manchester Guardian had discovered a suggestion by "somebody in America" that Dear Sir should be omitted at the beginning of business letters." The English writer inferred that the innovation had been proposed because the salutation sounds insincere says the writer in The Times, but defending the salutation as too obviously insincere even to be thought so, he remarks that "in letters the ceremonious is as a rule more welcome than attempted originality." However cold or inadvertently ironic an epistolary "dear" or "yours" may be, formal approach to and departure from the business seems inevitable. Complete absence of salutation of course as in certain impassioned letters of Keats, Shelley, and Diderot, arrests the attention as the formal salutation is unable to arrest it. Yet in these letters the conclusion is not lacking and one particularly admires that shapely mechanics in which the complimentary close is indivisibly a part of what came before it.

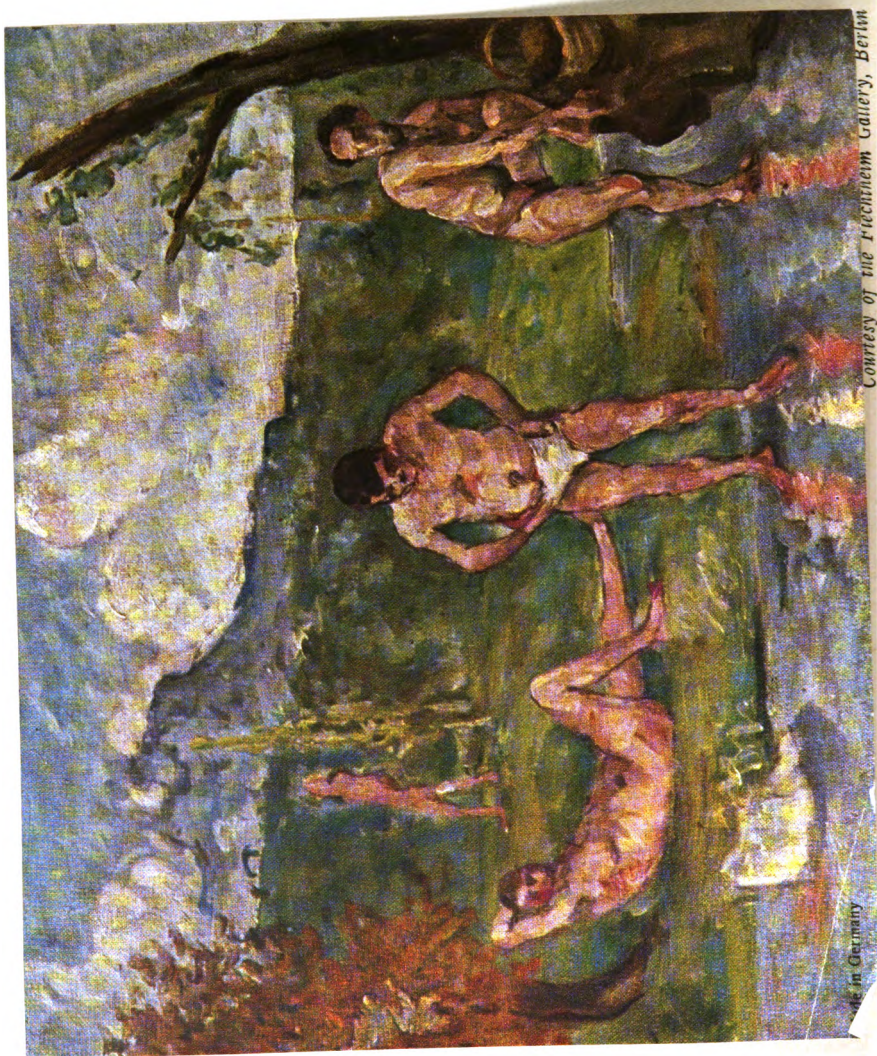
Short-cuts to culture are commended by present-day advertisers

¹ Caxton—Mirrour of Fifteenth-Century Letters. By Nellie Slayton Aurner. 8vo. 304 pages. Houghton Mifflin Company. \$6.

to those who would converse fluently, dance correctly, address audiences impressively, speak any foreign language like a cultured native. One can with difficulty place perfect faith in formulae which profess to remedy every mental deficiency; nor thus far has the secret of writing letters been imparted to the undeserving. Professor Saintsbury is sure that "the more the spoken word is heard in a letter the better." Some letters seem more reasoned than speaking. One likes those which are particular without being malapert and charm seems absent where there is not naturalness. Delightful things were to be found in *The American and English Autograph Collection of Mr A. C. Goodyear*,¹ sold at *The Anderson Galleries* during February. In the handwriting of some of these letters the author's individuality as we have conceived it seemed curiously evident; and Shenstone does indeed seem to speak rather than write, to the Doctor Percy of the *Reliques*: "I have also read ye *Essay on ye present state of learning*, written by Dr. Goldsmith, whom you know; and whom such as read it will desire to know." There were letters by Abraham Lincoln and a remarkable letter from Zachary Taylor to his son-in-law, Jefferson Davis. In many of the American letters one feels the tension of crisis; the English letters are companionably philosophical. Southey writes to John May: "There are three classes of people in whose society I find pleasure. Those in whom I meet with similarity of opinion—those who from a similarity of feeling tolerate difference of opinion, & those to whom long acquaintance has attached me, who neither think nor feel with me, but who have the same recollections & can talk of other times, other scenes . . ."

Of things purporting to be transitory, letters can be seriously a pleasure and as permanently a monument as anything which has been devised. With John Donne one "makes account that this writing of letters when it is with any seriousness, is a kind of extasie, and a departure and secession and suspension of the soul, which doth then communicate itself to two bodies." One can safely affirm at any rate that a writer of letters is not one of those who know much and understand little.

¹ *Catalogue of The American & English Autograph Collection of Mr. A. C. Goodyear, Buffalo, N. Y. Brochure. The Anderson Galleries. \$1.*



Courtesy of the Reichmann Gallery, Berlin

in Germany

THE BATHERS. BY PAUL CEZANNE

THE DIAL

MAY 1927

AN AESTHETIC SOVIET

BY GEORGE SANTAYANA

A SOVIET is a caucus of comrades, such as the sailors in a ship or the teachers in a college, who after hanging the captain or kicking out the president and trustees, assume joint control of the fabric in which they find themselves lodged, and declare it to be their property by right of eminent domain and of actual possession. In theory theirs is a spontaneous union and a spiritual bond. An unquestioning unanimity, childlike and brotherly, animates everybody; and it is no accident that the Soviet bears a Russian name, for there could hardly be elsewhere such a casual and affectionate way of superposing, as in children's games, a spiritual harmony upon spiritual chaos. Here is the perfect ideal of a free society: that each member should be an absolute spirit, grounded in itself and responsible to itself only, and yet that somehow it should transcend its isolation and feel the exhilaration of living and thinking in unison with a legion of kindred spirits, each no less free and absolute than itself.

The word Soviet is new, but the thing is extremely old; if not as old as spirit—for spirit in its depths as well as in its heights is essentially solitary—yet at least as old as play. How were ships invented or colleges first conceived? A boy may have gone wading for pleasure, alone or with an adventurous friend; and amid their splashing experiments with logs and rafts they may have gradually learned to become boatmen, fishermen, pirates, colonists, and merchants. An old man may have loved conning his adventures and maxims to himself, or decorating and sharpening them for the

benefit of the gaping bystanders; or he may have compared notes with an old crony, or wrought up his rival fancy to telling taller stories or giving more persuasive counsels: whence academies and parliaments. Very ponderous political and moral mechanisms may thus arise in play and be nothing but Soviets ossified. Sporting clubs and mystical sects have always been perfect Soviets in their beginnings; and if the great religions have a different character and rather resemble imperial governments or armies, the reason is that they do not represent merely the devotional overflow or speculative margin of human wisdom, but profess seriously to adjust the individual to the forces that control his life: they come in the name of the Lord, with wrath in their voices and promises in their hands. Whenever a Soviet does the same, and would impose its authority by force or by eloquent dogmas, it evidently forfeits the spiritual spontaneity which I was assigning to it: it becomes an institution like any other, one more of those material dominations and powers amongst which spirit must thread its way.

Least subject of human things to this fatality would seem to be aesthetic feeling and aesthetic invention. What could be more spontaneous and uncontrollable than living intuition, and at the same time more innocent? Aestheticism is a refined sensuality, the gift of finding an immediate joy in the obvious; and the field of the aesthetically obvious is infinitely extensible: every caprice or marvel of form, natural or unnatural, is waiting in the limbo of essence for the hand or the eye that shall bring it to light. This field also contains all possible intensities, all the varieties of depth, of pleasure or horror, of which any one can be directly sensible. The immediate is shallow only in the sense of being all apparent, all light and fleeting actuality, without any hint or question of causes. It may seem silly or unreal to the working intellect; and yet if intuition be vain, what shall rescue existence from vanity? Essence, whether aesthetic or logical, has no need of being true of matter: it has a sufficient truth or reality in itself; and unearthliness in it may go as far as it will, the farther the better, as we see in music and in spiritual religion, provided the organ that breeds these original intuitions is not unhinged. Exuberance of fancy, as in the Elizabethan age, is then a sign of manly vigour, health liberally enjoyed, and the fruition of many subtle harmonies, not only in the ear but in the blood.

To clap these trooping visionary images on to nature and define all things in human terms has always been the impulse of dogmatic reason, following in the wake of animal sense and of dramatic fancy; but the pure aesthete exists by renouncing that troubled ambition, laughing at opinion, and hugging his naked images for their own sake, in their innocent immediacy. What could be simpler or more legitimate? Yet this has never been the practice of artists. Works of art are not aesthetically richer than natural things: far otherwise. Works of art are causes of wonder, interest, and admiration; but a person who looks for *beauty* primarily in the arts cannot have loved nature, and will never understand the piety of art. Artists are craftsmen working under the patronage of industry, religion, custom, sentiment, or pride. They are not aesthetes; yet if they are to excel in their crafts they must have a good eye and a deft hand, gifts which will carry with them much aesthetic sensibility; hence a particular aesthetic bias, partly personal, partly traditional, will be discernible in their handiwork. Silently, and almost without knowing it, they will subject everything to special optical or manual rhythms, and will impose a thousand technical tricks, distortions, or inventions upon their subject-matter. Hence their schools or personal styles—just the element in their work which the idle aesthetic critic abstracts and perhaps exalts into their sole virtue: for the aesthete is a sort of intellectual voluptuary who thinks that everything is made, or ought to be made, simply for his contemplative satisfaction. And the aesthetic soul in the artists themselves takes this view, especially in musicians and painters, whose work has no immediate practical function; to them the patronage of industry, religion, and custom, or the duty of following natural models, may come to seem a monstrous imposition. Like the mutinous sailors or the rebellious professors, they may proclaim the independence of the spiritual quality, the free imaginative element, in their works; this, they may say, makes the true professional link between them, the artistic essence of their art; and in its name they may well establish an aesthetic Soviet.

Why not? The chief difficulties which might beset a Soviet of sailors or teachers, or even of artistic craftsmen, are vain and harmless in the impalpable realms of intuition. In politics or industry impulses may conflict, and dangers may have to be faced from without, so that your Soviet would quickly come to grief if it did

not begin by resigning all power into the hands of a leader. As sight requires a lens to focus and redistribute the interfused rays of light, so government requires a governor in whose brain and heart all interests may be synthesized and all actions co-ordinated. But for intuition the only lens needed is that which nature creates in each living organism: the rest—academies, precepts, public opinion—is so much dead lumber. Aesthetic values are essentially individual and occasional, and the greatness of masterpieces remains purely nominal until intuition in somebody recognizes and confirms it. It is the pupil's hand and the observer's eye that puts some living form, each time fresh and original, into the old subjects and the old designs. Moreover, in these free activities, nobody seriously suffers even if the worst comes to the worst. Let a painter stop painting, or compose things that nobody cares for, and who will perceive his loss? The brotherhood of aesthetes is not one of blood or interest, but of pure affinity: the aesthetic Soviet can accordingly break up harmlessly at any moment, until perhaps each artist becomes an only brother to himself; and even within the commonwealth of his own works and moods there need be no forced unanimity. Each of his intuitions will be sufficiently justified if it consecrates the vital harmony of the moment that produced it.

But in this case, we might ask, why set up an aesthetic Soviet at all, and not be satisfied with a happy anarchy, here where anarchy is innocent? Fish, I would reply, swim in a pathless medium, yet they habitually swim in schools. The same thing happens to free and emancipated spirits—aesthetes, poets, and philosophers. Not that free spirits or fish love one another. Their occasional cold contacts, in chasing the same seasonable bait, are slimy, offish, and spiteful; yet an uncomprehended compulsion draws them about into common feeding-grounds and currents, as if the movement and example of some unintentional leader were a signal requisite to give them direction and to awaken the darting impulse in their dark bosoms. Such is the helplessly gregarious nature of man even in his spiritual visions and most private flights. The truth and beauty which we profess to love would leave us profoundly disconsolate, if we could not dance before them holding hands and assuring ourselves, by saying so in chorus, that this beauty is really beautiful and this truth really true.

In thus faltering and seeming to renounce its integrity, spirit confesses and discovers its origin. For it is absolute and free only transcendently, that is, from its own point of view, when in the act of living it takes its existence and impulses for granted, and from that watch-tower surveys and judges all things as if from their absolute centre, or even thinks them a passive picture created by its own ingenious evolving thought. But all this, considered soberly and biographically, is so much egotistic illusion. In reality, spirit is never absolute or free; down to its inmost depths it expresses the life of some material organism, formed and buffeted by circumstances. Beauty—as the pure aesthetes have discovered—is not intrinsic to any form: it comes to bathe that form, and to shine forth from it, only by virtue of a secret attraction, agitation, wonder, and joy which that stimulus happens to cause—not always but on occasion—in our animal hearts. Even truth would be an unmeaning word and a nightmare to the spirit—as in fact it becomes in transcendental philosophy—if no threatening and mothering nature existed outside: intuition might grow more or less vivid, its field might seem more or less complex and organized, but no actual view could ever suspect the existence of any other view, or appeal to it. A construction in colours does not contradict or verify a construction in sounds; nor would a tragedy contradict a comedy, or another tragedy, nor would any part of discourse correct any other part of it, unless these various essences were understood to describe the same series of events, stumblingly enacted or brutally endured by living animals, and not in the least created by the intuition which may eventually review them in perspective. Pure spirit is not social: the pressing occasions for conflict or co-operation must first be impressed upon it from without or from below. Spiritual unanimity would be utterly inexplicable, as it would be perfectly idle and undiscoverable, if spirits were free and absolute, invisibly fluttering through heavenly spaces.

These considerations are not so speculative as they sound: they touch the fate of any Soviet. A Soviet requires that the spontaneous impulses of its members should be specific and that they should be unanimous. But how did these impulses ever come to be unanimous or to be specific? Evidently by force of animal necessity and of natural circumstances. Before children can conspire in

inventing and in playing a game, they must have been born contemporary brats; they must have had neighbourly parents and a common playground. Before sailors or teachers can form a Soviet, there must have been a ship or a college to bring them together, to give them a common task, and to turn them into comrades. A common competence or a common hatred or hope is first bred by the very institutions on which it reacts, and cannot long survive them. All nature is one great institution, of which animal bodies and human customs are in their day constituent parts: the freest spirit alive is a cub in that litter. Institutions do not originate in the sentiments which they produce; these sentiments, whether pious, aesthetic, or rebellious, always presuppose these very institutions. There may have been passions and plans in the minds of the founders too, or of the bystanders who insensibly, by their actions and interactions, allowed these institutions to arise; but such original sentiments, if not irrelevant to the result, would be those natural to sporting leaders, adventurous and imperious, who amid the surprise or opposition of the lazy majority constructed some novel engine, like a college or a ship, which they foresaw might hold together, and might acquire social uses; for any mechanism, if it can take root, will compel all adjacent mechanisms to adjust themselves to it. The ship and the college, if launched at the right moment, will attract vagrant souls, and turn them into sailors and students; and these novel employments will generate the moral bonds, the comradeship or the grievances, on which a Soviet may be based. The possibility of friendship among men hangs on such accidental heritages and contacts, on the fact of possessing common instruments and functions. These the Soviet inherits gratis, but they are its very life. Merchandise and travellers must continue to flow to the ship, parents must continue to send their sons to the college, if the fervent brotherhood of colleagues or mariners is to endure. No Soviet of professors could stand the strain of lecturing only to one another, or each to himself; nor could the ship go on sailing, wafted by a puff of socialism, simply to keep the sailors sailors, and spiritually one. How many of us have wished that there might be a monastery for free-thinkers! But the thing is impossible. A religious Soviet presupposes a fixed dogma, a common moral burden, an epidemic inspiration.

Aesthetic intuition and aesthetic invention are in the same parlous case. It is not enough that some image should arise possessing for the moment an inevitable interest and expressiveness, such as spontaneous ideas borrow from the effort of attention which fixes their floating form; if the image has no other significance, it will fade rapidly or will soon come to seem trivial and ugly, like those verses which a poet composes with rapture in a sort of dream, and which the next day, when he rereads them, he puts in the fire. A workman can hardly be true to a merely aesthetic fancy; it melts into something different; often it has sickened him before his apprentices have had time to adopt it. Hence an extreme instability in the purely aesthetic by-play of the arts. Spontaneous preferences are seldom so deeply rooted in sense or instinct as to be unalterable; fashion easily reverses them, and even while they prevail they commonly borrow their specious rightness from underlying moral compulsions. After all, on what can imagination feed save on such objects as happen to meet the senses, on the example of other artists, or on the public enthusiasms of the hour? Personal tricks of intuition will come to modify these themes, harmonizing them with one another and with the temperament of the artist; but pure taste is not creative, it contains no principle of initial choice, no radical motifs. Were the artist a free and absolute aesthete, equally solicited by the plethora of all possible forms, whither should his poor wits turn? I am afraid he would be condemned to eternal impotence, and would die like Buridan's ass without being able to choose among those equidistant allurements. But nature luckily breaks the spell, accident has loaded the dice; and if a man may abstract in his conceptions from the natural objects about him, he cannot abstract from the human nature within himself. He is animal before he is spiritual, imitative before he is inventive, and in his very inventions he merely turns over and ruminates the pabulum which fortune has thrust upon him. And as nature supplies his initial notions, so she also steadies his hand, and lends depth to his final allegiances. Certainly every aesthetic fashion has its intrinsic charm, felt when some wayward impulse conceives that particular effect, and prefers it. But why that effect rather than another? For some humble non-aesthetic reason: familiarity, facility, contrast, affinity, chance. The spark

of spirit requires the contact of material forces not only to kindle it but to give it direction, and fashions become styles only when they are anchored in necessity.

What, for instance, could be more intensely and exclusively aesthetic than stained glass? Yet the art of making it did not arise until non-aesthetic motives were found for it in civil life. It was akin to the boasts of heraldry. People had a passion for emblazonings, memorials, perpetual illustrations of sacred history, festive, dramatic, omnimodal expressions of worship. But soon, when learning became classical, chivalry reticent, and religion puritan, it was in vain for stained glass to retain all its splendour: this very splendour became odious or contemptible; it corrupted the light; it confused the eye; it seemed garish and barbaric, like peasants' finery. Glaziers were reduced to imitating the effects of paintings on canvas: for their own incomparable art they lost all skill, respect, or enthusiasm.

The truth is that the aesthete is essentially an amateur, a poetic spirit listening rather than composing. But in the modern world, where nobody knows where he belongs, it has occurred to him to pose as an artist. In this pretension he shows some democratic shyness. He would blush to confess himself a mere aesthete, coming to be ministered to and not to minister; he wishes to prove that he has a public function, and to justify his existence by doing some work, no matter how bad or unnecessary. At the same time, in this very pretension, he shows some democratic conceit; for he assumes that he is innately competent to do anything that he may fancy, and to do it much better than the poor slaves of training and routine. This is improbable: and in fact the most interesting work done by the aesthetic Soviet is that of old regimental artists who have passed to the revolutionary camp, and who can laugh at their own experiments and revert from them, on occasion, to traditional ways.

Such reversion is no recantation. Pure creation, absolute music, has always been the aesthetic essence of the arts: the more completely intuition can transmute and etherealize its materials, the greater its spiritual force. But this creation cannot be creation out of nothing; and here, I think, is the canker in the rose of the aesthetic Soviet, the reason why it seems sometimes to have lost the

modesty and grace of the garden, and to have become a monstrous orchid, forced in a greenhouse only to be displayed in a conservatory. Intuition is an animal function; its life comes of employing and if possible unifying the natural movements of the soul and summing them up in some luminous image. The image may be as sublimated as you will, it must not be irrelevant; the supreme is simple but not arbitrary. In proportion as the interests of the soul are not engaged, the soul will ignore that image, and the image will wither; the art which embodies it will have but a slender and unsavoury present, and no future. The prophets of the aesthetic Soviet announce that art must be emancipated from nature, and appreciation of art from literature. This is possible (though by no means exclusively right) if by literature we understand romantic history or fiction, and by nature visual appearances; but there is a mother-nature deeply hidden from the eye, and there is a moral world of which literature is the verbal expression; and from these no human art can be emancipated. All values are natural in their origin, and they all become moral in their harmony. A very casual and volatile pleasure may touch the moral world only by its innocence, in that it gives vent to some passing impulse, as laughter does, without doing any harm; but only the most superficial aesthetic effects can be put under that category. An adult work of art, since it has some material permanence, touches other moments beyond that in which it was begotten: it appeals to a moral constituency. If it is to be permanently esteemed it must continue to enrich the sympathetic observer with some emotion which exalts him, or with some perception which he is glad to renew. Otherwise the work abdicates that aesthetic quality which was its original essence, and says nothing to intuition. In its survival, it becomes a moral nonentity—as indeed all works of art become with time, when the spirit that informed them is obsolete. A monument without aesthetic fecundity encumbers the earth like the stick of a rocket, after its momentary flare has been lost in the intense inane.

We must expect the arts to remain in the hands of traditional artists; but these artists will lose nothing by occasionally joining an aesthetic Soviet for a sort of holiday or carnival. They will return to their workshops greatly refreshed; for after all the irresponsible aesthetes are the children of light. They have dis-

covered afresh how mighty is any technical medium, and how varied are the methods of pure composition: none compulsory and none illegitimate, if only they minister to the life which intuition draws from nature, but enjoys for its own sake.

PHOENIX

BY ROBERT HILLYER

The skirts of the careless wind have thrown
The sand in patterns of herring-bone.
Up from the ocean to the skies
Egyptward the phoenix flies.
Is it far away, bird of flame,
Is it far away, eyes of stone?
You'll lose your sight, you'll lose your name
Before the homeward journey is done.
Will you and the sun sail alone,
Bird of flame and boat of the sun?
Your eyes will fall to the yellow beach
And the tide will bear them out of reach;
The green tide will look at the sky
Through the fiery glaze of a phoenix eye.
Will the shrines of Egypt still be kind
When the wings are salty, the eyes blind?
What is sight to the dazzling sun
Who puts the stars out one by one?

And who is the young man that would dare
Fling his questions up the air
To the lord of fire who cruises there!



DAY. BY LOWELL HOUSER



NIGHT. BY LOWELL HOUSER

PERSEPHONE

BY MERIDEL LE SUEUR

WE boarded the train at a Kansas town. Its black houses sat low amidst the fields which were hardening and darkening now the summer was over. The corn had been shocked, the seed lay in the granaries, the earth had closed, and now the sun hung naked in the sky. All was over—the festival, the flowering, the harvesting. Dark days had come and I was taking the daughter of Freda away to discover, if I could, the malady which made her suffer.

As the train moved from the station I watched Freda standing on the platform, her round face shadowed by the train as it passed between her and the low sun. The daughter leaned against the window for the last sight of her mother; as we left the town she sat with her small head bent as if half broken from her body.

We sped through the dying country, fleeing through the low land. Upon the fields as they lay upturned and dark, clear to the round swinging sky-line, there fell the eerie wan light of the dying season. The train as it travelled through this dim sea of light became uncanny and frail, touched, too, with the bright delicacy of decay. But upon the daughter of Freda the last light dwelt intimately as she lay half sleeping, like the fields, fatally within the cycle of the dying earth.

Fatigued after the preparations for the journey, she rested in utter weariness. Her black garments hung, about to exhaust her, while out from them, like sudden flowers sprang her hands and face. Over her great eyes the lids were lowered and gave to her whole being a magical abstraction, as if she looked eternally within, or down through the earth. Only her mouth had tasted of violent fruit; it drooped in her face and turned red when she coughed, which she did frequently, dipping her head like a blind bird.

As I watched her an old pain brewed within me; a faint nostalgia which had come upon me all my life when looking upon her, or when in the presence of her mother, as if upon seeing these two women a kind of budding came about on all the secret unflowered

tendrils of my being, to blossom and break in the spaces of a strange world, far from my eyes and hands.

Just when the round and naked sun hung on the horizon, three bulls, standing in the dim, nether light, turned and loped towards our train.

“The black bull,” I said, “looked like your husband’s.”

She lifted the white lids from her eyes, but did not speak. When I repeated what I said, she turned away without answering and sat with her hands in her lap, her eyes lowered, in an attitude so fatal and hopeless that I knew it was of no use to take her on this train, through these fields, past these rivers and houses to our destination. Nothing lay in these things that could mitigate her illness. The malady was too deep.

As we sped through the fields, the fantastic conquering of distance threw a magic over us so that terrible and vast things became possible. With the dying of the sun the train travelled through a colossal cave, between the closed earth and the closed sky and I half forgot our departure and our destination.

I have always expected some metamorphosis to take place in Freda and her daughter—a moment when the distant look would, by miracle, go from their eyes and they would reveal their nativity in some awful gesture. Nothing had ever happened beyond the natural ritual of our common farm life. But there came upon me now the old mystic credulity as I watched Freda’s daughter sitting motionless, her white lids rounding over her eyes, her face glowing in the gloom.

Lying there she contained like a white seed, the mystery of her origin. The marks of living were slight upon her, for from the first she seemed to carry most strongly the mark of a perpetual death. Paradoxically I thought that because death was her intimate, I could never come nearer her mystery than to her birth on the prairies, in the spring as the first white violets bloomed.

For the women of the Kansas town, shading their eyes, had seen Freda coming from the prairies, walking and carrying the child.

“Whose baby is that?” the women asked her when she had come to them.

And she answered, “Mine.” And uncovered for them to see, bending down to them.

“When was it born?” these women to whom birth was a great dread, asked.

She answered smiling, "In the night." And she went into a store and bought some goods with little flowers marked on it in which she wrapped the baby.

That year the days were bright and the earth bountiful. For each ear of corn heretofore, there were now two. The sun ripened all that had been sown. The soil was so hot we could not suffer our bare feet upon it. Freda's lands were the most fertile of all.

Her husband, Frantz, the strongest man in the country, was a ploughman. We saw him in the fields, dark and stocky, driving his big flanked horses, astride the black furrows that turned behind him. When he came to our fields we were frightened by his narrow eyes buried in the flesh, and by his hands matted with hair.

Together, Frantz and Freda ploughed the fields; there was a feeling abroad that never had Freda sown a seed that had not come to fruition. It was true that for her everything blossomed.

In the spring we met her in the fields or in the thickets, where the first flowers were springing alone. In the full, golden light she came towards us, full-bosomed, with baskets of wild berries hanging on her bright arms. When we ran to her, she gave us gifts, berries, nuts, and wild fruits unknown to us.

At harvest time she worked in the fields with the men. When we brought her water she straightened from the earth to loom above us, curving against the sky; a strong odour would come from her, like the odour of the earth when it is just turned; her yellow hair would glisten round her face and we thought it grew from her head exactly as the wheat grew from the earth. Once when she leaned over me, I grew faint with the fertile odour and at the same time drops of perspiration fell from her temples on my face.

When her mare was seen hitched outside the houses of the town, we knew that a great, natural, and dreadful thing was taking place within. The house became, after that, marked, possessing a strange significance of birth. We children, while the mare waited, sat on the curb watching for Freda, who, when she came, passed in a kind of confusion of her great body, the golden hair, and the strong, sweet odour. We would watch the hips of the horse, with Freda upon her, disappearing down the road, past the houses of the town, out into the open plains.

The child of Freda, delicate and pale from the first, was not much known or seen about. She came to town on the first spring

days, with her mother, riding in the wagon, atop the early vegetables. She carried with her always, falling from her hands, the first white violets. It did not astonish us that she was thus privy to the first stirrings of the season, since we glimpsed her through all the year in the prairies, by the streams, or hidden in the nooks of the fragrant hills. In the fall, returning from berry hunting, she brushed past us in the chill dusk. In the winter, as we went to the frozen creek, we glimpsed her peering from the naked bush. In the spring we saw her come by her mother, with the first violets. She never spoke to us, but covered her enormous eyes with her lids, standing quite still, before us but irrevocably hidden.

On Saturdays as Freda went about the town she hid behind her skirts, her eyes lowered in her slim, pale face. Some women would stop in the streets and say she was idiotic because of her little head. To me, however, she had a strange grace, with her swelling body, her little head and pale face, her eyes like minerals, and her hair light like her mother's, but fine and thin as if it had grown outside the light of the sun.

When Freda and her husband were ploughing the fields, the girl, who grew very tall, would run in the wake of the plough, singing. Frantz hated her, as everyone knew, and he hated her singing. When Freda, with her horses went plunging through the black waves to the horizon, he would leave his plough and strike at the girl. She would veer away as if only the wind had struck her, still singing.

When I could run away from the town I used to lie in the damp thicket which bordered their field and watch them; the dark man straddling the furrows, following the rumps of his horses, holding the plough to the heavy soil; Freda with her skirts on the earth, the horses turning their great eyes to look back at her, the fields lying about her with their living secrets—I watched with satisfaction these two heavy figures, turning the vast earth, moving upon her stillnesses, and the slim girl, like an antelope, running in the fields beside them, singing high and shrill.

She coughed beside me, dipping her little head like a bird. Now no song was in her.

Outside rapidly past us moved the thickets, the fields, the villages. A woman stood in a doorway, half invisible in the dusk,

hoisting a baby on her hip—a man came down the road with his team, the white breath of the horses flying from them in the dusk.

The visible world was sinking into another sea, into a faint dusk. The daughter of Freda lay like a fallen and despoiled angel, travelling through darkness, lost to the realm of her nativity, with neither memory nor anticipation. Still I watched her trying to spin around her the stuff of reality. Did there exist for her the seed of our common life or had she eaten only the fruit of perpetual strangeness and death? All that had happened to her, all the incidents of her life, I brought to bear upon her, but I had easier made a mark upon the wind. These things had made no mark upon her. The only mark was her mark upon life, upon all of us who saw her as a frail lost child in the fields of her mother, as a woman ravished by strangeness.

The young farm boys, still delicate with the wind and the fire which is the mark of light and air before the fields harden them, were the only ones who came close to Freda's daughter. They often told us in the evenings that they had met her in the thickets or coming across the fields, and had talked with her. But then they would say no more.

The older youths found it impossible to snare the footsteps of the delicate girl. Strange to say, on the other hand, the firm and serious farm youth were convinced of her wantonness, while old ladies rocking on their porches hinted dark things of her.

But one night a man came to town, from the west, driving his cattle, packed and bellowing through the deserted streets.

The next morning people said to each other, "Did you hear the cattle going by in the night?" We children thought it had been only a dream until, early in the morning, we saw on the lawn, the deep prints of cloven hoofs. When I went for the morning milk, just outside the town, I saw the cattle where they stood sleeping, knee deep in the grass and mist. As I was passing a man sat up, from where he too had been sleeping, and looked at me from the grasses. His beard stood out like bracken. From his low forehead the black hair sprang. When I saw him about to rise, I ran into the town shouting to my brothers that the cattle they had heard and thought were only the sound in a dream, had really gone down our streets, and had stopped on the outskirts of the town.

It came to be known that the man I had seen in the grasses went by the name of March. Saturday he came into the town riding a splendid horse. He went about the streets talking in a loud voice to the country people. He was to be seen too, at the horse barns, or at public auctions. Saturday nights he herded what cattle he had purchased, sometimes only a fine bull, to the pasture he had bought next to Freda's land. He became famous through the countryside for his pedigreed bulls. The farmers came in season to lead them to their own pastures for breeding.

It happened in a very subtle way that the countryside came to think of Freda and her daughter and the man March, all three together, as somehow of the same blood. All the vital acts of farm life came to move around one or the other of them. Freda and her husband seemed intimate with the fields, and the half mystical rites of planting and reaping. It was said in wonder that Freda even brought in the lambs as they were dropped in the fields in the spring as if she knew their time. She appeared to the women at the oven and her appearance augured good bread. It was out their road the farmers went for the breeding of their cows. The very lay of the land with its rich dark colour was strange, so was the magic they had with the earth and with natural things. Freda's daughter held a more strange mystery. She seemed half evil at times. But after she saved the life of a boy, when his body had turned black, they sought her out for palliatives.

So that it came about that the country people as they dreamed over their work in the spring and autumn, were half unconsciously touched by the mystery of their tasks—a mystery between their own action and the secret of what they acted upon, by virtue of which alliance everything they did prospered and yielded in the field, the vine, the flesh. Probably because they were, in a manner of speaking, without a God, when in their dream, in a kind of blind ecstasy over the earth, within the heat, they attributed dimly to the figure of Freda, and with her the other two, an alliance and an intimacy with the virtue and the mystery, along with something sinister, of the natural things of which their lives were made.

After the corn had been husked and the dreary Kansas cold had set in, I was wandering in the thicket which ran along the stream in a little curve of the fields below Freda's. The pale sun, casting no shadow, shone on the naked sod and the land, low and flat, swelled

a little to the sky. This side of Freda's, the bulls stood in the wind, quite still.

I had just left the path and gone further into the thickets for berries, when, out of the dying woods, with only a slight sound like a bird's, ran the daughter of Freda. March came after her. I could hear his feet strike the bare ground, and saw as he ran past me, his black beard and hair struck by the wind as he ran into the open. She had climbed the barbed fence and was running in the bull pasture, through the crisp grasses toward her mother's. But three bulls turned at the farthest fence and eyed her. When she turned back, frightened, March was running to her. Then she stood binding her skirts around her, her small head, like a dying bird's, thrown back. As she seemed about to cry out, he came upon her and bore her with him into the grasses. A young bull struck the ground with his forefeet and loped toward the sun. I ran back into the thicket.

The next days I was filled with terror because of what I had seen. I dared not go upon the road to the fields, or even out under the sky. The third day I came home and there in the dusk was Freda, leaning in our door.

"She is gone," I heard her say.

My mother spoke from the dark kitchen, "And is he gone too, with all the cattle?"

"Yes," said Freda and stood suffering in the dusk. After a while she walked away down the dim road.

Frantz came in the night, knocking and pounding at our door to know where she had gone.

That winter she grew very old. The farmers, through the frosty moonlight, saw her wandering the barren plains. Children screamed when she approached the town. She seemed like an old woman whose time of fertility has gone. In the nights she came knocking at the doors of the village to ask for her daughter.

That year the spring never came. The flowers died beneath the ground and the fields burned in the sun.

Through the hot days of spring we saw her far off, unreal in the simmering heat. We found her by the old well in our orchard, sitting, sorrowing on the stones, her hair wild and white. We were young girls from school with bright ribbons in our hair. We had come to cool our faces over the black opening of the well and to

cry down its sides to hear the sweet, far echo answer us. But when we saw her there we drew together, whispering and peering at her. She rose and came toward us, no longer bright and bold, but still terrible, looming above us. She went among us as we hid our faces in our aprons, stroking our hair and arms, calling each of us by the same name. It was a name I had never heard before and I could never, after that, remember it. She peered at each of us so close that we trembled when her breath came upon us. When she turned her sad eyes to the well again we ran from her in every direction, through the orchard, and for the rest of the afternoon watched her from behind the trees as she sat on the stones of the well, sorrowing.

One evening late in summer, as the land still lay beneath the drought, my brother came from the fields, and standing before us with the heat of the day on his face he said, "I saw Freda's daughter walking towards her mother's."

That night the country people thought it strange that the first rains fell, plunging ceaselessly into the earth.

The train stopped at a siding amidst the prairies in a sudden silence. The woman, aroused, sat up with her eyes wide open.

"How far are we?" she asked in a light voice.

I answered her very low, "From where?"

Before she could answer a fit of coughing shook her and the train started again.

The lights were lit. She was timid about going into the diner, but at last, with vague gestures, lifting her pale hands she put over her head an old velvet hat and rose and went down the aisle, forlorn and pale, with a kind of assaulted and pathetic dignity.

I came behind her, looking at the tall body as it moved with its peculiar grace. It was like this she had come back to Freda's, with this delicate, hopeless grace, as if she had touched strange fruits and eaten pale and deathless seeds.

After the summer, March had come back, driving his bulls through the street to the old pasture. He had knocked at Freda's door and Freda had given her daughter back to him. She had gone to live in his low hut. When we passed we saw her come out of the door to throw the dishwater over the bare ground. Her thick black skirts, given her now by the women of the town, would be pulling

and dragging about her, her little head would swirl up from them, free as a serpent's. After she had thrown the water she would stand still, tall and hopeless, in that terrible abstraction, looking toward us with her blind, deep eyes.

In the diner she seated herself with timid, quick movements, then sat with her eyes lowered. Some arrangement of the heavy skirt annoyed her, she fingered it delicately beneath the table. She coughed, turning her head and frowning. In an effort to suppress it the tears started, and did not fall, but hung there magnifying her great eyes. Suddenly, unable to bear the light, she closed them. Again as the lids covered her eyes, by some bewitchment her face became beautiful and eternal. I felt again the imminent metamorphosis as if she were about to change before my eyes and as always in haste as if to prevent a phenomenon which I both hoped for and dreaded, I spoke.

"Did you see the fine bulls that ran toward our train?"

She lifted her eyes and looked at me, but did not answer.

"I believe the black one was the one your husband sold the upstate farmer." She was looking at me. "Did you see the bulls just before dark?"

"No," she said and the answer startled me.

Whether it was the natural desolateness of travelling between places, likely to give to the form of what reality we know a vast and fabulous temper, or the sorrow of the dying year, I do not know, but back in the car, I became desolate and afraid.

For the remaining hours I sat opposite, watching her sleeping. I brooded over her, half expectant as if about to startle from the mist that covered her, the winged bird which was the secret of her being. I watched her with pain as she moved me with her ancient mystery, as of something half remembered.

It seemed to me again that a metamorphosis was about to take place here on this train, going through Kansas, that the bounds of all that I had known would be shattered before me. Lying before me, she lost what semblance of reality she ever had and seemed to glow and live in other elements than I knew.

What strange realms had thrust her forth to be born of her mother in the night, to put upon her the burden of endless movement through fields, upon the earth, through many days under the

burden of shadowless nights, marked with the mark of strangeness to be usurped by an unfamiliar man, to walk through unfamiliar places, and to carry unfamiliar burdens.

Watching her glow before me with her terrible veiled identity, a strangeness of everything came upon me and a terror. I felt suddenly that after this journey, in which after all nothing had happened, I should never be the same; that by looking upon her I was partaking of some poisonous drug, like the poison of early spring flowers and the poison of late berries.

I dared not move in my terror, afraid she might stir, but she sat still, preoccupied, with her eyes hidden, dreaming of what she had never forgotten. Cautiously I came near to her mystery. She among us all had known that living was a kind of dying. When in these realms, she had refused to partake of our fruits and so become enamoured, but had closed herself in the dream which is real and from which we die when we are born.

Soon, now we would come upon the city glittering on the plain, above the bluffs of the river. A terror of all that lived came upon me; a terror of Freda's daughter who lay as if dead, glowing already in the mineral worlds of her strange lord. Because of the terror I said to myself, this woman is only the wife of a Kansas stockman—but who is the stockman? We saw him driving his bulls through the night, but who is he? Who is her mother? We saw her in the ripe fields, and turning the soil to fertility—but who is she?

All in that town came to me, all I had known passed before me, and I said, who are they? And I did not know.



DEER. BY L. H. JUNGnickel



ON THE BEACH. BY L. H. JUNGnickel

WILLIAM SHENSTONE

BY HAVELOCK ELLIS

SHENSTONE is ranked among the minor figures in literature, even in eighteenth-century English literature. Yet he has always been a significant figure for those who are able to see what signifies, and to-day his significance, not only for England but for Europe generally, continues to increase. In *The Cambridge History of English Literature*, where we may reasonably expect to find the standard literary opinion of our time, it is noteworthy that both Mr Saintsbury, who deals with the minor poets of the eighteenth century, and Canon Hutton, who deals with the minor prose writers, alike independently refer to the undue neglect of Shenstone; "a tendency at all times to treat him too lightly," says the former, who adds, also taking his prose into consideration, that we may put Shenstone after Collins and Gray for "the root of the matter"; while the latter states that Shenstone's prose has too long been neglected by lovers of good writing. As regards Shenstone's wider significance in the development of ideas in the modern world, that has been minutely studied of recent years by various writers in Germany and Switzerland and America, such as Dr Mathilde Müller, Miss Hazeltine, and Professor Hecht. This growth of interest in Shenstone is not merely due to that increased appreciation of the eighteenth century which marked the final disappearance of the nineteenth; it was already in progress in that century. For the interest of Shenstone is many-sided. While he was a child of his own age and carried certain of its lesser activities to the finest point, he was also the pioneer of a coming age; in various directions he felt and thought what people in general only began to feel and think some fifty years later. That leads us to his third and fundamental aspect: he was an original personality who had developed a temperament of his own. Such a man attracts the devotion of his friends, but usually the uncomprehending antipathy of those at a distance. It was so with Shenstone. He lived in the country, far from London. He cherished his friends, some of them men of con-

NOTE: A volume of Shenstone's prose writings, selected by Havelock Ellis and entitled *Men and Manners*, will shortly be issued by The Golden Cockerel Press. To this volume, Dr Ellis' article will form the introduction.

siderable distinction; the nearest and dearest was Richard Graves, perhaps the most notable of them all, and to him we owe much of our knowledge of Shenstone.¹

William Shenstone belonged to the middle of his century, being born in 1714 and dying in 1763, and to the central part of England at the point where Shropshire meets Worcestershire and Staffordshire. His family, it has been shown, was settled at Halesowen at least as far back as Queen Elizabeth's time, and his father was a plain country gentleman. Shenstone speaks of himself as having been born at the ancestral home, but nowadays we often know more about people than they knew about themselves, and it appears that he was born at Wigstone in Leicestershire, where, however, he was not baptized. This may indicate that he was born prematurely during a brief absence of his mother from home. That would be a significant fact as bearing on what seems to have been his constitutional tendency to ill health, notwithstanding a healthy country life; it is to be noted that the earliest dated poem he finally included in his work, dated 1730 at the age of sixteen (doubtless revised later) is an "Ode to Health" in which he mourns its flight, while several other poems are concerned with illness. Both his parents, moreover, died when he was quite young, while his younger and only brother died in early manhood, so that the heredity may not have been sound. His mother belonged to the Penns of Harborough near Hagley, an ancient family, and from her came the estate which brought her son some three hundred pounds a year. He was educated at a Birmingham school to which the gentry of the neighbourhood sent their sons, and then entered at Pembroke College, Oxford. This was the college of Johnson who later claimed Shenstone for Pembroke with satisfaction: "Sir, we are a nest of singing birds." Johnson and he do not seem to have associated, though they occasionally corresponded in later life, but it was here in 1732 that Shenstone learnt to know Richard Graves.² They were both

¹ I have elsewhere (Nineteenth Century, April, 1915) written of Graves and his *Spiritual Quixote*, one of the most interesting and amusing novels of the eighteenth century, lately reprinted for the first time after more than a century.

