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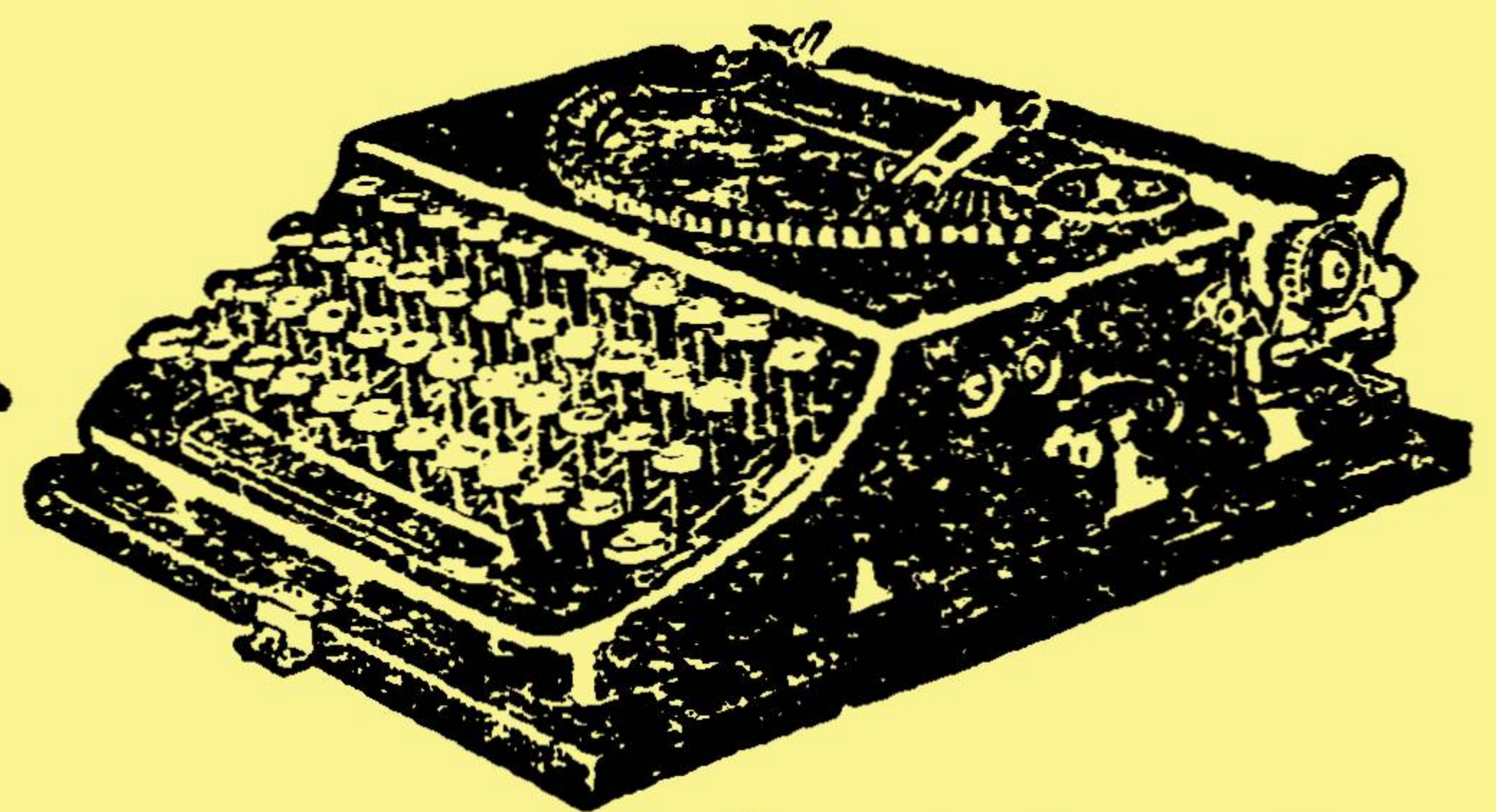


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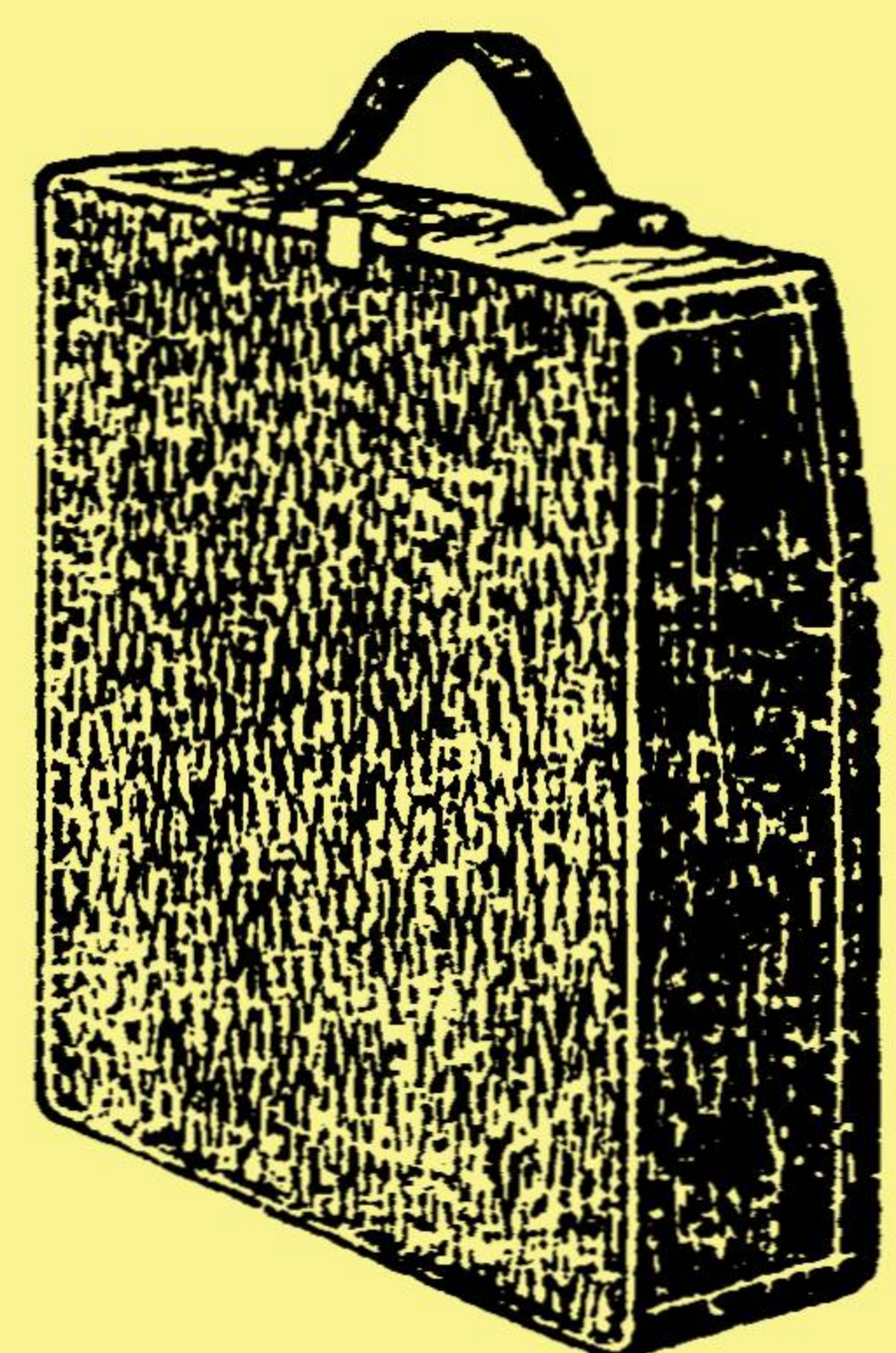
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The Adelphi