² In 1788 Graves published anonymously his *Recollections of Some Particulars in the Life of the Late William Shenstone*, the most interesting and intimate account of Shenstone we have, though not at every point completely accurate. Graves also wrote of Shenstone's home in the *Spiritual Quixote*, and another novel, *Columnella*, is supposed to be partly suggested by Shenstone's character.

occasionally to be found in a set which spent the evening in drinking ale and smoking tobacco, usually beginning these "pious orgies" with the catch:

"Let's be jovial, fill our glasses,
Madness 'tis for us to think
How the world is ruled by asses,
And the wisest swayed by chink."

But Shenstone was not altogether in his element in that set, nor indeed in the sets of a more sober and dreary character. He followed the regular courses with zeal and profit, and for the rest enjoyed the society of two or three special friends (mostly, like Graves, to prove friends for life) who would meet for breakfast to discuss literature and humour while they sipped Florence wine. On the whole he sought few friends, being bashful and always remaining rather unsociable. In his dress he was unconventional, hating wigs and wearing his own hair naturally, "almost in the graceful manner which has since prevailed," a pioneer in this as in more important matters. But he was a large and rather awkward person and his hair inclined to be coarse, so that in following the rule he had laid down that, without a slavish regard to fashion, "every one should dress in a manner most suitable to his own person and figure" (as his friend and publisher Dodsley puts it) he sometimes incurred a little ridicule at Oxford. He had been intended for the Church, but quickly renounced that project, and never joined any particular religious sect, just as he never associated himself with any political party; he was not hostile as regards these matters, but often humorous, and sometimes (when we look below the surface) rather critical. He left the University without taking a degree because on coming of age the family estate passed into his hands and he rather prematurely began to keep house, where what was regarded as his "indolent temper" induced him to linger—at that time reading much French literature—though he kept his name on the College books. At the age of twenty-two, when away on a visit, he fell in love, it would appear with the sister of his friend Richard Graves, a girl of great beauty, we are told, and "mild and serene graces." This passion held him for several years.

Meanwhile he gradually became absorbed in the cultivation of that combined rural and literary existence which was to make his

little estate, his *ferme ornée*, as he called it, The Leasowes, widely famous, and to occupy all his life. Fate was kind in enabling him to follow the vocation to which he was clearly called. It is true that he often complained of the idleness of his life, of his loneliness, of his lack of money and of health, of his melancholy, but it is certain that notwithstanding his indolence—of which he sometimes made a virtue—he found abundance alike of employment and happiness in his life, and constant delight in the development of his estate, even apart from the fame it ultimately brought him. In the absence of an early home life he had had no training in social intercourse; he disdained formality and etiquette, he disliked dancing and card playing and the other social amusements of that age. He had no love at all for town life. He went on a first visit to London—one hundred miles in those days meant a three days' journey—when he was about twenty-six, and found much to interest and amuse him, but he never felt the least desire to settle there, and the question of going abroad never even seems to have arisen. At The Leasowes he carried out gradually a never-ending task of enlargement and improvement in accordance with those of his fertile ideas which his small income permitted, for, as he wrote to his friend Jago, "Economy, that invidious old matron, on occasion of every frivolous expense, makes such a hideous squalling that the murmur of a cascade is utterly lost to me." Still the cascade was no doubt eventually made with the help of his man Tom, while he could not always resist the temptation to buy what he called "toys," especially snuffboxes. He painted in water-colours (especially flower pieces) with some skill it is said, and was fond of music; he played the harpsichord, sang with much expression, and always regarded music, he said, as his "dernier resort." He was too considerate, as well as too lazy, to worry his tenants when in arrears with their rents, and he seems always on the point of plunging hopelessly into debt, yet for all his seeming carelessness he kept within his income of three hundred pounds, left no debts at his death, and so improved his little estate that (his friend Bishop Percy stated) it was sold by auction in 1795 for seventeen thousand pounds. Dr Müller compares the fame of The Leasowes to that of Abbotsford half a century later, but, while they may be comparable in reputation, in character they were totally unlike; Abbotsford was the monument of Scott's enthusias-

tic devotion to the past while *The Leasowes* attracted attention because it was so "modern" and seemed a revelation of the possibilities of the future.

Shenstone's complaints of the emptiness of his life, we can now see, were the outcome of his constitution; his "natural melancholy," like his indolence, was the mark of a native lack of energy, despite a large and seemingly robust frame. We can detect no definite chronic disease; he complains most of his digestion; it is unnecessary here to go into all the symptoms (the epitaphic Inscription, which is the most amusingly indecorous of the section of his verse entitled *Levities*, was probably written of himself) but it is evident that powdered rhubarb (with a little grated nutmeg) was not always an adequate treatment; nor even visits to Bath to take the waters, in which he had much faith. We hear of sleeplessness, headaches, little nervous symptoms; and it is evident that his house-keeper, Mrs Arnold—of whom we catch glimpses in the *Letters* and would gladly have more—sometimes had trying experiences, but his dependents, like his friends, clung to him, and their devotion bears witness to the consideration for others which those who knew him noted as marking all his relationships in life. "Tenderness, in every sense of the word, was his peculiar characteristic," wrote Dodsley, who thought he carried it to excess. "I cannot be half a friend," he said himself. Graves, who thought he was a little too fond of raillery, notes how careful he was to stop when there was any risk of hurting.

With this disposition, and a horror of loneliness, he never married. To the modern literary critic the emotions of love he expressed in his verse seem an affectation. That is not so. His poems are, for the most part, as he said himself, "the exact transcripts of the situation of his own mind"; had he been a man of affectations he would scarcely remain of much interest to us to-day. We know from the statements of his close friend Graves that after the early attraction had faded out, at the age of twenty-nine, he met at Cheltenham and became intimate with a young lady of superior social rank to his own, who eventually outlived him; he was much enamoured, but he never seems to have made love to her. His emotions were sublimated in the *Pastoral Ballad*, which was long a favourite poem among youthful readers and remains one of his most admired productions. We may easily divine that, in his delibera-

tive way, Shenstone came to the conclusion that with his defective health and vigour, his love of informal ease, his inadequate income, he was hardly fitted for the arduous vocation of marriage. "It is a part of philosophy," he wrote of himself to a friend, "to adapt one's passions to one's way of life." But he always had a sensitive perception of the graces of women, and one notes, for instance, alike in his letters and his poems, how he appreciated a natural wearing of hair in his lady friends:

"So pleased I view thy shining hair,
In loose dishevelled ringlets flow."

When we come to Shenstone's relation to what is "natural," we are at the root of the question of his historical significance. To the literary critic of to-day, not burdened with much historic sense, Shenstone usually seems just a pseudo-classic eighteenth-century writer exploiting the conventions of his time, merely, in the words of one of his modern critics, "the best of English poets in the Dresden China kind." Similarly, as regards a yet more significant figure of the previous century, the mere literary critic is quick to see in Cowley his insipidities and his incongruities; he is blind to the new roads which Cowley opened, to liberate and enchant his contemporaries, simply because they are now so well trodden that the simple-minded critic takes them for granted. Thus it is that, when we look at Shenstone through the atmosphere created by the great Romantics, he seems lost in faded elegancies. To see what he means we must view him from the other side and we must know how he looked to his contemporaries. A rebel he certainly was not; he had neither the tough fibre of a Blake nor the sensitive reactions of a Shelley, which make the two types of rebel. He was too comprehensively humane and humorous for revolt, too temperamentally akin with the large harmonious spirit of Shaftesbury. But the same quality which led him to accept so much that was passing led him also to anticipate much that was coming. He was classic in fundamental taste. Yet even his favourite classic poet was the romantic Virgil, whose tender and melancholy music always haunted him, so that we often find it echoed in his own verse. "*All* the lines in Virgil," he wrote to Graves in 1755, "afford me that Sort of Pleasure which one receives from melancholy Music." The most favoured walk in

his grounds he had named Virgil's Grove, and here he set up urns to those whom he desired to honour, adorning them with the epigrammatic Latin inscriptions in which he was endlessly fertile; one of these (that to his beloved cousin, Miss Dolman) so good a judge as Landor termed "the most beautiful of epitaphs." But Shenstone, who had taken up the Faery Queen to parody it, found as he wrote *The Schoolmistress* that he was learning to love Spenser. It was, moreover, Shenstone, it seems, who first suggested to his friend Percy to edit and bring out those old ballads which were to be the inspiration of the coming romantic age. "'Tis the voice of Sentiment rather than the language of Reflexion; adapted peculiarly to strike the Passions which is the only Merit of Poetry that has obtained my regard of late," he wrote to Percy in 1760, towards the end of his life. Love verses without passion, he declared elsewhere, are nauseous conceits, and no poetry is worth while "that does not strongly affect one's passions." It is characteristic of Shenstone and those of his English fellows who were then feeling their way towards Romanticism, while still lingering among the classics, as Mathilde Müller remarks, that, unlike the early French and German Romantics, their movement was unconscious, and so it is that these first buds have so fresh a charm, and, as Saintsbury says, "a strange attraction." "I think most of my verses," he himself once wrote to Lady Luxborough, "smell of nothing but field flowers, and considering how I spend my time they can scarcely do otherwise." Thus it is that Shenstone, in the middle of his century, incarnates a transition. With one hand he touches Prior and beyond Prior points to the greater Spenser, and with the other he reaches towards Burns and even Wordsworth. We know what enthusiastic admiration Burns felt for Shenstone, especially for his elegies, his "divine elegies," and how in moments of depression he envied his genius. In Burns the buds of Shenstone become flowers. The echoes of Shenstone—magnified as echoes will be—appear in the ballads and elegiac lyrics of Wordsworth, though Wordsworth was moving with firmer and more adventurous feet in the new world to which Shenstone had uncertainly pointed.

The Leasowes was the physical embodiment of Shenstone's spiritual attitude of transition. When we read of the vistas he formed with such ingenious care, of the artificial waterfalls, of the inscribed urns to distinguished friends, such as James Thomson,

who had visited him, all this seems inconsistent in the man, so reverent of Nature, who wrote of the stream in the valley :

“Would art attempt, or fancy dream,
To regulate its winding way?”

But we have to remember that just as a modern critic (Saintsbury) has truly said that Shenstone's artificial pastoral was a stage in the return to real nature, so it was with his gardens. He was deliberately rejecting the formal geometrical gardens, with their fantastically carved trees, which his century had inherited from the seventeenth. He hated formality, in the garden as elsewhere, but in an age of artifice nature could only be introduced by cultivation, and what Shenstone did was to substitute for the imitation of art, which had so long ruled in gardening, an imitation of Nature, which in its turn gave place to the anyhow methods of gardening that prevail to-day. In this return to Nature he was working, however independently, in the same direction as the great professional landscape gardeners of the English school in his century, as William Kent and Launcelot Brown and Humphrey Repton. Years after his death *The Leasowes* still seemed to be laid out as finely as anything in the “modern” taste that had yet been done, and Isaac D'Israeli felt able to say that it was Shenstone who had educated the nation into “that taste for landscape gardening which has become the model for all Europe.”

We are aided to realize Shenstone's position if we observe the attitude towards him of the two most typical men of his time, who, however unlike each other, yet together best represented the spirit of their age, Dr Johnson and Horace Walpole. They were neither of them actually hostile to Shenstone, yet both stood aloof and both failed to like him, as indeed they could not but also fail to like each other. (“Good-natured at bottom,” said Walpole of Johnson, “but very ill-natured at top.”) Although Johnson was favourably disposed to Shenstone as being of the same college, his references to him were of a grudging and slighting character, even ten years after his death. “A good layer out of land,” he said (not that he thought much of that) but with no excellence as a poet, and he would not even agree with Boswell's appreciation of his prose. Boswell, whose perceptions were more sensitive, writes: “My illustrious friend, I thought, did not sufficiently admire Shenstone.”

Johnson's one tribute was that when staying at the inn at Henley-in-Arden, where Shenstone had written the stanzas *At an Inn*, he repeated "with great emotion," the last verse:

"Who'er has travelled life's dull round,
Where'er his stages may have been,
May sigh to think he still has found
The warmest welcome at an inn";

but that appreciation was due to Johnson's own declared belief that "a tavern chair is the throne of human felicity." Moreover it was a little touch of boorishness that had brought Shenstone to that inn and led to the poem; he had gone to visit his old friend Whistler, in whose house he never felt quite at home, when a little tiff occurred between the friends, and Shenstone went off to the inn in a huff. But so colossal a boor as Johnson could not but feel contempt for Shenstone's little excursions in that field. Shenstone had much admiration for the nervous qualities of Johnson's prose at its best, but Johnson, for whom even Milton's mighty sonnets seemed petty, was necessarily blind alike to the delicacies and the simplicities of Shenstone's verse; for him Shenstone must have seemed to be absorbed in trivialities. That might have endeared him to Horace Walpole, the supreme master of the trivial; indeed on one occasion Walpole mentions how he had been eagerly reading Shenstone's Letters, "which though containing nothing but trifles amused me immensely." No doubt he had there noted the remark that Mr Walpole in his books "with great labour recorded matters of little importance, relative to people that were of less." But it is clear that there were not trifles enough in Shenstone to please Walpole entirely. Shenstone's Letters seldom touch on great events or great personages, but to-day they are full not only of trifles, but of human interest and personal character. To Walpole Shenstone doubtless seemed provincial. Walpole, with all his taste for the fashionable shudders of an antiquarian Gothicism, was not only a man of the world, but a man of the wider world, a cosmopolitan, at home in France, the intimate correspondent of Madame du Deffand, the chief English representative of what to many seems the spirit of the eighteenth century, though it was really only one aspect, however significant; for just as Croce finds that the thought of the nineteenth century has been realized in the twentieth, so, with more confidence,

we may say that the seeds of all the mighty growths of the nineteenth century were sown in the eighteenth. Shenstone was not a man of the world and not a cosmopolitan; although interested in France he was English, though not, like Johnson, insularly English, and he was content to be English; his chief woman friend and correspondent, Lady Luxborough (who, indeed, sometimes "indulged" Shenstone, he says, with a letter in French) was distinctly English. Yet he moved in a larger orbit than either the more brilliant Walpole or the more massive Johnson, if at times coming near to both, and they remained too close to their own age to follow his course.

Shenstone, not without his ambitions indeed, and often more lonely than he liked in the cheerless winters, was still certainly content to follow his own course at The Leasowes, even though, as he wrote to his friend Jago, "the notable incidents of my life amount to about as much as the tinsel of your little boy's hobby-horse." Here he wandered in his own groves—"Virgil's Grove" he often mentions—and along his own brooks. Here he fed his wild ducks and gathered his carnations, wrote down his reflections as they occurred to him, carefully indited his letters (he thought well of these and was sorry to hear that one series had been destroyed on the death of a friend) seldom failing to refer to the visits he is expecting from his friends or those he is planning to make. Much time was taken up by the constant little improvements made to the estate, and in between all were woven his poems. "I have an alcove," he wrote to Jago, "six elegies, a seat, two epitaphs (one upon myself), three ballads, four songs, and a serpentine river to show you when you come." The visits of friends were always a festival for the often depressed and ailing poet. They found him, as described by Graves, a man a little heavy in appearance (clumsy, some said) with a face that became very pleasing when animated, and hair that had early turned grey, simply dressed (very negligently, others said) usually a plain blue coat in summer and winter alike, and a scarlet waistcoat with broad gold lace. We gather that he did not always get on well with acquaintances who were not of his inner circle. Amos Green, a now obscured artist who was a neighbour of Shenstone's, sometimes stayed with him, and in the Memoir by his wife we are told that "his intercourse with Shenstone afforded him great pleasure: he said he was singularly agreeable when in spirits; but he was full of foibles and faults, and their friendship was not lasting." But, though Shenstone speaks kindly

of young Green, and thought highly of his work, we can scarcely admit a friendship. "Foibles," Shenstone confesses to his friends, but with all who were really near to him the friendship was life-long. With Lady Luxborough, Bolingbroke's half-sister, his correspondence was close (a volume of her letters to him has been published) and lasted till her death. They frequently stayed at each other's houses; on one occasion we hear of her coming to his house with five servants, and horses to match, which must have taxed her host's modest hospitality. Lady Luxborough's marital life had not been flawless, and General Knight, a natural son of Lord Luxborough, is reported to have said that his father left his wife on account of her too great partiality for Shenstone. She was no doubt a woman of independent spirit with tastes of her own, but we may probably accept the view that Lord Luxborough, who notoriously "roved from fair to fair," merely desired a pretext to leave his wife; she was fifteen years older than Shenstone, and her letters give not the least indication of more than ordinary friendship with much community of tastes; she doubtless felt the attraction to a man of genius sometimes experienced by great ladies of cultivated mind, an attitude of slightly patronizing worship. With the Lytteltons and other distinguished families in his neighbourhood Shenstone was in friendly relationship, while at the same time he was on good terms with his humbler neighbours. The Leasowes grounds seem to have been open to all, and on Sunday evenings he speaks of himself as sometimes moving among nearly a hundred and fifty people. He had set up two stanzas of verse in which he warned "swains and nymphs" of the penalties which the fauns and fairies of the place would inflict on those who injured shrubs or picked flowers, remarking that, with the strong local belief in fairies, he trusted this warning would be effectual. We have hardly improved upon it to-day.

On one occasion he went to London, again lodging in Fleet Street. He found that neighbourhood and the Strand infested with pick-pockets, who carried bludgeons with the object of first striking their victims to the ground, even as early as eight in the evening, and decided that he preferred the milder troubles at home. He never indeed cared to be away for more than a few days at a time. It was a severe blow to him when his only brother died in 1752, the greatest affliction that befell him (though we do not seem to hear of the brother when alive) and he writes to Graves at length and with

touching simplicity of his grief. It seemed to him that he despised poetry and hated his house. A few months later summer came and he was trying to forget his sorrow. He writes in July:

“I neither read nor write aught besides a few letters; and I give myself up entirely to scenes of dissipation, lounge at my lord Dudley’s for near a week together; make dinners; accept of invitations, sit up till three o’clock in the morning with young sprightly married women, over white port and *vin de paysans*, ramble over my fields, issue out orders to my hay-makers; foretell rain and fair weather; enjoy the fragrance of hay, the cocks, and the wind-rows; admire that universal lawn which is produced by the scythe; sometimes inspect, and draw mouldings for my carpenters; sometimes paper my walls, and at other times my ceilings; do every social office that falls in my way, but never seek out for any.”

But his gaiety was the mask of melancholy, and a touch of sadness comes at the end of this letter, as in many of the letters that follow. Yet to the end his letters, if not his life, were marked by his old vivacity and are full of his old interests, glancing off now and then to the literature of the day, Voltaire’s latest play, Madame de Sévigné’s Letters, Sir Charles Grandison, Burke on The Sublime and Beautiful, or the new Virgil from “neighbour Baskerville’s press.” In 1758 he went to Worcester to hear the Messiah—“it seems the best composer’s best composition” though he had his criticisms—“but returned with double relish to the enjoyment of my farm.” Meanwhile his reputation was growing among men of letters, and the fame of The Leasowes spreading far. His spirits always rose in the season of flowers, but in the winter months, especially January, he usually suffered from depression of health and spirits. It was in January that he was attacked by his final illness. He died in February, 1763, of a “putrid fever,” a term which conveys no meaning to us but was then used not only for typhus, but for various acute inflammatory complaints.

It is an advantage for a minor author to come down to posterity encumbered with but little baggage. Shenstone bears only three small volumes—poems, prose, letters,—and they contain little that those who read them would desire to cast away. Herein Shenstone was well served by his constitutional indolence. He was too lazy to write except at such moments as he felt he had something to

say. Yet he was anything but lazy in the care he bestowed on what he had thus written. He was eager for criticisms and suggestions from his friends, he frequently rewrote, he was never tired of polishing. He rejected what he felt to be below his level, and took much trouble to suppress a little volume of poems he had published at the age of twenty-three. In the end, indeed, that has helped to limit the number of his readers, for the perfection of shape finally attained by his poems has hardly seemed of a degree to make up for the seeming lack of vivid original inspiration. In one of his later letters he defends this care in composition and argues that it should not obscure the mark of original inspiration. His arguments are sound. Yet it may be noted that *At an Inn*, which though but a trifle (he placed it among his *Levities*) has alone among his poems been styled "famous," owes that quality to a sharp original inspiration which has survived the polishing, while in too many of his poems we enjoy the polish, but find the inspiration vague. "One cannot deny," he himself admitted, "that there is a sort of person formed by nature for *shooting-flying*, which I could never do." At his best Shenstone is delicate or reflective, and with an echoing melancholy music, idyllic or elegiac:

"Where with Oenone thou hast worn the day;
Near fount or stream, in meditation rove;
If in the grove Oenone loved to stray,
The faithful Muse shall meet thee in the grove."

We need not doubt his original inspirations, but they are too often obscured by the classic convention in which he clothes them, and the music for which he had so fine an ear hardly suffices to make up for that obscurity. Collins and Gray are counted as in the same movement as Shenstone; but it was their good fortune to come a little later, and those traditions of art which to Shenstone could still seem natural they began severely to cast away (although we have to remember that Shenstone was one of the few modern poets whom Gray unreservedly admired) and so to come closer to the real facts and appear before us to-day in a poetic rank to which we can never lift Shenstone. Shenstone's *Schoolmistress*, in which, first begun in early life as almost a parody, he united his feeling for the fairy romance of Spenser with a naturalistic love for things of the earth, Gray called "masterly." Hazlitt, living in an age of great poetry,

had but a poor opinion of Shenstone, yet he calls *The Schoolmistress* "a perfect piece of writing," while to-day, Dr Harko de Maas, the historian of modern English romanticism, considers that poem "for humourous tenderness and pathetic burlesque not easy to match." But all the fine qualities of Shenstone in verse, it must be admitted, now make their chief appeal to the literary specialist, and he is likely to over-rate them. Gosse is reminded by the Pastoral Ballad of *Watteau*. That is excessive. Shenstone was never a magician to create a new enchanting world of fairyland. If we must have comparisons of this kind (they are really to be condemned) let us rather think of *Lancret*, who accepted the gracious traditions he had received, and developed them on a realistic earth with a skill which still appeals to those who can recognize it.

It is customary to regard Shenstone as a poet. But to-day it may be claimed that it is in his completely neglected prose that he is most generally interesting and most impressive. *Essays on Men and Manners*, the title which covers the whole of this prose, occupies the second volume of *Shenstone's Works*, published the year after his death. It consists of occasional essays, and many reflections jotted down as they occurred during the last twenty years of his life and arranged under headings according to subject. Dodsley, in introducing them, wrote:

"His character, as a man of clear judgment and deep penetration, will best appear from his prose works. It is there we must search for the acuteness of his understanding, and his profound knowledge of the human heart."

Essays on Men and Manners remained in the *Works* as long as they continued to be reprinted. Fifty years ago (in 1868) they were issued afresh in a series of miscellaneous books. But I have never been able to observe that they are ever read or quoted, or even referred to outside literary histories. There are perhaps at least two considerations which may help to account for this neglect. In the first place, of the two components of the volume, essays and fragments, it is the essays that are most conspicuous, but also the least notable. They are well and pleasantly written, like everything Shenstone wrote, sometimes of charming quality, though the phraseology may now and then seem antiquated; yet if to-day we smile at the adjective "elegant" and find "taste" too simple a name

for the aesthetic appreciation almost amounting to genius Shenstone had in mind, the substance of his writing is as much alive in our day as in his own. But Shenstone lived immediately after the great masters of the essay; it had been carried to perfection; at that moment there was no further progress to make; he could only do well what had already been done better. In the fragments Shenstone was alone in the field, and here he became really himself. But here also a supposed "unfinished" character diverted attention. It was not realized that they are not really unfinished. No one recognized that Shenstone was a *pensée*-writer, and that his prose corresponds in English to the work of the great French writers in that kind.

This was not clear to Shenstone's contemporaries. For them his prose was merely fragments. *Ex pede Herculem*, they said, and they thought of the wonderful things he would have done if he had not been so lazy. They failed to understand either his indolence or its outcome. "Did I never tell you (if not, I do so now)" he wrote to a friend in 1754, "that indolence will, in a thousand instances, give one all the advantages of philosophy and pray, if you call me lazy any more, take care that you do not use an expression by way of disparagement which I consider as the highest honour. I am a fool, however, for discovering my secret." Shenstone knew himself well enough to know that his "laziness" was the expression of that kind and degree of energy which had been bestowed upon him, and he was wise enough to accept it, and in so doing to transmute it into art and philosophy. His "secret" was that he knew how to use his limited strength, to spend it on what was worth while, and to produce, in the end, little, it may be, but only his best.

That is a kind of disposition, it must be noted, that accounts for the form of expression of the great *pensée*-writers generally. A writer of rich and vigorous temperament, a Goethe or a Bacon, may incidentally write *pensées*, they cannot be a chief outcome of his life. It is where there is only the energy for brief intellectual flights, the need for concentration, for hesitation, for deliberation, and the consequent demand for high finish, that the great writer of *pensées*, of maxims, and of reflections, is moulded. It may not be quite clear that the spiritual anaemia of La Rochefoucauld was the result of physical conditions and not of the unfortunate environment in which he moved, but we see clearly in Pascal the outcome of a morbid and suffering organism; we see it in the bitterness of Chamfort. I would especially like to invoke the instance of

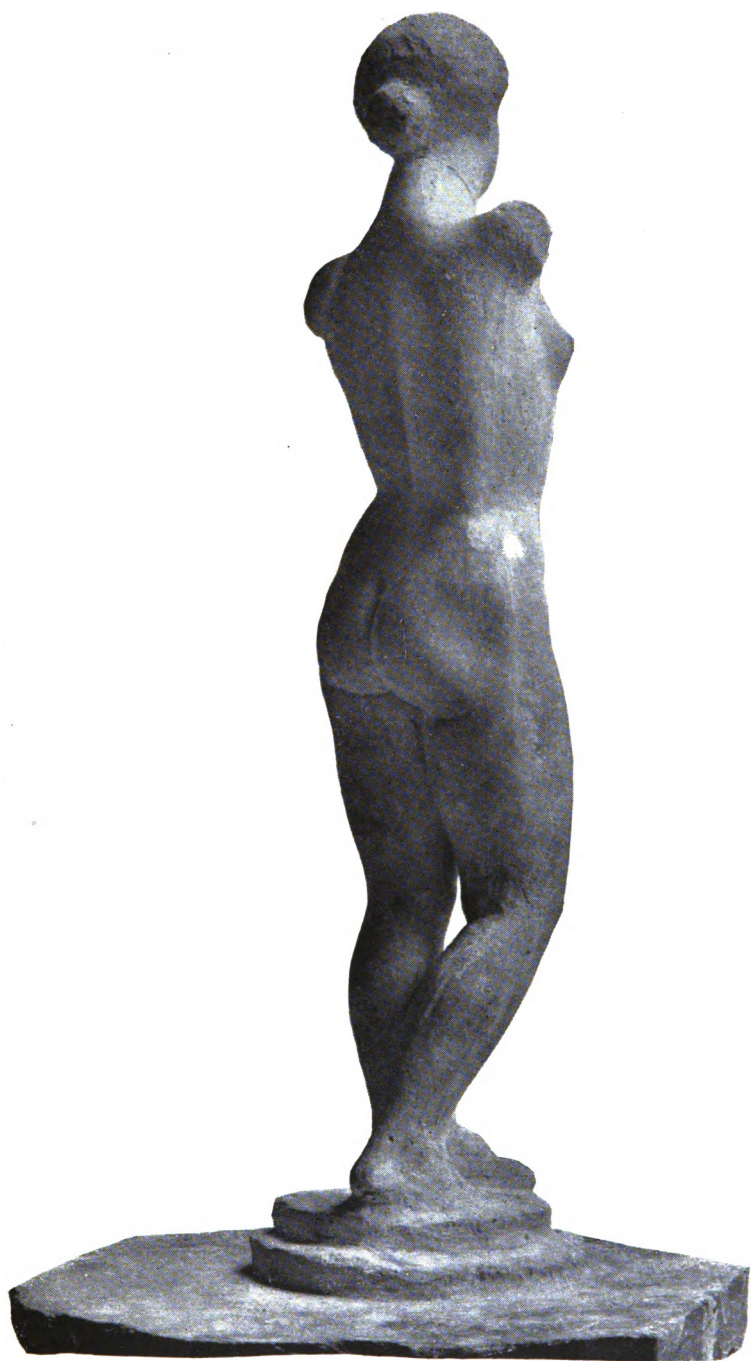
Vauvenargues, in whom we find not only the same courage towards life combined with physical delicacy, but a sweetness and tolerance and insight which bring him of all the great writers with whom he is grouped the nearest to Shenstone. It is time to realize that while the figures of first rank in this kind belong to France, we have in Shenstone a writer altogether English who is worthy to place among them, if not on the same level as the highest, yet in the same class.

THE HERMIT

BY RALPH CHEEVER DUNNING

Bleed, O my heart, bleed slowly but take care
 That no one hears thy bleeding. In the night
 Let not thy bedfellow divine thy plight.
 Bleed softly, O my heart, and in the glare
 And heavy silence of high noon, beware
 Of good Samaritans—walk to the right
 Or hide thee by the roadside out of sight
 Or greet them with the smile that villains wear.

Bleed slowly and bleed softly, O my heart.
 Go hide in nameless mountains of the north
 Or deep in monstrous cities play thy part,
 O bleeding heart whereby the world's aflood—
 But shun all congregations loving blood
 Lest some fool on a banner bear thee forth.



Photograph by Druet

FEMME DEBOUT. BY ARISTIDE MAILLOL



Photograph by Druet

FEMME ASSISE. BY ARISTIDE MAILLOL

MEMORIES

BY LEON SRABIAN HERALD

VI

STARS, FARMERS, CHILDREN

HOW dare a soldier in uniform whisper? There was no harm in it this time. It was Herald in an employment agency, whispering to the clerk who did not understand all that was being said to him—who did not hear Herald saying that he was a discharged soldier. But it was clear to him that the applicant wanted a job and he recommended him to a place on a farm, to which he went of his own free will.

In any city, town, or village in which he had lived, he had asked for work but had never mentioned wages and his eagerness to work on a farm now surpassed any thought of them.

“You want to work on a farm?” asked the farmer.

“Yes. The government is sending me to a farm to recuperate.”

“Done farmin’ before?” queried the huge farmer in the tone in which a city boss asks a country boy if he has worked with machines.

“I have in the Old Country,” replied the ex-clerk, leaving space in the sentence.

“If you know somethin’ ’bout farmin’, all right. We’re short this year and glad to git anybody. But there are lots of city men that ain’t worth the feed they eat.” And the plough changed hands.

The new farmhand thought ploughing would be easy, but he had hardly gone a horse’s length in the field when the farmer thundered, “Hoa! you’re ruinin’ my field. I thought so!” The horses stopped for they understood better than the man—who explained that he had ploughed with oxes in the Old Country and that horses seemed different. With vituperation plus admonition, the farmer took the reins and like a diplomat who must treat enemies as friends, assumed the trying task of teaching. Verily with intention, like a diplomat, he remarked later at the table

in his wife's and daughters' presence, "Our friend don't know ploughin'. Losin' a deal, teachin' him."

Four o'clock in the morning. Twilight and mist retard the summer dawn. The farmhand walks a mile to bring the horses from the pasture. He is about to cross a ditch to put a halter on Jack whom the rest of a dozen horses and colts follow. Jack is easy to catch; he is eating apples—apples thick and luminous on the grass—whiter than a bridal bed. Suddenly from the luminous patch at Herald's feet, arises the loveliest striped creature, looking up at him peacefully. What is it? The hired man is unacquainted with such a thing, has never seen or heard of it. It is a dog? Maybe; maybe not. He had best be careful. This lovely animal, this cub in the luminous apple-bed, standing so near to him. It does not run away. It is not afraid of him. He calls it as he would a dog, but it does not respond as a dog would, or wag its tail. It is not yet light enough to see, and a childish fear, a prehistoric remnant of primitive emotion dominates his senses and he begins to strike the little creature with a twig which is in his hand. It leaps away a few paces from the fear-tainted ploughboy and—O primitive boy, do you not see that the little thing that was so close to you was not to be stricken? No, you see nothing now and in vain are seeking a handkerchief, your soldier's khaki handkerchief to restore your eyes. Would that you had no sense of smell. This punishment came from nowhere but the sky. You ought not to have hit the thing born on the luminous apple-bed—of twilight and of mist. Now you are seeking water, with prayer, to wash your eyes. You are not blinded. How happy not to have been! Never again hit an innocent animal. For was it not a pleasure like that foretold by Isaiah, to stand in peace with the lovely thing in stripes? Even a hunter could not have shot it if it had been so close to him. For half an hour you wash your eyes. Now you can see a little, thankful to have found a pool made by the night's rain. . . . For an hour you wash your burning eyes and face—a mile away from home, unable to call for help or an antidote. Now you can see; now the twilight has left the mist; the mist is now leaving, the sun is rising; the farmer, waiting. He knows what has happened and fails to come to your relief. He is angry. Hurry, ploughboy, hurry; the sun is rising!

He comes home without the horses and before he is even near the barn he hears laughter, heavy laughter—striding, cleaving the mist, and assaulting his ears. Herbert stands at the barn-door struggling to smother it—smudge-like. The farmer laughs out once, then asks his new man where the horses are, and again laughs like a land-slide.

“Do you notice this smell?” the simple boy asks of the full-fledged cynic. The farmer and his man again laugh uproariously.

“We smelt it half an hour ago!” says Herbert.

“Oh!” says Herald, “you know it then? What is it, Herbert? Tell me.”

“Go home!” orders the farmer. “Herbert, fetch the horses. We can’t waste the day on a green city chap,” and he disappears in the barn.

“Tell me, Herbert, what is this smell? My eyes are itching—and—and—” he cannot finish because Herbert is bending like a poplar, in a wind of laughter-agitated words—trying to say, “A skunk done it!”

“A skunk?” says Herald.

“Skunk,” says Herbert and goes after the horses.

The “Missis” called the puzzled boy and told him to take off his clothing and bury it in the ground and leave it there a week—that in no other way could he destroy that terrible odour. The two grown daughters sympathized with him, smiling. Little Carl sympathized, and Carl’s dog—wagging his tail at a distance.

“What is this, what caused it?” he begged of the women, who smiled but told him nothing.

Long afterward, when he had buried his clothes, and was working with Herbert in the field, he came near to apprehending this subtle process of nature, this agonizing and at the same time wondrous means of self-protection. The book of knowledge was unfolding itself to him apocalyptically—without words. Pleasure was disguised in pain and he laughed to console himself for being laughed at.

By the end of the month the farmhand realized that his boss was a mercenary fellow, unloved by his wife and daughters, unliked by his neighbours, although president of the village bank. For a month’s services the ex-soldier was paid fifteen dollars—whereas if he had bargained in the beginning he could have had

forty, and in the morning he handed the job back to its rightful owner.

"Y're late this mornin', Lee! The horses are waitin'. It's after five!"

"I am going to the city," answered ex-Leon, turning on his side.

"And now I've teached you somethin', you don't want to work! I'll give you twenty dollars next month. I'll be fair with you."

"Thank you. I am going to have twenty dollars' worth of sleep this morning."

After all the farmer with a German accent could not be very angry with a youth wearing a soldier's uniform in that time of the Great War, wearing it against Germany. And the soldier-ploughboy slept.

It was not really because of short wages that he wanted to leave the farm. This was a mere excuse. Sleep and food were two strong legs upon which imagination was lifted high for he could sleep and eat now, but were there not yet other needs to satisfy? On the farm, books and magazines were inaccessible. It was true that ever since he had come to America he had not had much money and at times none at all, but had he ever felt himself poor? Had he ever felt that he was anything but rich? He never had. And imagination lifted high and strong upon its two legs of good appetite and sound sleep, carried him to the city again. In the afternoon he went by whistling while the farmer ploughed—waving his hand, maybe at the horses, maybe at the trees, maybe at the farmer too.

Like a poor wage-earner who squanders money on pay-day, Herald, with a similar knowledge of health came to a job in the city, a job in a bookstore. An indoor occupation was to him as a café to the wage-earner. Again he felt himself spent, mis-spent. How quickly is money spent when one knows not the laws of wealth. Mere intuition was flinging him from wall to wall. He could not understand, could not explain; he could only obey.

Snow-flakes always evoke the human voice and human voices come forth expressing either joy or grief. That day snow-flakes were falling thick and large. Herald watched them from the book-

store almost waiting for—no, hearing—human voices. Of children sliding, skating in the parks? Or the voices of snowbound travellers lost on the way and calling for help? The snow-flakes were falling thick and large as if wanting to hear the whole city, the whole world cry out together. Already the world was crying, moaning, weeping. Its voice had almost given out in its long crying, the world had almost perished, crying for help. Or was the snow merely calling to him to come out of himself? But soon the city answered all that the snow enquired; the world answered. Herald heard the city. He heard the world. Voices rose. Flags waved. Horns and bands wakened. Confetti rose in all colours to join with the snow-flakes, and distinct was one word—Armistice! Armistice! **ARMISTICE!**

He fell on his knees between the two counters, weeping. But is it possible to weep in that fashion? Is it possible to shed tears in that fashion? Could there be in a human body, so many tears to shed! The women in the store gathered around him, the men came, lifting him, asking him the cause.

“So far—so far,” he managed to say as clearly as he could, “so far only have I heard what has happened and now that the way is open, I may see what has become of my people in my own country—and know if so much as one of them is alive. How good and how terrible it will be to have a surviving brother!” And the people understood—stood with him as the world participated in that demonstration of descending snow-flakes.

He lives at the top of the house. His room has two windows; one in the ceiling, one in the wall. The sides are small; the ceiling is smaller. The window in the wall is very courteous. It barely rests there. To accommodate the wall it has given it all the room. The window is a mere imitation of a window. And all windows are as if by courtesy kinsmen—alike. The one on the ceiling is a ventilator, as uncomfortable as the one in the wall. The ceiling and the walls need more room. The walls and the ceiling are like large immigrant women carrying heavy burdens. The two windows are like courteous children, one hung there by a strap as it were, and the other puffing between the two women.

“Herald,” says the landlady, “you did not go to work. Let me

see your tongue." Soon the doctor comes with a doctor's good intention and a doctor's helplessness. The patient must go to the doctor's office to be examined again. His sickness is given another name. What was it the doctor called it? At any rate it is something quite different from what the other doctors had discovered. And Dr Friedmann, who becomes Doctor "Free" because of the war, and will re-adopt his German name in the near future, puts on Herald's breast a powerful electric light. That is all the doctor can do—put on Herald's breast a powerful electric light, as if his sickness were darkness—an absence of light.

The landlady trusts him now. His sickness had brought them closer to each other. He is given permission to go into the kitchen or to the living-room, to sit with the family and play with the children—maybe sing with them a little and dance. "You have a nice voice," the landlady remarks approvingly, "you must allow our teacher to try it."

"Yes," agrees fourteen-year-old Felice, bringing in her teacher who has a room across the hall. The next day Herald goes forth as a singing student with brilliant hopes for the future.

"May I take Felice to the movie?" he asks one evening.

"Thank you, but she is too young to go out with young men."

"I don't mean—I mean little Jeanne too. I want to take them to a show." And he walks on the street with the children as if rugs were spread under his feet, a prince of happiness. The show is wonderful too; it is a wonderful thing to go to a show with children. He compares this evening with times when he has been alone.

To be concluded

CHILDREN OF ADAM

BY JOHN COWPER POWYS

CONSIDERING the unique genius of Doughty and the primordial fascination of his subject, this one-volume edition of *Arabia Deserta*¹ is an event that ought not to pass unnoticed.

The English temper, taciturn and splenetic, is seen at its best in its contemplative adventurers; and of these Doughty is the only one whose manner of writing has the scope and stirring vehemence worthy of such magnanimous endurances. Refusing to eschew one jot of his own ancestral pieties he moves among these desert nomads, who have hardly so much as heard tell of Aysa-bin-Miriam the Nasrâny prophet, with unmasked face as Khalîl, the Nasrâny; and while he compels their reluctant admiration as a man of *shekhly* honour, he wins many a peevish heart in *beyt* and *menzil* by his skill as a wise *hakîm*. He and his huge book are a passing strange example of what can be achieved, in art as well as in life, by a certain bone-stark integrity; and there is no doubt that the so-called archaic element in his extraordinary style may easily be emphasized to a wrong tune. He is indeed no mere antiquarian raker in ancient libraries. The honest English words he selects are there in our common inheritance for all who have the wit to snatch at them. They have been rung upon, again and again, these words, for some four or five centuries. They are not prinked or spruce or affected. They are neither erudite nor obscure. Nor does Doughty scoop them up at random. He only uses the ones that lend themselves, by a kind of chemical fatality, to his own free humour. Others, compounded of alien stuff, he lets alone.

These felicitous appropriations from the "broad-mouthed" folios of our fathers are not permitted to all. The mind that can prosperously adapt them to its own temper is a mind that must be content to pay toll for such rooted proclivity in many a banked-up limitation. The "mettle" of these "pastures" must be in a man's

¹ *Arabia Deserta*. By Charles M. Doughty. With a New Preface by the Author. Introduction by T. E. Lawrence, and all Original Maps, Plans, & Illustrations. 8vo. 1320 pages. Boni & Liveright. \$10.

very marrow or he essays such an enterprise in vain. It is indeed a sort of Bodleian of the Market-place, this open secret of a tavern-clerkly style, and the mellowness of its ripe brewage can only be tapped by a true initiate. Steady must be the arm, firm the hand, that turns the spigot at this old-English bung-hole. Of pure metal must be the spoon that stirs the good posset heartened by such antique fragrance.

But however he acquired the tang of his toll-pike style, so full of a wayfaring scholar's jibes, it was to the caustic-cozening devices of his native wit that we find him repairing in many a shrewd *káhrwa* brawl among these Beduin coffee-drinkers. "What were now those great wars in the world? so that the Nasára durst make war upon the Sultan of the Moslemín!" I showed them, rolling the coffee-box, that this world's course is as the going round of a wheel. The now uppermost was lately behind, and that lately highest is beginning to descend." Nor was it only by words that he allayed their ruffling humour. Certain symbolic gestures of world-old significance pass between him and his hosts. . . . "I smooth my beard towards one to admonish him, in his wrongful dealing towards me, and have put him in mind of his honour. If I touch his beard, I put him in remembrance of our common humanity and of the witness of God which is above us."

Much, indeed, of the peculiar quality of Arabia Deserta lies in its gigantic reserve. Through all this "neighbourhood-gossip of the wilderness," as Padraic Colum so happily calls it, there runs a resigned-sardonic philosophy of the author's own, which is the more weighty from its grim taciturnity.