VOL. II. NO. 8.

JANUARY, 1925

POETRY, PHILOSOPHY, AND RELIGION

By John Middleton Murry

IN my last essay I gave an account of the spirit of the Renaissance out of which the modern Western consciousness was born. The Renaissance, I said, was a rebellion against the theory of the universe and of human life, held by and embodied in the mediæval Church; it was an assertion, or a re-assertion, of the right of the individual to prove all things for himself.

The complete expression of this movement of mind, of which we are the inheritors, is co-extensive with the whole spiritual activity of man—his art, his science, his politics, and his religion. In all these we can follow out the slow percolation of the great initial impulse: in those spiritual activities in which large bodies of men are inevitably involved—in politics and religion—not merely was the percolation slow, but the impulse itself was degraded, until to-day it can fairly be said that the ordinary thought of politics or religion lags hopelessly in the rear of the thought of science or art. It was necessary that this should be so, for neither in politics nor in religion was it possible to carry through that unfettered exploration of the universe by the individual, to which man dedicated himself at the Renaissance. In religion the issue was prejudged; therefore the exploring spirits held themselves aloof

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from it. And politics is not really an affair of the individual at all ; it is an affair of masses and therefore of crude approximations and still cruder caricatures. Political action, at best, could secure only the conditions of freedom—freedom of thought and freedom of speech. These once secured, the possibilities of politics as a field of expression for the free spirit of man were exhausted.

Only in art and science was the field truly adequate ; and between these one deep and clean division immediately appears. Science contains the exploration of the universe without, and literature (which is the only completely expressive art), contains the exploration of the universe within. Literature is essentially the expression of man's reaction to experience, whereas science is the investigation of the thing experienced. The object as it is in itself is the matter of science, the object as it is to me is the matter of literature. The division between these things is, of course, not absolute. The investigations of science into the object as it is in itself can change the object as it is to me. Keats and Charles Lamb were once heard to agree that science had taken all beauty out of the rainbow by explaining that it was caused by the refraction of light through drops of water. That was the utterance of momentary spleen. But there have been more durable interactions. There was, for instance, a change in the whole background of men's thoughts and feelings when they began to learn from science that the sun was an immense sphere of incandescent gas round which the earth revolved, instead of a convenient abode for angels dutifully circling round the earth. Their realization that the earth was certainly not the actual centre, and not obviously the spiritual focus of the universe began to colour the whole of their reaction to experience. But although the separation between literature and science is by no means absolute, we may distinguish between them for our purpose by saying that the exploration

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of the world without by science increased the opportunities and made urgent the necessity for literature to explore the universe within.

The inevitable effect of man's new freedom was to increase the tension of soul of those who availed themselves of it. Contradictory forces were immediately at strain in them. They had asserted the significance of man, and one of the first consequences of this assertion was to throw into a clear cold light man's insignificance: they rushed forth impetuously to discover the universe, and the first thing they discovered was that man was an exceedingly small part of it. The mediæval system against which they rebelled had placed man, with all his burden of original sin, beyond challenge at the pinnacle of creation: the new system—if we can call it a system—glorified man only to make him the plaything of a vast and inscrutable process. On the one hand a new trust in man's faculties and a new exercise of them: on the other a wholly new and disturbing doubt concerning man's destiny and purpose. Confidence and mistrust went hand in hand. The epoch of the divided soul had begun.

This internal warfare, this incessant struggle within man's soul for certainty, was the portion of literature after the Renaissance. To science fell the positive work of exploration, and science is never concerned with the effect of its results, but only with its results. Its wholly engrossing purpose is to discover objective truth: it is for other men to accommodate themselves to the objective truth discovered. It is sometimes said that this accommodation is the function of philosophy, and that these other men are the philosophers. I do not believe it. For the adjustment effected by philosophy, in so far as philosophy is a science at all and not a peculiar kind of poetry, is a purely intellectual adjustment; and because it is purely intellectual it is partial and unsatisfying. It is felt to be so by the

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philosophers themselves; and their real power might be measured by the extent of their spoken or unspoken admission that they are seeking to satisfy by the intellect alone an appetite that is more than intellectual. If they are great philosophers, they are either poets, like Plato or Lucretius or Spinoza, men who with their whole soul passionately contemplate the universe presented to them by their intellectual vision, or they are men of science, like Aristotle or Descartes, who include among the objects for their positive investigation the human faculties themselves. To make clear what I mean by the inadequacy of a philosophy which does not remain science or become poetry, I will take the words not of one of the great speculative masters of the past, but of one of the most distinguished philosophers of the present, the late F. H. Bradley.

When in the reason's philosophy the rational appears dominant and sole possessor of the world, we can only wonder what place would be left to it, if the element excluded might break through the charm of the magic circle, and without growing rational, might find expression. Such an idea may be senseless, and such a thought may contradict itself, but it serves to give voice to an obstinate instinct. Unless thought stands for something that falls beyond mere intelligence, if "thinking" is not used with some strange implication that never was part of the meaning of the word, a lingering scruple still forbids us to believe that reality can ever be purely rational. It may come from a failure in my metaphysics, or from a weakness of the flesh which continues to blind me, but the notion that existence should be the same as understanding strikes as cold and ghostlike as the dreariest materialism.