Khalîl can fling back his "*Aleykom es-salaam!*" to the "*Salaam aleyk!*" of these frenetic worshippers of Allah; but when he comments in his own person upon the drift of the world his tone has little unction in it. "We look out from every height upon the Harra, over an iron desolation; what uncouth blackness and lifeless cumber of volcanic matter!—and hard-set face of nature without a smile for ever, a wilderness of burning and rusty horror of unformed matter. What lonely life would not feel constraint of heart to trespass here! The barren heaven, the nightmare soil! Where should he look for comfort? There is a startled conscience within a man of his *mesquîn* being, and profane, in presence of the divine stature of the elemental world!—This lion-like sleep of cosmogonic forces, in which is swallowed up the gnat of the soul

within him—that short motion and parasitical usurpation which is the weak accident of life in matter.”

It is not only the stripping away of everything except hunger and thirst, sorrow and joy, pity and wrath, which sets the seal of such solemn beauty upon this book of the wilderness; it is the fact that these squalid privations and sun-burnt courtesies have gone on for thousands of years, under this flaming sky and glittering stars, even as they go on to-day. If in China we are aware of a sophisticated civilization that is incredibly old, here in the desert we come upon a simple civilization that is older still . . . older than the pyramids, older than the building of Troy. The very austerities of this stark life—this life from which so much brutality has been purged, not by mechanical inventions but by the magnanimous usage of old custom and human generosity—conduce to a detachment of vision which is as philosophic as it is *primaeval*.

What we contemplate in this book is a life of man upon earth which is *entirely poetic*. It is starved, it is miserable, it is filthy, it is cruel, it is menaced by every kind of danger; but there is nothing in all this excremental wretchedness, in all this leanness and violence, which could not be described by Homer himself. “Bare of all things of which there is no need,” says Doughty, “the days of our mortality are so easy and become a long quiescence!” Here indeed among these Beduins, with their scolding Hareem, often so unhappy but sometimes so triumphantly rebellious, with their water-skins and girdle-bread, their dates, their coffee-pestles, their goats, their dromedaries, their love-locks drenched in camels’ urine, their saffron-dyed beards, their night-sky meteors and horns of their new moons, Doughty has managed to restore to us, as he saturates himself with it all and notes it all down, something of that primal Adamic happiness in mere existence, that amplitude and expansion of heart under huge duress, which had been the secret tradition of humane poetry from the beginning. *Mithil el-mawt*, as the nomads say, “living is like unto dying”; but Doughty compels us to recognize a royal tact, a fatherly consideration, a *shekhly* graciousness, beneath many a filthy cotton tunic and wretched kerchief. Nor did they stint him of their responses to his most venturesome jests. “Men,” he remarks gravely of this, “will yield half their soul with the smile.”

Musing upon these desert-scenes, lying on our elbow with the Nasrâny in Sheykh Zeyd’s *menzil*, listening to his young wife

Hirfa's girlish-shrewish chatter, drinking drop by fragrant drop the heaven-given coffee, a slow insidious deadly suspicion begins to waylay us as to what loss, what appalling loss, in pure material happiness, we have suffered under our occidental sciences! Between pitiless necessity and paradisiac intermission of discomfort there is constant alternation in these nomad-booths.

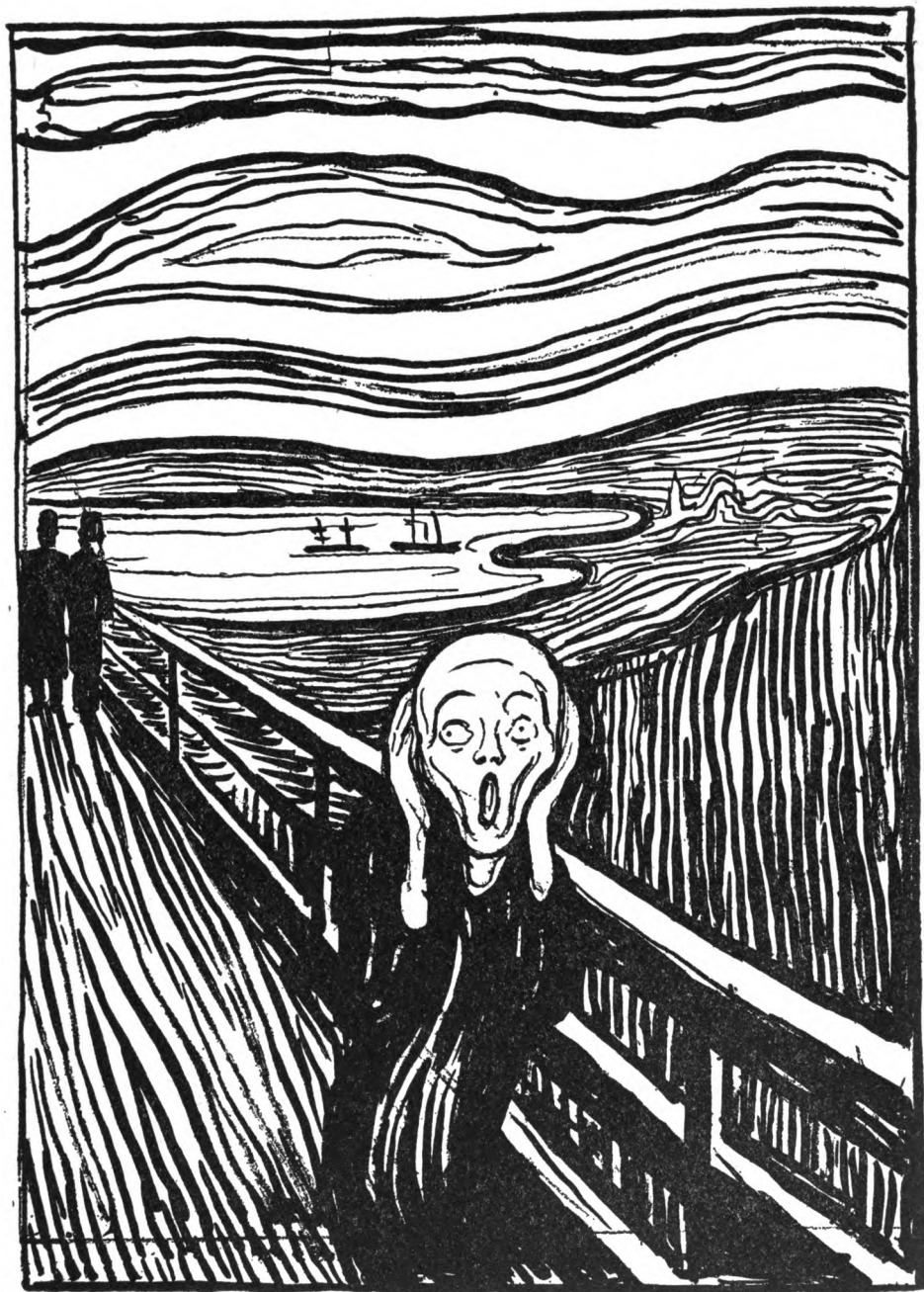
In the unharvested wilderness where "a thousand years are as one day," mankind hath comforted its spirit by making of the laboured ritual of an hour's pleasure the obliteration of months of misery.

It is because Doughty possessed in his own nature so large a measure of the musing humanity of the geniuses of old time that this bare existence of skin-exposed privation rises in the mirror of his tough mind to a very marvel of beauty. His imaging of nomad ways and of desert terribleness has many aspects woeful to a queasy stomach; but there emerges from it all such a vivid rendering of the eternal contrasts of good and ill upon this earth, that the most machine-dulled of modern readers is fain to cry, with El Araab, "*Wellah!* It is the truth!"

Arabia Deserta is crowded thick with memorable pictures of noble and ignoble men. Here is the whole hurly-burly of the world between burning air and burning sand. Here are the diurnal relaxations and reliefs of our poor flesh, set down without fastidiousness and without malice. For behold! the time-old courtesies of the desert are the ultimate ritual of man's life in all climates; and the nomad's resignation in the face of the end thereof is the basic wisdom of our condition.

Not only is bread and salt a covenant between man and man among these children of Adam; but every alleviation of hunger, thirst, desire, weariness, assumes a religious significance and gathers up the vague motions of the human heart towards the overshadowing unknown. The "God bless you!" of the trickiest beggar in our western cities hath something in it of this primordial gesture of our race.

"I am weakened with hunger, I cannot draw and drudge; but let my old camel drink a little which remains in the troughs and God will requite you.' When they heard my words they answered, '*Wellah!* he says truth; God help thee, Khalil; and have no care for this, but sit down, that it is we will water her.'"



A WOODCUT. BY EDVARD MUNCH

IRISH LETTER

April, 1927

PRIDE in the literature of their country, such as breaks out more frequently perhaps in English authors than in those of other nationalities, is not a sentiment which appears to find any flamboyant expression amongst Americans, so that I shall not, I hope, ruffle the susceptibilities of any reader of *THE DIAL* when I relate that a little group of eminent Irish authors, discussing recently the relative standing of Irish literature, agreed that Irish literature was on the whole as great in achievement as American literature. And even as I write I find in *The Irish Statesman* this sentence of A. E.: "Ireland with four million people has produced a literature at least as important as the United States with a hundred and ten million people." I should explain—out of respect for those readers, with whom I can sympathize, who may be inclined to point out that after all Ireland has no Emerson or Whitman—that there is a growing tendency in Ireland to extend the significance of the term Irish Literature and to make it include the Irish part in English literature. It is claimed that so far back as the seventeenth century, writers like Berkeley, Swift, and even Congreve, were all moulded by the distinct culture of a nationality which has only now received political recognition. On this subject I cannot do better than quote from a letter received from a correspondent who strongly objects to my own use of the term "Anglo-Irish literature.:"

"At the end of the period of the Plantations [in the seventeenth century] it is probable that among the Protestants the descendants of the Planters much outnumbered those of the old colony who now adhered to Protestantism, but as the influx was gradual and took place over several generations, and since at the beginning of the period the old Catholic Norman-Irish counted as the handers-on of tradition and culture to the Protestants, I hold the view that the Irish, born and educated in Ireland, were always in the preponderance among educated men in Ireland, and that there was a

true continuance of tradition; which means that the true roots of our culture in Ireland at present (except for the real Gaelic remnants in the west) are to be found in the Norman period A. D. 1200-1500: thus making Ireland quite parallel to England and Scotland, in each of which a fusion of Norman with local elements of population took place in the same period."

This new claim of Irish literature admits only of a pragmatic demonstration: if it could become the animating principle of Irish literature it would be true; and to bring Bernard Shaw and Berkeley within the entelechy of Irish literature it only requires that their true spiritual heirs should appear in the coming generations among the citizens of the Irish Free State. The implications of some such decisive manifestation of Irish genius might indeed be retrospective, and the age-long spiritual collaboration of Ireland with England might appear to the literary students of the future in a somewhat new light.

We have not heard much of this claim till now, for amid the extravagant hopes raised by the Celtic Renaissance, when Irish writers were entering into full possession of their inheritance of legend and mythology, all that went before Standish O'Grady and his Bardic History appeared to be forgotten—Carleton and Le Fanu, not to speak of Swift and Berkeley. There are now however a good many indications that the subject-matter of the Celtic Renaissance has come within sight of exhaustion. I will only mention one significant fact, that the most prominent of the younger writers, Mr Liam O'Flaherty, seems to have turned away from the "Celtic sources" and to have reverted to the realism of Carleton: he might be called, indeed, allowing for many things peculiar to himself, a Carleton who has read the Russians. And it is now that Irish literature is beginning to feel the need of a background of thoughtfulness, and how much it missed when, in the nineteenth century, it failed to have an Irish Emerson, a Moses who might have smitten the rock of Irish mentality, and caused a new stream of thought to flow. For, if I may express myself with candour, I do not think there is much in the new entelechy theory: I do not think there is any chance of recovering England's spiritual debt to Ireland, any more than there is of getting back the hundreds or thousands of millions which, according to the theory of the Repub-

licans, England still owes Ireland. No, Ireland's chance is an indigenous thinker of her own, or perhaps—since Irish literature lies particularly open to Russian influence—some nobly incomplete soul like Tolstoy or Dostoevsky, whose suffering becomes a martyr's affirmation of a new spiritual completeness. An Irish Emerson is difficult to conceive. Read only Mr Joyce's account in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* of the young men of the National University and you will appreciate the difficulty.

Meanwhile there is Yeats, who, with his international fame, his personal charm and authority, his devotion to culture, his theatre, his share in the management of the State, occupies—if regard be given to intrinsic quality rather than to the scale by which one is too much inclined to measure these things—a position in Dublin which seems almost modelled on that of the great exemplar of Weimar, busies himself with versions of Sophocles, indifferent to the malcontents of the new generation. Culture, culture! Yeats insists, quite like Goethe. Culture, indeed, is not necessarily a stimulant to literary production. It is not the well-educated who are chiefly moved to speech, it is the young men, the young women, who disconcert us with new forms, new norms, new matter. New modes of experience are for ever turning up in this our age, and we are not at the end of it yet.

We have an instance of this in Ireland at present in young Liam O'Flaherty, hailing from the last stronghold of an ancient culture, the Aran Islands, and yet it is with him as if the Celtic Renaissance had never been. Here the miracle for which Ireland has waited, a pure Gael with literary genius, has actually happened; yet in place of the resuscitation of Gaelic culture, possibly in the Irish language itself, we contemplate in him the age-long spectacle of the Gael abandoning his birthright. How insincere poets are, after all, one is tempted to believe, when they talk about "leaving great verse unto a little clan." Here was a poet who might have ruled a little kingdom of his own, a nook of the world virginal as ancient Greece with a language practically all to himself, and what do we see him do? Abjuring his birthright, for which the jaded poets of Paris and London would have signed away their reputations, he hies him to the slums and brothels of Dublin in quest of elemental passions. What secret of human affinities is disclosed in the zest and understanding with which this young islander, his coat still

drenched with Atlantic spray, looks round him in this fetid world? Must we conclude that the slum-dweller is the intensified form of the peasant? In the slum, as in the remote west of Ireland, Mr O'Flaherty finds that untrammelled play of character with which he is at home. He is almost without a rival in some of his studies of animal life, and it is perhaps natural that he is most interested in man when man is nearest the animal, as he is, no doubt, in the slums. Mr O'Flaherty likes to take for his subject something which he can watch from moment to moment: a sea-gull finding its wings, a dog tracking down a mountain-goat, a murderer closing in upon his victim.

There is an equally disconcerting quality in the talent of Mr Eimar O'Duffy; for though, unlike Mr O'Flaherty, he has been deep in Gaelic lore and literature, he has emerged from these studies with a spirit emancipated by mockery and mischief. The gaiety and gusto of King Goshawk and the Birds quite carry you off your feet. Gaelic literature seems to inspire above all things a confidence in the elemental passions, and a scorn of all the timidities of our hesitantly-Christian civilization; and indeed when I think of Synge's Playboy, of the buoyant irreverence of the Shavian drama, of Stephens, O'Flaherty, and now of Mr Eimar O'Duffy, I am suddenly moved to remember the Irish part in the ancestry of William Blake, and to wonder whether it is not in the direction of Blake rather than of Berkeley that Irish literature should look for its philosophical background. The formal adoption of William Blake as the inspired forefather of modern Irish literature might constitute a norm for it at least as clearly defined as that which the influence of Emerson imparts to American literature. All Irish writers revere him. Yeats and A. E. build themselves upon him. If only Blake, instead of reading Ossian, could have read the ancient Irish sagas, and instead of "Albion" and "Jerusalem" could have prophesied of Eriu and Tirnanoge!

I think there is a good deal in this conception of Irish literature, and I recommend it to those historians of Irish literature who have hitherto attempted in vain to make of it a consistent story, looking hopelessly after those writers on the other side of the Channel who appear to have dropped out of the story. Future developments of literature in Ireland may well make it irresistible!

JOHN EGLINTON

BOOK REVIEWS

A COMPANION TO HISTORY

ENGLISH MEN AND MANNERS IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY: An Illustrated Narrative. By A. S. Turberville. 10mo. 531 pages. The Oxford University Press, American Branch. \$4.

THIS book, one supposes, may be classed under the vague but convenient heading of Companions to History. It is one of the privileges of Literature, as of all Arts, that it is always possible to do it badly: but it would require a singular talent in failure to make a collection of contemporary illustrations of men and manners at any period entirely uninteresting. No doubt a good old-fashioned Debating Society might busy itself with more than one question as to the fashion in which the letterpress should be accommodated to the illustrations themselves. Perhaps the ideally perfect way would be to make each "cut" the subject of a shorter or longer description of its own subject and that subject's appurtenances. Mr Turberville, however, has preferred to reverse the process and bring in his "cuts" as, in the ordinary sense, illustrations to a more or less continuous history of the century itself. He had a perfect right to do so: and the result is very far from *mere* "letterpress." It is neither dull, nor partisan, nor as a whole inaccurate, though to describe for instance, Johnson as "assuming quite a proprietary air with Garrick" because "they were educated at the same school in Lichfield" is a little inaccurate, decidedly inadequate, and rather complicatedly unlucky. Garrick did not enter the "school at Lichfield" till two years after Johnson left it. But he did go to school *under* Johnson at the ill-starred Edial venture: and, as he was almost alone there, Johnson might feel, even more than other schoolmasters towards their numerous pupils, a "proprietary" relation towards this lamb. But this is a matter of very small importance: even if it had companions they need not interfere with the idle perhaps, but not infamous pleasure one may take in turning over the illustrations and letting "the shapes arise."

These "shapes," according to a now not uncommon habit with which the most ferociously fossil of anti-modernists can find no fault, are of the most miscellaneous character—not merely what are vaguely called "pictures" of persons, places, and events; not even merely coins, caricatures, et cetera, but facsimiles of manuscripts and Print; sketches of furniture and costume; bill-headings, copies (alas! only *copies*) of bank-notes; advertisements of all kinds. It is rather odd how this variety assists the imagination not only to the extent of the separate objects presented, but by the association with each other and with yet other things supplied by that imagination itself. The book becomes not merely a companion to history but one to literature as well. You see Catherine Hayes being burnt and her villainous son hanged on one page: and Lord Bute as a "Scotch Idol," leaning on the gigantic jack-boot which served as his punning emblem, on another. In yet another caricature of rather unusual excellence, one of the few abuses for which, so far as one knows, no excuse for a moment maintainable has ever been put forward, is rather cleverly hit off. A formidable but rather handsome divine, floating in the air with gown et cetera flapping like wings round him, and a mighty shovel-hat on his head, has his foot on one steeple, is advancing the other to a second at some distance, and stretches out his hand to a third, while there seem to be cathedral towers further off where perhaps the hand for which no immediate occupation is provided might find it or at least payment for it. Perhaps the two little children who are turning wheels in a rope loft do not look particularly unhappy: but Mr Turberville in more than one place admits that, in the "children's employment" question, it was rather the extravagant hours worked than any particular hardship in the labour that was objectionable.

However this may be, sometimes, if not always, there is an odd *impassibility* about these pictures. The spectators of Master Tom Billings, already mentioned as pendent from his gallows, appear to be not less casually attentive than their likes might be to-day when somebody is riding in Rotten Row. Hogarth himself, who has hardly ever been excelled in giving individuality to a crowd of faces, has put little more feeling into those of a strong House of Commons Committee with a half-naked victim of the scoundrel warder Bambridge before them, than if they were listening to

someone reading a blue-book. Single figures, whether deliberately caricatured or not, are, however, much better treated. You could hardly have a more excellent presentment of "a malignant and a turbaned Turk" (he actually has a turban or something very like it) than the portrait with sword drawn, of the great Captain Blackbeard—the amiable gentleman who (did he not?) fired pistols under a card-table for fun. Again, such a drawing as Sayers's caricature of the Duke of Grafton, where the caricature element is reduced to the lowest degree, is a pleasant relief after the exaggerated monstrosities of curve and dot which are allowed to pass muster nowadays.

For a single object of study one might suggest the physiology and physiognomy of the wig. The wig is—on what one may be permitted to call the face of it—one of the most extraordinary garments—or if the expression be preferred, ornaments—in the history of costume. Its origin may have been traced—but if so I am not acquainted with the tracing—to some early and unrecorded visit to Papua. This is the *most* ultimate thing that suggests itself: the Sudan comes next. It is not, as most garments are in reality or pretence, a protection: for from that point of view it is overtopped and made useless by the hat. It intimates, if it does not actually involve, getting rid of the natural covering; it is, in a way, as though you should have yourself flayed before calling in hosier, shirtmaker, or tailor. And yet there is no doubt that it adds a singular dignity—you might almost call it beauty—to the countenance. That is to say, of course, the full-bottomed wig does: not a "scratch" or "tie." Take, for instance, the portrait of that right reverend toadeater and very indifferent churchman, Bishop Hoadly. The face is not exactly ugly but exhibits an unpleasant combination, when you look into it, of meanness and bullying. Yet, *till* you look into it the wig (no doubt assisted by splendour of gown, sleeves, collar, et cetera) succeeds to no small extent in carrying off the worser nature; dignifying the meanness somewhat; and allowing the bullying to be not much more than stern.

But there is not the least necessity to take things so seriously as this: nor, though Mr Turberville gives you proper help for doing so, to consider whether Lord Chancellor Hardwicke was the great lawyer and statesman whom some almost beatify, or the wretched

creature that Horace Walpole would like you to think him. Nor, turning for a moment only, to the most serious matters of all, need you ask Mr Turberville himself whether he is not a little hasty in dismissing certain terrible but magnificent verses which Swift pretty certainly wrote on the Last Judgement as a "blasphemous parody." It is much better to take the goods provided for you in the panorama fashion already suggested. If the spectacle of Byng being shot is distressing (though you know it *did* "encourage the others" very mightily, and Voltaire's own countrymen paid pretty heavily for his joke) you can turn to a couple of pages exhibiting specimens of that marvellous furniture which somehow or other has never been surpassed in grace if perhaps it has had superiors in comfort. You can look at Tragedy and Comedy pulling Mr David Garrick each her own way: observe, perhaps with sympathy, that Thalia is evidently getting the better of Melpomene; and wonder whether Mr Thackeray had the picture in his mind when he drew the frontispieces for *Pendennis*. And you can also question whether in depicting the three scarecrows engaged in "curing" gout, colic, and "tisick" with punch, Gillray meant to stigmatize "the ravages of strong drink" so strongly as Mr Turberville does. The wicked wretches seem remarkably cheerful under their sufferings—and the treatment thereof!

We do not generally think of the eighteenth century as an imaginative period: and yet in a way it was. The four satiric playing-cards on the South Sea Bubble, which are reproduced here, are by no means commonplace. Our Free Traders nowadays would of course be shocked by the first—a sketch of a ship loading German linen at Harburg (not *Hamburg*) with the moral

"Encourage trade abroad for time to come:

And, like kind fools, neglect your own at home."

The second and third deal with America—the second being, owing to its small scale, not very easy to interpret. Indians and wild beasts may be at least guessed at: while, in the third, very prim Quakers, with a label "Pensil [*sic*] vania Company," are selling great tracts of land to eager buyers. The fourth shifts to the Whale Fishery where a cetacean of the largest size has already got one boat in his mouth and has just sunk another with his tail.

In old days I was more than once in Worcester College Library, Oxford, where these cards seem to be. I wonder if the whole pack is illustrated in sequence?

From a different order of things considerable delight may be derived by politicians in imagining a parallel, on this or that public man in whatever country they inhabit, to the broadsheet, *A Hue and Cry after a Coachman*. This is a ferocious description of Walpole, the centre of some forty or fifty lines of abuse being the rather ingenious "He formerly served a widow lady of the first rank till he was dismissed from her service for selling her corn and hay," referring to his Tower sojourn for corruption.

We have seen that Mr Turberville most properly shews up the country's excess in drink; it is a pity that circumstances did not permit him to do a similar office for its at least equal excess in eating. Before the Restoration we have not many details of dinners: but Pepys begins, Swift carries on, and other writers of the first or almost the first rank continue into the nineteenth century the enormous and almost appalling lists of food which were set before our ancestors and which (it has been charitably suggested) their staffs of servants, proportionately much larger than our own, may have helped them to clear. But it is very difficult to *picture* a feast in this respect, unless on a very large scale, for individual objects. He might, however, have done more than he has with dancing: though he has not neglected Bath and some others at least of the watering-places which were its principal home. It would moreover be illiberal to grumble at what is not here, considering the amount that is actually furnished. The navy is fairly dealt with and the plates showing Anson's Centurion and her galleon victim perhaps will not weaken, in some "eyes of the mind," the old idea that a sailing ship under full sail is the most beautiful object ever attained by human skill in the more mechanical kinds of art. The army has rather less to shew for itself though the exceedingly neat young officer whom Bunbury has depicted—with cocked hat, cockade, plume, pigtail, very smartly cut coatee, and continuations to suit, while before him three exceedingly but not unnaturally "raw" recruits are being literally licked into shape and line with the sergeant's cane—is a good piece of comedy.

But perhaps on the whole, as has already been suggested, the

political caricatures are the best. They gradually went off in the nineteenth century: and the twentieth has certainly not seen in England any decided return to felicity of anything like the old kind.

It may be only an idle attempt to philosophize: but these illustrations of history always bring more or less to my mind the famous ejaculation started by Goldsmith in his *Eastcheap Reverie* and emphasized by Carlyle but put in a sort of interrogative—"Pretty much like our own, Mr Rigmorole?" The superficial differences are of course enormous: whether the real and in the right sense of the word, substantial ones are so great is another question. There have been of course times which were apparently convinced that they were extremely different from others. The earlier eighteenth century (it was getting in Goldsmith's time, if not always in his own case, more doubtful) was quite certain of it. Some nineteenth-century people such as Macaulay followed in the same line: and I see that in England (I do not know what is the case in America) everybody who can claim to be really of the twentieth century is quite sure that everything has altered and is altering in it. I think I may claim without folly or fatuity (the words translate each other partially but do not exactly coincide) that a good many of us who were born in or about the middle of the nineteenth, escaped this delusion not of course in the very least through any merits of ours, but simply because the clock of things had come round to freedom from it. We had got to know a good deal more of the past and it had perhaps given us something of a conviction of the great doctrine of compensations—which makes you rather careless of the future but not such a very bad judge of the present. However, no more of this for it gets controversial. Still, things of the past sometimes *are* curiously like our own. Some may prefer Catherine the Great to Lenin and some Lenin to Catherine. But Potemkin was said to have planted impromptu villages on the Volga to suit the Empress on journeys and something similar has been said to take place when visitors explore the dominions of the Soviet.

GEORGE SAINTSBURY

A POET'S NOVEL

PALIMPSEST. *By H. D. 12mo. 338 pages. Paris: The Contact Editions; New York: Houghton, Mifflin Company. \$3.50.*

IT is with a peculiar excitement that one opens the leaves of this first novel by so accomplished a poet. Here corroborated and amplified one hopes to rediscover in H. D.'s prose the "fire," "restraint," and "devout paganism," so justly esteemed by another poet of the same sex and of a distinction even greater.

Palimpsest consists of three separate stories achieving a rather loose unity by the underlying idea which links them together and which gives the book its title.

Here is the emotion, or so I should suppose, which animates the author and which she seeks to render eloquent. Each moment that occurs, though appearing to cancel the moment that precedes it, merely erases it sufficiently to give a semblance of stability to its own existence. Thus the past is, when viewed with the eyes of vision, as palpable, as solid, and as dynamic as is the present. To H. D. the antiquity of decadent Athens is as pressingly importunate as is the obvious insistence of modern London, now decadent in its day. And if Antiquity lives in her imagination and motivates her thoughts, so also does her own past retain a static reality co-existent with each moment of the succeeding days, as well as with the future. Thus art becomes an expression of multifarious imprints laid one on top of the other "like old photographic negatives," which imprints can no longer be viewed with singleness of purpose. All creative form should seek to encircle these vague, diverse, and remotely related imprints, blurred and indistinct, but never completely obliterated. And just as the past by maintaining its life in the present manifests its vitality, so it equally illuminates the futility of all illusions, above all the illusion of morality, morality which at its best can be but a matter of fastidiousness and good taste. Only one divine and eternal alleviation is allowed to man, and that is the gift of poetry, the power to create and to delight in those pursuant snatches of rhythmic expression which recur and recur to redeem the fretted chaos of existence.

The first episode in the book takes place at about 75 B. C. Hipparchia, a poet and the daughter of the Greek cynic Crates, is living in Rome with her lover, a Roman, cultivated, but with the limitations of his epoch and race. The chief interest of the story lies in the content of Hipparchia's mind, in her repulsions and attractions, in her subtle, weary, egoistic, and neurotic responses to her lovers, and to the scenes about her. The lines of poetry which spring into her mind, and which give the pace and tone to the narrative, are often beautiful and effective, as well as at other times they seem tiresome and irrelevant in their self-conscious reiteration. The prose is sumptuous and rich in imagery, but frequently lacking in dignity, simplicity, and restraint. The short staccato sentences, clipped off and left standing like impudent, half-clothed intruders at a classic banquet, are of course, indicative of the modern method and of H. D.'s obeisance before it. But to me they seem curiously unfitting, and, indeed, not integral with her deeper individual perceptions, as unfitting as certain words such as "*insouciance*," take *congé*," "*arrière pensée*," and "a special *goût*," which obtrude like modish tokens of modernity dropped on a marble stairway. One longs, indeed, for what Petronius calls *oratio pudica* or "the modest style which does not abandon itself to the fluidity of every moment." And it is surprising to discover a poet with so slight a respect for the right use and economy of words that she can repeat, over and over and over, the same ones, such as stark, singular, pollen-dusted, and hyacinthine, in places where a more detained attention would have shown them to be easily substituted for fresher ones. This carelessness is discernible as well in the proof-reading, for perhaps never was a book so obviously published for the appreciation of an eclectic minority allowed to appear so overflowing with printer's errors. In the matter of rhetoric one suspects that inattention betrays almost always a lack of intensity, and one feels that although H. D. has emotional power and authentic inspiration, her passion, when it does lapse, becomes by turns turgid, arid, or irritatingly mannered. But where indeed to-day is that prose "broad and great, refined and sensible, sane and beautiful" that one has grown to expect in every enduring classic? Let me give a typical example of the short sentences. "She regarded Marius. The same. Thinness. The heavy spaces, chin, cheek, throat, rounded with muscles, it seemed, gone hollow. The face grey almost in texture." And now let me quote another

sentence in contrast, and there are many such sentences. "The soft saffron of her under dress showed like light lying on marble, sunlight in a pool, inset on some marble floor from which bird beak would dip and bird throat would lift and from which the very scattering of drops from that bird's frail pointed bill would cause the most distant, the most remote of music."

The second story, with its beautiful symbolic title, *Murex*, is of the three the most successful. The American, *Raymonde Ransome*, is really but another name for the Greek *Hipparchia*, for it is into the same aloof, poetic, ardent, conflicting, cleverly self-conscious temperament that we are introduced. But this story does in some way achieve both density and unity. The philosophic idea fuses with the action and fills out the structure. One is snatched into the dramatic complexities of *Raymonde Ransome's* emotions, her perceptions become our own, her developing insight our engrossed instruction, so that when the partition that separates her past from her brooding, suffering comprehension does finally yield, we, with her, contemplate those static pictures, static and intact, yet glowing too with a full, imperishable, present life of their own. It is in this story indeed that one can best measure the true potentialities of H. D.'s powers and one feels that its success is due largely to the fact that the situation has been nourished and matured in her mind before she began to write, whereas in the others she has sought to find a vehicle for her emotional response and has been betrayed, both by her own somewhat headlong virtuosity, and by her too receptive reading of such masters as James Joyce, D. H. Lawrence, and even, it might seem, of Henry James, masters all of whom have developed a style native to their unique, disparate, and supreme endowments.

If, as is claimed by at least one critic, it is dishonest in an age of transition not to seek out fresh methods of technique, then I for one can but hope that without harm to subtlety it will in time be again original to be simple and carefully selective, to be simple and selective in the sense that Proust and Pater are simple and selective; that is, to think with heightened clarity of what one desires to express, and then so to condense and pack this burden that it can be carried undamaged, without stumbling or confusion, from page to page, portable and precise, to be at last deposited for the absorbed persuasion of the reader.

ALYSE GREGORY

THE POETIC DILEMMA

POEMS. *By T. S. Eliot. 12mo. 63 pages. Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.*

ROCOCO. *By Ralph Cheever Dunning. 16mo. 22 pages. Edward W. Titus, Paris. Not for Sale.*

PELAGEA AND OTHER POEMS. *By A. E. Coppard. With Wood Engravings by Robert Gibbings. 8vo. 44 pages. The Chaucer Head. \$6.*

IT has been often enough, perhaps too often said, of late, that the almost fatal difficulty which confronts the poet nowadays is the difficulty of finding a theme which might be worth his power. If he be potentially a "major" poet, this difficulty is thought to be particularly formidable, if not actually crippling; but for even the "minor" poet (to use minor in no pejorative sense) it is considered serious. Mr T. S. Eliot, whose *Poems* have been reprinted by Mr Knopf, has himself contributed something to this theory. In his admirable note on Blake, in *The Sacred Wood*, he suggests that Blake was potentially a major poet who was robbed of his birth-right by the mere accident of there not being, at the moment, a prepared or traditional cosmology or mythology of sufficient wealth to engage, or disengage, his great imaginative power. He was compelled, in the absence of such a frame, to invent a frame for himself; and in this was, perhaps inevitably, doomed to failure. Had he been born to a belief as rich and profound as that which Dante inherited, might he not have been as great a poet? . . .

This is an ingenious idea; but it is possible to take it too seriously. It is obvious enough that some sort of tradition is a very great help to a poet—it floats him and sustains him, it carries him more swiftly and easily than he could carry himself, and it indicates a direction for him. But a fact too often lost sight of, at the present time, is that the great poet may be, precisely, one who has a capacity to find, at *any* given moment, a theme sufficient for the proper exercise of his strength. There were contemporaries of Dante who were excellent poets, but for whom the cosmology which en-

chanted Dante was not evocative. If Blake scanned his horizon in vain for "huge cloudy symbols," Goethe, scanning the same horizon, was not so unsuccessful. It is true enough that, with the decay of religion as a force in human life, poetry must be robbed of that particular *kind* of conviction, as has been noted by Mr I. A. Richards; but to assume from this that the poetry of the future must inevitably be a poetry of scepticism or negation is perhaps to oversimplify the issue. Poetry has always shown itself able to keep step easily and naturally with the utmost that man can do in extending his knowledge, no matter how destructive of existing beliefs that knowledge may be. Each accretion of knowledge becomes, by degrees, a part of man's emotional attitude to the world, takes on affective values or overtones, and is then ready for use in poetry. The universe does not become each year simpler or less disturbing: nor is there any reason to suppose that it ever will. The individual who is born into it will continue to be surprised and delighted by it, or surprised and injured; and in direct ratio with this surprise and delight or surprise and injury, he will continue to be a poet.

The wail of contemporary criticism, therefore, to the effect that poetry can find nothing to cling to, leaves one a little sceptical: though it is easy enough to sympathize with the individual poets who, suffering from that delusion, have for the moment lost themselves in self-distrust. Mr Pound and Mr Eliot are perhaps very typical victims of this kind. But whereas Mr Pound has evaded the issue, seeking asylum in a sense of the past (rather half-heartedly held) Mr Eliot has made a poetry of the predicament itself. His poetry has been from the outset a poetry of self-consciousness; of instinct at war with doubt, and sensibility at odds with reason; an air of precocious cynicism has hung over it; and his development as a poet has not been so much a widening of his field—though at first sight *The Waste Land* might suggest this—as a deepening of his awareness of it. Prufrock, who antedated by a decade the later poem, could not give himself to his emotions or his instincts because he could not bring himself, *sub specie aeternitatis*, quite to believe in them: he was inhibited, and preferred to remain a despairing spectator: but at the same time he wished that he might have been a simpler organism, "a pair of ragged claws." The theme of *Gerontion*, a good many years later, is the same: it is again the paralysing effect of consciousness, the "after such knowledge, what

forgiveness?" And *The Waste Land* is again a recapitulation, reaching once more the same point of acute agony of doubt, the same distrust of decision or action, with its "awful daring of a moment's surrender, which an age of prudence can never retract."

The reissue of *Poems* is not the occasion for a detailed review of Mr Eliot's early work, however; for our present purpose it is sufficient to note that Mr Eliot has conspicuously shared the contemporary feeling that there are no "large" themes for the poet, and that he has had the courage and the perspicacity to take as his theme precisely this themelessness. Why not—he says in effect—make a bitter sort of joke of one's nihilism and impotence? And in making his bitter joke, he has written some of the most searchingly unhappy and vivid and individual of contemporary poetry. One feels that his future is secure, by virtue of his honesty quite as much as by virtue of his genius.

If Mr Coppard and Mr Dunning have not Mr Eliot's importance, they nevertheless interest us, for they too are characteristic products of the contemporary poetic dilemma. What on earth—Mr Dunning seems to say—can one write about? Can one, for example, attempt such a worn-out thing, in poetry, as the telling of a romantic and tragic love-story? . . . That is what, in his *Rococo*, he has wanted to do. He has a good story that he would like to tell us, and he also, obviously, wants very much to write about love, or passion, and to do so with passion. Nevertheless, the fashionable distrust has somewhat poisoned him. How can one devote oneself to anything so *vieux jeu* as the mere telling of a love-story in verse? If it is to be done at all, he appears to think, one must do it as a kind of game; one must lend to the performance a kind of detachment, give it distance, force the thing into some sort of artificial frame. Above all, one must not have the air of accepting it as anything but a kind of convention.

For these reasons, perhaps, he casts his poem in a somewhat archaic *genre*—a somewhat decorative convention which might not have been displeasing to the Keats of Isabella—and then, to make it quite clear that he knows what he is doing, that he is not adopting this fragrant and old-fashioned convention out of pure innocence of heart, entitles it *Rococo*. And he does it, one must add, really admirably: he keeps his chosen convention singularly pure; and it is further to his credit that he manages to make his story delightfully vivid and quick, despite this heavy burden of what one must

feel initially is an artificial manner. His technical skill is remarkable. It is no small feat to tell a story twenty-two pages long in *terza rima*, with none but feminine rhymes: if any one doubts it, let him try it. The effect of the *terza rima* is very rich, gives a delightful intricacy to the narrative movement, and also gives it weight and resistance. It is no great disparagement of Mr Dunning's poetic skill to note that now and then he has been a little too much led by the rhyme-scheme, and that the demands of the elaborate form have occasionally dragged him into long sentences or verse-paragraphs which are either diffuse (padded) or too involved. One also feels that the persistent feminine ending is, in a poem of this length, rather cloying. At the outset, it is charming; but eventually one finds oneself longing for a departure from the dying fall, from the note of minor sadness and ornamental grace, and wishing that now and then one might encounter something more emphatic and robust. The problem was not, however, an easy one—the use of masculine endings might not so sympathetically have suited Mr Dunning's carefully calculated manner. As for the story itself, it is excellently managed. Mr Dunning gives it dignity and beauty, and a considerable psychological subtlety. It is only at the end that he at all breaks down. There, faced by the necessity of presenting a simple and stark and tragic action, he seems to have found that his chosen "tone" was not quite adequate. At any rate, the ending is, by comparison with the beginning, a little bit huddled and unconvincing. One feels that something a shade more spacious was indicated.

Mr Coppard is also, but in a different sense, a victim of the poetic dilemma. He brings to his poetry the fine qualities of imagination and whimsical humour which make so many of his stories delightful; but he seems to be of two minds as to what, precisely, poetry should be. He alternates between a straightforward presentation of a state of mind (in a kind of semi-narrative free verse) and a light playing with lyric forms of a decidedly seventeenth-century flavour. The latter are skilful and charming, but a little thin; the former are genuine and moving but not quite enough "shaped." One puts down his book somewhat unsatisfied, but with the conviction that so individual a mind might do something really first-rate in verse, if it could only discover its own note. But no critic can tell a poet what his own note is—he must find it for himself.

CONRAD AIKEN

“POET AND SAINT . . .”

BAUDELAIRE: Prose and Poetry. *Translated by Arthur Symons. 8vo. 280 pages. Albert and Charles Boni. \$4.*

FIRST I must protest against the words *Baudelaire Complete* which the publishers have placed on the wrapper of this book. There are two hundred and seventy-eight pages of translation. Mr Symons has translated most, but not all, of *Les Fleurs du Mal*: he has not included the section *Spleen et Idéal*, and even the most casual admirer of Baudelaire will miss *Le Voyage*; he has translated part, but by no means all, of *Les Paradis Artificiels*; only the *Petits Poèmes en Prose* are complete. But even if Mr Symons had given us the whole of the poetry, and the whole of the *Paradis Artificiels*, the word *Complete* would still be deplorable. There are now two fine editions of *Baudelaire Complete* in process of publication: that of Conard and that of *La Nouvelle Revue Française*; each runs to about fifteen volumes. In the case of many authors, this misstatement would not have so much mattered; for some even voluminous authors can be judged fairly by a very small part of their work. But not Baudelaire. It is now becoming understood that Baudelaire is one of the few poets who wrote nothing, either prose or verse, that is negligible. To understand Baudelaire you must read the whole of Baudelaire. And nothing that he wrote is without importance. He was a great poet; he was a great critic. And he was also a man with a profound attitude toward life, for the study of which we need every scrap of his writing. To call this volume “*Baudelaire Complete*” is to mislead the public.

To turn from the publishers to the translator is to turn from an error to a defect. But “defect” is not the right word. Mr Symons has made a good translation, in the Symons style. If our point of view to-day was the point of view of thirty years ago, or even of twenty years ago, we should call it a good translation. To read Mr Symons now, is to realize how great a man is Baudelaire, who can appear in such a different form to the 'nineties and to the nineteen-twenties. In the translation of Mr Symons, Baudelaire becomes a poet of the 'nineties, a contemporary of Dowson and Wilde. Dow-

son and Wilde have passed, and Baudelaire remains; he belonged to a generation that preceded them, and yet he is much more our contemporary than are they. Yet even the 'nineties are nearer to us than the intervening generation—I date in *literary* generations—the fact that they were interested in Baudelaire indicates some community of spirit. Since the generation—the *literary* generation—of Mr Symons and the 'nineties, another generation has come and gone—the *literary* generation which includes Mr Bernard Shaw, and Mr Wells, and Mr Lytton Strachey. This generation, in its ancestry, “skipped” the 'nineties: it is the progeny of Huxley, and Tyndall, and George Eliot, and Gladstone. And with this generation Baudelaire has nothing to do; but he had something to do with the 'nineties, and he has a great deal to do with us.

But the present volume should perhaps, even in fairness, be read as a document explicatory of the 'nineties, rather than as a current interpretation of Baudelaire. In an interesting preface—too short—Mr Symons avows that *Les Fleurs du Mal* “in regard to my earliest verses, was at once a fascination and an influence, and because from that time onward his fascination has been like a spell to me, and because that masterpiece has rarely, if ever, been equalled, has rarely, if ever, been surpassed.” Mr Symons is himself, we must remember, no mean poet; he is typical of the 'nineties; this influence of Baudelaire upon Mr Symons was manifestly genuine and profound. Why is Baudelaire so different now? We can learn something about Baudelaire, and about the 'nineties, and about ourselves.

Mr Symons' preface is very interesting: it is perhaps the most important part of the book. What is interesting is the attitude, so completely of his epoch, toward “vice.” For Mr Symons there is, at least *en principe*, a ritual, an hierarchy, a liturgy, of “vice” or “sin.” Here is a whole paragraph so significant that I beg to give it entire:

“In the poetry of Baudelaire, with which the poetry of Verlaine is so often compared [*i.e. compared by Mr Symons and his friends—we no longer find much in common*] there is a deliberate science of sensual and sexual perversity which has something curious in its accentuation of vice with horror, in its passionate devotion to passions. Baudelaire brings every complication of taste, the exasperation of perfumes, the irritant of cruelty, the very odours and colours

of corruption, to the creation and adornment of a sort of religion, in which an Eternal Mass is served before a veiled altar. There is no confession, no absolution, not a prayer is permitted which is not set down on the ritual. . . . 'To cultivate one's hysteria,' I have written, 'so calmly, and to affront the reader (*Hypocrite lecteur, mon semblable, mon frère*) as a judge rather than a penitent; to be a casuist in confession; to be so much a moralist, with so keen and so subtle a sense of the ecstasy of evil: that has always bewildered the world, even in his own country, where the artist is allowed to live as experimentally as he writes. Baudelaire lived and died solitary, secret, a confessor of sins who had never told the whole truth, *le mauvais moine* of his own sonnet, an ascetic of passion, a hermit of the Brothel.' "

This paragraph is of extraordinary interest for several reasons. Even in its cadences it conjures up Wilde (past ruined Regent Street Lord Henry Wootton lives) and the remoter spectre of Pater. It conjures up also Lionel Johnson with his "life is a ritual." It cannot get away from religion and religious figures of speech. How different a tone from that of the generation of Mr Shaw,¹ and Mr Wells, and Mr Strachey, and Mr Ernest Hemingway! And how different from our own! Mr Symons seems to us like a sensitive child, who has been taken into a church, and has been entranced with the effigies, and the candles, and the incense. *Such rugs and jugs and candle lights!*

And indeed the age of Mr Symons was the "golden age" of one kind of child, as the age of Mr Shaw was the age of another kind of child. If you take his paragraph to pieces, you will find much that is wrong; though if you swallow it whole, you will digest something that is right. "*Passionate devotion to passions*": no man was ever less the dupe of passions than Baudelaire; he was engaged in an attempt to explain, to justify, to make something of them, an enterprise which puts him almost on a level with the author of the *Vita Nuova*. "*The irritant of cruelty*"—did Baudelaire "bring" it, or did he not merely examine it (there are some important paragraphs in *Mon Coeur Mis à Nu*). Who ever heard of a Mass before a

¹ Of course Mr Shaw and Mr Wells are also much occupied with religion and *Ersatz-Religion*. But they are concerned with the spirit, not the letter. And the spirit killeth, but the letter giveth life.

veiled altar? And hysteria! was any one ever less hysterical, more lucid, than Baudelaire?¹ There is a difference between hysteria and looking into the Shadow. And when Mr Symons says, a few pages later, that Baudelaire's "impeccable" work is "the direct result of his heredity and of his nerves" I can only protest violently. If any work is to be described as the "direct" result of heredity and nerves—and "direct" here can only suggest that heredity and nerves sufficiently account for the work—then I cannot agree that such work is impeccable. We cannot be *primarily* interested in any writer's nerves (and remember please that "nerves" used in this way is a very vague and unscientific term) or in any one's heredity except for the purpose of knowing to what extent that writer's individuality distorts or detracts from the objective truth which he perceives. If a writer sees truly—as far as he sees at all—then his heredity and nerves do not matter.² What is right in Mr Symons' account is the impression it gives that Baudelaire was primarily occupied with religious values. What is wrong is the childish attitude of the 'nineties toward religion, the belief—which is no more than the game of children dressing up and playing at being grown-ups—that there is a religion of Evil, or Vice, or Sin. Swinburne knew nothing about Evil, or Vice, or Sin—if he had known anything he would not have had so much fun out of it. For Swinburne's disciples, the men of the 'nineties, Evil was very good fun, quite exciting. Experience, as a sequence of outward events, is nothing in itself; it is possible to pass through the most terrible experiences protected by histrionic vanity; Wilde, through the whole of the experiences of his life, remained a little Eyas, a child-actor. On the other hand, even to act an important thing is to acknowledge it; and the childishness of the 'nineties is nearer to reality than the childishness of the nineteen-hundreds. But to Baudelaire, alone, these things were real.

Mr Symons appears a more childish child than Huysmans, merely because a childish Englishman—bred a Protestant—always appears more childish than a childish Frenchman—bred a Roman. Huys-

¹ It is true that Baudelaire says "*J'ai cultivé mon hystérie.*" But it is one thing for him to say it of himself, another for Mr Symons to say it about him.

² There is a better, and very interesting, account of Baudelaire's heredity in Léon Daudet's book, *L'Hérédo.*

mans' fee-fi-fo-fum *décor* of mediaevalism has nothing on Mr Symons' "veiled altar." Huysmans, by the way, might have been much more in sympathy with the real spirit of the thirteenth century if he had thought less about it, and bothered less about architectural lore and quotations from philosophers whom he may have read but certainly did not understand: he is much more "mediaeval" (and much more human) when he describes the visit of Madame Chante-louve to Durtal than when he talks about his Cathedral.

As a translator, I have already suggested that Mr Symons turns Baudelaire into a contemporary of Symons. To say this is at once a very high compliment—for the work of translation is to make something foreign, or something remote in time, live with our own life, and no translator can endow his victim with more abundant life than he possesses himself—and a warning. It is not a warning against Mr Symons as translator. Mr Symons is as great a translator as Mr Symons can be. That is to say that his translation is, from his own point of view, almost perfect; we have no suggestions to make to Mr Symons himself. His translation of Baudelaire is a permanent part of literature. Only, it is what Baudelaire means to Mr Symons' generation; it is not what Baudelaire means to us. For one thing, we now are much better qualified to appreciate the very traditional character of Baudelaire's verse; we are nearer to Racine than is Mr Symons; and if we translated Baudelaire ourselves we should bring out just those resemblances to Racine which disappear completely in Mr Symons' translation. It is a pity that Mr Symons has not translated some of the poems in which this affinity with Racine is most apparent. The poet who wrote

*"Andromaque, des bras d'un grand époux tombée,
Vil bétail, sous la main du superbe Pyrrhus. . .*

De l'ancien Frascati vestale enamourée. . .

Nos Pylades là-bas tendent leurs bras vers nous.

'Pour rafraîchir ton coeur nage vers ton Electre!'. . ."

is not remote from the poet who wrote of "*La fille de Minos et Pasiphaë. . .*" We can, however, call attention to passages where it seems to us that Mr Symons has enveloped Baudelaire in the Swinburnian violet-coloured London fog of the 'nineties. His paraphrase of *L'Invitation au Voyage* is significant.

“My child and my star,
Let us wander afar. . .”

Baudelaire wrote

“*Mon enfant, ma soeur,
Songe à la douceur
D'aller là-bas vivre ensemble.*”

The word *soeur* here is not, in my opinion, chosen merely because it rhymes with *douceur*; it is a moment in that sublimation of passion toward which Baudelaire was always striving; it needs a commentary out of his Correspondence, for instance the astonishing letter to Marie X. . . cited by Charles Du Bos.¹ (On this whole subject Du Bos, whose essay on Baudelaire is the finest study of Baudelaire that has been made, has some admirable words: *ce désir contemplatif qui n'a besoin que de la présence, et qui ne possède vraiment que parce qu'il ne possède pas*). And further on, in the same poem, when we come to the magnificent lines

“*Là, tout n'est qu'ordre et beauté,
Luxe, calme et volupté*”

we are surprised to receive from Mr Symons

“There all is beauty, ardency,
Passion, rest and luxury.”

The only one of these words that is right is “beauty.” Baudelaire did not, we may be sure, take these substantives at random, nor did he arrange them at random. It is not for nothing that he put *ordre* first; and if Mr Symons had understood *notre* Baudelaire he would not have substituted—“ardency”! But order is positive, chaos is defect, and we imagine that Mr Symons was not trying to *avoid* Order—he simply did not recognize it. We can see that Mr Symons, trained in the verbal school of Swinburne, is simply anxious to get a nice sounding phrase; and we infer that all that he found in Baudelaire was a nice sounding phrase. But Baudelaire was not a disciple of Swinburne: for Baudelaire every word counts.

Here is another passage where Mr Symons seems to me merely to

¹ Charles Du Bos: *Approximations* page 219.

have made a smudgy botch. It is striking because it is Baudelaire in his most sardonic, bathetic vein—something which might be called strictly "modern," and which should therefore (considering that Mr Symons belongs to a younger generation than Baudelaire) have appealed to Mr Symons. These are well-known lines from the *Voyage à Cythère*.

*"Quelle est cette île triste et noire? C'est Cythère,
Nous dit-on, un pays fameux dans les chansons,
Eldorado banal de tous les vieux garçons.
Regardez, après tout, c'est une pauvre terre."*

Mr Symons astounds us with the following:

"What is this sad dark Isle? It is Cythera whose birth
Was famed in songs, made famous as the fashions
Of the most ancient and adulterous passions:
It is a beautiful and a barren earth."

Here Mr Symons' "stretchèd metre," always reminiscent of Cynara, fits Baudelaire's deliberately broken alexandrines better than it does in many places (in many of the poems, one feels that Pope would have been better fitted than Mr Symons). But such a mis-translation cannot be merely a confession of impotence to translate the words of Baudelaire into English; it expresses an impotence to *feel* the moods of Baudelaire—they can be expressed in English just as well as in French—an impotence to use words definitely, to use words at all unless they are the few poor counters of habitual and lazy sentiment. *Fashions* and *Passions*—how well we know them! We wonder even whether Mr Symons has not confused (*whose birth*) Cythera with Cytherea.

The important fact about Baudelaire is that he was essentially a Christian, born out of his due time, and a classicist, born out of his due time. In his verse technique, he is nearer to Racine than to Mr Symons; in his sensibility, he is near to Dante and not without a sympathy with Tertullian. But Baudelaire was not an aesthetic or a political Christian; his tendency to "ritual," which Mr Symons, with his highly acute but blind sensibility, has observed, springs from no attachment to the outward forms of Christianity, but from the instincts of a soul that was *naturaliter* Christian. And being

the kind of Christian that he was, born when he was, he had to discover Christianity for himself. In this pursuit he was alone in the solitude which is only known to great saints. To him the notion of Original Sin came spontaneously, and the need for prayer.

“Tout chez Baudelaire est fonction de son génie; or il n’y a rien dont ce génie puisse moins se passer que de Dieu,—d’un Dieu qui plutôt qu’objet de foi est réceptacle de prières,—j’irai jusqu’à dire d’un Dieu qu’on puisse prier sans croire en lui. . . . Cet incoercible besoin de prière au sein même de l’incrédulité,—signe majeur d’une âme marquée de christianisme, qui jamais ne lui échappera tout à fait. La notion de péché, et plus profondément encore le besoin de prière, telles sont les deux réalités souterraines qui paraissent appartenir à des gisements enfouis bien plus avant que ne l’est la foi elle-même. On se rappelle le mot de Flaubert: ‘Je suis mystique au fond et je ne crois à rien’; Baudelaire et lui se sont toujours fraternellement compris.”

So far Charles Du Bos. Other essays, not so satisfactory as that of M Du Bos, but recent and explanatory of Baudelaire as he is now understood, are Notre Baudelaire by Stanislas Fumet, and La Vie Dououreuse de Baudelaire by François Porché.

And Baudelaire came to attain the greatest, the most difficult, of the Christian virtues, the virtue of humility. Only by long and devoted study of the man and his work and his life can we appreciate the significance of that great passage in *Mon Coeur Mis à Nu*:

“Faire tous les matins ma prière à Dieu, réservoir de toute force et de toute justice, à mon père, à Mariette et à Poë, comme intercesseurs; les prier de me communiquer la force nécessaire pour accomplir tous mes devoirs, et d’octroyer à ma mère une vie assez longue pour jouir de ma transformation; travailler toute la journée, ou du moins tant que mes forces me le permettront; me fier à Dieu, c’est-à-dire à la Justice même, pour la réussite de mes projets; faire, tous les soirs, une nouvelle prière, pour demander à Dieu la vie et la force pour ma mère et pour moi; faire, de tout ce que je gagnerai, quatre parts,—une pour la vie courante, une pour mes créanciers, une pour mes amis et une pour ma mère,—obéir aux principes de la plus stricte sobriété, dont le premier est la suppression de tous les excitants, quels qu’ils soient.”

T. S. ELIOT

BRIEFER MENTION

MR. GILHOOLEY, by Liam O'Flaherty (12mo, 282 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$2.50). It is difficult to place this virile and gifted author. We know through his short stories and his sketches of animal life the delicate powers of his poetic imagination. The present novel, so sombre, so erratic, so penetrated with the quality of madness, so unrelenting in its realism, gives little scope for these more lenient insights. If he is to be likened to any living writer we must perhaps select Mr D. H. Lawrence, for both authors choose sex as the centre about which revolves a torturing chaos of illusions and insecurity, and both are equally vulnerable to the manifestations of nature: but whereas Mr O'Flaherty's flights are perhaps less exalted, he is likewise incapable of the lapses in literary taste and the shameless didacticism which so boldly display themselves in many of Mr Lawrence's later novels. Certainly Mr O'Flaherty's star is still rising.

GO SHE MUST, by David Garnett (12mo, 246 pages; Knopf: \$2.50). No one could possibly fail to be pleased with this deft and charming story, so admirably restrained, so nimble and so light, so witty and so subtle. Mr Garnett pictures, or rather creates, the character of a young girl whose mind, with the quick rise and dip of a swallow on a summer morning, veers to every flick of circumstance. That it is not a mind which rises with the untrammelled ecstasy of the lark or digs into the secrets of life with the fierce pertinacity of the woodpecker does not detract from our sympathy and admiration. Mr Garnett should be read by some of our young American writers who have never learned that obstinate craft of maintaining a veracious balance between the inner life and the outer circumstance.

WHITE BUILDINGS, by Hart Crane (10mo, 56 pages; Boni & Liveright: \$2). Mr Allen Tate, in a eulogistic preface to Mr Hart Crane's volume of verse, expresses a fear lest "his style may check the immediate currency of the most distinguished American poetry of the age." He remarks also: "Crane's poems are a fresh vision of the world, so intensely personalized in a new creative language that only the strictest and most unprepossessed effort of attention can take it in." After this, a sufficiently unprepossessed effort of attention becomes difficult. Mr Crane has ability: he makes good phrases, and is capable of writing excellent blank verse; but he seldom writes a completely satisfactory poem. Partly this is due to certain affectations of idiom, to a straining and self-conscious and disingenuous preciosity; partly it is perhaps occasioned by an unreflecting indulgence in what one might call high-class intellectual fake. When Mr Crane writes less pretentiously, he is more successful, as in *In Shadow* and the second part of *Voyages*. The latter has great beauty, both of colour and movement.

DARK OF THE MOON, by Sara Teasdale (12mo, 92 pages; Macmillan: \$1.50). Miss Teasdale's refined and fastidious intelligence may be once more appreciated in this her latest volume of poems. If her irony is sometimes touched with self-consciousness and her susceptibility falls too often short of ardour, if she has none of that dark and irregular passion which we are apt to prize in poetry, we can forgive her, for she has in certain verses, such as, for instance, *Fontainebleau*, and *Foreknown*, proven herself a true poet, and to be a true poet, if on but one or two occasions, is to have more than compensated for any number of mild and pretty lines.

COMPOSITION AS EXPLANATION, by Gertrude Stein (Brochure, 16mo, 59 pages; Hogarth Press: 2/6). So many people want to know and in this, her Cambridge lecture, Miss Stein explains. "Each period of living differs from any other period of living not in the way life is but in the way life is conducted and that authentically speaking is composition." In a still greater burst of confidence, Miss Stein exclaims, "Continuous present is one thing and beginning again and again is another thing. These are both things. And then there is using everything." Also there is the being "simply different as an intention." With these first definite revelations of the new technique, Mr Sherwood Anderson, Mr E. E. Cummings, Miss Mina Loy, and the other disciples may take heart of grace, avoid fumbling in the dark, and sweep on to a complete modernity.

ART AND COMMERCE, by Roger Fry (Brochure, 10mo, 23 pages; Hogarth Press: 2/6). Mr Fry himself calls this essay, originally a lecture given in Oxford upon the occasion of an exhibition of posters, a "cold douche." In it he insists, quietly and firmly, that art is one of life's extras, due to an excess of energy that spontaneously asserts itself. The patronage of art is vanity, but a certain rebelliousness upon the part of geniuses ill adapts them to play the *rôle* of prestige-purveyors to the rich. This leads Mr Fry into some nice distinctions between genuine and mercantile art. Society, which is invariably alarmed by manifestations of the spirit, defeats art in the end by making it a tradition. Mr Fry invites some such punishment upon his own head for his little book is packed with what society must consider "revolutionary thought."

DISCORDANT ENCOUNTERS: Plays and Dialogues, by Edmund Wilson (10mo, 297 pages; A. & C. Boni: \$2.50). In the imaginary dialogues contained in this volume Mr Wilson presents, presumably, everyone's ideas but his own, and this is not, we know, because he himself is infertile in ideas. Any one familiar with the writings of this grave and prolific critic is aware that ideas come as readily from his pen as ejected pellets from "the meditative owl." Certainly Mr Wilson has juxtaposed in an interesting and perspicuous manner a number of significant points of view both in art and in science. As for the plays, it is perhaps just as well that so enviably articulate a spokesman for some of our younger writers should himself be prone to certain of their most recognizable naïvetés.

TRANSITION, *Essays on Contemporary Literature*, by Edwin Muir (12mo, 218 pages; Viking Press: \$2). Mr Muir in his search for the dominant tendencies of our age chooses the writers in English whom he deems most typical and most original, and seeks to extract from their attitudes and their methods a general insight into our irreverent era. These writers include among others James Joyce, T. S. Eliot, Lytton Strachey, and Edith Sitwell. Though he makes no claim to permanent evaluations, yet he brings to his analyses so clear and unbiassed a mind, a mind so versed in sorting, juxtaposing, and balancing ideas that one is led on, instructed, and usually converted to his manner of thinking. How seldom, indeed, one discovers a critic "uncontaminated by literary prejudices," sympathetic with modernity and at the same time conversant with European traditions! One has but a single reservation and that is concerned with the impeccability of Mr Muir's taste, a disturbing suspicious reservation based on his choice of certain quotations. But this does not really detract from the value of this admirable and stimulating book, a book prolific in suggestion, lucid in style, and convincing in argument.

THE NEGRO IN AMERICAN LIFE, by Jerome Dowd (8vo, 647 pages; Century: \$5) is an uncommitted and careful study of the possibilities of improving the race-relation of the negro minority in America to the white majority. The negro is studied in all his varieties of social and racial character, and in all his varieties of contact with the white population, in every locality of the United States in which he could have social influence—in Harlem, New York; in the "Old South Side," Chicago; in Ward Seven, Philadelphia; in the Tidewater South; and so forth. It is the view of the author, expressed with justice and supported by a fair account of the facts, that the black race has valuable cultural potentialities, and that the way through the still vexed negro problem in America lies in the cultivation of co-operation and mutual respect between the races, in which cultivation the white race, for its own interest, will take the lead, teaching the negro, first how to find and take that place in the national economic structure for which his particular aptitudes fit him; and second, how to develop his own legitimate culture as the social outgrowth of his aptitudes.

WHALING NORTH AND SOUTH, by F. V. Morley and J. S. Hodgson (10mo, 235 pages; Century: \$3). The first part of this book is written by an adventurous younger brother of Christopher Morley. His contribution is interesting, but we could wish that the ancient profession had been reviewed from a wider and more philosophic standpoint. For a moment, perhaps under the influence of the genial culture of his celebrated brother, he meditates with poetic imagination upon the corpse of a dead whale. "Where went that spirit, which played in his magnificence—which made this mountain leap and sport, quickened the eye, retracted that balloon of a tongue, lifted that fallen jaw?" His use of the word balloon at the end of so fine a passage shows Mr Morley's sense of style as being still immature. His confederate, Mr Hodgson, is a better photographer than writer. He is the kind of man who would take satisfaction in being known as "a hard case"—who makes free use of *cliché* phrases such as "the supreme law of the wild."

DARWIN, by Gamaliel Bradford (8vo, 315 pages; Houghton Mifflin: \$3.50).

Why when Mr Bradford is so obviously responsive to nature, so appreciatively conversant with the great masterpieces of the ages, so full of tolerance, modesty, goodwill, and rational understanding, does one become irritated with his expositions of celebrated men? Is it that one suspects the author's urbanity of covering a certain emptiness in his own mind, his tolerance of being merely a lack of personal intensity? Would he treat with the same tender reverence a *living* revolutionary thinker, Herr Siegmund Freud, for example? Is not his apparent emancipation exactly tempered to suit the readers of that estimable magazine, *The Atlantic Monthly*? If one wishes to seize at a glance the process through which Darwin has passed at the hands of Mr Gamaliel Bradford one has but to glance at the jacket of the present volume where a mild old man looks at one with mock stern eyes, then open the book and regard the photograph from which this drawing was made. What sad and formidable force is there!

SAMUEL BUTLER AND HIS FAMILY RELATIONS, by Mrs R. S. Garnett (10mo, 228 pages; Dutton: \$3.75). If the late Samuel Butler went to Hell, as is very likely, be sure the Devil has already placed a copy of Mrs Garnett's book in his hands. It is fiendishly contrived to torment him. It is just such a book as the friend of his unlamented relatives would write. She attempts to prove that Butler *père et mère* were, after all, nice! As if that were in question!! The only thing charged against them was the unforgivable sin of stupidity, and out of their own mouths—Mrs Garnett quotes them at length—they are proved guilty. However, it does not appear that there is anything to be done about it. It sufficiently punished them to be the parents of a genius.

MYTH IN PRIMITIVE PSYCHOLOGY, by Bronislaw Malinowski (16mo, 94 pages; W. W. Norton: \$1). This study of the *rôle* fulfilled by myths in the lives of primitive peoples is the result on the author's part of several years spent among a Melanesian tribe in New Guinea. His thesis which he upholds in clear, simple prose is that myths, far from being merely narratives or fantasies created to explain certain recalcitrant facts of nature, are in very truth integral with the cultural context of tribal life, constant by-products of living faith, and inseparable from the daily habits and manner of thinking of the people. The examples chosen to point his contention would alone repay one for reading this concise little book. One should perhaps in duty add that Mr Malinowski is an unrestrained admirer of that delightful imparter of misinformation, Sir James Frazer.

HISTORY OF ENGLAND, by George Macaulay Trevelyan (8vo, 723 pages; Longmans, Green: \$4.25). It is hard to believe that within the same limited number of pages any history of England could be written to rival the volume we are considering. Mr Trevelyan in very truth is a great historian. His vision is wide and deep and he possesses the rare gift of being able to present in an interesting form the salient facts which go towards elucidating each particular epoch. He himself from first to last remains dispassionate, objective, uncommitted.

THE THEATRE

THE first play of the New Playwrights Theatre is **LOUD SPEAKER**, by John Howard Lawson. It commits the one unpardonable sin in the theatre—it is dull. The fault lies partly with Mr Lawson and partly with Mr Harry Wagstaff Gribble, who staged the play, and partly with Mordecai Gorelik who made the setting. That leaves out the actors.

Our President's admonition to "look well to the hearthstone, therein all hope for America lies," is quoted on the programme, and makes us therefore suppose that **LOUD SPEAKER** takes as subject for farce the private lives of public men. Briefly, the following elements are distinguishable in the play:

that candidates for governor have had fleeting mistresses in Atlantic City and still grow sentimental about them;

that wives of such candidates, wanting love, turn to mysticism;

that daughters drink and urge attractive youths to seduce them;

that politicians are hypocrites;

that the tabloids are energetic and false and vulgar;

that Americans love bunk;

that American life is chaotic;

that this chaos, which has a lot of dancing in it, is maddening and amusing.

I submit that these ideas are commonplace and tedious, the property of every college junior who has reached Mencken. To be sure, there is another point, which can be made by inserting the words "in American plays it is common to find" before the "thats" above. But Mr Lawson's play is not a burlesque of American plays, it is a farce in itself. Yet it is a farce in which the satire is so obvious and heavily handled that no protestations of non-serious intentions can stand against the evidence of the play itself.

If the intentionally bad singing and good dancing and preposterous speeches and *cliché* lines of the play are not meant as elements in a satire, they are simply not good enough to stand by themselves; if they are elements in the composition, they are much too long—they grow wearisome. If the jokes are bad jokes intentionally, they are too numerous and not bad enough; if they are meant to be good,

they are dreary. And when the whole action stops for the insertion of words, music, and dancing which are all exactly on the level of the Garrick Gaieties, I really have to give up speculation on the author's purpose and record the simple fact that I was unutterably bored.

When I reviewed *PROCESSIONAL* I suggested that Mr Lawson's form told more about America than his subject; I felt that the form was his theme, and the subject, which he overvalued, was merely raw material. I was accused of not recognizing a fundamental of art: that form and matter coincide, that form embraces matter, that matter fills form. It seemed to me that with Mr Lawson these ideal events failed to occur. In the present instance I should say that he is playing with uninteresting ideas; that the farce he has built on them is not funny, nor is it illuminating as satire. And that the structure, which is rather like that of *PROCESSIONAL*, is here neither appropriate nor interesting.

My objection to the constructed scenery, which is extremely interesting to the eye, is only that it slows up an action which is already far too slow. Mr Gribble, a comic writer of fine parts and an expert director, ought to have seen this. He ought also to have carried out the syncopation of events and of ideas more easily. But perhaps he found them as insignificant as I do.

I protested last month against the bitter reception of *DAMN THE TEARS*, an experimental play by a new dramatist. The New Playwrights Theatre, as an experiment, deserves support. But I do not think that Mr Lawson, with his fourth play, can count on any indulgence.

Pirandello's play, *RIGHT YOU ARE IF YOU THINK YOU ARE* is appearing at matinees in a Theatre Guild production outside of the regular subscription season. I am curious to know whether the Guild considered this too dainty a morsel to throw to their subscribers, or not good enough, or what. It is, in fact, somewhat less tedious than most of Pirandello; it has some intensity of life in spite of the weariness of the author's mind. As a piece of dramatic construction it seems to me rather woeful. Pirandello has done what every playwright would like to do; that is, he has written a play in which the tag-line of each act is the same—in this case a mocking reference to "the truth." A group of busy-bodies determines to discover the true reason for the conduct of a young

functionary in a small Italian town; he supports his mother-in-law in one house, his wife in another, yet communication between all three seems of the friendliest. At the end of each act an explanation is offered and passes, momentarily, for the truth; but the various truths cancel out, they are all true and all false. It is an excellent idea, treated with no lightness, and with a fatal verbosity. To me the brilliant second-act endings of *THE PLAY'S THE THING*, by Molnar, conveys a similar idea with grace and dramatic effectiveness. But, of course, Molnar is only a playwright, and Pirandello is a Thinker.

In the production Beryl Mercer, as the mother-in-law, is extraordinarily right and Edward Robinson concentrates in himself an intense passion and life; the audience, like most audiences assembling in the Guild theatre, cackled with delight at the appearance of Miss Helen Westley in a grotesque costume and Miss Westley made it easy for them to continue to cackle, and to forget Pirandello, by "registering" her lines. She was so successful that several minor members of the cast imitated her in waddling or wiggling or otherwise cutting up comic in their exits. I am wholly unable to determine whether the Guild cares at all for the plays it produces, or cares only for the laughter of idiots.

The fault in *SET A THIEF*—, a melodrama, is capable of demonstration. The end of the second act has some plain and fancy shooting and a trace of eeriness; but before the curtain is allowed to come down, a cap is added to the climax in a roll of thunder. This play is rather like *WOODEN KIMONO* in that the motives of the characters are as mysterious as their movements; there is something to wonder about in addition to the usual speculation of who and how. In *CRIME* there is no mystery; there is a lightness of touch, here and there, which is not usually associated with the work of Mr Samuel Shipman; and James Rennie, who plays the best crook of the lot is, as I overheard when I left the theatre, "the personality boy." He is, in fact, quite attractive and acts a little more than he used to, although he seems still aware of his attractiveness if he does no more than stand still. The big scene in *CRIME* is a daylight robbery every detail of which has been mapped out beforehand for the benefit of the audience. The suspense is terrible; and as some-

one says in *THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING ERNEST*, I hope it continues.

They are still standing them up at *GEORGE WHITE'S SCANDALS* which must be nearly half a year old now, so nothing detailed need be said. But it is worth remarking that Mr White, by putting a great deal of energy into his shows, by reducing to a minimum the slow-motion tableaux which held up the *FOLLIES*, by speeding his scenes on, has established himself in Mr Ziegfeld's old position as a prime revuer. He has, in the present *SCANDALS*, no single great outstanding star, yet in their several ways Ann Pennington, Frances Williams, Willie Howard, Buster West, and Tom Patricola are technicians of the first order. I was particularly impressed with Miss Pennington's perfect performance of the *Black Bottom*; especially when she does it the first time, solo, it is all dance from her hair to her toes.

I return to an ancient query of my own. Why is such purely technical perfection so rarely seen on the legitimate stage? And I might add, why is it that so often, when it does occur there, it is the work of recruits from the lighter forms of entertainment?

I sincerely hope that *METROPOLIS* will still be visible when these notes are printed. The promoters seem sceptical, although it has outlived the majority of films which come to Broadway for only one week. But if it fails it may turn out to be another *CALIGARI*, a film which you will with pleasure go miles to see. Until you have seen it you will not know how maddening and unnecessary an imposed plot can become. *METROPOLIS* is interesting only for the cinematic handling of masses of men and of machinery; but in these respects it is tremendously good. It has made electrical discharges, eminently cinematic in themselves, parts of a dramatic climax; it has made machinery into dynamic compositions. Above all there is a sense of mastery in the direction, a definite assurance that all the technique is not only known, but is being put to a proper use.

I wish seriously that German directors would not try to produce bastard American movies; just as I wish American directors would not try to import German tricks without knowing what the tricks should be used for. The Americans have certain technical virtues;

almost all of them, with the help of chemists, have been able to show on the screen a series of pictures more pleasing in superficial texture—in depth and tone—than the German; recently the Germans have created that branch of technique which is called "camera angles," and they have used it correctly, with predetermined effect. The first American directors who released the camera from its fixed position seem to have no idea what the angles can be used for, how they can heighten interest, carry on narrative, condense passage-work and connecting scenes, and so through every portion of a film. The director of *SUNYA*, Mr Albert Parker, is an exception, and I hope that his next picture for Miss Swanson will give him something worth working on. The present one, which elaborately opened the Roxy Theatre, is terribly trivial.

I recommend *STARK LOVE* for its obvious and natural virtues; if Man Ray's *EMAK BAKIA* is shown again by the Film Guild it is worth the attention due to all experiments in abstract movies. And for those who would like to see an old-fashioned *mélange de genres* in the best pre-Lessing manner, I recommend the Vitaphone in all of its programmes. But not to those who care for the movies.

GILBERT SELDES

MODERN ART

MRS SHAMEFOOT "used always to say it would be at Versailles, or Vallombrosa, or Verona, or Venice. Somewhere with a V." I think if that highly modern but fragile lady were still extant she might now agree that it could begin with a P. At least Ponca City in Oklahoma has become the captivating though not quite realizable (perhaps it's for that very reason) city of my dreams. It used to be Samarkand, which was followed by a nostalgic interest in the eighteenth-century cure at Lucca, and I even succumbed to a pre-Gauguin feeling for the Marquesas Islands (due to Melville's *Typee*) which dwindled, however, almost to the vanishing point before Gauguin arrived to give it the coup de grâce. As a rule it is wiser to restrict one's commerce with such places to the dream-world. To touch them is fatal. I made that mistake with New Orleans, the only city in the United States that had, in the generation just past, an appeal. I adored it a dozen or so years ago, worshipped at all the shrines, and came home to read in the newspapers of the destruction of the old Hotel St Louis, the most romantic and satisfactory building on the continent, and the burning of the heavenly opera house. New Orleans immediately receded farther into the distance even than Tahiti. So, considering everything, I don't think I shall go to Ponca City, Oklahoma.

I had never heard of the place until the night of the Marland banquet in the Hotel Plaza to the competing sculptors. Mr Marland had come on from the West with certain friends and business associates to view the submitted sketches for the monument that is to glorify the hitherto unhonoured Pioneer Woman of the Plains, and a little conviviality was considered necessary to put us and him in the mood. It was the lady who sat next to me at this dinner (pearls, white satin, and a calmly youthful face that in itself I thought distinguished—so rarely is calmness associated with youth nowadays in the eastern part of the country) who mentioned Ponca City. She came from there, she explained. "From where?" I enquired, thoroughly mystified. "Why, from Ponca City," she repeated, "the place where this statue is to be put up. I should think you would know where Ponca City is," and she eyed me

doubtfully, as though suspecting a joke that through repetition had grown tiresome. Disavowing any intention of being funny and deploring my ignorance, I was able, after a while, to elicit the picture of Ponca City that still fascinates me.

It centres, it seems, about this Mr Marland who made all the money for himself and the others so quickly, and who gives the statue. He it was, so my neighbour with the pearls informed me, who first of the new community became interested in art. "Indeed, he keeps us all stirred up," she continued. "He is interested in many things and likes us to share in his enthusiasms. For instance, he loves hunting, keeps a great stable, and on the day of the hunt any one at all decent in the town can go to his place and have a mount free. His home is a fine villa in the Spanish style. He entertains a great deal. We all came east in his private car—it is most comfortable. He took Mr Davidson, who came to Ponca City to do portrait busts of Mr Marland's family, out to the coast in this car upon a little excursion. Then there is the golf-course which is certainly handsome, and due, I believe, to his initiative. And, oh, so many things. He doesn't seem to think of himself but of the general life in Ponca City. You know this Pioneer Woman is but the beginning. He has other ideas for the advancement of the community. . . ." But she had said enough to make me think that pioneering must be, upon my word, vastly different now from what it was in the old days, and, take it all in all, a mighty attractive life for those who have the vocation. It was with the arrival of this thought that it occurred to me that there was, after all, no longer a necessity for me to go to Avila, Spain, to spend my declining years, a plan that I had hitherto held to; Ponca City would do as well. Not that I altogether fancied dwelling in the shadow of a fifty-foot bronze Pioneer Woman by, possibly J. Bryant Baker, but I could have, I hoped, a little bungalow facing in another direction, with an outlook upon the inspiring activities of the place, and possible glimpses of all the sculptors going to and coming from the Spanish villa, and all that sort of thing. . . . Mr Marland who just then arose to do a tiny after-dinner speech, looked the part that had just been given to him—an essentially modest man, markedly idealistic, and one to whom the possession of millions would be but the starting point. What I marvelled most at was the lack in his features of any trace of strain or hardness. There was nothing in

him of Rockefeller asceticism or of Ford sternness. I had always thought that the quick accession to riches could only be managed at the expense of soul—an idea probably acquired from a reading of the novels by Sinclair Lewis and Booth Tarkington—but studying Mr Marland and his associates, all of them young and uncrushed, I saw that I and the novelists would have to readjust our conceptions of American millionaires. Apparently a new type has arrived, a type we artists can have something to do with.

And apparently there is in this first arrival the makings of a most amenable art patron. It was reported, for instance, that after his inspection of the twelve sketches by the twelve sculptors, he expressed satisfaction in all of them and said that he would be content with any one. That is decidedly the proper spirit. A scheme of popular voting for the best of these models has been inaugurated and it has already had lovely results in publicity and will doubtless eclipse anything in that line that we have experienced. Which is all to the good! The public actually seems willing to think over the problem as to which is the best of these twelve sketches. It is a little exercise in connoisseurship that we ought to follow up quickly, if we are to have educational profit, with another pleasing problem of the same sort and only a shade more difficult. And by and by we might have an art public. But that is looking far ahead. Just at present, I believe, nobody in his senses, would agree to letting the public have its way, even with this Marland Pioneer Woman. The public would inevitably choose the least of the twelve. Out of the million but very few, obviously, would recognize the best bid for the permanently bearable. Mr Marland has wisely decided to cast the deciding vote himself.

Not but that he'll have his difficulties. There is no easy way out in these matters. Already what is called "human nature" has manifested itself in this competition. The twelve little sculptors, it appears, are not just so many little lambs. Already Arthur Lee, one of the little sculptors, has misbehaved himself in the actual presence of Mr Marland. Something, I believe, about Maurice Sterne's innocent error in making his sketch four feet high instead of the three feet to which the others adhered. The cry arose that the larger model gave Mr Sterne an unfair advantage. And then there was the episode of Paul Manship. Mr Manship, upon hearing that Jo Davidson was already on the spot in Oklahoma doing por-

trait busts of members of the Marland family, refused to have anything to do with the affair. "Call that a competition!" said he, with withering sarcasm. . . . But such things are trifles and every great art patron must realize sooner or later, and preferably sooner, that artists are after all human; and subject to all the wayward impulses the mind is heir to. The great Michael Angelo himself had more than one sharp encounter with his pope and Benvenuto Cellini said things to his duke that he afterwards apologized for. The little fable about the puppies by Epictetus—"See how they love each other, but throw a bone among 'em"—is thought by some to be malicious but it is not; it is merely practical. Throw a commission for a five-hundred-thousand-dollar bronze statue among a group of sculptors and you may expect politics. That this should be so, will not I hope disillusion Mr Marland. In fact the difficulties in doing good are part of the attractiveness of doing good.

HENRY MCBRIDE

MUSICAL CHRONICLE

THE polytonic concertos for orchestra and for wind instruments, works of the contemporaneous Paul Hindemith recently given in New York, have archaic hardness. Conceived in twentieth-century fashion on contrapuntal harmonic levels, they move to classically dry, precise, snappy rhythms. The spry wraith of Philip Emanuel Bach marshals the harsh metallic tones of the piece for full orchestra. The grinding music for brass and woodwind steps away to the stiff beat of an old Prussian military march. Symphonies startlingly unlike those which early won this most energetic of the young German moderns the sympathy of patriotic, pious Germany!

It was, very largely, their filial restatements of romantic Teuton norms that got Hindemith's first hard and benevolent Brahmsian and Pfitznerish violin sonatas opus 11 and string quartets opus 10 and 16 their enthusiastic and grateful welcome. He himself was presented to the world as a stripling Arminius repulsing legions of cosmopolitan musical influences, *Welsch*, semitic, and atonal. Now, in breasts once comforted by his green pieties, the entirely un-sentimental, atonal, and archaicizing processes of his recent maturing works must grate unmercifully. The expansive Germany of the peasant-soul, and its appropriate norms, are absent quite from them. None the less, the new concertos are exactly what the unindividual tyro-work were merely taken to be: the new bourgeoning of an old tradition.

Never a poet endowed, say, in Strawinsky's degree with the instinctive capacity for the harmonization of expression and actuality, Hindemith seasonably showed himself responsive to the pace and rhythm of contemporary life. In the crisis of European reconstruction, he produced his first original music; and these atonal pieces, the dances from the puppet-opera *Das Nusch-Nuschi* op. 20, the chamber music for small orchestra op. 24, No. 1, the chamber music for five wind instruments op. 24, No. 2, and the suite for piano op. 25, entitled 1922 are based upon an idiom directly born of the situation. Deficient, possibly, in distinction and persuasiveness and the wit that is the better part of brevity, Hindemith's

deliberately brutal post-war music is none the less not to be confused with the mass of stuff popular, jazzy, and vulgar only out of an intellectual necessity. Synthesized in an evident striving for order, his mechanical rhythms, drab colours, parodistic accents, jazzy shufflings, jerks, and brayings, interplays of pure sonorities which in their automatic, soulless romance almost burlesque the elder emotional forms, bring the human organism, if only superficially, into relation with its debased, vulgarized, bottomless environment and the bitter time of *lèse-majesté*. Referable to sensation and perception through the testimony of an imaginative and technical use of their new, naturalistic material, and haunted, for all their deliberate hard-boiling and impersonality, by the romantic German feeling the author so rigorously strove to exclude, Hindemith's transitional pieces unmistakably declared themselves the fruits of experience and portions of a vital process.

The character of the libretti selected by the composer for his three one-act operas, strengthens the picture of a relentless struggle for contact with actuality. Oskar Kokoschka's expressionistic drama, *Mörder, Hoffnung der Frauen*, grasps at the root of the after-war sex conflict more grandiosely treated by D. H. Lawrence. *Das Nusch-Nuschi*, the comedy for Burmese marionettes by Franz Blei, stands in the relation of a satyr play to the vehemently erotic music-dramas of the period before the war; in one place even satirizes *Tristan und Isolde*; and part ironically, part recklessly, wholly accurately, finds the gentle, animal, and sleepy tone of contemporary eroticism. *Sancta Susanna* by August Stramm, the latest member of the dramatic triptych (op. 12, 20, and 21) deals with the obsessional desire frequently coupled with egoistic sanctity, and part of the general breakdown. And like the young Richard Strauss before him, Paul Hindemith has turned for poems for his songs to poets with a sense of the beat of the times. As Strauss set verse by John Henry Mackay, Otto Julius Bierbaum, and Richard Dehmel to music, so Hindemith has used lyrics by Christian Morgenstern, Elsa Lasker-Schüler, and Rainer Maria Rilke.

The jazz age died upon its worshippers. The symbol passed from music-making of the sort that produced Hindemith's relentlessly rushing *Kammermusik*, 1921, with its obsessional beat, vulgar and hysteric gibbering, sullen bareness of colour. While expansivity and exaltation were still suspect, shimmies, rags, fox-

trots, bostons, as excuses for sarcastic expression and the indulgence of surface feelings, lost their interest for composers. Like Stravinsky, the Six, and the other creators of tendency-music, Hindemith was confronted with the problem of uniting mechanical, "objective" rhythms with "subjective," personal, and strongly sentimental elements. Present to him doubtless no more than half intellectually, and chiefly as a problem of form, it automatically found a temporary solution through the age's antiquarianism and the fascination which the masterworks of the baroque possess for all to-day. In the characteristic rhythms of the early eighteenth century, so spry, robust, and precise, there lies the suggestion of a kind of movement objective, external, removed from the empirically personal, and still not incompatible with human feeling, with comedy as distinguished from tendency-wit, and with ethical values. The beginnings of freedom beckoned. And in Hindemith's case, at least, the adaptation of archaic forms was not insincere. These lived in his blood, and had become conscious partly through education and partly through the experience of the archaizing tendency in *Die Meistersinger* and those of most of the experiments of Max Reger. They were not norms foreign to his race, to his musical culture, to his personal past, and deliberately annexed.

Hindemith's combination of archaic forms with the idiom produced by the experiments of 1918-1922 creates what patriotic Germany thought to find in his early sonatas and string quartets. His amalgamation of received materials and materials found through contact with actuality, breathes, and transmits the inherited impulse. Of the archaizing new music, the best has been composed by Germans, by Kaminski and his neo-Bachian group, and by Hindemith; and Hindemith's compositions excell the rest in geniality, in charm, and in rhythmic and instrumental invention. The close of the second movement of the orchestral concerto, for example, the memorable page of the whirring, chattering string-music, is no parlour-magic. Rhythmic flow was always spontaneous in Hindemith; and in his newest work the periods sprout from each other as directly as branches of spruce. Often drab in quality, all his volumes move, amuse, and hold the interest tense with their alacrity. There is a fine roughness in the quality of these new uncompromisingly polytonic pieces. Hindemith is still the hard

unvoluptuous young Teuton, and the hard sophisticated young modern. Only, the hardness has become cool and robust and objective like stone. Sophistication has become the feeling of the demoniacal, the recognition of evil which so daringly informs the dances of the ballet, *Der Dämon*; it has also, and more characteristically, become the levity, muscularity, and swiftness of the orchestral concerto, and the humour and manly sympathy with which the concerto for wind instruments salutes the rough old Prussian soldier-life in last farewell.