This "obstinate instinct," this "lingering scruple," to which Bradley gave utterance, is the stubborn protest of the whole being of man against the attempt to enforce upon it an allegiance to a truth created by a single part of it. And in the inward struggle for certainty, which either begins, or takes a new, acute and intimate form at the Renaissance, it is the whole

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being which has to be satisfied. What we need to remember is that the being makes different demands at different periods in human history : or rather it makes always the same demand which can be satisfied in different ways at different times. It seeks the freedom of its own unity. If it has been imprisoned in a dogmatism, it can find this freedom in a vision of the universe which to a man born into other conditions will be bleak and intolerable. To Lucretius, for example, the vision of the universe as a majestic mechanism was a cause of exaltation, because it liberated his soul from the dark fears of superstition and the terror of death : so also, when Spinoza contemplated the universe as a realm of Necessity, where what is cannot be otherwise, he was kindled to admiration and ecstasy, and it became a matter of wonder to him that men should refuse the stern comfort of their manifest destiny. Consider this sentence from the introduction to the third book of the Ethics, a sentence which contains Spinoza's central thought.

Most who have written on the emotions, the manner of human life, seem to have dealt not with natural things which follow the general laws of nature, but with things which are outside the sphere of nature : they seem to have conceived man in nature as a kingdom within a kingdom. For they believe that man disturbs rather than follows the course of nature, and that he has absolute power in his actions and is not determined in them by anything else than himself.

This inclusion of the internal world of freedom in the external world of necessity, which kindles in Spinoza the flame of " the intellectual love of God " might well be a nightmare menace to other minds in other times. But to Spinoza's soul it meant freedom, and not merely the freedom he had enjoyed in the process of reaching this certainty, but the deeper freedom which the free man finds in a voluntary and open-eyed submission to a principle far greater than himself.

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When, therefore, I say that philosophy is inadequate to the task of the adjustment of the human soul to truth, I am not denying that there have been philosophers who have attained this final goal. But they are more truly to be called poets : because they are men to whom their intellectual vision of the universe is a deeply felt reality, to which they react with their whole being. It is this reaction of the whole being which distinguishes the process of poetic comprehension : that is to say, the philosopher who attains to a vision of the universe which, with his whole being, he can accept for true—and these alone are the philosophers whose work makes an indelible impression upon us—becomes a poet. It is the complete acceptance by the philosopher of his own vision which matters ; it is that which excites and fascinates us in our turn. I do not believe there is much of this complete acceptance in what is called philosophy, and I believe that where it is found we are on safer ground and nearer to the truth if we call it poetry.

For the driving impulse of poetry is this striving towards a vision of life which the poet can completely accept. That may sound a dubious assertion. The obvious impulse of poetry, it may be said, is creativeness itself, the power to use words in such a way that they communicate to us, even compel us to feel, the thoughts and feelings which the poet desires to communicate. That, of course, is an essential, but it is also one which is assumed, a *datum*. We are concerned with the thoughts and feelings which the poet is impelled to communicate. He desires to communicate truth, and his truth is of a different kind from the truth of the scientist : it is the truth not of the object as it is, but of the object as it is to him : it is his own truth, the complex of related thoughts and feelings which seem to him significant and have gradually formed in him a habit of soul which is a vital part of him. It is this truth of his, and the personal use of language necessary in order

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to express it, which confer upon him the individuality of a true style.

I am not saying that every poet* reaches, or indeed strives for, this condition of personal certainty : but I believe that the greatest and most memorable do, and that they are the greatest and most memorable because they do. The more complete they are as men, the more inevitable and more absorbing the struggle for that certainty becomes. The poet may not pass beyond the instinctive and lyrical phase, in which he surrenders to an overwhelming emotion aroused by some object or incident in life : somehow the encounter is significant, simply because it is vivid, and the quality of this moment of vivid apprehension clings to his record of it. He is content—who would not be content if he could?—to live in such moments. But the greatest poets are quickly driven beyond this point. They are compelled to consider the nature of their own perceptions, to distinguish between the importance of them, to reject some as trivial and nourish others as profound, to try to reconcile them with a world of thoughts and ideas, to struggle to achieve some sort of harmony between their intellectual judgment and their emotional perception, to ponder over the inward purpose of their own activity. They have a gift, and precisely because they have a gift, they are troubled. For this gift in its fundamental form is nothing else than a capacity for being enraptured by the particularity of the universe, of seeing vividly what others scarcely see at all. This enhanced sensibility, this heightened awareness, lacking which no man can begin to be a poet, is liable to extreme disturbance. It is perpetually threatened by the discrepancy between the moments of delighted apprehension, and the pains of normal experience ; it lives under the menace of chaos, as did Othello.

*The "poet," for simplicity's sake, is used here and henceforward as the type of the creative writer in every kind.

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When I love thee not
Chaos is come again.

That is to say, the conflict between the inward world of freedom and the outward world of necessity, which is common in some degree to all humanity, becomes infinitely more acute in the poet, precisely because he is a poet. As his immediate sense of freedom is greater than the ordinary, so is his subsequent sense of captivity. And that is why in the history of English poetry you so often find the instinctive lyrical poet wandering forlorn, moonstruck, and melancholy in the world of everyday. I do not want to be romantic about this truly romantic theme : but the facts are facts, and it is important to understand what they mean. It is not pure accident that we find Collins, Chatterton, Smart, Cowper, Clare, Coleridge, Poe, and Swinburne in perpetual peril of what men call sanity. It cannot be an accident : the proportion is too high. These incipient or actual madmen are the authors of half the authentic English poetry written in the last two hundred years.

And, to follow this particular clue for a moment, the poetry of these men occupies a queer midway position in the scale of poetry. Theirs is not major poetry, and emphatically it is not minor poetry. Theirs is pure poetry that only lacks the sustained strength of the greater kind : it is spasmodic and intermittent. And the cause of this lack of the higher poetic power is, I think, fairly plain : they lacked the capacity to harmonize their own conflicting experience, they could not hold the inward and the outward world together, their ascents into illumination and their descents into normal life remained for them utterly opposed. They could not hold both worlds for real, as indeed they are real, and work out a synthesis between them. Of the gift that makes true poetry they were possessed, of the further gift that makes great poetry they were deprived.

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They had poetic apprehension ; they had not poetic comprehension.