Without a doubt, the completely personal and matured Paul Hindemith is not yet arrived. Only giants are mature at thirty-two. The archaicism is probably only a temporary solution to the psychic problem. There is a German romanticism, an expansiveness, and a peasant-soul in Hindemith that he cannot much longer avoid facing. And meanwhile, he writes too much and is too readily satisfied with what he produces. But his music-making has become experience; and life moves out through it.

PAUL ROSENFELD

COMMENT

ACADEMIC feeling, or prejudice possibly, in favour of continuity and completeness is opposed to miscellany—to music programs, composite picture exhibitions, newspapers, magazines, and anthologies. Any zoo, aquarium, library, garden, or volume of letters, however, is an anthology and certain of these selected findings are highly satisfactory. The science of assorting and the art of investing an assortment with dignity are obviously not being neglected, as is manifest in “exhibitions and sales of artistic property,” and in that sometimes disparaged, most powerful phase of anthology, the museum. Persons susceptible to objects of “extreme significance” may remember with gratitude in the late Lieutenant Commander William Barrett’s Naval and Marine Collection at the Anderson Galleries, an albino tortoise shell decorated in scrimshaw with an American clipper ship in full sail; and in the Spanish collection of Señor D. Raimundo Ruiz, at the American Art Galleries in December, a remarkable Gothic forged iron gate and “some small objects.” A two-edged Dresden rapier from the armoury of the Fortress Hohenwerfen (the Anderson Galleries) seemed to one, super-eminent—the serpent-like nudity of the interlacing spirals about the grip suggesting Swinburne’s comment upon Rossetti’s *The Song of Lilith*: “It has the supreme luxury of liberty in its measured grace and lithe melodious motion of rapid and revolving harmony, the subtle action and majestic recoil, the mysterious charm as of soundless music which hangs about the serpent when it stirs or springs.” One cannot be dead to the sagacity inherent in some specimens of sharkskin, camellia-leaf, orange-peel, semi-eggshell, or sang-de-boeuf glaze; nor be blind to the glamour of certain “giant,” “massive,” “magnificent” objects in pork-fat or spinach-green jade as shown last winter in the collection of Mr Lee Van Ching at the Anderson Galleries.

The selective nomenclature—the chameleon’s eye if we may call it so—of the connoisseur, expresses a genius for differences; analogous dissimilarities in Man Ray’s *Of What Are The Young Films Dreaming*, exemplifying variously this art of comparison and synthesis. In what degree diverse subject-matters lend

themselves to association, is a question. Comprehensive paper, cloth, and leather "libraries" attest the public's docility towards editors and its respect for transcriptions. We owe much to "the excellent Mr Bohn" and are conscious of multiple value received, in Cassell's ten-cent paper series. No books in miniature could be more pleasing or in a sense more rare than Gowans's Nature Books, or more accomplished in providing that which could not be omitted, than the Frederick A. Stokes "Painters" Series. In issuing *The Pamphlet Poets*,¹ Simon and Schuster credit us with a fondness for poetry irrespective of the year in which it was written. Lincoln MacVeagh in his *The Little Books of New Poetry*² assumes that we can enjoy what has not had a fuss made about it; though *The Weed in the Wall*, and *Sussex Poems*, we find conspicuously unobscure. In James A. Woodburn's and the late Alexander Johnson's collection of *American Orations*,³ we have phenomenally an effect of history recalled as experience. Mr George H. Putnam, Chairman of the American Committee instituted to give co-operation in the establishment in London University of a chair for instruction in American History, emphasizes in his introduction to the fifth edition of these documents, their value as documented *feeling*. Unfamiliar yet actual, like an animal reconstructed from certain bones, they curiously evoke the past, constituting in their chronological sequence, an anthology which results as a skeleton should, in being a "body."

However expressive the content of an anthology, one notes that a yet more distinct unity is afforded in the unintentional portrait given, of the mind which brought the assembled integers together.

¹ *The Pamphlet Poets*: Carl Sandburg, edited by Hughes Mearns; Elinor Wylie, edited by Laurence Jordan; Walt Whitman, edited by Louis Untermeyer; Ralph Waldo Emerson, edited by John Erskine; Nathalia Crane, edited by Hughes Mearns; H.D., edited by Hughes Mearns. Simon & Schuster. Twenty-five cents each.

² *The Little Books of New Poetry*: *The Portrait of the Abbot*, by Richard Church; *Sussex Poems*, by Bennett Weaver; *The Weed in the Wall*, and *Other Poems*, by James McLane; *Beethoven Deaf*, and *Other Poems*, by Alec Brown; *A Sorbonne of the Hinterland*, by Jacques LeClercq; *A Poet Passes*, by D. L. Kelleher. Lincoln MacVeagh, The Dial Press. Fifty cents each.

³ *American Orations: Studies in American Political History*. Edited by Alexander Johnson and James Albert Woodburn. With an Introduction to the Fifth Edition by George Haven Putnam. 12mo. Two volumes. 433 and 481 pages. G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$5.



Courtesy of the Flechtheim Gallery, Berlin

THE WINDOW. BY CARL HOFER

THE DIAL

JUNE 1927

THINGS ABOUT BLAKE

BY GEORGE SAINTSBURY

AS even moderate scholars in Greek will be aware, it was one of the quaint idiomatic customs of that language to use the phrase "those about" somebody, sometimes at least as merely equivalent to naming the somebody himself and by himself. But more usually it could be taken literally of persons *and* things, and the title of this paper has been selected to include Blake and things about Blake—one a stately quarto of engravings in colour as well as in black and white; the next a dainty facsimile of one of his tiniest and rarest pieces which, tiny as it is, is characteristic of his work in letters as well as in design, and illustrates the too frequent fate of that work by having, small as it is, to be pieced out of one defective and mistitled paper copy in Mr Huntington's collection and another rough proof of the real title. The last of our books is letterpress and comment, not text. But the whole mixture itself illustrates Blake's own ways: for he loved to mix design and letters, while the famous Catalogue shows how ready he was to comment on himself. In fact in a way almost all his designs are commented with text, and the text (after the Poetical Sketches) is rarely left without comment in designs. So this chance combination of things gives an excellent opportunity for spending a little time with Blake and things about Blake in various senses of "about."

One rejoices so much in the companion volume¹ to the late

¹ The Engraved Designs of William Blake. By Laurence Binyon. With twenty plates in colour and sixty-two, in colotype. Demi-quarto. 140 pages. London: Ernest Benn, Ltd.; £6 6s. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons; \$35.

Mr Darrell Figgis' *Blake's Paintings*¹ which Messrs Benn have issued under the Editorship of Mr Laurence Binyon, and in the technical assistance that Mr Binyon himself has given, that one is loath to utter even a syllable of grumble. But some readers at least may possibly wish that he had left symbolic interpretation alone. That of the late Mr Wicksteed, on which he chiefly relies, was, as some have said, actually under course of re-handling before the author's death; anybody who wants such matter can find it consecutively and fully supplied by Mr Foster Damon² if they can't make it for themselves, as surely any such body should be able to do. However the bulk of the book, consisting of the designs themselves with sufficient descriptions, is entirely free from anything of the kind and supplies most delightful pastime and almost pasture—for Blake feeds all the senses of the soul and, through the single one of sight, some of those of the body as well. It is a further point in favour of the book that it is not all or anything like all—"black and white." To say that Blake *needs* colour would be contemptibly false. Things both great and small from the almost parsimonious economy of the "I want" and the "Traveller" in the *All Religions Are One* to the most complicated illustrations of *Young and Job* and *Dante*, rise up at once in contradiction. But it is perfectly true that colour in Blake—sometimes the merest wash of colour—adds an effect to his designs which is by no means merely that which occurs in the contrast of most pictures with the engravings from them. His colour "talks" and makes his designs talk—unless any fanciful person prefers the saying that his designs always talk but his colour makes them sing.

One might of course write a volume or any number of volumes on this one: but perhaps a single reflection, not absolutely banal, which has been suggested by this last visit to a very delightful Blake-gallery, may be permitted as an addition to thanks for and praise of it. That Blake could not make beautiful faces—which though not so common an error as some others about him, I think

¹ *The Paintings of William Blake*. By Darrell Figgis. 100 plates. 4to. 115 pages. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$35. Reviewed in *THE DIAL*, May 1926, page 413.

² *William Blake: His Philosophy and Symbols*. By S. Foster Damon. 8vo. 487 pages. Houghton Mifflin Company. \$10. Reviewed in *THE DIAL*, September 1924, page 257.

I have seen said—is absurd. Look at Narcissa in the frontispiece to the *Third Night Thought*; look at Keren-Happuch (she is not so named, but she comes last in the picture and I have always wanted to meet a Keren-Happuch) in the first group of Job's reanimated daughters; look at Enitharmon hovering over Los¹ and that matter will be settled. But one has heard more frequent and perhaps less obviously ungrounded remarks of a critical kind on his expression as too frequently confined to the stern, the terrified or terrifying, the agonized or the grotesque. Look now at the expressions of Job and his wife from the very moment that God has begun to speak to them. The beginnings of that speech itself, it will be remembered, though, as they should be, among the greatest things in literature, are by no means soft speaking. It is some time before they can exactly be called gracious. But from the very first the look of indignant agony passes from Job's face and that of utter despair from his wife's. They do not smile—still less smirk; they do not triumph over Eliphaz and Bildad and Zophar or look with a sort of patronizing forgiveness at Elihu. But there has come upon them a great peace—the tyranny of Satan is felt, before it is declared, to be overpast; they can bear to be told of Orion and the Pleiades and those other stars which had come out so vividly in Blake's own illustration to the opening of Elihu's speech. This is not a chance, for the change is kept up subsequently: it is not I think a mere symbolist's fancy like hundreds of others with which Blake has been overloaded. But of course one's own fancies are always superior to other people's: and mine may be mere examples of this well known phenomenon.

A quaint contrast but a most welcome supplement to Messrs Benn's volume—on which the much abused word magnificent is hardly wasted—is our next, a quarto too in its way but almost a quarter of the other in length and breadth and not a tenth in thickness, bar covers. This is Mr Hollyer's fascinating facsimile² of one of the most curious if not exactly the most attractive of all Blake's separate issues—the strange little pamphlet *All Religions Are One* which is a sort of twin of *There Is No Natural*

¹ When she is, in another plate, floating in a really heavenly sky her profile is rather too rigidly Grecian.

² *All Religions Are One*. By William Blake. Printed and published by Frederick Hollyer at Pembroke Square, London. 1926. 15/.

Religion and consists of no more than eight tiny pages, the first containing an Argument and the seven others, "Principles" of some dozen or score words, each framed and illustrated with tiniest drawings. None of these is quite equal in charm to the "Wanting" of the moon referred to in our text which as it happens belongs to the companion booklet; but the Traveller (also glanced at) in front of hills or pyramids who in Principle Four, illustrates the doctrine that no travel through the known will ever make you reach the unknown, is intensely Blakian. It gives, moreover, not merely a rescue from rarity but an excellent opportunity for studying Blake in miniature though in exceedingly characteristic miniature of thought, style and design at once. All Religions Are One because they all represent Poetic Genius—which is one. But in very few cases I think will any two persons of intelligence agree in the interpretation of the infinitesimal "cuts" accompanying the letterpress. The traveller just mentioned is clear enough perhaps; and one is not surprised to see the Tables of the Law (about a quarter of an inch high) surmounting Principle Six which begins "The *Jewish* and Christian testaments." But if anybody tells me that he is positively certain (I can make several guesses myself) as to the sense of the context—"are an original derivative from the Poetic Genius [clear enough so far]. *This is necessary from the confined nature of bodily sensation*" I am his very humble servant. One would rather have thought that the confined nature of bodily sensation had more to do with Paganism, the various forms of which confine themselves almost wholly to that, while Judaism does not do so and Christianity rather looks down on it.

Probably the worst sin of a reviewer, or the worst next to ignorance, is impertinence; and I wish to clear myself of the slightest intention to be impertinent to Mr Burdett, if I say that I have gathered from more than one or two passages of his book¹ the impression that he thinks such a book not of the most necessary to be written. In one sense, no doubt, it *had* to be written: because the famous series in which it appears would have been still incomplete without it. There is nothing in the book itself to authorize a suggestion, pertinent or impertinent, that it might have been better written. It is, as a biography, very good. It is as a dis-

¹ William Blake. By Osbert Burdett. 16mo. 199 pages. English Men of Letters Series, The Macmillan Company. \$1.25.

cussion perfectly sensible, which is very much more than can be said about some other discussions of Blake. But to be plump and plain, is there much good—is there *any* good at all—in *discussions* about Blake? Let him be reprinted as often as he can be. Let him be re-designed (though the “highbrows” of art assure us that the thing is impossible) and re-coloured as often, as copiously and as well as may be whether as decoratively as in Mr Binyon’s work or as faithfully as in Mr Hollyer’s. Let him have his beauties in art and letters discreetly set forth and praised for ever and for ever. But “discussion” of him, at least of one kind—manufacture of “systems” out of him, that is to say and all the like of it—is rather useless and may more than often be mischievous. To lay down a dictum in his own manner though alas! not with his own power, “Every man who can understand or enjoy Blake at all understands and enjoys him in his own way.” There is no Guide or Handbook to Blake. In the same words discussion of him *is* useless.

So let us discuss him, and Mr Burdett’s book on him, a little in another kind, whether it be useless or not. For he never ceases to be a tempting subject, and it is always amusing to skate round holes and climb “pillars.”

There used to be in English nurseries and schoolrooms of the Early and Middle Victorian time a children’s game, based upon and intended to stimulate Biblical knowledge, the nature of which can be pretty well guessed from its usual title, “Prophet, Priest, or King?” Everybody who knows anything about Blake knows that he was “Poet, Painter, *and* Prophet”: and persons of only moderate intelligence who have read books about him must surely have noticed that the triplicity has rather bothered the authors of these books. The artistic specialists have been inclined to regard the poetry as at best a secondary matter, if not as merely a sort of assemblage of mottoes, “captions,” letterpress to the drawings and paintings. The pure—or more or less pure—critics have sometimes seemed as if they were afraid of being accused of not minding their own business if they said much about Blake’s work in line and colour: while the propheteers (as we may perhaps be permitted to call them) have forced everything—poetry and painting both—into the service of creating a “system”—now of philosophy, now of religion, now of a mishmash of both for him. All three sets (as was, one supposes, inevitable) have endeavoured

to weave in and spin out the scanty facts of his biography so as to suit their private ends. There are times when Blake-lovers, learning that it was apparently a mere chance that he did not become a practitioner in music as well, have wondered whether they ought to thank Providence or mildly grieve at its ways. It would be something to have, if one could have, a sonata corresponding to the Mad Song or "O earth! O earth! return" in poetry—to The Ancient of Days or the man who "wants" to climb to the moon in picture. But this might involve other sorts of creations from the musician and it would certainly involve some very terrible matter from those who write about music. Blake as we have him though a great treasure and pleasure is not an easy job: we do not want more handles for its being made still more difficult.

Yet one might add even a fourth P to the initials which, in not *quite* such an alarming fashion as when the angel marked them on Dante have been ticketed on Blake—in this case the initial of Politician. One or two of the commentators, *not* including our present author, have made a good deal of it—things connected with it certainly had to do with his curious experiences in Sussex; and he no doubt did by a piece of judicious advice save Mr Thomas Paine from a good chance of the gallows. As to the merit of this last action opinions may differ. But it is certain that he ceased, like so many others, to sympathize with the French Revolution: and those who have read his poem upon it (which it must be remembered very few people had had the chance of doing till quite recently) will hardly have found much pure sansculottism therein. There is, however, one point, and a very important point, in which this little fit of actual political measles in him may be taken right profitably with his general character as Poet, Painter, Prophet, Philosopher, and everything else, whether beginning with P or not. It springs from, and is part of Blake's unvarying and essential hostility to Rule. Whether more education—of which he had very little though he had considerable aptitude for it—would have directed his efforts of insurgence more happily in other things, as it actually did in Poetry and engraving, and as Sir Joshua thought it would have done in Painting, nobody can say: and there are some people wicked enough to say that in poetry and painting they don't want him improved at all. Providence had supplied him, in the Elizabethans, with an incomparable place to revolt to in poetry: if our author is right in thinking that his early familiarity with

Westminster Abbey Gothicized his tastes in the other art all the more glory to "the" Abbey. But Swedenborg and Ossian—who more than anything but the Bible (which they went far to neutralize) served as his tutors in mystical tone of thinking and form of writing—might certainly have been exchanged for the better. At the same time it is difficult even for the most hard-baked advocate of a classical education—and there can be few baked harder than the present reviewer—to agree with Mr Burdett in wishing that Blake's culture had been more Hellenic and less Hebraic in Literature, more classical and less romantic in Art. In the first place, so robustious and even rebellious a nature as his would in all probability have rejected it, if the chance had been given. In the second, there is just a possibility of the opposition of soil and cultivation resulting in no crop at all, or in featureless and "fashionless" (as the Scotch say) stuff of no or little value. But in the third place—the most important of all—we don't want a tamed, and managed, and classicalized Blake. There are few greater, and unluckily there are not many commoner mistakes than this desire for something to be, or even attempt to make it, something other than itself. If Blake's own aspirant instead of setting his ladder to the moon and trying to ascend it to the motto-sign of "I want," had put that ladder neatly away in a barn, and taken a walk to the nearest baker's to buy, or turned into the nearest field to earn, his daily bread he would have been quite a proper and reasonable, but hardly an interesting person.

To set to credit against this (as some may think) mistake, let it be said that Mr Burdett is sound and sensible though perhaps a little reticent and gingerly on the all-important in one way, quite unimportant in another, question of Blake's mental condition. His conclusion is the pretty certainly right one that Blake was always perfectly sane in his actions and responsible for his conduct, but that in thought and speech and writing and even exercises of manual art he showed symptoms of a state not quite reconcilable with ordinary sanity. There is nothing in this that need in the least offend any reasonable admirer or even in a sense worshipper of Blake: it falls in with the common, and in history and practice well justified, notion about the alliance of great wits and madness; and it can itself be justified from the patent and certain work and the known facts of life without needing the slightest recourse to the legend of the Garden of Lambeth-Eden, or making

a mystery of the really quite commonplace squabble with the soldier at Felpham. It is perhaps true that this point of madness which at Blake's first "resurrection" used to be quite a burning one, has become much less dangerous: but the change may give an excuse for a slight expression of surprise at Mr Burdett's treatment of the resurrection, or series of resurrections, itself. A person just introduced to the subject—and this excellent set of books has from the first been intended so to introduce people—might, one fears from Mr Burdett's expressions about the "hundred years" since Blake's death et cetera, fancy that the discovery of him was one of the glories of the twentieth century certainly, if not even of its second quarter. Of course there has recently been a fresh outburst of interest in Blake evidenced, caused, encouraged, what you like, by the first careful editing of the Prophetic books; the making accessible in completer and cheaper forms of the designs; the discussion of the "systems" in and out of England and so on. But it is only and barely during the first third of this hundred years that he could really be said to be in eclipse or abscondence: and he was not completely so then. By the sixties Gilchrist's most unusually full account of his life with specimens of the work, and Mr Swinburne's fulgurous but brilliant and fascinating essay had in no vulgar sense almost "vulgarized" Blake. It is fifty-three years (more than half the "hundred") since William Rossetti gave if not a perfect, an extremely useful edition of the Poems: and separate editions of the picture-books began to be issued in facsimile. Even Messrs Ellis and Yeats's huge Thesaurus of text and comment is a third of a century old and again more also. Add many other dealings with, and some exhibitions of his designs, and it will not be too much to say that no man not himself a centenarian can say that at any time of his life Blake was even neglected.

This however may again be said to be a matter of only secondary or even less than secondary importance. More exception to the generally favourable estimate of the book may be taken to the remarks that Blake's "Writings, exquisite as his lyrics could be, rank below his designs" and that as is elsewhere laid down, you cannot fully appreciate the poetry of the two sets of Songs unless you have before you Blake's original production of them—hand-made and hand-illustrated. It would hardly be a valid criticism to say that this is a sort of petty treason to Mr Burdett's commission which is to deal with Blake as "a man of letters": for

of course *magna est veritas*. But it is a valid criticism to say that the attitude shows an insufficient appreciation of the relation of the arts to each other, and, very specially, of the nature, relative and positive, of poetry itself. To say that *The Ancient of Days* ranks above or below the *Sunflower* couplet, for instance, would be, though one does not wish to be uncivil, a mere blunder. The glory of the stars is different not in size or "rank" but in kind. And though the ornamentation of the *Innocence* and *Experience* pieces may add to the pleasure derivable from themselves it is an addition—a mechanical and separable addition, not a factor in a chemical compound developing or creating new quality. It is really astonishing how constantly one finds these mistakes about poetry. They are not absent of course in the case of the other arts: but they are there nothing like so frequent. In fact it is the very rarest thing to find poetry criticized as poetry and nothing else. If you so take Blake's poetry you will find that it "ranks below" nothing of its own kind except in mere quantity and number. In quality and essence it, at its best, never fails: and it is a circumstance rather to its credit than otherwise that when it is not at its best it is generally not poetry at all, but little above doggerel. His wings either raise him to the empyrean: or like those of Baudelaire's albatross pinion him even in walking.

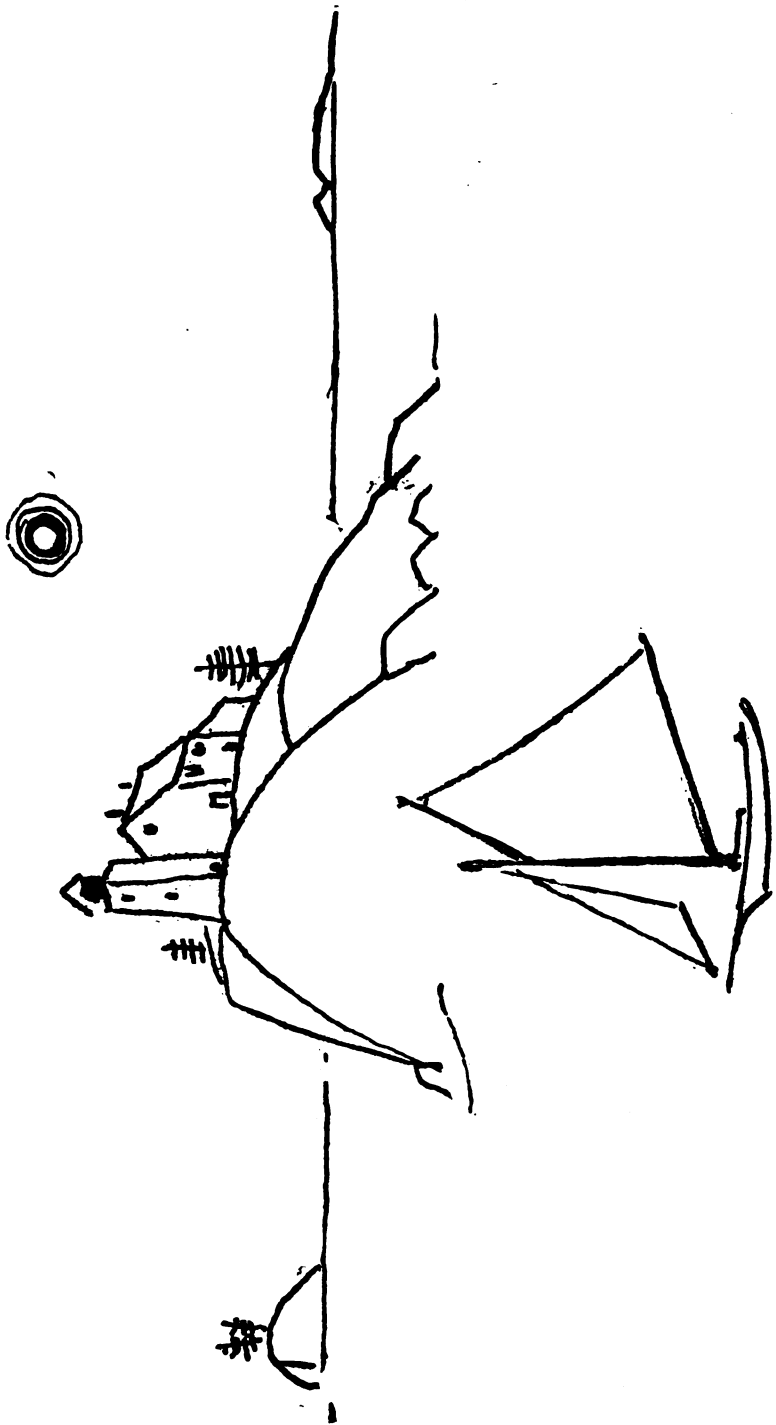
To pass to another part of the subject, when Mr Burdett quite properly praising Blake's attitude to Chaucer calls it "his nearest approach [which it certainly is] to orderly criticism" and exclaims, "How just and yet how like Blake is the following reflection: 'The characters of Chaucer's Pilgrims are the characters which compose all ages and nations—as one age falls another rises different to mortal sight but to immortals only the same. For we see the same character repeated again in animals, vegetables, minerals, and men; nothing new occurs in individual existence. Accident ever varies; substance can never change nor decay,'" one thoroughly agrees with him. But would it not have added to the interest if he had pointed out that Blake had evidently been reading an author who was still, in his earlier time, quite as commonly read as Shakespeare or Milton—that is to say, Dryden? The famous passage in the Preface to the *Fables* which praises Chaucer for incorporating "the various manners and humours of the whole English nation" which lays it down that "mankind is ever the same and nothing is lost out of nature though everything is altered"

must almost certainly have been in Blake's mind when he was designing the picture which commemorated the rascality of Cromek and which (perhaps excusably) proved too much for the good nature of Stothard. But there is no doubt that the Catalogue does show in Blake the most curious streaks of criticism and *un*-criticism—streaks which need not in the least trouble those who take a rational view of his rationality—though they may puzzle others.

Let us therefore give thanks unmitigated and undefiled by any rascally comparison with its manifestation in different places, or its utilization of different *media* and methods—for that “idiosyncrasy” of Blake's which Mr Burdett rightly insists upon, but which seems to be in some respects a sort of trouble to him. If anybody says to me “But *you* seem rather to neglect Blake as a designer in order that you may extol him as a writer” I pray that he may not be punished for his injustice. If pleasures were comparable, as they certainly are not, I should say that the pleasure given to me by the Mad Song and the pleasure given to me by Glad Day were indistinguishable in amount. I *can* say, that each could not be better in its own way. But I know rather more about the way in which one of these pleasures is produced than I do about the other; my experience of other people's exploits in the one way is far more extensive than my experience of their exploits in the other; I will even be so very bold as to say that I can write verse which is not absolute doggerel and according to different judgements tolerable or intolerable prose, myself; while if I endeavoured to draw an Adam or an Eve the result would be even more deplorable than Princess Angelica's knight's head and helmet before Tomaso Lorenzo (No! it was Betsinda) touched it up. So I may speak more confidently and more by choice, of Blake as a writer than as a designer. But I can acknowledge little less fervency in my admiration of him as either or both. When you come to the third division—the philosophy or the etho-cosmotheology or whatever you like to call it—in not the least agreeable of slang phrases I own that my admiration “leaves” him, or becomes bare and soon satisfied curiosity with certain resulting or appended reflections which it is not at all necessary to particularize here. “Take, read, and enjoy; take, look at, and enjoy” is I think the command in Blake's case—and, for once in a way, I do not think that either as Poet, Painter, or Prophet he would have objected, general objector as he was.



AT ROCKAWAY BEACH. BY BERTRAM HARTMAN



THE ISLAND. BY BERTRAM HARTMAN

THE WHALE-SHIP

BY CONRAD AIKEN

WHEN my mother and father died, the children were distributed, for temporary shelter, among various relatives; and it was my good fortune to be sent for a winter to the house of my father's cousin, Stanley Bragg, in New Bedford, who had come forward with an offer to look after "one male child." Of course, I was at first bewildered by the abrupt change, the removal from the tropics to New England, the separation from my brother and sister; but on the other hand I had always been fond of Cousin Stanley; and his house, which I had several times visited, had always seemed to me quite the most beautiful and romantic in the world. It stood well back from County Street, concealed by elms and huge horse-chestnuts, on a high grassy terrace. On the lower lawn (and this had, to begin with, particularly fascinated me!) stood a life-sized figure of a stag, cast in dark metal. It looked very lifelike, especially when it had been wetted (as frequently in summer) by the garden-sprinkler. The garden, behind the house, was divided formally into squares by high box hedges which were full of spider-webs and superb spiders—the latter I used to tempt out of their funnels of silk by twitching a strand of web with a twig; and I had the feeling that they used positively to *growl* at me. Here there was an old-fashioned chain well, like a little latticed house, overgrown with honeysuckle, which worked with a crank; and which kept up a gentle clinking while from the revolving cups on the chain it gushed forth the most delicious water. There were also pear-trees, flowerbeds, a wilderness of nasturtiums round the pump, and at the end of all, before you got to the barn, grape-arbours all across the back wall, so thickly grown that on a not *too* rainy day you could crawl in under the vines and eat grapes in shelter. In the stable, of which John was the benevolent king, were the two horses which Cousin Stanley kept; a solemn black closed coach; a light buggy, for country driving; and, in the cellar, a pig. On one wall, where the whips and harnesses were hung, was nailed a wood-carving of a large heart-shaped leaf.

The house itself was a comfortable mansard-roofed affair, with a wide "piazza" (on which stood tubs of hydrangeas) and lofty rooms in which one had the impression of a good deal of white marble. Among its wonders, for me, were the wooden shutters, which slid magically out of the walls beside the windows, and a great number of small carved objects of jade and soapstone and ivory, brought from China and Japan by Cousin Stanley's father. Best of all, however, was the attic, and its cupola. Cupola! I remember how strange the word sounded when I first heard it pronounced by Miss Bendall, the housekeeper, who smelt of camphor. It struck me as "foreign"—a *Northern* word, surely!—and I hadn't the remotest idea in the world how one would go about spelling it. But from the moment when Cousin Stanley, stooping a little (he was very tall) led us up the dark stairs to the warm wooden-smelling attic, and then, with triumph (this was several years before) showed us the cupola itself, I entertained no doubts as to its fascinations. Miserable child, who has no cupola for his rainy mornings! It was in itself a perfect little house, glassed on all sides, with a window-seat all around, so that one could sit on whatever side one liked and look out to the uttermost ends of the earth. Over the slate roofs of houses, one looked steeply downhill to the harbour, the bright masts, the blue water, the Fairhaven ferry, and Fairhaven itself beyond. Further to the right one saw the long red brick buildings of the cotton mills (not so numerous as now) and then the Point, and the Bug lighthouse, and the old fort, and the wide blue of Buzzard's Bay. With a good glass, one might make out the Islands; or observe the slow progress of a Lackawanna or Lehigh Valley tug and its string of black coal barges all the way from Fort Rodman to Cuttyhunk; or pick up the old *Gay Head* sidewheeling back from Wood's Holl, with its absurdly laborious walking-beam.

You can imagine how enthralled I was with all this, and how quickly, in my absorption in such wonders, I forgot the separation from my brother and sister, and the tragedy—now far off, tiny and soundless—which had brought it all about. It soon seemed as if I had always lived in New Bedford, with Miss Bendall and Cousin Stanley and old John (a perfect *stage* coachman!) and Mabel, the Irish cook, who churned the butter in the pantry. I knew every flower and spider in the garden, every branch of every tree, and whether it would hold my weight or not; and every picture in every

one of the forty-odd bound volumes of Harpers which I used to take up with me to the cupola. The great black cistern, which concealed somewhere a sinister little tinkle of water, was my ocean, where I sailed a flotilla of small blue-painted boats provided by Cousin Stanley. In the evenings, there was often a game of cribbage with Cousin Stanley or Miss Bendall, or else Cousin Stanley would talk to me about ships and shipping—he was a ship-owner—and the voyages he had made as a young man. Smoking a crackling great calabash pipe, he talked rapidly and vividly; so much so that I sometimes found it difficult, afterwards, to get to sleep: my senses stimulated, my imagination full of sights and sounds. It was as a result of these talks that I began, in the afternoons and on Saturdays, exploring the wharves for myself. With what a thrill I used to start down Union Street, seeing, at the bottom of the mile-long cobbled hill, the bright golden eagle of a pilot-house! Or how entrancing to discover in the morning, when I looked down from the cupola before breakfast, a new four-master coming up the harbour, with its dark sails just being dropped!

The magnificent climax to all this, however, came early one Saturday morning—when Cousin Stanley woke me and told me to get dressed quickly: he “had a surprise for me.” The big bell in the Catholic steeple, a block away, by which I always went to bed and got up, was striking five, and it was just beginning to be light. What could the surprise be? I had no idea, but I knew better than to spoil Cousin Stanley’s delight in it by asking. When I went down the stairs, he was waiting for me in the darkness by the door, holding one finger to his lips as a sign to me to be quiet. We stole out, tiptoed across the piazza, and down the flagged path to the gate, where John was waiting for us with the buggy. “To the Union Street Wharf, John!” said Cousin Stanley—and instantly I was lost in a chaos of intoxicating speculations. Were we going to sea? but how could we, without luggage, without even our coats or sweaters? . . . The sky was beginning to turn pink as we turned from North Street; the city was profoundly still; not a sound, except for Betsy’s clip-clop on the asphalt and the twittering of sparrows and robins in the elms, where a deeper darkness seemed still to linger. But when we turned again, into the foot of Union Street, what a difference! For there before us, on the long confused wharf, was a scene of the most intense activity—a whale-ship was being made ready for the sea.

Dismounting, we plunged into the midst of this chaos. The ship, in which Cousin Stanley owned a share, was the *Sylvia Lee*: she was, he told me, pointing to her crossed spars, a brig, and one of the last sailing vessels in the whaling trade. Two gangways led aboard her; and along these shuffled a steady stream of men, carrying boxes, bundles, small kegs, and coils of rope. Cousin Stanley moved away to talk with someone he knew, leaving me beside a pile of fresh wooden boxes, the very boxes which were rapidly being shouldered aboard. Shouts, cries, commands, a fracas of voices—how did they manage to hear one another? A man with a brown megaphone was leaning over the bow rail of the brig (the white bowsprit pointed up Union Street) and shouting “Mr Pierce! Mr Pierce!” . . . Where was Mr Pierce? and what was he wanted for? and who was the man with the megaphone? The tops of the masts were now struck by the sun, and became surprisingly brilliant, orange-coloured, in contrast with the still-sombre wharf and the dark hulk of the vessel herself. Seagulls fluttered and swooped, quarrelling, around the stern, where a man in a white jacket had emptied a pail of garbage. These too, when they rose aloft, entered the sunlight and became flamingo-coloured. “Mr Pierce! . . . Is Mr Pierce there?” I became anxious about Mr Pierce. What if he should arrive too late? It might be something terribly important. “Jones! send one of your men up to the office, will you, and see if Mr Pierce is there. If he is, tell him I haven’t got my papers yet. At once!” . . . Where was Jones? I heard no reply from him; but there must have been one, lost in the general hubbub; for the megaphone seemed to be appeased. Only for a moment, however: it reappeared immediately on the high deck of the stern, before the deckhouse. “Now then men, make it lively. I want those gangways cleared in five minutes. . . . Mr Jones! Will you see that the slack in that cable is taken in?” . . . A block began a rhythmic chirping in the bow—two men, leaning backward, pulled in short, hard pulls at a rope. The pile of boxes beside me was diminishing—a dozen, ten, eight, six—condensed soup.

“Well, Billy! Shall we go aboard?”

This was the moment of Cousin Stanley’s delight, and in reply I could do nothing but grin. Was he serious? I didn’t like to commit myself, one way or the other.

“Come along, then!” he added, and led the way to the bow gang-

way, which was now clear. It consisted merely of two great planks lashed together at the ends, and it swayed, when we reached the middle, with a shortening rhythm which seemed disquietingly to come up to meet one's foot in mid-air. In the dirty water between wharf and ship a lot of straw, bottles, and some lemon-peels rose and fell, suckingly. I felt dizzy. I was glad to jump down from the broad black bulwark to the weatherworn deck. We walked aft, and climbed up the short companion-way to the poop.

"Good morning, Captain! Just about ready, eh?"

"Mornin', Stanley. Yep—tug should be here now. . . . There she is, too. You haven't seen Pierce, have you?"

"Pierce? No. Why?"

"He hasn't brought my—"

The little tug Wamsutta (old friend of mine) floundered astern of us with ringing bells and a sudden up-boiling of foam over her reversed propellers. The pilot was leaning out of his little window, shouting, a corn-cob in his fist. The Sylvia Lee began swaying a little, agitatedly, with creaking hawsers. The Captain turned his megaphone toward the Wamsutta and spoke quietly—

"I'll be ready in five minutes, Peter. . . . Mr Jones, get your men aboard. Has Mr Pierce been found?"

"Yes, sir. He's just goin' aboard."

"All right. When he's off, throw out your gangways, and be ready to give Peter a hand. And have some men standing by to cast off."

"Yes, sir."

The wharf had suddenly become perfectly silent. A dozen men stood motionless, in a group, watching us with an air of profound wonder, as if already we had passed out of their lives and become something remote, unexplained, transcendental. One of the last of the whale-ships! But we were something more than that—we were a departing world, the moon taking its first flight from the earth. And I felt myself that I belonged to the Sylvia Lee, and was at last taking leave of everything familiar, setting forth at day-break toward the unimaginable, the obscure, the unattainable. *Islands* somewhere! the Islands of the Blest! or wherever it was that old Ulysses went, beyond the Pillars of Hercules—those same islands that I still dream about periodically, lying in mid-Atlantic, two fair green isles divided by a deep strait, and inhabited by a tall race of surpassing beauty. Was it something like this I thought

of? The Wamsutta had come puffing alongside, its bell ringing twice and then once and then three times; the hawsers were cast off and fell swashing into the dirty water; and the *Sylvia Lee*, trembling, began to glide stern-foremost into the breezy harbour. The men waved their caps and shouted farewells. "So long, Mike! Don't lose your false teeth!" "Don't forget to tell Jim what I told you!" "So long, boys! We'll be back for the next election!" "So long! So long!" . . . Phrases were replaced by shouts, and then the shouts by wavings; and as the Wamsutta turned us handily about in midstream, and then strode ahead of us with easier puffs and lengthening tow-rope, a pandemonium of bells and whistles gave us a wild salute. Good-bye, New Bedford! Good-bye, Acushnet River! We're rolling down to Rio, rolling down to the Horn, racing north to the Pole, where the icebergs grind screaming together and the right whale breaches through a sheet of ice and snow! . . . The lighthouse-keeper in the "Bug" ran out on his lowest circular balcony and blew his little tin fog-horn three times as we passed, and then, waving his arms, shouted something unintelligible. He looked very small, and his dinghy, bowing on the end of its painter under the balcony, seemed no bigger than a peasepod. I felt that I was leaving this too for ever; and the gaunt scarred rocks of Fairhaven, which smelt so deliciously of kelp at low tide, where I had so often explored the salt pools; and Fort Rodman, where the tiny blue sentry crept back and forth by the barracks like a toy. Good-bye, good-bye! William Demarest is going away on the *Sylvia Lee*; you will never again see him driving on the Point Road, or gathering scallop-shells on the salt beach that looks westward toward Padanaram. Never again, never again.

Away on the *Sylvia Lee*! We had cleared the Point already, and now we could glance up the deep inlet that led to Padanaram and Dartmouth. Further off, on our starboard bow, lay the low green brightening shore of Nonquitt, with its Elephant Rock, its Spindle, its rickety little wharf, its mosquitoes, and its bog full of red lilies and orchids. I tried to make out the Spindle, with its little keg on top of the iron pole, but it was too far away. Farewell, Nonquitt! We are whalers sailing away to perils and wonders in uncharted seas! . . . Cousin Stanley suddenly lifted me up so that I could see into one of the whale-boats, with its rusty harpoons and tub of coiled rope. Mr Jones and the Captain

were beside us; and Mr Pierce, who had not gone ashore after all.

"She doesn't look very smart, does she?" said the Captain. He rubbed a harsh finger on the blistered gunwale. "But there'll be plenty of time for paintin' and polishin' between here and Valparaiso. . . . I think if you're goin' to get some breakfast, Stanley—"

"Yes. I suppose we'd better have it. Like some breakfast, Billy?"

Breakfast! a deep qualm opened within me like a kind of marsh-flower. I suddenly became conscious of the fact that I was on a *ship*. We went down a steep stairway into the officers' saloon, gloomy and evil-smelling, where a red and pink table-cloth covered a long table. At the forward end, the table abutted on a slant mast-root which was beautifully encased in varnished and inlaid wood, and around which ran a little mahogany tumbler-rack, like a verandah. But the smell was appalling! The smell of whale-oil, perhaps; which, after years of whale-voyaging, had saturated the ship. My gorge rose, and I was terrified lest, on a calm day, with no excuse whatever, I should disgrace myself by being sick. I sat down gingerly. The idea of eating food became abhorrent to me; the bread looked dusty and hard, the corned-beef a thousand years old; the dishes, too, were thick and greyish, somehow oppressive. And then, to have corned-beef, and boiled potatoes, with their skins imperfectly removed, for breakfast! In a state of passive weakness, not daring to move or speak lest the paroxysm should seize me, I allowed Mr Jones to give me corned-beef and potatoes. Reluctantly, I raised my fork to begin, when the cook (the man in the white jacket whom I had seen emptying the pail of garbage) put down before me a thick china bowl, full of *melted butter*. Into this he dropped a dull leaden spoon. "Help yourself, sonny!" he said. "Whale-oil!" Incontinently, I raised my hand to my mouth, and felt myself on the point of giving that horrible little crow which is the prelude to disaster. My mouth drew itself together—I felt my tongue cold against my cold palate—and then I rose and fled. Disgraced! The laughter that followed me up the steep stairway was kindly, however, and as I stood again by the bulwark in the fresh wind I forgot that momentary discomfort in the sheer romanticism of the voyage. Valparaiso! Was it really possible? These sails, which the men were now breaking out one by one, and which now gently filled

with the following wind, and shifted a little with a settling creak of spars long unused, these sails would carry the *Sylvia Lee* all the way to Tierra del Fuego, and round the Horn to Valparaiso. What would Union Street seem like then, with its little green street-cars? Would the men remember Buttonwood Park, and the bears, and the motor-paced bicycle races at the bicycle track? Would they talk about these things, or long for them, these things which were now so commonplace and real? Would these things then seem as distant and incredible as Valparaiso seemed now? . . .

When at last the sails had all been spread, and the tow-rope had been cast off, and the *Wamsutta* drew away to starboard and stopped, her nose pointing toward Cuttyhunk, it was then that the greatest moment came. One of the whale-boats was manned and lowered into the sea; into this we clambered, Mr Pierce and Cousin Stanley and I; and the men pulled away toward the waiting tug. The *Sylvia Lee* hung enormous above us, her sails flapping, as we drew out from her shadow; but I now paid little attention to the beautiful tall ship, for I had discovered that the whale-boat was leaking, leaking fast. In a moment I had to draw up my feet. Before we had gone half the distance to the *Wamsutta* we had taken in about four inches of water. Were we sinking? Would we get there before we sank? What astonished me was the indifference of the men at the oars—they sat with their feet in the swashing water and hauled stolidly away as if nothing whatever were occurring. I felt, therefore, that it would be a breach of etiquette to comment, or show anxiety, and I scarcely knew *what* attitude to take toward Mr Pierce's humorous observation that it looked "as if they were trying to drown us." It hardly seemed a subject for joking. I was measuring the water, measuring the gap between us and the *Wamsutta*; and seldom have I experienced such an acute sensation of relief as when we drew alongside and climbed aboard in a smell of oil and hot-breathing engines. More remarkable still, however, was the fact that the men in the whale-boat did not pause to bail out the water—which was now halfway up their legs—but at once turned the heavy boat about and started back again. How slowly, how laboriously, she seemed to creep! By the time they had come up once more with the *Sylvia Lee* her gunwales were only a foot out of water. They were safe, however—we saw them climb briskly aboard.

And then we saw the boat being hauled up, while one man bailed with a pail, flinging great scoops of hollow silver over the side; and at once, majestically, with filling sails, the *Sylvia Lee* bore away. The men waved to us and shouted—the *Wamsutta* blew three vibrating blasts of her whistle—and while the ship moved stately southward, we turned and chug-chugged back toward New Bedford. Good-bye, *Sylvia Lee*! Good-bye indeed. For the *Sylvia Lee* was destined to be one of the tragedies of the sea. None of the men who sailed away with her ever returned. No one ever knew how she was wrecked. All that was found of her, two years later, west of the Horn, was the fragment of stern-plate that bore her name.

THE OGRE

BY ELIZABETH J. COATSWORTH

I walk among the gardens.
Do not think
I cannot guess what once the statues were
That languish in the hedge, and I infer
The origin of the deer with their sad eyes.
I trail my gown along the formal walks
And in the trees above me hear the cries
Of clip-winged birds. I do not pick a rose
For fear of wounded stalks.

And night by night I lie in my plumed bed
Lulled to slow sleep
By the monotonous, the heavy creep
Of the old ogre pacing overhead.

STENDHAL

BY PADRAIC COLUM

IT is Stendhal's distinction that he dealt with the primary passions as later writers have dealt with the secondary ones. The central situation in *The Red and the Black*¹ and *The Charterhouse of Parma*² could be made into powerful melodrama and yet Stendhal has brought us to these situations as Henry James might have brought us to some odd embarrassment or George Meredith to some social adjustment—by way of analysis. His important people have the dignity of tragic characters, and yet we are let know of them in their daily lives, and their creator prepared to write about them by reading the prose of the Civil Code.

This distinction belonged to Stendhal because he was at once a man of the eighteenth century and a man of the romantic period. He was primarily a man of the eighteenth century: he knew the world as only the men of the social age knew it—he knew it as Casanova knew it—Casanova the writer of the great processional novel who has not had enough credit given him as a creative artist—he knew the world as no writer has known it since. Since the beginning of the nineteenth century we all have been idealists, reformers, propagandists—everything except men of the world. Now Stendhal, a man in whom the eighteenth-century type of mind had survived knew the world: in his books we have the writing of a man who possessed the general's or the statesman's sense of fact: he is like Swift in this respect, and one could imagine someone who knew the European world at its centre saying of one of his books what Sara, the old Duchess of Marlborough, said after reading *Gulliver's Travels*, "Tell him that it is the most accurate account of kings, ministers, bishops, and courts of justice that it is possible to be writ." This man of the eighteenth century had

¹ *The Red and the Black*. By Marie-Henri Beyle (De Stendhal). Translated from the French by C. K. Scott Moncrieff. Two volumes. 12mo. 288 and 350 pages. Boni & Liveright. \$5.

² *The Charterhouse of Parma*. By Marie-Henri Beyle (De Stendhal). Translated from the French by C. K. Scott Moncrieff. Two volumes. 12mo. 290 and 343 pages. Boni & Liveright. \$5.

survived into a time when an elaborate narrative form had been evolved and was at his disposal. An epic feeling had been brought into the novel. The revolution, Napoleonism, the restoration, the attempt of those in power to banish the possibility of another '93, had raised up characters, had created situations that the men of the eighteenth century could not think of as possible. And so we have this man with his understanding of the world dealing with a society that had in it more colour, more drama than the society of the eighteenth century had had and having to his hand an entertaining medium for its rendering. Many writers in English have been compared to Stendhal: Meredith, obviously, tried to write some of his novels in the Stendhal way, but Meredith has no inner likeness to Stendhal. The writer in English who has most of an inner likeness to him seems very remote from him at first glance. I mean Jane Austen. Jane Austen had Stendhal's interest in society, Stendhal's knowledge of society, and she had too what Meredith lacks—Stendhal's power of telling a story. Jane Austen is the Stendhal of the village, of Spinsterdom; Stendhal is the Jane Austen of Europe, of the young men who cursed themselves for not having been born in time to have been generals of Napoleon's at twenty-five.

In an often-quoted passage he declared that his novels would be read fifty years after his time—that is, about 1880. Does that mean that he thought that his people were so abnormal in their relation to the time that they would not be understood for fifty years? I do not think so. The European ferment, and nothing in the characters themselves would postpone, to his mind, the reading of his books (he had nothing to say about the understanding of them) for fifty years. He knew that the people in power could think of nothing but how to defend themselves against a repetition of '93. How, under such circumstances, could they give time to the reading of books that were books? And there was no use in attempting to interest their opponents in serious matters. "Excepting only what might bring to his country Two Chamber government the young Count felt that nothing was worthy of his attention. He parted from Mathilde, the most attractive person at the ball, with pleasure because he had seen a Peruvian general enter the room. Despairing of Europe, poor Altamira had been reduced to hoping that, when the states of South America became

strong and powerful, they might restore to Europe the freedom which Mirabeau had sent to them." Stendhal was not interested in the debate between Absolutism and Liberalism in Europe; he knew it was bound to go on for fifty years: the real question to him was this: how can a man in the nineteenth century and in European society realize his passions and ambitions? How can positive personalities be created?

All the same, Stendhal's people must have been puzzling to readers of the '30's, '40's, '50's, '60's, '70's, '80's, '90's. To us who have read Marcel Proust and James Joyce they will seem externalized, unduly simplified. But the people who read *The Red and the Black* and *The Charterhouse of Parma* before our time must have thought that there was something unaccountable about the people in these books. They are men and women of action: we know them as we know people in real life—by their conduct; Stendhal's analysis does not reveal the various depths of consciousness in them. But these characters are so well integrated that we, with our present knowledge of analytical psychology, can think back to what was in their unconsciousness or sub-consciousness. Thus, when Julien Sorel fires the shots at Madame Renal, and then discovers how happy he is that she has been left alive, and what a small part Mathilde in whose interest the shots were fired has in his life, we know what complex has tied this motherless youth to the elder woman. Stendhal, naturally, does not always come level with this later knowledge of ours. In *The Charterhouse of Parma* Clelia makes a vow to the Blessed Virgin that she will never look upon Fabrizio.

"Clelia imagined herself to have been visited with a just punishment, for having been unfaithful to her vow to the Madonna: she had seen Fabrizio so often by candle-light, and indeed twice in broad daylight and with such rapturous affection, during Sandrino's illness. She survived by a few months only this beloved son, but she had the joy of dying in the arms of her lover."

Not death, perhaps, but blindness, might have been Clelia's doom, if her creator had been instructed in the effects of such a conflict by the psychologists of our day.

The *Red and the Black* and *The Charterhouse of Parma* are

Stendhal's masterpieces. I know that many fervent admirers have difficulty in deciding between them. I have no such difficulties: I decide at once for *The Charterhouse of Parma*, and for the reason that it is what Balzac, quoting a phrase of Diderot's, said of it—"thickly-foliaged"—it is more "thickly-foliaged" than *The Red and the Black*—far more abundant in character and episode. And yet *The Red and the Black* is a great book; *Madame Bovary* is a great book, and still I do not think I am wrong when I say that Flaubert made *Madame Bovary* out of a piece of *The Red and the Black*. It is sparse in character and episode. Indeed it would seem as if a great creator had accomplished it working within very narrow limits and using the minimum of material. There is a man of twenty-two and there are two women; there is a provincial gentleman and an important minister; there are Jesuits and Jansenists; there are happenings in the provinces and happenings in Paris. Out of this material a story is made that sums up an epoch. For Julien Sorel is post-Napoleonic France: he is a young man who has been cheated out of a generalship merely because he was born after Waterloo. He should have had a division at twenty-five. Instead he has to strive to get preferment through the Church. He goes to the guillotine for a crime that he was incapable of committing and that nevertheless he committed; he dies because his pride and ambition frustrate his memory and his affection; he dies because he was a young man. In *The Red and the Black* we have what only a very few authors have been able to put into their books—a man of genius; Julien Sorel is a man of genius who has had no attainment. If we did not really know him we could not believe in such a person—he is self-seeking and generous, calculating and impetuous; he is a man with nothing to learn and yet with the whole of life to learn. Stendhal's book must have created a hundred Julien Sorels in France—how is it we have never heard of any of them? Besides a man of genius there is also a beautiful woman in the book—Mathilde de la Mole, and it is as rare to meet in a book one who gives the impression of being beautiful as to meet one who gives the impression of being a genius.

It is hard to say anything about *The Charterhouse of Parma* for Balzac has criticized it and Stendhal has criticized it in his reply to Balzac. The beginning is wrong and the end is wrong

and Balzac has said so. It should have begun with the battle of Waterloo; we should have met Fabrizio for the first time upon that lost battle-ground; it should have ended with Count and Countess Mosca's return to Parma. Balzac also said this. What follows after the return to the court is not an end to the story; it is a hasty sketch for another story that Stendhal did not write—a story that might have been entitled Fabrizio and Clelia. In *The Charterhouse of Parma* we have a man of genius who is also a man of attainment—Count Mosca—and we have two beautiful women: the Duchess Sanseverina exists side by side with Clelia Fabio. How superbly Mosca exists! Think of the attempts which have been made in our time to create a statesman of genius and then think of this statesman of the reaction, this Metternich of a petty principality. He is a calculator but he can act, and he has passions and affections. He is Prime Minister to a Prince whose capital has only forty thousand of a population, and yet he makes the statesmen who have been making such a to-do in our world seem like amateurs. The Duchess Sanseverina is one of these beautiful women who have courage and wit as adjuncts to their beauty—a man who has known the capitals of Europe may meet one such woman in a lifetime. Clelia Fabio is to me a more appealing figure. What a picture is brought up in the few words of description that contrast the young girl with the Duchess.

“Clelia showed herself calm and slow to move, whether from contempt of her natural surroundings or from regret for some unfulfilled dream. It had long been thought that she would end by embracing the religious life.”

What can a reviewer say of a story so thickly-foliaged—a story that has in it the sort of romance that would make an effective movie, and that has, not two or three, but a half dozen characters who are as superbly done as in any piece of literature, and that is, besides, a chapter of the secret history of Europe? What triumph there is in even this last, unintentional effect! The Court of Parma is made the microcosm of the political and social life of Europe: the people one meets in it are the people who have created European art, manners, and policies. There is something more to be said about them—it has been noticed by Balzac, of

course, and it is as true of *The Red and the Black* as it is of *The Charterhouse of Parma*—there are no vulgar characters in it. Stendhal did not put vulgar people into his books: perhaps that is the reason why Balzac could foresee only twelve or fifteen hundred readers for *The Charterhouse of Parma*.

*The Abbess of Castro and Other Stories*¹ belongs to Stendhal's minor work: these stories are historical sketches of Italy in the sixteenth century, and they illustrate Stendhal's thesis that in Italy one saw passions and not the habit of gallantry. They also illustrate the thesis, new in 1830, that perhaps political order is not favourable to the development of personalities and of the arts. "This state of civilization makes morality groan, I admit; in our day we have the duel, dulness, and judges who are not bought and sold; but these sixteenth century customs were marvellously well adapted to create men worthy of the name." Stendhal understood something else about Italy—something which practically all who have written in English about Italy have failed to understand or have left out of account—the fact that Italy is a Catholic country.

Scott Moncrieff's translations of Stendhal's works ought vastly to increase the twelve or fifteen hundred readers whom Balzac spoke of. These translations, like the translations of the Proust volumes, make this French writer's work part of English literature. One reads the volumes published so far without for an instant getting the feeling of that artificial language which is the bane of translations; that is to say, these important books have been done into free, fluent, and distinguished English.

¹ *The Abbess of Castro and Other Stories*. By Marie-Henri Beyle (De Stendhal). Translated from the French by C. K. Scott Moncrieff. 12mo. 269 pages. Boni & Liveright. \$2.50.

... enfolding an old
lady

By W. C. Williams

All the fancy things

music and painting and all that
That's all they thought of
in Porto Rico in the old Spanish days
when she was a girl

So that now
she doesn't know what to do
with herself alone
and growing old up here—

The green car is green
but the tag ends
of older things, *ma chère*
must withstand rebuffs
from that which returns
to the beginnings

or what there is, a thin
clean air, high up, unoffended
by gross odours—

A MEMORY OF TROPICAL FRUIT

The *guava* you find growing more in the country, like a plum. Yes, they eat them raw—they are very good. The *mango* they plant in yards like our apple-trees or peach-trees. I remember there was a whole double row of them at Mme. Christi's along the road leading up to the *hacienda*, the boys coming home from school would pick them up from the ground. Then there is the *caimito*. It is round like an apple and bright green but inside it is pure white, like milk. Toledo always called me, *cara de caimito*, because when I was

young my face was round like that. The *nispero* is about the same size only it is brown and soft inside—fluffy. They say

*El que nispero come
y esparrago chupa
bebe cerveza
y besa una vieja*

*ni come, ni chupa,
ni bebe, ni besa*

When a child eats the *caimito* he must be a little careful because the inside near the skin sticks all around the mouth all white and you cannot get it off, it is like glue.

Then there is the *corazon*, red and shaped like a heart and the *quenepas*, small like a plum and green, it comes in bunches and you bite it and open it, tac! and suck the inside. It leaves a pit that rattles inside the skin when you shake it. There is a bean too, the *guama*, that when you open it has little things like cotton and inside of each is the seed. It is very sweet. You take each one out and suck it. There is too a grape that grows by the sea, a sea-side grape. But it is different from the grapes here. It is more the shape of those torpedoes that the children throw down, tac! and they explode. They are pinkish and very good.

We never went in bathing in the sea. What! take off our clothes where men could see us! No. Once I remember I went with my mother, perhaps at five o'clock in the morning, before anybody was up, to bathe. Then we came back before anybody could see us. When the Americans went there and went bathing in their suits with the men, the people were scandalized but now that there has been time for the children to grow up and get used to it—they are Americans too!

When I first knew your father in Puerto Plata, he lived in a long low house, what they would call here a bungalow. It was not more than from here to the street from the sea. He would go there and bathe. Your grandmother would go too sometimes. But there were *baracutas* there. When the little negro boys would be swimming someone would watch, then there would be a cry, Here comes

a *baracuta!* and everybody would scramble to get on shore. Once your father was just going to dive in when he looked down and saw one quiet in the water looking up at him and—and waiting.

Rosita would say, Oh Elena, I wish you would marry Willie.

BRILLIANT SAD SUN

LEE'S
LUNCH

Spaghetti
a specialty

Oysters
Clams

and raw winter's done
to a turn—Restaurant: spring

Ah, Madame, what good are your thoughts
romantic but true
beside this gaiety of the sun
and this huge appetite?

Look!
From a glass pitcher she serves
clear water to the white chickens

What are your memories
beside that purity?

With empty pitcher dangling in the sun
her coarse voice croaks
bon jor'

And Patti, on her first concert tour
sang at your house in Mayagues
and your brother was there

What beauty
beside your sadness—and what
sorrow—



Collection John Quinn

HARLEQUIN. BY PABLO PICASSO



Courtesy of Paul Rosenberg, Paris

LES SALTIMBANQUES. BY PABLO PICASSO

MEMORIES

BY LEON SRABIAN HERALD

VI (continued)

WINTER is nearly past. Spring comes. His health will not permit him to work in the bookstore any longer. Mr Burton the manager, pays him an extra week's wages and lets him go. And yet, arising in him is something which says: "I am Hope!" He has avoided his countrymen since his discharge from the army; they think him lost. They advertise in the papers to find out if he is lost or dead; no one knows. Perhaps some of his relatives have survived and have sent him a message. He cannot bear to hear from them. He must live. He must cope with life's problems alone.

One morning just as workmen are stirring from their beds something heroic happens—that is, something cowardly. Driven out by insomnia a person is going somewhere if another will let him. A heroic thing happens or a cowardly thing, and much is left unfinished.

It is Herald looking through the windows of an express office. No one is there. "They told me to come early," he says to himself, and tries to see again. As workmen are walking to the place where they will find their tools a policeman comes along. He looks at Herald.

"Are you a detective?" asks the man with a club.

"No," answers the man without a club, "I am looking to see if any one is there."

The policeman pauses. "You are a thief; they have been looking for you!"

Herald looks at the burly figure and cannot think of anything.

"I am not a thief."

"You are a liar."

"You are a liar yourself."

". . . damn fool!"

"It is you that are the fool."

And workmen that were wont at this hour to crowd to the street-cars to hang on to straps, stood each where he was on the street as if by command, to watch a puny person pummelled with gusto by a guardian of the peace.

"Come along, you . . . !" called the officer, dragging the thief by one shoulder, to a telephone box.

A patrol came up and two other guardians of the peace took the culprit between them—the captor following.

"God damn wop!" contributed the one on the left.

The captive did not hear, and for his lack of attention was pinched in the side.

"Dirty deserter!" muttered the one on the right.

"I am not a deserter," said the prisoner, showing his button.

He was taken into the room for detectives and reporters. After two hours a member of the secret service came to identify the thief who could produce nothing but unintelligibility. He took everything from his pockets as he was asked to—papers and notebooks were all that he had—some addresses and "poems."

Having found no satisfactory evidence the officer in plain clothes began to whisper to the officer in uniform while the prisoner waited, thinking: "Ten o'clock in the morning; take the interurban car to Mt Pleasant." He produced a certain address and looked at it. "The farmer will be waiting for you to take you to his place ten miles from town." As it was already after ten o'clock, he made a speedy mental excursion, "I take the car; I go to meet the farmer and shake hands with him; we drive home on a wagon; the home people are glad to have a hired man for the spring work; they are discussing him; it seems that they like him." When he waked as if from sleep and looked at the clock, it was twelve. He stirred in his seat and tried to command himself. . . . What he thought during this space no one knows. Could he think at all?

He had noticed that after the two officers had whispered together, the shoulders of the officer in uniform lost their erectness. This in a measure, made waiting bearable, and finally his captor nodded to him unaggressively to follow. He jumped up, pride and humiliation changing places. Both felt this as they entered the captain's office. The head officer put the case orally by a short look at the prisoner's face and a long look at the policeman. Then addressing the captor, told him to make his statement.

"Your honour, at four o'clock in the morning I saw him looking through a window in a manner which aroused my suspicion, and when I questioned him he could not give a satisfactory answer."

The captain to the prisoner: "Tell me about yourself."

"I am sick, sir. I have just given up my work in a bookstore to go on a farm. I had arranged with the express company to come and get my things and send them to Mt Pleasant. . . . I cannot sleep, nights; he—he—hit me—on the street; they called me coward."

"What are you crying for?" asked the policeman, involuntarily troubled.

Herald was not afraid of the captain's firm, inflicting voice for it was not descending upon him.

"Why don't you bring in a convalescent from the hospital? Could any one in that condition disturb the peace?"

The next day he started off with his suit-case and typewriter to go to Mt Pleasant, stopping first at a store where on the previous day he was to have met a man named Gus. The storekeeper had given him the message, and explained that Gus had come, had waited for him yesterday, and finally had gone home disappointed. Now he must walk. It was only ten miles; he might get a lift on the way. Still, traffic on farm roads is slow at this time of the year. The storekeeper wished him good luck and said that Gus was a nice man to work for.

Never before in America had he walked such a distance in the country—country shaken by oncoming spring—rendered mellow, with here and there clusters of beaming grass. He could not but grin, himself. It was a joy to pull his rubbers out of the youthful mud. He walked as if someone had told him that somewhere in this part of the country, a revelation was awaiting him. Once or twice—a dozen times—he yelled. Not words but feeling. It was as if someone in him answered somebody else, or something else. "I am coming, coming. Coming!" The episode in the city now seemed laughable.

"For Pete's sake!" exclaimed Gus joyously, "I thought you'd never come."

"I had some business with the city officials," said Herald.

"I see," Gus answered seriously.

"Yes."

Friendliness is nice, but for one working in the country, food is more essential. A dish of oatmeal in the morning is not sufficient to saw wood on, until noon. This went on for sometime; until one day, the hired man with shaky knees and a shaky tongue, said to the farmer, "Could you give me something else besides a dish of oatmeal in the morning?"

Gus flushed, swallowing, and said in a voice akin to that of the saw, "Why didn't you speak up, Leon? We could give you plenty of potatoes if you want them."

"Could I have bread and butter, and an egg maybe, and some milk?" asked Herald.

"Eggs are expensive—"

"I am working for it, though."

They kept on sawing.

The next day the farmer too, ate more than he usually did. This set Herald thinking and he discovered that Gus ate two breakfasts, two dinners, and a second supper after the regular one. With anything like this, one can be tolerant, but there are other things. There is the farmer's wife with blood-shot eyes—with an unsatisfied meaning in them. She goes to the barn as if to look for eggs—or something else—when the hired man is alone there. She talks to him about the city girls and tells him that he is caged here, in the country.

"Uh!" says the hired man, as if he does not understand. Then she goes, somewhat disturbed it seems, and pats the bull in a queer way, and goes out. The farmer suspected something of this, and one day while the two men were milking, he said:

"Leon, suppose somebody's wife wanted to make love to you, do you think it would be right? Especially in the country where a man is hard-working and can't keep an eye on things and it's hard to get a wife? Do you think that would be right?"

"I don't know," said Leon compressing his lips, "why, Gus?"

"Nothing. I just wanted to talk it over with you. We are both men. We can speak out about things like that, can't we?"

"Why, of course."

"What do you think about it?"

To tease him Leon laughed and said, "It all depends. It would be a good thing I guess, if the man took it all right and the woman was nice."

"It wouldn't," said Gus after a long pause, "no matter what they were."

Gus warned the hired man against many things—not to pay too much attention to the neighbours—not to visit them. He said they did not know enough. He was himself an agricultural college graduate, and even his cousins and his uncle were unworthy to associate with. He never had anything to do with them.

However, the hired man had found out some things—that the very contrary was the truth.

"Do you know why Gus told you that, Len?" asked the farmer's cousin Clif.

"No. Why?"

"Well," he said, "you see that empty house next to Johnson's? It's my grandfather's house. You know, people didn't put money in banks at first, they just hid it in the house or in the barn or somewhere. On his death bed my grandfather called his children. When they had gathered 'round him, granpa said to my uncle John who was the oldest son, 'John, there is a sum of money in such and such a place in the barn. Go and bring it to me.' Uncle John went to the barn and after a while came back and told my grandfather that he had looked everywhere but couldn't find it. Granpa trembled in his bed trying to get up to go for it himself, but couldn't. Then he sent my father and grandmother. But they both came back without the money. Well, of course this hastened my grandfather's death. But that's not the point, for he was going to die anyhow. The point is this—about a month afterward my uncle went to California, nobody knows why, and in three months came back rich.

"That uncle of mine never sold a dozen of fresh eggs. He never threw away a bad egg no matter where or when he found it. No wonder he is retired and lives in Washington. His son has to do as he tells him to, or lose the land when his father dies. He's done some thievin' himself. No wonder he never comes round our house. All the neighbours know the story, and that's why he tells you they 'don't know anything.' If my father had done what Gus's father did I could go to half a dozen colleges, myself. No wonder their land is all tilled and fertilized. You just ask my grandmother who lives there in the house with you; she'll tell you. You don't know why she lives there. Well, that's a different story."

The nearest town in which to get a hair-cut was eight miles from the farm. Gus would not trust Herald with the horse and buggy. He gave no reason and wouldn't go with him.

"You can take the mule," he said, "and that saddle. It's a brand-new one. It hasn't been used since my father used it."

"Good," said Herald, "I had my own horse in my old home. Does the mule kick?"

"Not that I know of."

Apart from its stiff neck, the mule was satisfactory.

About a month later Herald had saddled it. He had had a hair-cut, had bought a supply of cigarettes, and was already a mile from town—homeward bound. The mule was galloping. Herald was singing. A rattling Ford began to overtake them. The mule galloped. Herald stopped singing. The hellish sound was closer. He pulled on the reins as hard as he could and shouted—"whoa-whoa!" The mule's neck stiffened; the right stirrup came asunder; the rein broke in two. He clutched the mule-mane—clipped, bristly. The mule kicked; the rider went up and came down, arms in the air. The mule leaped over him; its heels hissing past his head, shaking sand over his right wrist. How could a few grains of sand be so heavy? Dethroned, uncrowned, he looked after the ungrateful beast; then as he searched for his hat, he found that he was out of equilibrium; his arm was broken. A crow's foot took shape upon his face. The mule had disappeared, the Ford also. A farmer picked him up and they travelled along until they found the mule grazing victoriously in a pasture. When they entered the yard—a crest-fallen Don Quixote, dragging the mule after him—the boss met them with a yellowed countenance, scared ten times more than the damaged knight.

Unable to milk the cows that night, the hired man was put to tend the horses. He climbed up the haymow, and attempted to use the fork with his right hand. It was immeasurably too heavy. Putting the handle under his right arm he tried to manipulate it with the left arm. By the time he was through, the arm throbbed with pain.

In the evening a disagreement arose because he refused to work the next day. This made Gus somewhat "hot." There was much work to be done. A hired man ought at least to work for his board and room. To let him eat and sleep in the house and do no work was too much; Gus could not afford it.

Herald could not do a single thing. "I am not going to sue you," he said, "but I am going to quit."

The farmer said after a pause, that his man could stay around a few days without working and would be given a raise in wages, but the hired man insisted on leaving. The "Missis," with blood-shot eyes, interfered and said a man was simple-minded, who did not know how to make use of his opportunities. This, of course, made Gus red in the face, and made the hired man laugh.

The next day Gus's unworthy cousin, Clif, dashed toward Herald to shake hands. "Don't!" shrieked the behumbled rider. Clif burst out laughing.

"We quarrelled last night, the family and I," said Herald.

"I thought something was going on. Our dog howled to beat the band," said Clif. "If you want to stay in the neighbourhood, Jasper down the road there, wants a man. His folks used to be one of the best families around here. But now he is all alone with a sick wife and a child."

With a robin's egg in his left hand, which he had found on the grass and thought of keeping for ever, Herald mounted a neighbour's milk wagon which was on its way to Jasper's. He had many a time passed this house in which Jasper lived, but had never seen a soul around it—a yellow-painted large house, well hovered over by healthy towering maple-trees. Jasper laughed as if to encourage the new comer and assure him that there was life in his house as much as anywhere.

"Daddy, who is he?" asked little Alice, taking her thumb out of her mouth. Jasper pretended not to hear the child and turned his back to her. When she tried to catch sight of his face, the father turned faster. She tried to run around him but could not do it and took hold of his hand, "Daddy! tell me, who is he? Please, please," she said and put her thumb into her mouth again.

"I don't know, my little girl." Jasper laughed and took her in his arms. "Ask him, Alice."

"Leon, Leon is my name," was the answer.

"His name is Lee," said Jasper. "And tell him Alice, what your name is."

"A-al-ice," she said and crowded her thumb into her mouth again as if someone might take it away from her.

Mrs Bley was sitting in her chair in the kitchen. She was youthful and on her face there was a strange illumination. Jasper

took Lee's things upstairs to his room and told him he would make the bed later.

"You must excuse me," Mrs Bley said apologetically when they had come downstairs, "if I go to bed. When I see young people I feel like going about actively myself. But if my husband will help me, I think I ought to go to bed." No doubt, she thought her incapacity might be a burden to those whose bodies carried them wherever they pleased to go; or perhaps, to sit immovably before a stranger's eyes, she may have thought, was not such a pleasant thing.

Things were congenial in Jasper's house. There was no fat woman with blood-shot eyes, looking for eggs that were not laid. Jasper did the cooking. There was peace and time for meditation—to wonder why he should be there on the farm when his thoughts were pulling him in another direction. Had he come there to die? to go insane? to kill someone? himself? Why were people called insane when they had done nothing to justify one in calling them that? The days got longer and longer, and fast as they came, the sun filled them with heat and light. "Life, each day, is like the day itself," thought Herald. Was there not a daily sun for daily life? Why could not he fill his life with as much warmth and light as there was from the sun, warmth and light for each day?

Mrs Bley had for a long time been afflicted with leakage of the heart, and daily her pain was augmented by having to ask for things. She preferred to wait on herself, but could not and suffered every time she had to ask for anything. Her span of life grew shorter. In that large and beautiful house she had been able to use the kitchen and the bedroom. Now she could use the bedroom only. The haunting emptiness of the other spacious rooms was like a ferocious animal which menaced her freedom—a kind of devouring irony.

There was little Alice, her thumb always in her mouth. The way she seemed not to obey her mother would have been humorous if her mother had not been an invalid, so mournfully afflicted. A chorus of chickens invaded the kitchen and the bedroom. Mrs Bley asked her little girl to chase them out. "Huh-uh!" grunted Alice, unwilling to take her thumb out of her mouth even to say what she wanted to say. Then she ran out to her father with: "Daddy, you do it!"

No matter where he was, Jasper always came, calling out "What?" He chased the chickens away and then asked Alice if she wanted anything. "Huh-uh," she said again.

On Sundays there were no chores. There were only the three cows to milk and the horses to take care of, and Jasper was willing to do that himself.

Mt Pleasant is a town with the full aspects of a city—its people and buildings—a place to which people from all parts of the country came to recuperate, for it had famous mineral springs. Herald walked there and back—nine miles each way—to continue his singing lessons, for he had heard of a good teacher there. These weekly visits not only sharpened the dull edge of farm life, but also spurred him on to retrospection. Life to him so far had been a game of hide and seek. Seeking, and not knowing what he sought, he had strayed from his goal and had found himself on a farm. Books were to him as yet, only something to read. He was fond of reading, but it had never occurred to him that books could contain the master-key with which to unlock the door beyond which lies the relation between Man and God.

One day there was a runaway, for Gus's team of mules had got away from his new hired man. Jasper and Lee were in the barn, and heard shouting, "Whoa—whoa—ho-a-oo!" as the team came nearer. The young man on the wagon was pulling on the reins, but the mules seemed more and more encouraged by his shouts. The two men rushed out but were not quite to the road when the animals dashed through a neighbour's garden frightening the children. Jasper suggested that they go into the house lest his wife be worrying.

"Gus has a circus man!" Jasper said, jesting about it and telling her there was no accident.

"His mule did not run away from me, not at least while I had hold of the reins," Lee said laughing. The laughter of the men like two streams, met as it were in Mrs Bley and became a swift current. She laughed twice as hard. But her frame, like weak clay, could not withstand such swiftness—so much laughter—and before another sun rose she was carried away by the strong current.

After her mother's death, Alice asked more and more questions. Wherever they were, on the steps, on the grass, in the barn, with him or following him, she was always asking her father for some-

thing to eat, to make her comfortable, for untold other things. And all the stricken father could say, was "What?" or "I don't know."

A youth was asking the same questions gradually, and with more and more earnestness, although there was not even a father to answer "What?" or "I don't know." But he asked them just the same, and his questions seemed as important as the ones Alice asked. He began to look for his father and mother in books—from which so far, the only answer he had had, and it was firm, was "Don't ask questions!"

But who can silence a child? Who could silence a youthful questioner? Doctors? under whose care his sickness had become many, until it was a terrifying hydra? He read on, each book a question directed at something, somewhere. The steel wall of darkness that was holding answers back from him—that steel wall held firm against him even by men—fell, crumbling. The earth shook. Light spread before him, upon life and the relation between man and man—Man and God—cementing each with the other—now close, now one. Out of the earth this time, not from the sky, a dove rose, from the earth a voice came, "Thou art my Son!" and this voice heard on earth, carved out of an insane being a moving monument to love of men. He saw that the earth is not a place in which to go insane. How could Paradise be depicted but in terms of this earth—a miniature Paradise remodelled and enlarged by oncoming angels, as yet men?

The distance between Jasper's farm and Gus's would be to a surveyor perhaps a mile, and a judge of age might have thought this lad to be no more than twenty. But on Jasper's farm he had gone the distance between a world and a world, between a life and a life—chaos and understanding. He went away from Jasper's farm with a lark's song in his throat—proof against the codes of men; he went singing. For the first time in his life he had learned what man is—what this world can be in which he had been cast aside—a piece of clay.

The End

TO
BROOKLYN BRIDGE

BY HART CRANE

How many dawns, chill from his rippling rest
The sea gull's wings shall dip and pivot him
Shedding white rings of tumult, building high
Over the chained bay waters Liberty—

Then, with inviolate curve, forsake our eyes
As apparitional as sails that cross
Some page of figures to be filed away;
—And elevators heave us to our day . . .

I think of cinemas, panoramic sleights
With multitudes bent toward some flashing scene
Never disclosed, but hastened to again,
Foretold to other eyes on the same screen;

And Thee, across the harbour, silver-paced
As though the sun took step of thee, yet left
Some motion ever unspent in thy stride—
Implicitly thy freedom staying thee!

Out of some subway scuttle, cell, or loft
A bedlamite speeds to thy parapets:
Tilting there momentarily, shrill shirt ballooning,
A jest falls from the speechless caravan.

Down Wall, from girder into street noon leaks,
A rip-tooth of the sky's acetylene.
All afternoon the cloud-flown derricks burn,
—Thy cables breathe the North Atlantic still.

And obscure as that heaven of the Jews,
Thy guerdon . . . Accolade thou dost bestow
Of anonymity time cannot raise:
Vibrant reprieve and pardon thou dost show.

TO BROOKLYN BRIDGE

O harp and altar of the fury fused,
(How could mere toil align the choiring strings!)
Terrific threshold of the prophet's pledge,
Prayer of pariah, and the lover's cry—

Again the traffic lights that skim thy swift
Unfractioned idiom, immaculate sigh of stars,
Beading thy path—condense eternity:
And we have seen night lifted in thine arms.

Under thy shadow by the piers I waited;
Only in darkness is thy shadow clear.
The City's fiery parcels all undone,
Already snow submerges an iron year. . . .

O Sleepless as the river under thee,
Vaulting the sea, the prairies' dreaming sod,
Unto us lowliest sometime sweep, descend
And of the curveship lend a myth to God.

IMPATIENCE OF A PROSEMAN

BY JOHN EGLINTON

A CURIOUS misadventure befell me as I began to read Mr James Stephens' Collected Poems.¹ Mr Stephens, as a poet, is for me the author of one particular poem, and hastily turning over the pages to read it again, I could not find it. What? I began to wonder, has he left out his best poem? and I was already searching amid my recollections of the annals of the *irritabile genus* for any instance to match such petulant vanity, when a familiar phrase caught my eye: there it was, the first poem in the book. Instead of

“I would think until I found
Something I can never find,
Something lying on the ground
In the bottom of my mind”

I now read:

“I would think
Until I found
Something
—I can never find
Something
Lying
On the ground,
In the bottom
Of my mind.”

I must confess that this poem, which has often fluttered into my mind like a beautiful moth balanced on its wings of twofold meaning, was examined ruefully by me, its symmetry now spread over five pages in carefully numerated sections, each section dis-

¹ Collected Poems of James Stephens. 10mo. 268 pages. The Macmillan Company. \$3.

membered into the articulations of its tiny organism. Mr Stephens should have more confidence in the practised reader: is it possible that he does not realize that what gives form to poetry is its own internal music? What would have become of Marlowe's mighty line if *his* publishers had not insisted on printing it in the traditional way? Mr Stephens engages in no experiments in Free Verse; his metres, even when he calls them minuets and arpeggios, are all fairly orthodox; and I gather from the curiously written Preface to the new volume that he does not regard Free Verse as a legitimate development of lyric poetry.

He argues that lyric poetry has been "found out," a phrase by which I take him to mean that its capacities are for the present exhausted, and that it is unable to cope with the "world-interest" of to-day. As if there were any such task imposed upon lyrical poetry! That is the task of prose literature, and Mr Stephens is probably justified in thinking that "until a norm of experience is re-established, prose must do the world's work." The lyrical gift is in all ages a rare one, and it is a striking thought that while the ever-mounting volume of literature threatens to burst the confines of one library after another, the number of poems with the attribute of finality produced from year to year probably varies comparatively little from one generation to another. Thank Heaven, we are tempted to exclaim, for this blessed and standardizing fact! Progress, if there be progress in poetry, is to be looked for not in extreme developments—as in the verse of Gerard Hopkins—but in the line of normality, and a new liberation of the poetic spirit will probably be the quite simple and inevitable result of some new point of view.

The lyric is a dance of the male and female elements in the soul; first the feelings, then the intelligence is caught in some rhythmic movement: sometimes a measure centuries old, endowed for the moment with new intoxication, sometimes a new and complicated rhythm, to which the feelings have to accommodate themselves by a special strain. Our poets have for some time begun to weary of the facility with which feelings and intelligence blended in the old conventional measures: new measures have been devised, in which, if one may say so, the masculine element seems to dictate the movement, and the feminine to respond without entire conviction or self-surrender. I am not referring specially

to experiments in Free Verse but to the whole—"tempo" is, I believe, the word now used, prevalent in present-day poetry. So long as there are cultivated people there must be literature, and so long as there is literature there must be some kind of poetry, but as intellectual conviction has for the most part vanished from the world, with its correlative, spiritual passion, we have come to look for a new inspiration for poetry, for which I can think of no better designation than "impassioned intellection." A lyrical movement in which the feminine element is so subordinate is liable to the criticism which, as Mahaffy tells us in his *History of Greek Literature*, was directed against certain lyrical aberrations of the Sixth Century B. C., *'Ουδεν προς τον Διονυσον*, "Dionysus has no part in this!" or, as was said by the Orphic poets, "Though many carry the thyrus, few are the votaries of Bacchus!"

In the lyric achievements of those god-like youths who, at the outset of the nineteenth century, revolutionized the English metrical system, one feels that there has been a sort of emotional landslide, a shock in which the whole nature of the man has been exposed in all its profoundly private reactions to life. The emotion which had the power so to transform the whole nature of the poet was so strong that as we read these poets in our youth we are ourselves affected similarly. We are still sensible of an overwhelming afflatus in the work of Coleridge, Shelley, Keats; to a less degree in the Victorian group who followed; and hardly at all in poets like Bridges and the crowd of technically proficient moderns. Now it is possible to regard these emotional storms as something which should not happen: one should see them coming, be provided with a technique with which to lay hold of them, and never feel as limp as Shelley confessed himself to feel after one of these visitations. These first poets of our era, the martyr-poets as we might call them, were not thus provided, and possibly the only means by which a controlling technique could be discovered was by grappling as they did with the heart of nature for those rhythms in the achievement of which they foundered. Yes, martyr-spirits were these men, who immolated themselves in the conquest of new graces and powers for the human soul; and not only they, but the great tone-poets have acquainted our souls with new modes of exultation, unutterable tendernesses and profundities of mere sound. In any thoughtful-looking man you meet in the street

may be rolling some repercussion of the harmonies of Beethoven. For a long time to come perhaps our poets (living meanwhile pleasant, normal, and gregarious lives) will continue to occupy themselves as they do at present with metrical experiment, feeling after the true Dionysic rhythm in which the modern soul will at last find words for its exultations and its claims.

And one of two things must happen. Either (what seems to me more probable) a lawgiver will arise, himself no doubt a poet, who will prescribe to poetry its proper sphere, possibly a less comprehensive one than we are for the most part disposed to imagine; or out of this new world of rhythmic possibilities some uniform metrical system will precipitate itself, adapted to modern requirements. In either case the sphere of poetry will be restricted, and the paradoxical result of this restriction will be that poetry will have a wider because a more definite appeal than it has at present. Of what the nature of this ultimate rhythm and metre will be, our souls as yet have no forefeeling. Mr Stephens has some remarks, more or less in this connexion, on blank verse, which he pronounces to be "incomparably the subtlest, the greatest instrument that literary art has evolved"; and he goes on to say that "the matter which can be submitted to this form must be the gravest that the mind can conceive, and, naturally, the most intensely comprehended." "Nothing, in human terms, has been finally uttered until it has been said in blank verse, or [this rather spoils the definiteness of his statement!] its equivalent in whatever language." Yet I can hardly imagine that blank verse will ever dominate the English-speaking world with the same exciting power as that with which the hexameter, for example, dominated the Greek world. Blank verse is above all others the organ through which speaks the music of meditation, and if blank verse should indeed triumph it would mean that the English-speaking world had at length entered on a fruitful vein of meditation.

I have been led to these reflections by stumbling over Mr Stephens' Preface. In many of his poems, besides *The Goat-Paths*, he vindicates the belief (which I share with him) that a true music may still be heard in the traditional rhythms.



Courtesy of the Montross Gallery

HEAD. BY WALT KUHN

A. D.'S LIBRARY

BY NATALIE CLIFFORD BARNEY

BOOKS lined the four sides.

Books closed in the door through which we had entered.

No plaster walls reflecting shadows.

Here we should exchange our shade for the definite little shades thoughts leave on paper.

Paper, the mind reader.

Paper, the virgin of receptivity, the white priestess, had confessed all those who now stood bound on the shelf.

High-backed in-folios gave the impression of organ-pipes.

Their radiation, vibration, atmospherical stillness, was so intense that to one who could play collectively on so collective an instrument, instantaneous knowledge of their capacity followed a look at them.

They never need be displaced or tried by one who knew how not to read.

To feel what's in a book is better than to learn it by heart.

We perceived, from the vantage-ground of so many unopened books, that most were written through some disease, an irritation in the brain, fermenting ideas that lead to religions and revolutions, actioning a maddened strength—for not only individual action, but the actions of multitudes had been prepared in these quiet places of the mind.

Few had been emancipated from their organisms—pure secretaries receiving supreme dictates.

Which, of so many writers, had A. D. preferred?—the fevered, the torpid, the consumptive, the consuming, the visionary, the insane?

The seeing, the far-seeing, the inspired?

Those who wrote with their soul, their bile?

Those who wrote with their blood, or the blood of others?

Were not these books the imposed ancestors of A. D.'s mind? Or had they been chosen after the years of formation—the atavistic transmitting of tastes and tendencies, or revealing tastes and tendencies already habitual?

We approached the nearest shelves, where a curious order had been kept.

The books a little above the eye-level were mostly the books of poets—poets who gave off a feeling of their rich blood.

Above our heads ranged books of superhuman vision—some of these joined those poets who saw with the eye of the forehead degenerated into the pineal gland.