But the conflict in which these poets were defeated, the conflict in which every man who is gifted with " the vision and the faculty divine " is inevitably involved, was precisely the conflict in which the spirit of man was involved at the Renaissance. There on a large, on the largest possible scale, you have the conflict between the inward world of freedom and the outward world of necessity. Is it not clear that poetry was, as it were, predestined to be the battleground on which the struggle would be fought? Here, at any rate, the battle was bound to be most intense and most visible ; here, in the poet's mind, it was most likely to be a life-and-death encounter. If comprehension was to be found, if the state of inward unity was to be attained, it is in poetry, in literature, not in philosophy or religion, that we must look for the evidence of them. Not in philosophy, for reasons which I have tried to explain : but also not in religion.

That also I must try to explain more fully. Not least because I believe that this struggle for comprehension and inward unity is in the last resort religious, it seems to me most necessary to distinguish between this effort of literature towards a religious goal, and actual religion. The moment will come when the final connection, perhaps the ultimate identity of religious aspiration and literary endeavour will be fully recognized : but for the present, it is the distinction which I have to emphasize. And the distinction at the Renaissance is almost absolute. Indeed we may call the Renaissance spirit definitely anti-religious. For religion, to the Western world, is Christianity and Christianity is the organized Christian Church. The Renaissance was a rebellion against the Church. Among its by-products it threw up the Reformation, which was a sort of Renaissance in a nutshell—im-

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portant in its way, but altogether a timid and parochial affair compared with the real rebellion that was carried through by literature and science. The rebellion of the Reformation was only a compromise, a half-way house : that is why, I suppose, it was most strikingly successful in England. But the pure spirit of the Renaissance was one of no compromise ; it either denied the Church or ignored it. Religion did not exist for it ; its God was man. A reform of the Church was futile, first because it prejudged the issue and determined beforehand what the human soul was to find on its voyage of discovery, and, secondly, because it took away from the Church many of those elements of ritual and symbolism which hold the greatest content of spiritual freedom. If there was to be a choice between Churches then the ideal man of the Renaissance would have chosen the old one rather than the new—for in the old he could find more actual and more imaginative liberty. And that, I imagine, is the explanation of the curious irrelevant discussion that crops up every now and then as to whether Shakespeare was a Catholic. No one who had really read Shakespeare would dream of asking the question. Shakespeare's comprehension was poetic, and poetic comprehension completely includes religious comprehension. But if we must assign to a Church a man who was manifestly of no Church at all, well, in a sense it is truer to say he was a Catholic than to say he was a Lutheran. When he has to represent actual religion as a reality for his ulterior dramatic purposes, he is more at home with the old faith than the new. If Shakespeare had had to make a choice he would have chosen the old : but by making the choice he would have become other than Shakespeare. And, to dismiss the question for ever, it is only necessary to consider how sedulously, or how instinctively, he avoids reference to actual Christianity ; when Shakespeare makes his approach to the truth

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enshrined in Christianity,—and I believe he did make one—his road is altogether more direct than by adherence to a Church. He strikes to the very heart of the mystery.

I have said that poetic comprehension completely includes religious comprehension. The justification of that assertion will be implicit in the story of Keats. But I hesitate to leave so provocative a remark even for a little while unmotivated ; at all events I must try to show that it is not a random firework, even at the cost of anticipating the story that will follow. The essential act of religious comprehension is, I believe, the act of knowing God. That is not an act of intellectual knowledge ; it cannot be achieved by the intellect. God is known by the soul. That knowledge of God, which we will assume for a fact just as the existence of religion itself is a fact, involves for its own perfect completeness a knowledge that the universe is harmonious. If there are powers and forces in it which strive against God, they strive against Him with His consent and by His ordinance (if we conceive of God as a person), or if we find it unnecessary to conceive God as a person except in deliberate metaphor, these apparently evil and discordant forces are revealed to us by our knowledge of God as necessary to the harmony which is revealed to us also by that knowledge. That, I believe, is essential to the religious act of knowing God ; in other words we know ourselves and the whole universe, as parts of God.

That act of knowledge, with all its consequences, is a tremendous thing ; and it is a rare thing. And even for those religious minds which do indeed achieve it, it seems necessary that they should schematize their knowledge into some sort of theology, which is an intellectual formulation of an act of knowledge which is not intellectual. But this intellectual formulation is used, or should be used, simply as a ladder by which the mind

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can ascend (and its ascent change its nature and become the soul) towards a knowledge of the divine reality. The mind contemplates, the body partakes of, the soul communes with, this divine reality in the central act of worship. The mind has its theology, the body its ritual, and the soul its knowledge and itself. But in the act of pure poetic comprehension these scaffoldings are not external to the man. The poet makes contact with the divine reality in its immanence : the reality that is God's garment and is God, he knows immediately, without the intervention of theology and ritual. He, instead of passively knowing the harmony, does actually elucidate and reveal it in the created world, and this even though he is, as he often is, unconscious that it is a harmony that he is revealing. So long as he remains a pure poet he does this thing and no other. This is the import of Keats's famous remark that "the excellence of every art is its intensity, capable of making all disagreeables evaporate from their being in close relationship with Beauty and Truth." Or, to put it more plainly still, poetic comprehension is the realization and justification of religious comprehension. No man can *prove* to you that God exists except the poet, because religion is abstract so soon as it is uttered, whereas poetry is always concrete.

All these statements I hope to justify, though not by argument. They cannot be argued. But just for the moment we may consider what is implied in the most fundamental act of all poetic perception. Ever since men became conscious of poetry and began to speculate on the nature of its strange potency, it has been agreed that the most essential poetic gift is the faculty of making metaphors. I do not say the greatest poetic gift, but the most necessary. Without the faculty for metaphor a poet can scarcely be said to be a poet at all.

I open my Shakespeare at random and pick out the

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first metaphor I find. It is a simple one. Macbeth speaks :

I have lived long enough : my way of life
Is fall'n into the sere, the yellow leaf.

Oddly enough, the phrase has stuck in the general consciousness. Why? Partly because it is true, partly because it is beautiful. But it seems to me that neither of these answers will suffice. There is a sort of comfort in the phrase ; it brings our fitful fevers under the dominion of the natural process of things, and makes our life one with the larger life of trees and flowers. It reminds me immediately of another metaphor :

We must endure
Our going hence even as our coming hither :
Ripeness is all.