Books of thought—inspired thought—were also found in this section evolved beyond the ego, having laid self apart, using it merely as a scribe of their visions.

Then came the confessions of lovers and other martyrs, and the sentences of ironists who had taught their wounds to smile.

In opposition to these followed books of cold observation, of a realism so exterior that it was more obvious what their authors had let slip than what they had captured.

The novels, treating of the affairs of the heart, at the place of the heart.

Erotic anthologies joined them.

The “mediums” of modernism were excluded, as *mannequins* of fashion—because an acquired speed can never represent a movement. Documentary pamphlets and other statistical swindles with every fact warped to prove a point—truth, that Might-be, bent out of shape to fit a preconceived idea—and encyclopaedias big with inexact precisions, and volumes of philosophy, records of the successive errors of the human intelligence—were abandoned to the level of our feet.

We were impressed less by the bibliographical rarity of some of the books, than by their variety which, though it seemed to exclude predilection, betrayed A. D.'s peculiar character by the rather arbitrary arrangement.

Aware of their importance as a mass, only a few detained us by their radiance—the generating forces they supplied to others.

What a lot of printed matter contained within the measurements of a body.

And its influence might extend through as many generations as the vices of the blood.

Such-and-such a book had perhaps called us into existence?

What books produced you? might be asked as conclusively as—
Who are your parents?

The shelved room, the cellular and ribbed organism, were but the contribution of a contribution?



HARBOUR—PIRANO. BY BARBARA WEBSTER

PARIS LETTER

May, 1927

STRONGLY entrenched in a central position, as they have been here, since the era of Impressionism, the painters of Paris did not suspect that a time would come—as it has now come—when they would have to meet competition on the spot, in Paris itself. Is it chance, or fashion, or is it to be accounted for by some more imperious necessity? In any case, it is now the *littérateurs* who go in for painting. That is our “latest.” Perhaps, through having been so close to literature for twenty years, and especially since Cubism, the painters have brought this upon themselves. Only a short time ago, at the Musée Victor Hugo, there has been an exhibition of the most important designs left by the author of *Les Misérables*: prodigious hazards in ink and sepia, mysterious landscapes imitating the veins of marble, the grains in wood, and spots caused by dampness, drawings which will remain, as it were, the obscure notation of poetic and subconscious genius—and now amateurs are arguing over the works of Max Jacob. Max Jacob, a Jew converted to Catholicism, one of the most curious writers of our times, and the most original since Apollinaire, began by exhibiting some views of Paris which he modestly entitled “postcards” and which were painted with coffee juice and cigar ashes; and now so thorough and eminent a poetess as Anna de Noailles, having arrived at the frontiers of verbal expression, has crossed over into painting. She has become a portrait-painter, the King of the Belgians having posed for her recently. Finally, Jean Cocteau is pleased to experiment with a more intimate but less painful and less direct mode of expression than the written word. While borrowing some of its methods from Picasso and the expressionists, his latest work—like everything which comes from the hands of this ingenious and subtle artist—is a repository of grace, spirit, and intelligence. The Cocteau exhibits, which brought all Paris running a month or two ago, have been classed by him as “plastic poetry” in order to relate them to his writings, which are a consistent monument to poetry, for Cocteau is primarily and invariably a poet. As with his plays and novels, Jean Cocteau

introduces his exhibition with a preface, dated Villefranche 1926. "Wishing not to write," he writes, "I had to occupy my hands, to tinker with whatever might be lying about in a hotel room. But poets can no longer play—death and mystery are too eager to join the game. . . ." Made of bits of string, cork, and pasteboard, candle-drippings, burning drops of sealing-wax, lumps of sugar, materials deliberately trivial, the works of Cocteau might have been done by a prisoner who had nothing with which to amuse himself and to express himself but the cotton threads of his sheets, the crumbs of his bread, and the saltpetre of his cell. The *Orphée*, constructed of matches, *La Tête aux Punaises*, and the *Tragédie Grecque* which is made of pipe cleaners and is like the very skeleton of a silhouette, were, I thought, an astounding success.

The largest publishing house in France, the *Librairie Hachette*, which has been celebrating its centenary very gloriously, is now issuing under the direction of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace a new quarterly review, *L'Esprit International* (The International Mind) the purpose of which is to place before the public critical studies and information of a documentary and bibliographical nature, about the great international problems of the day. In the first number we find, among other names, Nicholas Murray Butler, A. Gauvain, Politis, and there are some magnificent pages by the great German novelist, Thomas Mann. About a year ago, Mann was invited to deliver a lecture in Paris which one might say inaugurated the resumption of intellectual relations between the two countries. He spoke on the moral tendencies in contemporary Germany. Affected by his sympathetic reception in Paris, of which he has since given to his compatriots a brief account, entitled *Pariser Rechenschaft*¹—and without touching on the delicate question of responsibility for the war—Mann compares culture and civilization in profound and conciliatory terms. I cannot refrain from quoting one superb passage. After having said in substance that Germany was conquered through having forgotten, in the interests of imperial romanticism, the classicism of Goethe, Mann evokes the author of *Faust* and writes, "The primal powers, the powers of chaos and of the mother earth, the generative sources of life, were familiar to him and he took

¹ See page 501.

good care never to deny them. *He acknowledged them as holy without ever consenting to revere them as divine.* Divine for him, on the other hand, were the powers of day, of light, and of reason. An august meeting of mind and nature, on the road which leads each of them to the other by reason of reciprocal yearnings—that is man. And it is this conception which determined Goethe's attitude towards romanticism, which was an attitude of disapprobation."

M Armand Lunel, a young writer of the South of France, has just given us his best book, *Nicolo-Peccavi*, a novel dealing with the Jews of the Midi. France, which was once a centre of immigration—and is again becoming so—received a large number of Jews during the fifteenth century, at the time of their expulsion from Spain, who had come here to place themselves under the protection of the Pope, then residing at Avignon. These Jewish families settled in the small towns of the Rhone valley, and have since built up a provincial aristocracy which is genteel, highly respectable, and disdainful of the "Polaks," the more recent emigrants from Central Europe. Armand Lunel, who like his friend the musician, Darius Milhaud, belongs to this *milieu*, was thoroughly qualified to write this comic tale which he recounts in a vivid, animated style reminiscent of Alphonse Daudet. For a background he uses Carpentras, in the heroic times of the Dreyfus case. Jean-Richard Bloch, who gained prominence around 1910 with a book of stories, *Lévy et Cie.*, had also approached the *Affaire* from the provincial and picturesque point of view. M Lunel has returned to this same theme, which he has treated in a new and very personal manner.

Passing to a somewhat allied subject: M Robert Dreyfus, childhood friend of Marcel Proust and the author of a remarkable book on Gobineau, has just published some very attractive reminiscences of Marcel Proust (*Souvenirs sur Marcel Proust*) which well merit the attention of the Master's admirers. As everyone knows and must know in order to realize his full significance, Proust was half Jew, his mother having been Mlle Jeanne Weill. And even more than half: for it seems that he owed little to his father and almost everything to his mother, whom he adored. From her he

inherited his most prominent characteristics—a restless intelligence, a morbid sensitivity, and oriental eyes. Thanks to M R. Dreyfus, we get an admirable view of young Proust's first friendships at school: R. Dreyfus himself, Léon Brunschvicg the philosopher, Daniel Halévy the son of Ludovic Halévy—obvious Israelite affinities. The very first letter in the correspondence between Proust and his friend seems revealing to me, as Proust here passes judgement on his professors with a critical acuity, a precocious nonchalance, and a tone of equality which are essentially Judaic. Who is later to introduce the young student, with his dreams of authorship, into the circles to which he so ardently desires entrance? It is Mme Strauss, *grande dame juive*, who was the daughter of Halévy and whose first husband had been Bizet, the composer of Carmen. When Proust publishes *Les Plaisirs et les Jours*, who is to secure for him a preface by Anatole France? It is Mme Arman de Caillavet, *née* Lipmann, also Jewish. Who is to be Proust's intimate friend for twenty years if not the composer, Reynaldo Hahn? In this connexion I cite from M Dreyfus' book a curious sentence in a letter dating from 1905. The anti-Semitic journal, *La Libre Parole*, having written "that some young Jews, M Marcel Proust among them, were dishonouring Barrès," Proust adds: "To rectify, *it would be necessary to say that I was not a Jew and that I did not want to be.*" Of course, Proust will henceforth frequent the salons of the aristocracy, like Swann himself, his principal hero, and will live in circles where the Jews, in those days at least, did not often venture; but just as we see the old Israelite reappear in Swann, anti-Semitic clubman, as he ages, so we can say of Proust himself, that when his work is finished, the undying spirit of Zion has been disclosed. In the light of the Jewish intelligence so corrosive, analytic, and destructive, the vast satire of the *Temps Perdu* and the *Temps Retrouvé* acquires all its significance. Beneath exteriors often genial, it will be discovered that in the last analysis Proust has not spared a single aspect of a society which may appear brilliant but is really in full decay, where vices and valets are kings. I have only been able to read short passages in a curious article which appeared last year under the title, *Marcel Proust et les Juifs*, but I did note a striking remark to the effect that the style of Proust, so complex, so crowded, so eager to exhaust every possible interpretation and to include all the glosses of a single text or a single thought, recalls the style of the

Talmud itself; as it also recalls its black despair, its nothingness without God, and its relentless acuity of analysis.

But I have been carried far by this engaging subject, and I lack the space to discuss here the new volume of the *Bibliothèque de Synthèse Historique* entitled *L'Impérialisme Macédonien et l'Hellénisation de l'Orient*, by P. Jouget, of the University of Paris. M Eugène Marsan, so typically French, our most graceful painter of women, has given the *Nouvelle Revue Française* his *Chambres du Plaisir*, such rooms as one would love to spend the night in. M Jean Vignaud, an excellent writer, has published a new novel, *La Maison du Maltais*, depicting the life of a young Oriental idler from Northern Africa whom chance has brought to Paris.

In art criticism, M Camille Mauclair to whom we are indebted for such beautiful works on Impressionism and the eighteenth century, has published a very remarkable *Greuze*. M Migeon, connoisseur of art and one of the best French orientalists, has just published his book on Japan which, although it originally appeared twelve years ago, remains exact and excellent. Last year when going through imperial Kyoto I carried this book with me, and I found it of the greatest assistance. Finally, I should like to call attention to a very good documentary study of the Dutch East Indies by M Gabriel Angoulvant—*Les Indes Néerlandaises*. The Congo diary of André Gide not yet being completed, I shall speak of it in a subsequent letter.

PAUL MORAND

PARISER RECHENSCHAFT:¹ . . . I was to speak next; and applause greeted my rising. The audience seemed pleased when I began in French; and there was further amusement when, turning to my manuscript, in the middle of a sentence I dropped into German. I made known my deepest convictions—already expressed to others and in essays addressed to the German public. Furthermore, I was not rhetorical, preferring the plain truth, and urgently affirmed that if the continent should finally be brought to a condition of relative unity, we Europeans could have little cause to pride ourselves on that account! It would be an instance not of mature morality, but of the most primitive enlightenment—in fact of compulsion; for Europe—as has now become only too obvious—will stand or fall as a

¹ *Pariser Rechenschaft*. Von Thomas Mann. S. Fischer Verlag, Berlin. 3m. 50. The excerpts here presented are translated by Kenneth Burke.

whole. It is this general condition which has made for unification, arbitration, and peace, and is gradually gaining preponderance over our many passions and prejudices. I said something about those powers of chaos which are holy, and those powers of light which are divine; about the immanent godhead of the ego and the race; and about racial emancipation, universality, and social-mindedness, which is another word for democracy; in short, about culture and civilization. I spoke on behalf of Germany. What a portion of our press chose to report in big type of my scandalous bowings to the French, was merely—misrepresentation. I explained that it would not be a libel against the German character, but on the contrary would be crediting it with a religious function and a special position in history, if one should attribute to it a more or less openly recognized leaning towards the powers of the unconscious and of pre-cosmic and pregnant darkness, a predilection, which makes us Germans true problem-children of life. I spoke of romanticism and of its regenerative, revolutionary aspects, mentioning by way of illustration the differences which do in fact exist between the German and Western European-American traditions of thought. I made it clear that the resistances historically dividing the German temperament from what is called democracy were not in themselves reprehensible. I had, in preparing my lecture, assumed that it would be pointless to visit Paris for the purpose of repeating to the French their own ideas, since they would prefer to hear about things German. I particularly stressed the fact that European peoples had nothing really new and alien to say to one another. The entire complex of Occidental life and thought, I said, was common to all nations, and its dialectic was continually manifested both in their relations as a group and in each nation individually. It had been absurd, I protested to my French audience, to think that Goethe's people could in all seriousness pass for a time as the enemies of mankind—and I gave us blame for this to some extent, as we deserved. I discussed the senescence of ideas, the degeneration of a romanticism which had temporarily converted us into hermits and outlaws, and the insipidly romantic policies which had characterized the empire of William II. I admitted that I could understand the universal antipathy which had necessarily resulted when the new empire combined romanticism with crass imperialistic tactics until Germany had finally come to be pictured as a thoroughly brutal director-general, listening to Schubert's *Lindenbaumlied* being played for him on an electric gramophone—whereupon applause threatened to interrupt, apparently from the German side, but I proceeded so rapidly as to stifle it. I congratulated the French on the growing psychological insight with which the question of responsibility is being regarded by them, and could assure them advisedly that in Germany the idea of democracy is steadily gaining ground—if one takes into account the fact that German thought should never have been allowed to get so far out of touch with Western Europe, and that no people could hold aloof with immunity from anything with so many practical and theoretical considerations in its favour as an organization of mankind and a society of nations. In conclusion I spoke on behalf of sympathy, calling it the child of Eros and of reason, a kind of appetite made moral which also goes by the name of kindness. In aiding, I said,

to strengthen and consolidate the sympathy between the two great peoples on whose good relations the peace, unity, and future of Europe depend, one would be doing a service to the highest object of all sympathy, to life itself.

I sat down and there was applause, especially heart-felt, which continued some time after Professor Lichtenberger rose to repeat my words in French. I needed to rise in acknowledgement several times. It was a proof of friendliness which I could by no means think of attributing to myself or my address, understanding its more general significance.

After he had spoken, Lichtenberger invited discussion, suggesting that the audience ask me questions. Things went as usual under such circumstances; no one wished to be first. Even definite enquiries by him failed for the time. Then there were a few interpolations, characteristic in their uniformity, for they were all actuated by the same restlessness and curiosity: how are things with Germany; what is going on in that vast, menacing nation across the Rhine? What is its state of mind? Are its intentions good? Do all writers there feel as you do? Do its "intellectuals" desire to exert an influence on the governmental policies of their country, and have they hope of acquiring such influence? Would Germany enter the League of Nations? Why would it do so? There was one very strange question: "Has Germany confidence in her future?" Perhaps that was not meant wholly in good faith. Perhaps I was expected to burst out with the announcement that very soon Germany would be in a leading position again, "first in the world." I merely answered that Germany nurtures that belief in herself without which no people can exist. I also declared that I was far from presuming to speak for all the intellectual circles of Germany. That we are a very decentralized nation; that even the intellectual element in Germany is decentralized; that German writers are somewhat like stylites. However, I considered myself a good German, to a certain extent typical. (Polite assent.) So they could with some assurance permit themselves to consider that they were hearing Germany speak through me. ("*Très bien.*") As to the influence of intellectual circles upon politics, the complete republicanization of Europe would doubtless make such a thing easier. And this would apply also to Germany, for whose writers the times of the "ivory tower" and of political disinterest were past. Germany would enter the League of Nations: not only because she saw that as a way of regaining her rightful influence in the council of nations, but also for the intellectual and moral reasons which I had tried to indicate in my address. . . .

The afternoon's programme was heavy. First we were to visit the Union Pour la Vérité, where I was expected to attend a session being held there under the chairmanship of its founder and leader, Paul Desjardin. An unpretentious room on the ground-floor of a house in the Rue Visconti. On the walls: a bookcase and, facing each other, the portraits of Descartes and Beethoven. A long table, covered with printed matter and papers, at which Desjardin presides. Benches and chairs occupied by the auditors. It gives the impression of a conventicle, the gathering of a band of gentle conspirators for good.

On entering we hear the calm voice of a single speaker. It is Count

Coudenhove-Kalergi, who stands facing the chairman at the table, expositing his views. We can distinguish the word "Europe." As he is finishing we drop down near Desjardin in the unoccupied places at the narrow end of the table. The chairman thanks him for his report, then turns to me and addresses me with the aid of a prepared manuscript, accompanying his words with delicate movements of the hand. A grey, astute apostle's head, with a mixture of idealism and craftiness which is very attractive. He speaks both lightly and seriously at once; to characterize my work he makes some happy remarks, half humorous and half in earnest, on the identity of person and production; and finally he comes to the subject of Germany and France and the "question of responsibility" touched on in my address. He expressed himself with all the scepticism, all the will to thought, to freedom, and to justice, all the scorn of vulgar simplifications, which I found everywhere these days in the sphere in which I had the honour to move and which constitute the typical form of French idealism, of French intellectual self-respect. This scepticism and purity of the will are all the more meritorious in that they must serve to overcome the obstacles which the memory of the invasion and its horrors puts in the way of a free and, as it were, unpartisan judgement. In fact they acquire thereby a certain intellectual asceticism; and this ascetic tendency to dominate self and senses in the interests of freedom and truth, while it also has its element of gaiety and irony, may be greatly instrumental in giving these meetings of the Union Pour la Vérité their early-Christian character, their air of clericalism and of silent resistance to the world. In an essay entitled *Esquisse d'une Conception Psychologique de l'Histoire* which appeared in a recent number of the *Nouvelle Revue Française*, Léon Bopp discusses this subject both as a whole and from the exclusively historical standpoint, and explains how it is looked upon in intellectual circles. "For some," he writes, "the French revolution is the 'cause' of the invasions to which France was subject. While for others Germany is to be held responsible for these invasions. Which is very much as though I were to wrangle over the following question: If I place two unequal weights in the two scales of a balance, does the lighter cause the scale in which it lies to rise, or on the contrary does the heavier cause its side to sink?"

To do full justice to the question of responsibility, Desjardin asserted, one naturally could not confine oneself to the days or even the years just prior to the outbreak of the war. It would be necessary to go farther and farther back, even beyond Napoleon I—and just where should one stop? . . . Such doing away with things by thought leads to freedom, to the *melancholy* of freedom, which is the atmosphere of reconciliation.

And now I too was to speak. Desjardin requested me to do so, adding that I might speak in my own language. Very well. If it is to be so, so be it. I was not in the slightest prepared, and had no reason to fear losing the thread of my argument since I had none to lose. Sitting with folded hands, I spun out seven or eight minutes of that chatter which we Germans call *quatschen*, but it was amiably received. In the midst of the most unashamed improvising, I suddenly remembered a favourite phrase from Johannes Secundus which Goethe had included among his *Maxims and Reflections*:

"*vis suprema formae.*" I enlarged upon this a little, but in such a chatty manner that I was abashed when, after I had lowered my voice decisively and leaned back as a sign that I now definitely had no intention of further *quatschen*, a gentle young man arose and said that of course they had understood, but perhaps not with the exactitude, not so word for word, as the value and importance of what I had said demanded—and so he would request a translation. He was applauded. Whereupon I had again to listen to my shamelessness, this time in French, repeated by someone who had followed me in shorthand: the young Boucher, a favourite student of Lichtenberger, unusually gifted, and made for better things. They nodded assent to our words. A little conversation ensued. I was given some publications, volumes of the *Correspondance de l'Union Pour la Vérité*, among them several things bearing on Franco-German relations, voices *d'Outre-Rhin*, and a pamphlet which combined a cleverly annotated abstract of my essay *Von Deutscher Republik* with statements by Ernst Robert Curtius and by Keyserling.

Charles du Bos had attended the meeting. We left with him and Lichtenberger for the next engagement, a reception by the Union Intellectuelle Française. But there was time to take a little refreshment beforehand; and while Du Bos went ahead to see to things at the Union, we dropped down with Lichtenberger for a quarter of an hour or so in front of a little café. In front of a café, I say, *au coeur de l'hiver*, in darkness, wet, and cold. This was made possible by a commendable arrangement whereby metal baskets with glowing coals were placed on the pavement between the little tables, the heat being held in by folding screens. One can sit here in perfect comfort, enjoying his tea and *brioche*s in the fresh air and looking into the street. And we also walked the remainder of the short distance to the headquarters of the Carnegie Endowment, where the meeting was to take place.

It is a private mansion which dates from the eighteenth century and was purchased by the Endowment two years ago. The scene of action was a large room on the ground-floor, larger than the one in which I had spoken the day before. After waiting for a short time in an ante-room, Bertaux, Boucher, Du Bos, Lichtenberger, and I mounted the platform, where we took seats in a row behind the table, two of my companions being at either side of me. The meeting was very well attended. Perhaps many persons had come who had been unable to gain admission the day before.

After Lichtenberger's brief introduction Félix Bertaux arose as the first speaker. He talked without effort, skilfully and fluently. While he is speaking, his good-humoured homeliness is made still more attractive by a characteristically French smile of spirited good-fellowship which we shall never imitate, and by the charm of his movements which are likewise more national perhaps than personal. Let us admit that such things are not at our command, as in his first salutation: "*Mesdames, Messieurs . . . [turning] et vous, Monsieur, dont nous fêtons ici la bienvenue . . .*" It is very good that this exists, though beyond us.

Bertaux tells most engagingly of a visit to my home in Munich. He speaks of the old house in Lübeck which is now a book-shop. At a bound (hold, hold!) he comes to another house, in Frankfort, on the Hirschgraben.

Hold, restrain this flow of words! But since I cannot control his nimbleness I sink—with him pursuing the chain of his associations—into my own dreams of Frankfort, recalling the house; the mood of its rooms and stairways; the intimacy of childhood and folk-tale which pervades it; and that shock of recognition which I experienced with profound emotion one day, when I found myself in that place. . . . Intimacy, love, kinship? Have not the children of man often claimed gods and demigods as their relatives and forbears? Did not Stifter say that he was no Goethe but was one of Goethe's kin? Am I nothing in comparison to Stifter, or am I such that I too may dare to entertain, in moments of elation, a sense of kinship? And is not this heightened hour such a moment: here in the capital of the "sworn enemy," facing a foreign public, among men who in their own language, this French language the analytical tradition and culture of which is without parallel among the languages of Europe, are discussing my existence in terms of friendship?

Bertaux speaks of social origins, of bourgeois and urban traditions, of German republicanism. The French, he said, are inclined to think that the German bourgeoisie is new, a thing of yesterday without cultural or political past. In reality it is as old as the bourgeoisie of France, its history extending back to the Hansa and Dürer's Nuremburg, although the official system of government prevented the French from realizing the fact that Germany had always possessed some measure of autonomy, democracy, and freedom; and the German bourgeoisie, for all its cultural conservatism, had a reactionary side which came straight from its industriousness, its creativeness, its close concern with the present and the future, with the invariable result that after every hundred years or even fifty years, Germany turned an entirely new face to the astonished world, having as one of the constants of its character a physiognomic versatility before which other nations stand incredulous. But there are times when one must believe in this new face of Germany, he thinks; it is genuine, even though it has again been altered. And now he should like to touch on another form of revolution, a form which the bourgeois tradition lifts to a higher plane: he is referring to art, "*dont chaque poussée est une révolution.*" Every artist must emerge from his tradition, whatever it may be, and imbue it with new hopes and new life. This conviction had sometimes occasioned irony on the part of their present guest, who looked upon it as a danger, a menace, to the soundness of the traditional structure. . . . But by continuing he would be encroaching upon others who intended to speak of this. "*Nous avons hâte d'entendre ce qu'ils en diront.*"

Amid profuse applause, M Maurice Boucher, philologist, essayist, and poet, arises at my left. He is tall and blond, and I think what might be called the national type. Just how can one be so tall and blond without violating in a single trait the stamp of one's French nationality?—He reads. His speech has literary finish; it is weightier and more delicate in thought than the improvisation of his predecessor. It seems as if the young *homme de lettres* might be winning his critical spurs on this occasion. Everyone is very attentive. A new talent is being discovered. His diction displays that joint precision and depth which is the mark of the born

essayist and to which one never quite does justice in translation. "We greet you," he said, "as a writer. And this word combines for us concepts of serviceability and greatness which transcend all boundaries in the enjoyment of common privileges and the shouldering of common burdens. Among all those whose business it is to express what they are thinking, there is an international and professional solidarity such as unites any workmen engaged in the same trade."—Excellent, my country's neighbour! In the midst of war, under the pressure of emotion, I uttered this thought, in the *Betrachtungen* of which you will soon be speaking.—First Boucher mentions the German language, "one of the richest, noblest, and most pliant in existence," and my relationship to it. With precision and depth he says things which it would have been quite difficult for me to hear in German without loss of composure, though they are made endurable by the veil of a foreign idiom, much as with the good Hans Castorp in a certain radical conversation of *The Magic Mountain*. The speaker is getting on. He says I was wrong in declaring that my novels were not translatable into French because they would seem like monsters. He must protect me against myself, or defend French form against certain prejudices. He does not believe that any of my books, if their feeling and tone were successfully preserved, would seem formless to the French reader. A misunderstanding had prevailed here. From that formalistic point of view which is associated with Latin-French critical standards, the *Odyssey*, the *Aeneid*, *Don Quixote*, *Pantagruel*, and *Candide* would be without form. "What we call form, now more than ever before, is no such strict tyranny, no such narrowing of horizons. It is more analogous to the procedure of a traveller who employs his time with discretion, uses his opportunities to the best advantage; and while this kind of form does ultimately involve choice, it is no more antagonistic in its relation to movement than memory is to life."—I would call to your attention, my dear friend, that the tendency of modern aesthetics to deduce the laws from the work instead of measuring the work by the laws is anarchic and perilous; but that naturally there can be no point of issue between us, when in presenting a definition of French form, you evaluate with precision and depth my own form.

What he has said so far is a guaranty that more good things will follow—as they do, in that he now speaks on the merits of hypochondria, of brooding, of antithetical doubt. "Did not Schiller divide beauty into two parts, solely that he might be able to claim a share of it for himself?" And now it would seem as though, in more fortunate cases, one man possessed not only the half of "beauty," not only "nature" or "intellect," but also a half of the other half along with it. It is mysterious how intellectual factors will sometimes fall into place with complete exactness, of necessity, and with the significance and power of the naïve and the plastic! Inversely, one may call a writer naïve who sees and accepts people, his people, as they are, without distorting them through interpretation. But when they are so selected that definite and desired ideal conflicts result from their encounters, this is also something else: it is an intermingling which may be called either ingenious or fortunate, and it does show that neither too much spontaneity nor too much intellectuality is

right, and that form is nothing other than fidelity to life governed by the will to select and to arrange.

Fine young man. Things seem to be going my way to-day. I have never listened to what was more after my own heart. Detail is tiresome without ideal transparency. Art is life in the light of thought. Are we in agreement, I wonder? I hear you say that Settembrini, Naphta, Peeperskorn, and Chauchat are not puppets and doctrines, but ways of being, and that they do not typify individuals, but entire peoples. I hear you add that in France my book, the *Betrachtungen Eines Unpolitischen*, is better understood now that they know *The Magic Mountain*, and I am happy because I incline to feel, though perhaps it is an illusion, that when artists understand one another, nations must also be mutually in accord.

Ah, Germany and France! While I was writing the *Betrachtungen*, this young Frenchman, so he is explaining, was going about among the troops of his country delivering what were then known as *conférences morales*. One of us was defending "culture," the other "civilization." And now? If I would not have "culture" looked upon as just so many phrases; if I insist that it is a concept of reality arrived at both by perception and emotion; if I seek out that phase of humanity in which ideas are purified to the minutest particular; if I deny that the mind is a logical phenomenon and that it could ever be done away with by verbal jugglery; if my attention were trained simultaneously upon the eternal and the rational; if I see in man not only a social and a mystical being, not only an originator of formal inanimate structures, but also a personality, a whole mass of graduated feelings, a mixture of dependence and self-determination; and if, finally, I believe the dignity of a man to be gauged solely by the nobility of his character: then he would ask me not to think it very strange if he said that this is exactly what he and his colleagues had understood by the word "civilization."

"We were so unfortunate," he says, "as to have had to probe our consciences at a moment when history was being controlled by the powers of destruction. Misunderstandings arise from an attitude of aloofness. Every intellectual system has its centre of gravity. These centres fail to coincide, not only nationally, but I am sure, even among individuals in one and the same nation. . . . Every event can be interpreted either antagonistically or sympathetically. I believe that the sympathetic interpretation is always closer to the truth, but there are times wherein we are not free to choose it. It seems as though we were not unhampered even in our own minds, as though our deepest conscience, or law of idealism, induced us to place a negative interpretation upon that which is most precious to us, in order that we may affirm it with the greater force."

Critical spurs, young man, spurs of the moralist! I have a feeling that no one in the room would refuse you them; and so far as I am concerned—

"Is it not significant that a Frenchman has created the symbolic figures of Bouvard and Pécuchet? Passing over Nietzsche, it was Goethe himself who gave Faust's assistant the traits which are usually associated in France with the idea of the German savant. It shows to begin with that neither of the two peoples is blind to its own shortcomings. But it shows

too that concepts of national psychology, at least in their popular forms, must be revised. So long as we put more faith in convention than in reality, there is bound to be inharmony. In the midst of war, you said: 'I cannot bear this laying of blame at people's doors.'" (He repeated the words in German, in a delicate, painstaking way—very touching.) "And sheltered by this sentence, I would close. Are there, between certain peoples, irreconcilable antagonisms? Perhaps. But it is quite certain that the characteristic virtues of France and Germany tend to draw the two countries together. If music is the most perfect symbol of man's profoundest yearnings—in what foreign country has German music found more response than in our own? Let us not dream of eternal harmony, let us not be Utopians! Harmony is but a preliminary of music; music itself is something different and greater. Let us attempt to create in life a musical realm—in Occidental life at least! Let us fit our individualism into a larger scheme! Perhaps we shall succeed in combining both life and clarity, in obtaining a communism of interests which enriches, and in reconciling freedom with independence, a contrast which affirms and heightens. Is not this what actually we both understand by culture? Your presence encourages us to believe in its realization."

Prolonged applause. Charles du Bos is the next to speak, at the right end of our line, with his wide, black, typically French moustache, his clean-shaven, rather heavy chin, and his emotional dark eyes which often, as when he is shaking hands for instance, glance up with a certain fervour. His address has something exalted about it, something musical and ceremonious, almost priestly. I believe that he is religious—inclined to intellectual Catholicism. I read recently in the *Nouvelle Revue Française* his study of Rivière, entitled *Sur l'Humilité Féconde*, the religious note in which has aroused some antagonism. But he is a great admirer of Nietzsche, for after all he has made a profound study of the German mentality and has lived among us. He tells of pre-war Berlin, of his Berlin, which was also the Berlin of Simmel and Dilthey, of Wölfflin, Reinhold Lepsius, and Liebermann. He mentions a lecture which I gave there, twenty-two years ago, which he, as a young foreigner, had attended. He speaks of Tonio Kröger and of *Death in Venice*. In elevated and vibrant accents, he discusses the anomaly of art, insisting that in the artist the will to combine, to connect, and to indicate relationships is paramount. He is reminded of Flaubert, of Henry James, and of Valéry. He repeats the splendid phrase about the "pride, never to be content" which he said placed my work with the last of these three. He mentions a love of the sea which would also indicate some kinship with the author of the *Cimetière Marin*. They said that Paul Valéry, *de l'Académie Française*, was in the audience. Well, he made no audible protest.

Nothing now remained but for Barrès to be brought in, and soon he was mentioned. As has been said, things seemed to drift in my direction that day. Of whom didn't I remind someone? Some Frenchmen were struck by the fact that I liked to quote Barrès. This should be a frequent practice with us; for it would show that German nationalism—recently put forward with skill as having its intellectual roots in Heidelberg romanticism—is

for all its "chthonic" religiosity, its veneration of night, death, soil, tradition, and race, by no means peculiarly German, but as European, as "international," as any other more light-loving counter-tendency; and that it is to be found with all its gloomy ingenuity and with a slightly Spanish tinge in the originator of the League of Patriots and in the creator of the "*esprit nouveau*" of pre-war days.

How well and with what fullness of emotion this author on my right, towards whom I turn in my chair and who sometimes glances up expressively from his text, reads about the tragedy of the man who knew perfectly that there are diseases which one must have been through before daring to join in the talk of life, who would not permit aesthetic success to prevent his "escape" from it into life, who sought still higher planes of existence and yet was destroyed before attaining his goal—the shores of sympathy. . . . "*Oh la profonde parole, et qui vous échappe avec la plénitude de simplicité de ces vérités dernières qui, parce qu'elles remontent au plus intime de l'expérience vécue, viennent enrichir à jamais notre trésor spirituel.* There is nothing, just at this moment, which better expresses that which is uppermost in our hearts. To know death yet be the friend of life—you have conceived a postulate which serves for us as for you."

That was all. Lichtenberger whispered something in my ear about a word or two still to be said in conclusion. What was one to do? How respond to such an outpouring of true gallantry? I rose enthusiastically and said things typical of such moments. Indeed, under the emotion of the instant, I said a little too much, I suspect. My tongue ran away with me; it was the only time when the guardians of our national dignity had any ground for complaint. To have the modest contribution of my life adjudged with such spirit and friendliness by the representatives of a literature to which I was so much indebted for my own education—I should feel this to be, I said unreservedly, "the" pinnacle of my life. I should have said: "a" pinnacle, since I am not certain what the real summit will be, though it ought not to be concomitant with sudden gratitude and possibly will not be attained in a public hall. A moment later I saw this. Too late—the word had slipped out, the "bow" had been made.

But observe the consummateness of the French! They have tact. Is not one sensible of it? Boucher, as interpreter, emended me and translated with tasteful inaccuracy, using the indefinite article "*un*." He said "*un des sommets*."

BOOK REVIEWS

THE MAGIC MOUNTAIN

THE MAGIC MOUNTAIN. By Thomas Mann. Translated from the German by H. T. Lowe-Porter. Two volumes. 12mo. 500 pages each volume. Alfred A. Knopf. \$6.

THE scene in which this story is laid is the little Alpine valley of Davos the narrowing end of which is filled so beautifully by the rising peak of the Tinzenhorn. The magic mountain of Dr Thomas Mann's latest novel, however, is not this towering horn, the roots of which are the height of other mountains nearer the plain of civilization, but a symbol for an international sanatorium which also beckons to consumptives from all the corners of Europe. Its magic resides in its power to attract and to retain these sufferers, who come for a month as a precaution and linger on, till they think in terms of nothing shorter than a season, to die, in one of several traditional forms, at last. In other words this enormous novel is a detailed study of sanatorium life, of the routine, the treatment, the gradual acclimatization, the peculiarities of an imaginary group of patients in a typical institution, and their gradual, almost imperceptible, segregation in mind and outlook from the workaday world. It is done with German thoroughness, and at German length. It flinches from nothing. It spares you not at all. From one point of view it is a clinical treatise, from another a study of human reaction to time, from a third of institutional life the world over. To read it is as good as having the disease. In fact it is better, for you can leave the book for ever, whereas you can leave the sanatorium which it describes only to return, if you do not die first.

One rather hopes therefore that the book will not fall into the hands of any consumptive who is in the incipient stage of the disease, and who looks forward to entering a sanatorium as a means of escape from it. For such a one there will be no surprises left.

He will know absolutely what is in store for him, and he may well be overcome by the prospect of the inevitable. In Dr Mann's novel no one, I think, recovers, and the sense of fatal destiny is heightened because even the few visitors, who come to see their relatives there, naturally fall into the routine of the place. Perhaps they also find the rarefied air fatiguing, and begin to rest like the patients. Perhaps, being on the spot, they think it well to be overlooked, and, if they are advised to remain for a month as a precaution, we know that they too will be drawn into the magic circle. The only alternatives are to yield, or, if they are bold enough, to flee the next morning. With the proviso that this novel is descriptive, and not tendentious, neither for nor against the system that it describes, this is what happens to the hero of the story.

Hans Castorp, a young engineer, arrives at the sanatorium on a three weeks' visit to his cousin Joachim, who has been a patient for some months in the place. We meet Hans on the last stage of his long journey from Hamburg, in the stuffy little train that puffs its slow way from Landquart into the mountains. He is greeted by Joachim on the platform at Davos Dorf, and on the drive from the station to the sanatorium his initiation into the unfamiliar atmosphere begins. His cousin points out that they never wear hats here, that they do not feel the cold which may freeze strangers, that *that* is the road down which they bring the bodies of the dead on sleighs. One should know these things, the young visitor feels, in order to be at home in the place. With considerable skill, and detail by detail, the physical and mental acclimatization of Hans Castorp is described. His three weeks' stay occupies about one third of these two volumes! We follow him throughout the day, at his five meals in the luxurious restaurant, at his rest-cures, on his walks. We see him invited to buy a thermometer and to "measure" like the patients. We watch the discomfort of his physical reaction to the air at this altitude. We accompany him on the examination for which he asks. We hear the advice of the Hofrat that he should stay for a short, but unspecified, time. We share his annoyance at the obstinate height maintained by his new thermometer. Finally we notice that his sense of time has changed. He begins to think in months instead of days. He is under the spell. He is himself a permanency.

The rest of the long story may be outlined briefly before we criti-

cize the book. Hans Castorp's fund of emotions, the form which love often takes among consumptives, is deeply stirred by one of the women patients. It is not easy to make acquaintances with those who sit at a different table, but he makes an almost hysterical avowal one carnival night. She startles him by saying that she is leaving the next day. Then his cousin too rebels against fate and, after a stormy interview with the Hofrat, also goes. They have changed places, for Hans now is convinced that he himself ought to remain. His rebellion comes later, when, called by the tingling life of a sunny winter, he takes surreptitiously, for it is against the rules, to ski-ing and is nearly lost in a snow-storm. Later the old inmates, true to life, become subject first to ennui and then to irritation; there are "scenes" and scuffles, which culminate in a duel. The assistant doctor, who gives psychoanalytic lectures once a fortnight to the patients in the hall, becomes interested in one of them who is a medium, and our credulity is a little strained by the *séances* over which he presides. At one of these Joachim, who has returned (after a breakdown) to die, is successfully "materialized." Fill in these separated moments of crisis with long descriptions of the other patients, with interminable discussions by the disputatious among them on history, philosophy, Masonry, alchemy, botany, or whatever happens to turn up; add to these, elaborate descriptions of the snow, of pneumothorax treatment, of x-ray photography; enliven them with pictures of numerous death-beds and the behaviour of the dying, conclude with the "thunderclap" of the war, which breaks the spell and sends Hans Castorp away to die on a field of battle, and you will have a very imperfect idea of the contents out of which this chronicle is made.

The word to describe it is conscientious. Local colour is the writer's preoccupation, and it provokes the familiar criticism that a mass of well-observed detail, of first-hand information, is interesting rather than something more. It would probably be impossible to assimilate perfectly into an imaginative whole such an array of minute facts, but their cumulative effect is considerable, and Dr Mann cannot be denied the praise of having accomplished the study which he proposed. The score or so of principal characters are severally distinct, from the pair of cousins, related but not similar in temperament, to the breezy, efficient, but slightly sinister head of the sanatorium, who knows his work so well that, in spite of his

interest in it, his patients and their behaviour, whether in convalescence or in death, are little more than the repetition of a familiar experience. The translation, judged on its own merits as an independent composition, appears to be a conscientious reflection of the original, which teems in descriptions, reflections, reveries that one follows with interest, until an undeniable weariness intervenes. The author himself does not obtrude except in his lengthy descriptions of states of nature or states of health. These are well done, but there is such a thing as too much, so that in the end we begin to wonder whether the result is imaginatively worth the immense pains that have been spent upon it. What, after all, beyond a mass of interesting information, have we carried away? Could not the book have been pruned with advantage? If Dr Mann's object was to put us personally through the experience of consumption and of life in a sanatorium, he has succeeded. Moreover this experience, like all others that are true to life, is worth having. But the fatal desire to omit nothing has led him to describe in page after page the interminable conversations of some of the patients on philosophic themes, upon which, at such length, nothing but the best is bearable. He would probably reply that he has taken his characters from life, and has not offered them to us as anything but average donkeys. The answer must be that life and art are not the same, and that the boredom, say, of a bore in real life needs more than mere reflection if it is not to produce the wrong kind of boredom in a prose narrative.

We can, on this very ground, accept the few more unusual occurrences as a necessary relief from the monotony which it is the object of the book to impress, but to use the war as a means of climax is less convincing since it is an arbitrary way of ending a monotony which normally ends with death or a return home. The latter, even if the hero must still die, and die with regret perhaps at exchanging his routine, would have been more moving. He might complete his circle by making the sanatorium the measure of the outside world. The best relief in the course of the narrative is the short episode of the visit paid to Hans by his uncle. Hans now plays the instructor and watches his uncle under the first influences of the spell. The climax comes when, seeking to be like his company, the uncle asks the Hofrat at table to explain the process of decomposition. He receives an answer so exact and so illuminating

that, when Hans enters the old gentleman's room early the following morning, he finds that the bird has flown! What an escape, we cry, and how well the surprise is prepared. Apart from the interest of out of the way information on a hundred subjects, this is the most human episode in the two volumes. We have learnt nothing, but by a stroke of art humanity comes before us in an episode.

If *The Magic Mountain* comes into the hands of any one with no opportunity to visit Davos, the present writer can end with a word of consolation. At the very date at which the story is supposed to open, he was staying with a patient in one of the Davos hotels. Not all patients, even when gravely ill, consign themselves to sanatoria. The life was pleasant; the patients never discussed their temperatures or condition, and except that they lay about they did not live in the macabre world that Dr Mann, no doubt faithfully, describes. There was John Addington Symonds' house to visit, and people were interested in a search for an early essay in an old Davos periodical that the late Robert Ross, Wilde's literary executor, had commissioned me to find. I do not say that the moral is to shun sanatoria. I say only that if you wish to view a sanatorium under the microscope you can do so by reading *The Magic Mountain*. It will give you vicariously an extraordinary experience that, whatever the reaction of your feelings may be, you will probably be glad to have had, and certainly can never forget.

OSBERT BURDETT

THE MARGINS OF INFINITY

STREETS IN THE MOON. *By Archibald MacLeish.*
8vo. 101 pages. Houghton Mifflin Company. \$5.

IN the prologue to his *Streets in the Moon*, Mr MacLeish tells of being wakened, once, by the song of nightingales in the garden. And he thought, "What time is it? Time—is it Time still?—Now is it Time?" In these three questions, which are really one, lies the dominant theme of the volume. They will lead him into philosophy, and sometimes they will involve him in such difficult concepts as relativity and the fourth dimension; but even in this realm of abstractions, he will not cease to be a poet. Time, for him, is more than an intellectual category; it is change, memory, death, and frequently a mood which can be expressed in metaphors of no little power:

"Think that this world against the wind of time
Perpetually falls the way a hawk
Falls at the wind's edge but is motionless—

Think that this silver snail the moon will climb
All night upon time's curving stalk
That as she climbs bends, bends beneath her—
Yes

And think that we remember the past time."