Mysteriously enough, human destiny is enriched and made more lovely in being thus assimilated to the destiny of things not human. The secret surely is that this likening of one order of things to another, which is almost an identification of one order with another, is the discovery of a harmony in the universe. If it were not so, we should never feel that metaphors were true, and I think we should never feel that they were beautiful. But this incessant revelation of a harmony immanent in the world thrills us and brings us peace.

The seizing of a metaphor is the elemental act of poetic thought ; it corresponds to the syllogism in logic : but it belongs to a totally different kind of thought. Implicit in this elemental act of poetry is the assumption that the universe is harmonious, whereas the implicit assumption in the syllogism is that the universe is rational. Those assumptions are not necessarily contradictory : but the assumption that the universe is harmonious is more satisfying than the other, because it does not involve any abstraction from the unique reality of things. If the poet reveals that one thing is like another, both

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things remain themselves in spite of the unity he elicits in them. The unity is a rich and pregnant unity. Whereas if the logician says one thing is another, the reality is impoverished by the unity. In her most elementary and instinctive act of thought poetry is loyal to the glorious singularity of the universe, while theology on the one hand and logic on the other are compelled to sacrifice that singularity to a scheme. Yet poetry insists on a fundamental oneness, no less than they: or rather more truly than they, for whereas they proclaim a unison, she reveals a harmony.

The consequence is this. So long as the poet remains a pure poet, that is so long as he is loyal to his own unique faculty of perception and thought, and does not try to superimpose other faculties upon it, no matter how remote his conscious mind may be from discerning a harmony in the universe, he is for ever a witness to the harmony. Intellectually he may be a rebel, but if he is truly obedient to the poetic genius within him, his most impious blast of defiance and his most embittered curse of disillusion are changed in the utterance to their opposite.

I have dealt with this question summarily. The question is central, and it will emerge later in a different form. Then, I trust, the issue will be made clearer; but perhaps I have said enough to justify my assertion that poetic comprehension includes religious comprehension.

If that phrase be taken rigidly, there is danger—the danger of imagining that the poet, by the mere fact of his being a poet, prejudges the issue with which the modern consciousness has been confronted since the Renaissance. The difference between being a poet, and being a poet conscious of his own implications, is vast, and in that vastness there is room for a hell of suffering.

THE AFTER-MEETING

By Roger Dataller

BLOP! . . . Blop! . . . went the gallery lights . . . Blop! . . . and as the last globe was extinguished Mr. Reuben Sanders closed his eyes. Quiescently his arms fell into place upon the seat to which his face was turned, and a slight smile occupied his lips. For he loved to close his eyes. He loved to hearken to his fellow-worshippers, marking each separate point of entry, and recognizing with an infallible recognition, the furtive sequence of tappings and whisperings that denoted the presence of one or another of his Methodist acquaintances. . . .

Here upon the extreme right came Lemuel Welsh. Mr. Sanders could have recognized the rustle of that asthmatic breathing anywhere. He had entered from the pulpit door, and with him Henry Coleman, whose silver cuff-links made a diminutive clashing as he shook a silken kerchief out and laid it on the floor. . . . Crk! Crk! . . . The pettish plaint of Mrs. Corder's stays arose as she bowed herself upon the rusty footstool with its tangle of well-worn threads. Hush! Hush! . . . sh-sh-sh-sh . . . came the delicate, the cautionary rustling of Mrs. Wainwright's satin gown . . . Ah!

The smile deepened. Within the warm and darksome sanctity of his lowered eyelids, Mr. Sanders called her presence into mind. Her tantalizing fingers pink with health, and crowded with the burden of curious adornment that the late Josiah Wainwright had heaped upon her, were wonderfully capable. You should see

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her run the knife around a currant tea-cake (Mr. Sanders could not for the life of him bear plain ones), in the "cuttings-up," or work the butter, frozenly obdurate, into an easy spreading mixture. . . . Hush!
. . . . s-s-s-sh. . . .

She would be kneeling now, within the high exclusive territory of the corner pew—devoutly kneeling on the crimson glory of her footstool, the strange, malevolent glistening of her carved jet hat-pins alone perceptible above those oaken walls . . . malevolent?

Lucy Wainwright? . . . Lu-cy?

He turned his head a trifle to the left, and opening a cautious eye, peeped out. At first the lamp beyond, a brilliant incandescent globe of light, swam in the centre of his vision, making his eye to water slightly; but bravely he maintained his gaze and swept the ragged distribution of worshippers to where she sat. And all was as he had supposed. The cut jet ornament winking lazily was the only evidence of her presence there . . . He cast his glance beyond . . . a pair of pale grey eyes, a long straight nose, a wisp of thinning hair . . . so Maleham had arrived.

Mr. Sanders brought his lids together with a sense of grievance. And he gave a subdued snort. It was just like Maleham to steal in silently . . . soft-footed . . . creepy-creepy . . . like the tailor that he was. . . .

Oh! no . . . he didn't dislike Maleham. Fools he always had tried to suffer gladly. But there were some fools who might be suffered far more gladly than others. And Maleham was not of these. The tailor always seemed to be such an indeterminate character. He sought to draw around himself a cloak of—what? Of intellectual exclusiveness? Mr. Reuben Sanders was not at all sure. But whatever this slightly irritating quality might be, of one thing he was absolutely certain, that Maleham sprang of Jewish stock. . . .

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The fellow never mentioned it, of course . . . not that it mattered much. It didn't really matter in the least . . . but. . . .

“ Almighty Father! . . . ”

Mr. Sanders moved to ease an aching knee. That was Lemuel, of course—Lemuel, always in :

“ We thank thee that thou hast spared thy children out of thy almighty love.”

“ Amen! Amen!” cried Mr. Sanders explosively, as he always did in the discovery of common ground like that . . . “ Amen!” he murmured diminuendo, meeting the speaker once again and allowing the full seductive tides of Lemuel's voice to lift and bear him on its surges. . . .

Even Lucy—even Mrs. Wainwright knew . . . not that it mattered . . . Last Wednesday evening, after service, the man had hung around, eating up the conversation in the porch outside. . . .

“ Bless this church in all its ram-i-fi-cations. Thou has blessed us mightily in the past——”

“ Hallelujah!” said Mr. Sanders determinedly. “ Praise Him!” He might have had a Grand Duke's competence by all the fuss and flowered words . . . instead . . . a measly shop, and a dirty back-street establishment at that . . . that such a man should raise his eyes! . . .

Mr. Sanders ran a finger down his nose incredulously as he remembered his own position at the colliery, and the prestige of an under-manager's certificate. . . .

“ In Jesu's name——” Lemuel stopped suddenly. A stray “ Amen ” arose. Then silence . . . a subdued breathing . . . a smartly indrawn sigh . . . a touch of utter weariness? . . . the double tinkle of the Tollgate tram-car bell, frailest point of sound in that vast hinterland of outer darkness. . . .

“ O Lord our God——” The stays were creaking spasmodically. It was Mrs. Corders, poor woman . . .

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poor, daft woman! heaving to her feet. Mr. Sanders turned his head away from her in an unavailing effort to escape her voice. But the opening sentences began to dominate his thought, and to his unutterable disgust he found himself compelled to listen while she sallied down upon her Maker in that abominably chatty attitude that he (Mr. Sanders) so detested. As usual, she was ladling over her gossip, her morning-milkman garrulities, with an undue insistence upon irrelevant detail. . . .

“ We thank thee for that bow—that beautiful bow what thou did’st give to hus las’ night. . . .” Mr. Sanders wriggled his shoulders pettishly, angry with himself for this compelling circumstance, and angry that he should be angry, in the sanctity of the after-meeting of all places.

“ Thou ’as told hus when thou gave hus thy bow, that thou would never drownd the world away again, but that thou wouldst deal with hus in another fashion. . . .”

Mr. Sanders cleared his nostrils with an aggressive snort. He clashed his cuff-links savagely upon the book before him. Meditation had become impossible. . . .

“ O Lord, wash us clean, as thou didst wash thy disciples’ feet in them olden days. Wash all the corners out. . . .”

He clicked his tongue with infinite pity. Was it possible that there could be so great a gulf of difference between two women in the service? Lu-cy, and . . . and this?

“ Put thy loving arms right round about hus, over our ’eads and right underneath our feet. . . .”

Abominable!

II.

“ Would any other brother care to pray—but briefly, please? ” asked the leader in his level tone. Another brother would, and Mr. Sanders brought both hands

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together, loosely interlocked in the preparatory movement, when a voice whose timbre there was no mistaking broke from the rear-most pew. It was the tailor opening out in prayer.

Mr. Sanders's fingers fell apart. With no definite purpose at all he found himself groping around in the darkness for his hymn-book . . . to run a firm thumbnail along its leaves. . . . Everybody, the tailor included, understood that Mr. Sanders always prayed the third, and this unwarrantable intrusion—what could it mean? He thrust out his lips portentously. There was a certain sinister flavour. . . .

“ Almighty Spirit. . . .” Ah! there he was again with that New Theological bugaboo. “ Monarch ”—“ Lord of All,” weren't quite good enough for Maleham.

“ The things of the spirit. . . .”

Mr. Sanders opened his eyes, gazed down reprobatively upon his waistcoat, and followed the thin bright line of his watch-chain as it looped across his stomach. Too often and too long had that familiar phrase concealed the anarchistic leanings of his neighbour. So . . . he was praying for the heathen now . . . he was praying for the Government. So . . . Well, another would pray that night for His Britannic Majesty's Ministers of State, thank God! So . . . he passed into the prisons now . . . the slums . . . what next?

Mr. Sanders stirred uncomfortably, shifting his weight from one knee to another. This easy flow of diction was somehow strangely disquieting. . . .

“ O Thou, who art perfection here—Ineffable One!—our dreams, our thoughts go out to Thee——”

At first he struggled with the semblance that the spoken words imposed, yet slowly, slowly, a nameless fear crept in his heart—a dominating emotion that seemed to gnaw into his very vitals. The serpent's tongue, in its age-old nefariousness, that silky serpent's

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tongue was weaving webs of unspeakable abomination. Impossible that Lucy should be listening to this . . . and even to this. . .

“ We bring thee all our unworthiness. We lay it at thy feet, O thou who art perfection. . . .”

Mr. Sanders ran his hand across his brow, away over the briefest stubble of hair to the further fringes of a large bald patch. And, covering his eyes once more, incuriously he became aware of his perspiration-sodden fingers. Ah! that was Maleham—the perspiration . . . the prayer . . . the tripping pauses . . . insufferable the counting of the seconds as they ambled on . . . tick tick . . . tick . . . Maleham’s voice, his words, his message, seemed to race the slothful-footed clock. . . to leave the prinking points of sound a thousand miles away . . . “ a gowden bracelet what ’eedna got offna young Boer woman ” . . . that was the banksman talking last Friday as he waited for the cage . . . an old South African or something . . . “ gone raand my guts it would ” . . . “ well yer want a woman ter comfort yer, eh Mester Sanders? ” . . . “ the bigger the better—eh? ” . . . the Pit-head must have known. . . .

“ In the name of One——”

Maleham had already entered into his concluding sentence. . . . Mr. Sanders rose.

“ Almighty Monarch! ” he began impetuously. “ We love the place O Lord wherein Thine honour dwells, the joy of Thine abode all earthly joy excels. We thank thee for the blood that thou did shed for the remission of sins. We are poor unworthy vessels in thy sight, yet we would throw ourselves unreservedly into thy arms. Thine arms are warm and comforting. We feel that thou canst take care of us O God, even as thou didst take care of the mother of Lazarous in her affliction. Incline our hearts graciously towards thee. May we find favour in thy sight. Speak in our

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hearts the comforting word. The world is a great big lonely place, O God. We are awaiting thy presence with us to comfort and to bless, to find a balm of woe, to tend the lone and fatherless is angel's work below. . . ."

Mr. Sanders paused and drew a deep breath through his teeth.

"If it is a word of decision we are waiting for to-night, help us to make up our minds, O God, to be at one with thyself. Wilt thou not speak to thy servant? Speak, for thy servant heareth!"

He paused again, and with half-uplifted hand betrayed some measure of surprise. Was not that the faintest "Amen," winsome and feminine, lifting from the fastness of the Wainwright pew?

"For Jesu's sake," he said abruptly. As he slid into a kneeling posture once again, he trembled with unwonted eagerness. He began to wonder vaguely how the hour stood, and whether other of the brethren wished to pray. He hoped not, quite sincerely, for the night was well advanced, and people would be tiring soon of chapel and the service. . . .

"A gowden bracelet offner a Boer woman. . . ." How that silly phrase persisted in his mind. He eased his watch into the light. Another two minutes—he'd give 'em another two minutes, and then. . . ? Well, Maleham didn't matter any more. He just didn't matter. And Mr. Sanders squeezed his eyes together more tightly than ever. . . .