Time, for the individual, is a series of remembered impressions: "an old man's face at Morlaix, lifted to the birds," a child's hand that opened the window to a moth "and let the flutter of moonlight in"; or again the memory of "silence waiting in the hall, between the doorbell and the door." Time can be regarded as another dimension of living creatures, and the poet wonders how we shall bury all these queer-shaped people, these "by time protracted edge-wise into heretofore" people, in graves that have only three dimensions. Time is a progression of events, one which includes death as an event like all the others; and white bones continue our endless circuit round the sun—

“. . . the great curve
Inscribed in nothing by a point upon
The spinning surface of a circling sphere.”

Time, finally, is “a leaning over . . . a kind of waiting”; it is a question to which even death—“the hand upon the mouth, the mask with broken eyes”—provides no answer. Perhaps, the poet seems to say, the answer is nothing; and it is probably significant that the volume ends almost in pure nihilism. It ends, that is, in the description of a circus tent one night when the top blew off, and all those thousands of white faces stared up to see—

“There in the sudden blackness the black pall
Of nothing, nothing, nothing,—nothing at all.”

It is rather to be regretted that *Streets in the Moon* has been published so expensively. The carton in which it is enclosed, the decorated title-page, the heavy linen paper, the limited number of copies: all these may lead to its being classified as a collector's rarity, something which belongs among the first editions with uncut pages. They also tend, somehow, to emphasize its faults, which are not grave. Some of the images seem derivative, and there are a few poems which can be dismissed as decorations; but there are others of unusual power, and everywhere the style is admirable. The volume as a whole reminds one of thumb-nail sketches, drawn skilfully on the margins of infinity; while somewhere in the distance, never out of mind, broods that great river of time on which the poet, his emotions and philosophy, his books, other books, people, and the world which contains them—all are only flotsam.

MALCOLM COWLEY

THE GOLDEN DAY

THE GOLDEN DAY. A Study in American Experience and Culture. By *Lewis Mumford*. 12mo. 283 pages. *Boni & Liveright*. \$2.50.

MR MUMFORD writes with precision. He has also a gift for titles which are actually explanatory, and for summaries. He has written an important book which has been thoughtfully and enthusiastically praised by Van Wyck Brooks, Waldo Frank, and George Santayana. I am not altogether in sympathy with Mr Mumford's attitude, and in order not to misrepresent him I shall quote him to suggest the scope of his book.

The European, settling in America, continued a process already active in Europe, the process of disintegration which began in the thirteenth century when the citizen began to measure time, instead of keeping his eye fixed on eternity:

"In America the new order of Europe came quickly into being. If the Nineteenth Century found us more raw and rude, it was not because we had settled in a new territory; it was rather because our minds were not buoyed up by all those memorials of a great past that floated over the surface of Europe. The American was thus a stripped European; and the colonization of America can, with justice, be called the dispersion of Europe—a movement carried on by people incapable of sharing or continuing its past. It was to America that the outcast Europeans turned, without a Moses to guide them, to wander in the wilderness; and here they have remained in exile, not without an occasional glimpse, perhaps, of the promised land."

The pioneer existed in the European mind before he came into being in America, says Mr Mumford. He came out of Rousseau, among others; and the actuality found a sort of queer counterpart in the terror and cruelty of Poe's fiction. ". . . The pioneer experience did not produce a rounded pioneer culture; and if the

new settler began as an unconscious follower of Rousseau, he was only too ready, after the first flush of effort, to barter all his glorious heritage for gas light and paved streets and starched collars and skyscrapers and the other insignia of a truly high and progressive civilization. . . . So much for an experience that failed either to absorb an old culture or create a new one."

The Golden Day which came after the pioneer is divided by Mr Mumford into several phases. The figure for the morning star is Ralph Waldo Emerson for whom "matter and spirit were not enemies in conflict; they were phases of man's experience: matter passed into spirit and became a symbol: spirit passed into matter and gave it a form; and symbols and forms were the essences through which man lived and fulfilled his proper being. . . . To withhold the name of philosopher from the man who saw and expressed this integral vision of life so clearly is to deny the central office of philosophy." For the dawn, the figure is Thoreau: "In short, Thoreau lived in his desires; in rational and beautiful things that he imagined worth doing, and did. The pioneer lived only in extraneous necessities; and he vanished with their satisfaction: filling all the conditions of his environment, he never fulfilled himself. . . . What Thoreau left behind is still precious; men may still go out and make over America in the image of Thoreau. What the pioneer left behind, alas! was only the burden of a vacant life."

I find no swift summary of High Noon, the period which is focused in the person of Walt Whitman, possibly because Mr Mumford, devoted to Whitman, has less that is personal and fresh to say of him than of Emerson, Melville, Poe, and the rest. The twilight which sets in after Whitman is figured in Hawthorne and in Melville, on both of whom he writes briefly and brilliantly. After them we are full in the Gilded Age which Mr Mumford attacks partly through fiction (Howells) and partly through philosophy (the chapter is called The Pragmatic Acquiescence):

"The Gilded Age tarnished quickly; culture could not flourish in that environment. Those who could not accept their external milieu fled abroad like Henry James. As for those who remained, perhaps the most significant of all was William James. He gave this attitude of compromise and acquiescence a name: he called it

pragmatism: and the name stands not merely for his own philosophy, but for something in which that philosophy was deeply if unconsciously entangled, the spirit of a whole age."

In *The Pillage of the Past*, I find Mr Mumford influenced by Mr Brooks on the subject of Henry James, brilliant on Mrs Jack Gardner and her museum, and succinct, but not entirely satisfactory, on Henry Adams who should have been more of a source book and also more of a problem for *The Golden Day*. The final chapter contains a vicious attack on phases of Dewey's instrumentalism. Discussing Santayana, with independence and sympathy, Mr Mumford had said: "When we are integrated, we grow like the tree: the solid trunk of the past, and the cambium layer where life and growth take place, are unified and necessary to each other. If the pragmatists had read this lesson from history, they would not have sunk entirely into the contemporary scene; and if the pillagers of the past had realized this truth, their efforts to establish a background would not have been so superficial."

Through Dewey and Dreiser and others we trace the age settling into the mire of the present, missing the power and the glory and the kingdom because they have not been sought together—only power, with its unstable kingdom and its tarnished glory.

And then, in a brief *envoi* Mr Mumford mentions a few desirable things, cites the names of Sherwood Anderson, Edna St Vincent Millay, Eugene O'Neill, and Waldo Frank, and rather surprisingly sounds an *Allons!* to conceiving a new world, in a philosophy "oriented as completely toward Life as the dominant thought since Descartes has been directed towards the Machine." I say surprisingly, not because I think Mr Mumford a romantic pessimist. I do find his robustness at times forced, but I think his zest and interest are actually dominant qualities in his make-up. The surprise is that the final chapter should be so brief, should give so little to go on with.

I think it worth noting that although this study of America easily classifies itself in the category of all romantic yearnings for the happier past, it does not suffer from the sentimental faults of most revisitations. I have said that I am not entirely in sympathy with Mr Mumford's ideas and this must be, essentially, because I do not

find the Golden Day so pure, nor the Gilded Age so cheap as he does, although it must have been bad enough. In regard to morals and manners it is arguable that our present is only a degeneration of the Gilded Age, and yet it has its points of attraction. They are trivial points, no doubt, and their sum, even, will go only a short way to help us to know "what it means to live a whole life"; but they exist and if we are not to separate ourselves from the world, if we are to live complete lives, not as Thoreau, but in the crowd, we can appreciate, value correctly, and subdue to our uses everything from fast motor cars to quantum theory.

Mr Mumford's indifference to superficial America is a mark of his seriousness. His whole book is an attack on protestantism and industrialism; his ideal position is that of the humanist. Actually I discover overtones of protestantism in him. He cares for unity—a classic ideal—with a puritanic fervour. And it happens that America is all scattered and diverse, a circumstance which offends Mr Mumford so much that in his whole book there is hardly a reference to the side of American life which balances, or at least matches, the influence of the pioneer. I mean the influence of the immigrant. The Golden Day thus becomes the story of the rise and decline of the Anglo-Saxon in America; quite possibly that is the central episode of our first hundred years as a nation. That it can continue to have supreme importance in the second hundred years I consider doubtful. If we are to persist and create a culture we will have to master the machine, we will have to order our own chaos, we will have to create new values; all these things Mr Mumford makes imperative, with passion and persuasiveness. I think only that his terms of reference are not wide enough, that a certain urbane catholicism is wanting. But philologically, whatever is urbane is regarded with suspicion by Mr Mumford.

GILBERT SELDES

THE POETRY OF THOMAS HARDY

COLLECTED POEMS OF THOMAS HARDY. 12mo. 818 pages. *The Macmillan Company.* \$3.50.

THE collected poems of Thomas Hardy go far to suggest the truth of the view that the tragic ways of feeling, though less animated than the buoyant, are more alive. It is surely not often that one finds in the ranks of the merely affirmative such extremity of consciousness, such magnitude and delicacy of sentience as is implied in Thomas Hardy's courageous and sombre honesty of question.

His greatest sympathies being for life's most living moments, his themes naturally must come from the realms of passion; by nature he seems passionately unresigned, scornful of the glassy consolations of philosophy, hostile to the machine of the world, sleepless in the militance of his pity. Seldom, surely, has characteristic woman, who is likewise so feelingly alive, had a profounder sympathizer than Thomas Hardy, or a painter better endowed or more faithful to set forth her actualities of being in full character and colour.

To designate the creative emotion of Thomas Hardy as pessimistic seems a meagre description indeed. Pessimism implies an acceptance of the world at its worst, with a particular acceptance of the inevitability of human frailty. Though Thomas Hardy is not an optimist, it would be a misappreciation of the fidelity with which he depicts lives laid waste by passion and frailty and fate to suppose that he accepts them as the pessimist accepts them. He does not. It is not pessimism but compassion; it is his enormous earnestness to exact a "full look at the Worst" that gives pungency and tragic point to his large sombre masterpieces of depiction. Euripides is cited as the ancient exemplar of the force of pity in a great temperament; and one can make no doubt of the force of his rebel resolution. So with Thomas Hardy, one should not mistake composure for resignation, or sombreness for surrender.

Mr Hardy employs the lyric form in two ways: perhaps most

numerously he uses it as narrative in small, the history of a heart; again, he uses it more purely as the voice of a single feeling and moment. It is of the first mode, possibly, that he is most thinking when he describes his poems, which he does more than once, as "dramatic and personative"—"and this even when they are not obviously so." But is he ever dramatic except in the drama of the closet, the drama of contemplation? His present lyric speakers seem no more detached dramatically from the powerfully conditioning regard of their author than the persons of his fiction; they are as heavily umbered with the darkness and the fires of his general emotional intent. He is not the dramatist, the emotional mimic throwing himself utterly into a projected *rôle*. He is the sympathetic contemplator, seeing life best, and best setting it forth in ample views, views coloured with his special feeling, views in which the living forms are seen against a background hardly less living, hardly less feelingly depicted than themselves. And doubtless it is a main factor in the force of his art that we do not see the subjects of his picturing detach themselves ever from their created atmosphere; that they rather appear illustriously *en bloc* with the whole dusk wealth of his total affection by life. For this reason one cannot but feel that in comparison with the men and women of his novels, the persons of his lyrics often appear at a disadvantage. They too have their story which is to be told; yet it must be told here with but a scant share of that breathing magnificence of setting which only he, working with sumptuous sombre tenderness, in the full scope enabled by the novel or the closet drama, could give.

The lyrics in his stricter mode, voicing a single personal feeling or moment of expression, seem for the most part poetically superior to his semi-narrative poems. In the purer of them he finely intensifies his prevailing feeling; and these are as beautiful as they are characteristic, as for example, First or Last:

"If grief come early
Joy comes late,
If joy come early
Grief will wait;
Aye, my dear and tender!

Wise ones joy them early
 While the cheeks are red,
 Banish grief till surly
 Time has dulled their dread.

And joy being ours
 Ere youth has flown,
 The later hours
 May find us gone;
 Aye, my dear and tender!"

Yet it is difficult in general to describe his sombre power and density of feeling as *song*; its extremest poignance is quiet and seems a little stopped in timbre. Is there really much harmony between the ultimate singing, the piercing utter purity that we look for in lyric poetry, and these dark spreading swells of feeling? The lyric is intense, not massive. It is made, perhaps, as much by the heart's exclusions as by its takings. To sing to the top of singing in one theme, it is possibly needed that one shall be insensitive to others, for the moment to all others. But what if the heart be pan-aesthetic? And has it not been Thomas Hardy's characteristic preoccupation to be appealed to at large by the surpassing transient loveliness and the pain and cruelty of the entire world of life within his ken? The fact, possibly, is that so in-specific, so all-mirroring a mood may by its native potency inspire powerful emotional utterance, but we are expecting a good deal if we expect it frequently to sing to the top of singing.

The shaped ecstasy, the skilled extremity of the certain lyric are things one finds here only with some searching. These serried ranks of powerful verse suggest a great emotional vitality; but they suggest too, a possible infrequency of that intuitive yet cultivated felicity of choice among moments and means, which, one would think, the lyric poet, before all artists, should have; for though something, no doubt, can be made of every mood and every impression, it is evidently not all such that sweep clear to the true flight. And there are here, perhaps, other lyric deficiencies. It is not apparent that the lyric talents are identical with the depictive; nor is it clear that great emotional endowment guarantees that the poet shall write infallibly in "the tongue of heaven"; Mr Hardy, one is obliged to notice, does not. Where few equal him

in force and volume of pronouncement, several pass him in technique of utterance. There is that about his rhythm, his vowel structure, his diction, his occasionally libertarian idiom which suggests a not very adept command of the technical resources of the art; for many of his verses he appears not overlong to have "searched the alphabet for letters soft." There seem, indeed, to be some intermissions in his sense of language; for example, his not strictly chastened penchant for coining and compounding words. It is a difficult pleasure which the ear can take, if it can take any, in such locutions as *noonshine*, *mindsight*, *scareless*, *bloomage*, *wormwood-worded*, *foredame*, *phasmal*, however skilfully they may be fitted in their context; the somewhat problematical charm of freshness which they achieve seems hardly to compensate for their summary buffeting of one's established expectations. And while such words no doubt represent the extreme of his licence, the tendency of which they are the culmination is perhaps best indicated by saying that he is, amid his so keenly sympathetic watch o'er man's mortality, somewhat careless of the possibilities of strict taste, of the "ear industrious and attention meet" of that verbal craftsman who ought to reside in every poet.

But whatever a reader may think of the general technical qualities of music in these poems, their body and dignity of significance as a poetry of humanity and their force of feeling are too great to be other than attentively and respectfully received. Whoever cares for honesty and courage of view should certainly find them in these passages of deep feeling, of which the word *unflinching*, perhaps, is a term more accurately descriptive than the word *pessimistic*. It is easy enough, of course, to find and to dwell upon the many moments and poems in which the poet seems over-inclined toward the numb nullity of pessimism. But the careful-minded reader will hardly feel justified in neglecting those other poems, such as "For Life I Had Never Cared Greatly" or The Lacking Sense, God-forgotten, Mute Opinion, On a Fine Morning, and others, in which an evidently different note is sounded; such pieces are not numerous perhaps, but they are several. At all events it can be no specious affirmative that shall hope to face Thomas Hardy's dark force, whether that force be considered a force of question or one of denial.

CHARLES K. TRUEBLOOD

BRIEFER MENTION

TRUMPS, A Collection of Short Stories, compiled by the Community Workers of the New York Guild for the Jewish Blind (10mo, 348 pages; Putnam: \$2) is a thoroughly democratic compilation, with Willa Cather's *A Gold Slipper* seated alphabetically beside Octavus Roy Cohen's *The Lion and the Uniform*, and with John Galsworthy and Sam Hellman rubbing literary elbows. It contains, in general, the second-string work of first-string writers and the first-string work of second-string writers. There is ample variety, and even in the stories of minor importance, one finds technical skill and sound observation.

THE GOLDEN DANCER, by Cyril Hume (12mo, 261 pages; Doran: \$2) veers as sharply away from his second novel as his second did from his first; Mr Hume is one of the younger writers promisingly free from the sin of complacency. His work is still experimental, but it is not thin. Here he celebrates a certain lyric quality which runs like a vein of fine gold through commonplace people leading ordinary lives; the poet is never quite submerged in the novelist. *The Golden Dancer* is romance touched with rhapsody.

THE EXQUISITE PERDITA, by E. Barrington (12mo, 377 pages; Dodd, Mead: \$2.50) further extends the author's growing gallery of historical persons dipped in fiction. Here Sheridan and Garrick and the sometime mistress of George the Fourth are given a coating of the same confection which has previously made the lives of Lord Nelson and Lady Hamilton and of Byron quite palatable to a considerable number of readers. The stuff is sweetly stilted and smoothly applied; it presents an adequate picture of the period, and it does no serious violence to the incidents with which it deals.

DESERT: A Legend, by Martin Armstrong (12mo, 275 pages; Harpers: \$2.50) lacks oases. One cannot work up much enthusiasm over it—even by irrigation.

Almost any poem among the **SELECTED POEMS OF EDITH M. THOMAS**, edited with a *Memoir* by Jessie B. Rittenhouse (12mo, 247 pages; Harpers: \$2) will serve to illustrate the purity and keeping, of her lyric gift; but the sonnets, perhaps, show it most at ease within its range. The poems in general bespeak an emotional experience rising naturally into a certain fine clarity of song; and this formed fine smoothness does not break, but does it not sometimes yield? Of the sonnets, however, this could not be said. One might think of Keats, to be sure, in reading the sonnet *Music*, or the sonnet *Ephemera*, or *Frost*, or *Migration*; but one does not, in hearing of the moths, those "Candle-elves," or in seeing "the clover toss its purples on the breeze." One takes such things quite for themselves, for they are current gold.

THE CANDLE IN THE CABIN, by Vachel Lindsay (8vo, 130 pages; Appleton: \$2). Mr Vachel Lindsay seeks to evoke in characteristic rhythms his responses to the deeds of Indian heroes and his appreciation of "untamed nature." There is much in his expression which fulfills "the dreams of his sleeping passions" and there is still more that betrays sterility and an absence of "that perfect fidelity to one's own inward presentation" without which great poetry is impossible. His pen-and-ink illustrations have the freshness and originality that one discovers in the drawings of children. On the whole, this volume will not add to Mr Vachel Lindsay's reputation.

THE PSALMS, translated by J. M. Powis Smith (8vo, 274 pages; University of Chicago Press: \$3). Such readers as could charge this translation of the Psalms with being less sonorous than the King James version, admit to caring for sound irrespective of meaning. With a desire to enlarge our understanding of "the thought and feeling of the original," Doctor Smith presents decisions of interpretation which must, by their scholarly exactness and stateliness of expression, command gratitude. Appended also are Textual Notes and comment upon the spirit and purpose of the Psalter.

TECHNIQUE IN DRAMATIC ART, by Halliam Bosworth (illus., 12mo, 438 pages; Macmillan: \$2.50) covers a range of topics. "Some actors have names which do not sound well for theatrical use. In such cases they should change them for the stage." "The ticking of a clock helps greatly to create atmosphere." "The effect of a turned-up nose can be secured without putty." "The element of the pause pertains mostly to the feelings . . ." An exhaustive guide to grease paint, the tricks of acting, and so forth. The theories canvassed serve only as introduction to hard facts.

READ AMERICA FIRST, by Robert Littell (12mo, 389 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$2) is delectable shadow-boxing with the Babbitts—even-tempered, observant, and well-aimed. Mr Littell's wit is nimble without being self-conscious; he thinks on his feet. He plays with pet American shibboleths without resentment; his thrusts are gay and cover a wide range of foibles. Beneath them all is a note of understanding, for the writer belongs to the category of those whom he has himself admirably characterized as "citizens of America who can distinguish her wine from her lees, and yet drink down both together."

THE FALL OF ROBESPIERRE and Other Essays, by Albert Mathiez, translated from the French by Catherine Alison Phillips (8vo, 249 pages; Knopf: \$4). This book is likely to be of more interest to a student of the French Revolution than to the general reader. Professor Mathiez offers many unpublished documents with the avowed intention of presenting Robespierre as a "just and clear-sighted statesman who lived but for the good of his country"; and so convincing is the evidence he produces that we presently come to envisage the young lawyer in this light, this young Arras lawyer who announced in 1792 that "Louis must die, that the country may live" and who up to his last day "wore knee-breeches and silk stockings."

CRITICAL ESSAYS, by Osbert Burdett (12mo, 169 pages; Holt: \$2). It may be recalled that Mr Burdett is the author of that accomplished little book on the Nineties called *The Beardsley Period*. In this present collection of essays he displays the same cultured taste, and the same discrimination, a discrimination attendant upon reflection. His subjects range from the works of Nathaniel Hawthorne to the art of Charlie Chaplin. If his admiration for George Meredith and Coventry Patmore seems to the present reviewer somewhat exaggerated, this favouritism is atoned for by other judgements subtle and accurate. Especially well pointed is the essay entitled *The Effect of Printing on Literature* in which Mr Burdett traces the results of the modern accessibility of books upon the art of writing. Facetiousness, haste, facile thinking are not to be discovered in these essays. Their dignity, perhaps a little Victorian in tone, combined with their literary temper should ensure them an appreciative reading among an eclectic minority.

CORNISH GRANITE, *Extracts from the Writings and Speeches of Lord Courtney of Penwith*, compiled by E. C. M. Stuart and E. Satterthwaite, with introduction by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch (16mo, 207 pages; Leonard Parsons: 6s) is a volume of extracts from the speeches and writings of Lord Courtney who, for many years represented South-east Cornwall in Parliament. The major part of the book is concerned with problems of government. Lord Courtney, in watching the slow shifting of ideas and party movements in England, arrived at conclusions with regard to fundamentals of government, and his brief, shrewd comments are generally illuminating. His philosophy is largely that of Jeremy Bentham; his religion, a questioning discontent as it were, with the modern church's "accommodation of the religion of Christ to the world."

INTERNATIONAL ANARCHY, 1904-1914, by G. Lowes Dickinson (8vo, 505 pages; Century: \$3.50) is a history of the diplomatic triumphs, each more diplomatic than the last, which laid infallible trains to the late Armageddon; the author painstakingly gathered his evidence from the vast detritus of official war histories, texts of secret treaties, memoirs of high personages, and so on. The tale is very little, one of economic and population pressures, which supply so much of the underlying impulsion to our modern slaughters; but it expounds clearly and with all possible historic continence, the other sinister axioms of international anarchy that lead to war; for example—(1) the two poles about which the psychoses of nations revolve are national honour, that is, lust of the prestige that goes with power, and the creed that the only right is might; (2) it is inconsistent with national honour—to be defended at what cost soever—to let any of one's neighbours get the best of one in a deal for power; (3) international diplomacy is the trade secret of those few whose business it is, and these, if they are not actually criminal, rarely proceed on motives that would not be considered in private affairs as either cynical or dishonourable, and usually both; (4) the psychology of peoples from moment to moment is largely in the hands of a press whose chief consideration is to "sell the paper"; (5) no nation wants war, but all arm for it; (6) all armaments are defensive, but the best defence is offence.

IDEALS OF CONDUCT, by John Dashiell Stoops (12mo, 375 pages; Macmillan: \$2.25). We have in this book, a comparison of the old ethnic order of Hebrew life, with that of pre-Socratic Greece; a consideration of such moral detachment as is exemplified in Jeremiah and in Socrates; and an examination of Christian and of Socratic inner idealism as enriching objective organized interests. One covets for such books, an exquisite aesthetic simplicity, but would not dwell upon defects, welcoming as one does, the author's unselfish, thoughtful scrutiny of present problems of behaviour and his conviction that private morality must include the interests of family, property, and state.

CIVILISATION OR CIVILISATIONS, An Essay on the Spenglerian Philosophy of History, by E. H. Goddard and P. A. Gibbons, with introduction by F. C. S. Schiller (10mo, 245 pages; Boni & Liveright: \$2.50). For those who have read Spengler this book is unnecessary; for those who have not they would probably secure more profit by going to the original publication of this celebrated philosophic speculator. In the present volume one discovers, diluted and synthesized, the same ingenious and ponderous theory which is to be found in the German's impressive work, a work the main thesis of which, though incredible to many serious students of history, is yet, in its erudition and method of presentation, so "formidable, lugubrious, and passionate."

WHAT IS CIVILIZATION? by Maurice Maeterlinck, Dhan Gopal Mukerji, and others (8vo, 216 pages; Duffield: \$2.50). The consensus of this symposium appears to be that civilization is a sort of poor-box—all contributions gratefully received. Those of India are enumerated by Mr Mukerji, those of Africa by W. E. Burghardt Du Bois, those of Greece by Paul Shorey, while Maeterlinck fills a couple of chapters as the spokesman for Egypt. And Elizabeth Robins Pennell thinks that America's contribution is bad manners in the subway. All the papers are competent and interesting, although it must be admitted that they leave civilization much where they found it, which is perhaps inevitable and just as well.

THINKING ABOUT THINKING, by Cassius J. Keyser (16mo, 91 pages; Dutton: \$1). With admirable explicitness Professor Keyser defines the three main divisions of thought—organic, empirical, and autonomous or postulational. His interest is not in the transformation which thought undergoes as it leaps, shrinks, or crawls crookedly forward under the whip lash of instinct. He is concerned with the organization of knowledge into verifiable systems, not only in the field of mathematics, but in that of the social sciences as well, nor does he exclude ethics. His brief, for it is a brief, is in the service of postulational thinking whose history he traces from its first appearance with Euclid up to our present day where it flowers for the first time in abundance. The book is so modest in its claims, and is written with such clarity, cogency, and toleration that it can hardly fail to interest any one at all interested in that least appreciated of the arts, namely the art of controlling, and presenting in harmonious patterns the multiform and diverse concepts of the human intellect.

MODERN ART

ALTHOUGH Gaston Lachaise has been widely recognized as a sculptor of importance these ten years past it is still the "might have been" aspect of his career that fastens the attention. Those who first made acquaintance with his talent in the Bourgeois Galleries in 1918 saw possibilities in the public use of it that are not yet realized. They already saw, those early connoisseurs, that the "public use," depending as it usually does upon committees, would be difficult, but they little suspected how difficult it was to be. Lachaise's art is not the kind that pleases committees. There is nothing pretty about it, nothing light nor reminiscent of the fashions of recent years. On the contrary it makes an unusual demand upon the spectator. Lachaise's sculpture, as much as the painting of Braque, requires the party of the second part to have a sensitive feeling for beauty in the abstract. At least I think it is abstract beauty that makes the appeal when the student is swayed by an ideal astonishingly different from his own. Lachaise's own feeling in the matter is far from being abstract, it's concrete enough. His ideal female of the species, to come to the point at once, is fat. He is so innocent about it, however, so intense and certain of his conviction, that I suppose it must surprise him fully as much to see the models of the day, dictated by the rue de la Paix, as it surprises committees to see what he puts forth himself. The actual creative feeling back of his art can be explained interestingly enough, I suppose, by Freud, but not Freud nor any other scientist can explain away the right of an artist to express beauty upon his own terms, nor minimize the positive achievements of Lachaise in that line. The two big Venuses that I saw in 1918 and 1920, and which have never yet been put into stone or bronze, seemed fat only in the first minute or two of inspection. After that they became, and have remained, immensely satisfactory works of art, alive and beautiful. In fact I say "fat" only because that is the word opposing critics have used. I feel sure that if actual measurements were taken they would not be found to be revoltingly larger than most of the Venuses that have won the world's renown—including that one from Milo. That one from Milo, I believe I

have already said elsewhere, would not herself stand much chance with the officials of to-day, being more, I am persuaded, a product of the fields than of the town, and committees are exclusively town. It is not anyway so much a question of bulk, with Lachaise, as a certain largeness in scale. There was something in those two Venuses that started most of Lachaise's friends to imagining the new Statues to Liberty that he would be doing, the statues in scale to the new architecture. Here, at last, they all thought, is the man for the New York job—but the nearest he ever came to it was the design for the allegorical figure in the new Telephone Building,¹ a design afterward rejected, it was said, because it was thought the public would fear "that" was the reason for the increase in the cost of telephone calls. A hideous charge against New Yorkers, if true. But of course it is not true—merely bad psychology—for even the dullest New Yorkers know that one statue in a vestibule would not appreciably affect telephone charges. But the failure of the telephone people to see the chance to do a really gracious act for their subscribers was only a minor tragedy compared with the packing away into store-houses of the two plaster Venuses and the halting of Lachaise in the production of things on the grand scale. That is the real accusation against the times we live in and against the state of art-patronage in America in particular. There is no rich person, apparently, with sufficient feeling for serious art to wish to do something handsome for the age in the way of monumental sculpture. There is no public place in New York that the people themselves yearn to see decorated. What is the use in attempting an ornament for a "place" or a public square that is always in process of change? Were there one spot in the Metropolis that positively called for sculpture, one of the usual "publicity campaigns" might be undertaken for Lachaise and "the people," always docile in the long run, might be induced to subscribe the necessary funds. But since there is no such spot the only alternative is to wait as patiently as possible for the miracle that is to produce it—city control of architecture must arrive sometime—and to keep Lachaise groomed against the day.

But I prolong the lugubrious note unduly. The grooming process has in itself produced a series of noble portraits, an imposing piece of garden sculpture, and a host of small bronzes, and when

¹ Reproduced in *THE DIAL*, December, 1922.

these things were recently shown in the Intimate Gallery, none marvelled at them more greatly than Lachaise's fellow sculptors. The voice of criticism was not raised at all. There was nothing but praise; and gratification for the way in which the sculptures explained each other. There had been some astonishment expressed at the first portraits, shown singly, for in them, as in everything else, Lachaise had shown a largeness of spirit that suggested he had been thinking inwardly of niches in the Escorial or some other such vast edifice, and that again patrons would have to do some tearing down and re-building—as for the two regretted Venuses—before the busts could be employed. But owing merely to a little matter of sympathy in the arrangement, the Intimate Gallery was able to dissipate this fear, and to relate all the busts and ornamental pieces so perfectly that all thought of sizes vanished. If miracles have been slow in coming to Lachaise, this at least was one, for the Intimate Gallery is as tiny as its title implies, and an acceptable installation of Lachaise's wilful carvings had not been anticipated. It may augur that at length the season for miracles has been ushered in.

HENRY McBRIDE



Courtesy of the Kraushaar Galleries

WOMAN'S HEAD. BY GASTON LACHAISE

THE THEATRE

I DO not believe that any one is so utterly ill-advised as to depend exclusively upon this department for a well-balanced account of plays in New York. The reason for noting this is that, a few nights ago, I went to the theatre and discovered, folded into my programme, a dodger for *THE CONSTANT WIFE*, the play by Somerset Maugham which I made little of in every possible way when I reviewed it in these pages. In this advertisement I found:

Ethel Barrymore, radiant to behold, provides a quite delightful evening in the theatre.—Alexander Woollcott, in *The World*.

It is a deft and sparkling comedy, and in the hands of Miss Barrymore it is pure gold.—George S. Kaufman, in *The New York Times*.

Miss Barrymore is very successful in Mr. Maugham's new play, one of the suavest of the year's comedies; she was humorous, adroit, intelligent.—Percy Hammond, in *The Herald-Tribune*.

To our readers we can only suggest that they go and see the thing for themselves. They will be happier for it, and they may even be better husbands, wives and fellow-citizens.—E. W. Osborn, in *The Evening World*.

As smart as a wise-cracking whip, as stinging and as graceful. I do hereby commend "The Constant Wife" for scintillating refreshment.—John Anderson, in *The Evening Post*.

Not to speak of the enthusiasms of the tabloids. Mr Stark Young, of *The New Republic*, disliked the show, as I recall; and I can hardly believe that Mr Nathan was altogether taken in.

My present recollection of *THE CONSTANT WIFE* is of a comedy several cuts below the author's *TOO MANY HUSBANDS*; a play full of strained smartness, with Maugham's usual theatrical deftness, which is admirable. The production, on the second night, when none of the gentlemen quoted above saw it, lacked cohesion and pace; Miss Barrymore giggled or otherwise indicated to the audience that she had said something brilliant at the end of every supposedly witty speech; the rest of the cast was without magnetism, several good actors playing far below their form. All the usual distinction of the average English smart comedy was lacking.

The box-office proved that Mr Young and I were captious and ungenerous; or perhaps proved that the critics can make a play a success if they praise it enough. It proved more. The critics of the daily press respond with some precision to the theatre audiences, particularly at the level of light comedy. And I suspect that these critics are looking for other qualities in such plays and are judging them by other standards than the removed critics of weekly and monthly journals. There is no proof that the latter are absolutely right.

This does not in any way shake my judgement on *THE CONSTANT WIFE*; I still hold that a good memory for other plays and productions would rank it extremely low. And I think it worth while to note specifically the disparity of judgement, and to suggest that something more than "difference of opinion" is involved. There is actual difference of intention, difference of experience, and difference of standards.

All of the above may be taken as prelude to a review of *SPREAD-EAGLE*, a play about which I agree with almost all of the newspaper reviewers. It is produced by Jed Harris, whom every lover of the theatre wishes well because he produced *BROADWAY*, and it has at times some of the same expertness in production. It has not the same expertness in the script. The play begins in the office of an American *entrepreneur* who has made a fortune out of bad army supplies in the late war and who is now involved in Mexican industries; between this master of finance and his cynical secretary a devilish plot for skullduggery in Mexico is cooked and the son of an ex-President of the United States is sent out to certain death, i.e., to become the certain cause of American intervention. We next see the devil's work done, and by radio, announcements in the auditorium, and movies, we see America plunged again into war. The financier becomes a dollar-a-year-man again and goes down to the scene of action. There a cocky general gloats over the blood-letting (so much better than manoeuvres) and the sacrificed boy returns miraculously to life; the secretary saves the financier, but, too disgusted to remain in his employ, joins the army and thereby gives justification to the finest snapping curtain line of the season. The first and third acts are both too long; the authors, Messrs Brooks and Lister, correctly let the third languish a little

in order to give the whipcrack to the end, but they went too far; and the result is that the news-reel remains the outstanding part of the play, the part filled with devastating satire. Apart from that the character of the secretary is perfectly realized, and perfectly played by Mr Osgood Perkins.

A week after the opening of *HER CARDBOARD LOVER*, I was unable to see why the firstnighters had so clamorously demanded an individual curtain-call for Mr Leslie Howard who played the lover extremely well. The usual explanation is that the audience was not so terribly pleased with Miss Jeanne Eagels who in that play returned to New York after her long siege in *RAIN*. If that explanation is right, the audience showed discrimination, for Miss Eagels had only two good scenes, each of about two minutes' duration. The rest of the time she was an extremely experienced and accomplished actress brilliantly miscast. *HER CARDBOARD LOVER*, in the diminished version offered to New York, was altogether artificial; it demanded the unreal chattering clicking style of production which we have developed for French farces when we have sufficiently purified them. That convention of production is a good one and a few of our comediennes positively flourish in it; Mr Howard fell into it perfectly. Miss Eagels remained outside it, the cat that walked by herself. She was thoroughly in the play when she began to throw off her clothes at the telephonic orders of a lover and quite exquisite when, by the divination of a coffee-cup which refused to tremble, she became aware, to her own bewilderment, of her indifference to that lover. For the rest, Mr Howard not only was absurd and correctly unreal in the comedy, he actually carried the Wodehousian extravaganza of fake suicides and shattered flowerpots to a fine point.

The Theatre Guild continues a season exceptionally domestic in character with *THE SECOND MAN*, by S. N. Behrman, a light comedy in which Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne are excellent and Margalo Gillmore and Earle Larrimore are pretty good and good in that order. Miss Gillmore was permitted or encouraged to express girlish spirits by a peculiar movement from the heel to the toe as she walked; Mr Lunt as a hack-writer was continuously catching not only his ideas, but his pencil and paper, on the wing.

As usual under Mr Moeller's direction, the style of the play wavered between artificial and realistic, neither style ever being perfectly achieved. My guess is that the playwright's intention was to produce an artificial comedy out of which the truth of character and communication might transpire. The wit of the lines could not, therefore, be checked by discussing their dramatic propriety; wit itself became a functioning element in the play, in the sense that the motive behind a wisecrack explained one character and affected another. Because I felt this at moments I think that Mr Behrman is legitimately in the theatre, not only by ambition, but by natural feeling.

The bill which makes mandatory a padlock on any theatre in which an indecent play is produced, has become a law with the signature of a Governor who seems to have a decided feeling, in other regards, for human liberty. There is one element in American character which, I suspect, will largely invalidate the workings of the Wales law; that is our notorious dislike of expropriation. Those called on to judge the indecency of a play will have well in mind the fact that padlocking a theatre for a year is not like padlocking a night club; the night club moves across the street; but the theatre is firm fixed and if it is locked it may lose for its owner a quarter of a million dollars. Faced with this, the new censors will certainly want proof of intention, even if they are not entitled to it by law; they will not easily condemn. On the other side we have the pusillanimity of the producers, already made notorious by the case of *THE CAPTIVE* (where the movies were disastrously implicated). I foresee a year or so of pussyfooting and perhaps two or three years in which no play will be produced for its smut alone. After that the comedy of prohibition will begin to play itself again and the theatre will be pretty much what it has always been. Except for the meddlers. About them, something drastic will have to be done.

GILBERT SELDES

MUSICAL CHRONICLE

GORGED with whole live guinea-pigs, the sluggish pythons who regularly compose Mr Stokowski's New York audience, lay in digestive stupor. Arcanes, Varèse's invention, was being performed. Only a few scattered hisses and twitches confessed deep slumbers troubled. On the platform, the conductor patiently tugged at his orchestra. Frightened, the band was unable to acquit itself of its normal fullness of sound. (A similar uncertainty had paralysed it during its first performance of *Le Sacre*.) Varèse and Stokowski none the less being the stronger, enormous over Carnegie Hall there fell the shadow of Leonardo da Vinci.

Arcanes is music born of Leonardo's synoptical and comprehensive type of vision. The orientation in the present universe which it induces is suggestive of the breadth of his personality. A passion for discovery in Varèse appears to be referred to the technique of art, and the exciting scientific perspectives of the day related to his new emotional and auditory experiences, with something of the inevitability with which the process possessed his illustrious archetype. The new tone-structure does not a little to bring us close to the bourne of the feeling moving both the contemporary scientific and the contemporary sensuous man; and while instantaneously exposing the unity in our world, divided and specialized much like that of the Renaissance, adumbrates the rôle of the art-work of the future. Not frequently has the prime importance which a new synthetic intelligence of the capacity of the Vincian's would have for us, been so apparent.

The form of Arcanes is to be regarded as an "immense and liberal" development of the passacaglia form, and an exposition, scherzo, and recapitulation. A basic idea, the banging eleven-note phrase which commences the work *fortissimo*, is subjected to a series of expansions and contractions given to very large orchestra and percussion players. The treatment yielded, in performance, a series of metallic tone-complexes compulsive of extraordinary space-projection. Bristling with overtones as a castle with turrets and a dinosaur with warts, the almost unbearably straining

chords shot feeling tall into distances. Part of Varèse's method involved a number of air-pockets, suspensions of sound between various thematic metamorphoses; and the resulting volumnear accentuation merely augmented the excitement of the emotionally conceived relationships between a series of precisely delimited, dynamically ejaculated sound-bursts. As the high-tensioned piece proceeded, and feelings found cold interstellar regions, and material volumes signalled and responded to each other, a fantastic habituation to the gloomy valleys and arches of the non-human universe impended. The final variation of a subsidiary theme, given to contrabass-clarinet, bassoon, clarinet, and muted trumpets and trombones, came like a long-awaited answer to intuitive searchings in some unexplored portion of the cosmos; or sudden vision of a new constellation hanging jewel-like before the eye of the telescope. So largely is the impulse which bore the brusque music of Arcanes that which the Germans call *Bemächtigungstrieb*; and so sympathetic is it to the highly sublimated form which the desire to control and dominate an environment takes among researchers, scientific discoverers, and engineers (Varèse studied engineering, his father's profession) that it appears to have found the way to its own more abstract and sentimental field through their numerical expressions and material symbols, converting them into emblems of larger value.

On the title-page of the score appears a quotation from the Hermetic Philosophy of the "Monarch of Arcana," Paracelsus the Great: "One star exists higher than all the rest. This is the Apocalyptic star. The second star is that of the ascendant. The third is that of the elements and of these there are four: so that six stars are established. Besides these there is still another star, imagination, which begets a new star and a new heaven." As appropriately, Arcanes might have borne the phrase of Leonardo's: "The greater the consciousness, the greater the love." More directly even than from the instinct of control, the composition seems to proceed from the feeling of the unity in present things; and to move toward a form for the entire man of the times. The genuine, large, satisfying, smoky, and metallic sonorities, completely free from the iachism of Debussy and his period; the gorgeous explosive violence, its brutal quality mixed so considerably with the

feeling of thought, of the cerebral processes; the dry nervous vibration of the Chinese blocks; the high erotic tension converted into the impulse to "find out," gathered different emotional strands together and showed them single. Deep within one felt the force which thrusts up towers of steel and stone to scrape the clouds, seeking here, there, again and again, to break through the hopelessly dirtied crust of life into new clear regions. Balked, it returned persistently to the breach; till finally a new light, a new god, answered its wild penetrations from afar. That was the emotional aesthetic man no less than the scientific technical one, and the communication of the singleness of the frustrate, battling, finding feeling evoked a world made one again.

PAUL ROSENFELD

COMMENT

The Sun's Light when he unfolds it
Depends on the Organ that beholds it

WILLIAM BLAKE

THOUSANDS of people can talk," Ruskin says, "for one who can think; but thousands can think for one who can see. To see clearly is poetry, prophecy, and religion all in one." A special kind of seeing, "mental strife," "rapture and labour," are characteristic of few persons indeed, and of no one perhaps to the degree in which they are characteristic of Blake. The incontrovertible actuality of seen impossibilities as he portrayed or told of them, we need scarcely be reminded of—as when in conversation he thus revisualized a fairy's funeral: "I heard a low and pleasant sound and knew not whence it came. At last I saw the broad leaf of a flower move and underneath I saw a procession of creatures of the size and color of green and grey grasshoppers, bearing a body laid out on a roseleaf, which they buried with songs, and then disappeared. It was a fairy's funeral." Contrariwise, "the spiritual apparition of a Flea" is fearsomely circumstantial—though in connexion with John Varley's "test of the truth of these visions" as recorded in *A Treatise on Zodiacal Physiognomy* it is interesting to read that "the neatness, elasticity, and tenseness of the Flea are significant of the elegant dancing and fencing sign, Gemini."

As for labour, "the hard wiry line of rectitude and certainty in the actions and intentions" of Blake teaches one to dispel all hope—and fear—that great art is "the fruit of facility." In a letter, the property of Mr W. A. White, written to James Linnell on August 25th, 1827, he says, "I am too much attached to Dante to think much of anything else. I have proved the six plates and reduced the Fighting devils ready for the copper. I count myself sufficiently paid if I live as I now do and only fear that I may be unlucky to my friends and especially that I may be so to you." He could "see," and could work—his home being not the age nor the house in which he lived, but his mind. The placing of a stone near the site of his grave in Bunhill Fields, and of a tablet to his memory in St Paul's, is rightly commemorative, as are reproductions and exhibitions of his works. In being urged to prepare for the Blake centenary, however, we are a little at a loss. If we are not already prepared, it is difficult to know how we are to become so.

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