THE DIVORCE BETWEEN THEORY AND PRACTICE

By James A. Aldis

FEW things were (and are) more harmfully distinctive of English national life than the gulf separating the intellectual classes from the men engaged in practical work. Happily the Universities have begun to bridge this gulf in one or two directions.

This divergence is perhaps rooted in racial characteristics, strengthened by our geographical position and political surroundings. It is no doubt to some extent a legacy from the civilizations of Greece and Rome, where all handicraft, including MS. copying and arithmetic, was done by slaves ; while freemen devoted themselves to abstract philosophy, deeming the Universe of sense essentially irrational. To a still greater extent it is due to the fact that from the Reformation onwards the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge were mere appanages of the Established Church, and so gradually became a preserve for the ruling classes, from which the common herd of business and handicrafts was jealously excluded. The divorce between theory and practice thus became complete : the book-learned university man and the practical man of the work-a-day world mutually distrusted and despised each other.

The most striking illustration of this divorce is the *fiasco* which deprived England of the glory of discovering the planet Neptune. Herschel found the planet Uranus by the accuracy and thoroughness of his work in mapping out every star in the heavens. One night he thus accidentally discovered a new star. His prac-

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tised eye told him it was not a star : he concluded it was a comet, and announced it as such. Further observation proved it to be a planet. Thus Uranus was discovered by mere practical skill, quite apart from theory.

But after this new planet had been under observation for a length of time its orbital motion was found to be strangely irregular. It was always more or less out of its calculated place. At last astronomers were driven to the conclusion that its motion was interfered with by the attraction of some unknown exterior planet. Could the whereabouts of such a planet be found by mathematical calculation from its observed errors of position? Airy, the Senior Wrangler of 1823, who in 1835 had been promoted from the Cambridge Observatory to the post of Astronomer Royal, was consulted on this point. He declared publicly that the problem was an impossible one.

A young undergraduate, Adams, made a note in his diary that as soon as he had passed his Tripos he would attempt this "impossible" problem. He was Senior Wrangler in 1843; and after a short time found out a rough solution; from which he subsequently worked out the orbit of the unknown planet. When he had made sure of his calculations he took the results to Challis, who had succeeded Airy as head of the Cambridge Observatory; and asked him to search for the planet with the powerful Northumberland telescope which Airy had designed and mounted in 1835. Challis was a weak man, entirely under Airy's influence. He gave Adams a note of introduction to the Astronomer Royal, and relieved his feelings by an entry in his diary, which he subsequently published in his own defence. He looked on the request as an absurdity, to which no practical man would pay any attention. Airy and Challis in turn snubbed Adams, and showed a studied indifference to his work, until it was known that the French

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astronomer Leverrier was on the track of the same problem. Then Airy told Challis to institute a careful search, through a long tract of the ecliptic band comprising every position in which the unknown planet could possibly be. Challis was to note the position of every star in this tract ; he was to do this thrice, and then compare the positions of all these hundreds of stars in the three sets of observations. If one of them was thus found to have shifted its place it would be the planet in question. Notice that neither Airy nor Challis dreamed of looking at the place named by Adams, except when it should come in the inevitable order of their work. The planet was thus observed thrice, and its position noted simply as a common star. The third time Challis wrote this damning record in the margin, "*It seems to have a disk.*" A star, seen through a telescope, is a mere point surrounded by a faint blur due to unavoidable optical defects : a planet shows a circular disk which grows larger as the power is increased. If Challis had taken the trouble to compare the third observation of this star with the two previous ones he would at once have proved it to be a planet. But no, he determined to wait till his laborious catalogue was completed. A few days later the world was thrilled by the news that Dr. Galle, of Berlin, had found the planet in the place predicted by the French astronomer Leverrier. Thus England lost the glory of the greatest astronomical discovery that had been made since Newton found out the Law of Gravitation.

It is clear from the details of this story that Airy and Challis looked on themselves as practical astronomers and despised Adams as a mere mathematician. It is equally obvious that, up to the bitter end, they both felt sure that the planet would be found by Herschel's "practical" method ; and that it would be found in a place so remote from the one assigned by Adams and Leverrier that the mathematicians would be publicly

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discredited, and their own contemptuous disbelief in mere theory would be as publicly justified.

There is a moral attached to this tragic tale. *Whenever theory and practice are thus divorced both suffer alike.* The mere theorist makes unaccountable blunders in theory, while the mere practical man stultifies himself in his practical work.

In searching for a planet a star-atlas used to be indispensable. Stellar photography has now made the problem an easy one. Stars show as mere points, while planets show as lengthened streaks. But, in Airy's time, if you had no atlas, you were compelled to go through the tedious work that Challis undertook ; which was virtually making his own atlas as he went along. An atlas shows every visible star, but planets are necessarily excluded as they move about in the sky. If therefore a star that is not in an atlas be seen in a telescope it is almost certainly a planet (or comet).

Now it happened that the particular part of the sky in which Neptune was found was not included in the ordinary atlases. A map of that region had been published in Berlin two years previously. Neither Airy nor Challis had heard of it. Their practical apparatus was not kept up to date.

As soon as Leverrier had finished his calculations he wrote to his friend Dr. Galle, head of the Berlin Observatory, and gave him the calculated orbit, and the exact position of the unknown planet night after night. Dr. Galle received the letter in the afternoon, and the same night went into his observatory : pointed his telescope exactly where Leverrier indicated, and almost immediately found a star which was not in the atlas. To make sure he waited till the next night. found the star again, and saw that it had moved through the space that Leverrier had predicted. I have seen this map in Berlin. Near the bottom left-hand corner are two small pencilled crosses, close to each other.

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Opposite to them in the margin in Dr. Galle's own handwriting are the words "Neptun gerechnet, Neptun beobachtet" (Neptune as calculated, Neptune as observed).

Thus was Neptune discovered by the prompt and willing co-operation of Practice and Theory.

This mulish "practicalhood" seems peculiar to England. It is not found in Germany. One university there, Jena, has devoted its energies to theoretical and practical work in optics, especially in the art of glass-making. One German investigator, Abbe, stands to optics in much the same relation as Newton stood to astronomy. He founded, with the liberal aid of the German Government, what was almost an artistic republic; and did all he could by his regulations to make it impossible for its members to sacrifice perfection of work to the greed for profit. Thus it came about that, from the latter part of the nineteenth century right up to the Great War, opticians over the whole world depended on the supply of Jena glass, while Zeiss & Co. had almost a monopoly of the most effective optical instruments.

My next story has a happier ending, in spite of the apathy of English manufacturers. About 1908 a Cambridge graduate (second wrangler, 1900) invented a new method of calculating the optical arrangements for making the most perfect possible signalling-lamp. This invention, in itself, was merely a mathematical theorem. But it had its germinal idea in a practical detail. This graduate, after leaving Cambridge, worked his way from the bottom bench to the top in a photographic lens factory, and had thus made himself master of every detail of mechanical manipulation. All previous designers of signalling-lamps had taken the telescope as their model, and had done their best to arrange the reflecting and refracting curves so as to bring a beam of parallel rays accurately to a point. This is a waste of

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work. For the light of a lamp does not come from a point, it comes from a number of incandescent threads. All that is necessary is that every part of the parallel beam shall come to a focus, not at one point, but anywhere along a series of short lines (the incandescent threads). This gives a far easier problem in geometrical optics, and one which can be solved with greater accuracy. Since a ray of light will always retrace its own path, it follows that, for a lamp thus constructed, all the light coming from its incandescent threads will come out of the lamp as a parallel beam; and will thus be visible to an observer at the greatest possible distance; and what, in war, is equally important, it will be invisible to everyone else.

This invention was published as a separate chapter in a professional book on "Motor Headlights." The inventor then spent several months in trying to induce some manufacturers to work out the idea, and construct a lamp on this principle. He found himself up against a dead wall of prejudice. The attitude of the lamp-makers to him was that of Airy and Challis towards Adams. Only they were more polite. "Your idea is no doubt an excellent one, and deserves the highest honours that your University can bestow. But we are practical men, and cannot afford to spend time or money on academic theories."

Thus it came to pass that the Great War found us, as usual, unprepared. Happily the authorities were not so blinded as the manufacturers. This young man was already known to the Admiralty as an inventor (or improver) in the "optical level" for submarines, and the "all-round periscope." So he was sent for early in 1915 to examine and report on the signalling-lamps then in use. He went to the headquarters of the Flying Service on Salisbury Plain; sent in his official report, and was encouraged to get a lamp constructed on his own principles. A trial lamp was soon made. Its front

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was $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, and it was so light that it could easily be worked by an airman while flying. The best lamp of the authorities had a front diameter of 9 inches; *i.e.*, four times the area, which therefore should have been visible at twice the distance. But it was too heavy to manipulate by hand. So it was mounted and worked on a stand, while the airman took the new model and flew off. The two men kept signalling to each other. At seven miles the large lamp was invisible, while the new model could be seen clearly with the naked eye; and with field-glasses its signals were read up to a distance of about twelve miles.

This was the beginning of a series of other inventions, or improvements, especially in the unit-magnification telescopic gun-sight for aeroplanes. Other optical firms were stirred up to a wholesome rivalry, with the result that, before the war was ended, our Flying Service was almost as supreme in the air as our Navy was on the sea. This happy result was thus ultimately due to the co-operation in one personality of Theory and Practice.

But it was also largely due to a change in the spirit of the Universities, which had been going on for some years before 1900. I believe that before 1901 a Fellowship had never been given by any college to a graduate who was actually engaged in business, and intended to devote his whole life to business. It is true that the business was an intellectual one, that of photographic lens manufacturers and optical specialists. The work done by the elder brother of this graduate, the head of the firm, is described in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 1902, Vol. XXXI., p. 696 b, c, d. And the authorities of Trinity Hall could hardly help themselves. In my year, 1863, Romer, of that college (afterwards Lord Justice of Appeal), was Senior Wrangler. From that date onwards till 1900 Trinity Hall never had any wranglers higher than one seventh, one eighth, and three tenth wranglers. So when in 1900 they secured a

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second wrangler they could hardly help giving him a fellowship. Verily they had their reward. For that fellowship guaranteed comparative leisure and freedom from financial worries. Without such leisure invention is almost impossible. If Newton had been obliged to earn his own living by taking pupils he would never have discovered the law of gravitation. And if in 1901 the governing body of Trinity Hall had been so far obsessed by old-time academic prejudices as to refuse a fellowship to a man engaged in business, in all probability the new signalling-lamp would never have been invented.

I have often been astonished to find how profound is the gulf between theory and practice in England. A friend of mine was head of a firm for the wholesale manufacture of spectacle lenses. I went to him once about my own spectacles, which were too weak. He gave me a series of lenses to try with my own. I soon found one which exactly suited : and so wanted to order a pair whose power should be equal to that of my own glasses *plus* the extra one. To my astonishment I found that he was ignorant of the formula for calculating the power of two thin lenses placed in contact. Here was the head of a lens factory ignorant of the A B C of geometrical optics. And from all I hear a similar ignorance prevails in most departments of practical work that involve the results of any kind of theory.

But the one department of practical work in which this divorce is most extreme is probably organ-building. And it is precisely the one which (with the exception of optical work) most needs the help of mathematical research. There ought to be a mathematical expert on the staff of every organ-building firm of any pretensions. As things now are, organ-builders are stuck in a traditional groove, and have no wish to get out of it. Indeed, without mathematical aid it is almost impossible for them to do so. Only one such attempt is recorded in Hopkins and Rimbault's text-book on the organ, *viz.*,

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Ouseley's *Pyramidon* stop. A mathematician could have warned the inventor beforehand that it was an almost useless experiment. In a letter published in *Nature*, August 30th of this year, I have given the theory of the *Pyramidon*, and shown that it cannot possibly have a good quality of tone ; while the only merit it possesses, depth of pitch in proportion to its height, can be secured far better by a new kind of pipe I was led to invent through a purely mathematical research on a suggestion made to me by a cathedral organist. The non-mathematical organ-builder who quits the beaten track in search of novelties is simply groping about in the dark to find one possible chance among ninety-nine hopeless ones.

On the other hand the mere mathematician is helpless. He can invent new forms of organ pipes, he can calculate the pitch of their fundamental notes and overtones, and he can thus say whether they have or have not the possibility of the one all-important thing, *viz.*, a beautiful quality of tone. Any decent carpenter can make a wooden diapason-pipe which shall give as good and steady a tone as a common harmonium. But to voice such a pipe so that it shall be worthy to rank beside one of Father Smith's diapasons demands genius to begin with, a musical ear of the utmost delicacy, and the strenuous application of a lifetime. The organ-pipe voicer in his way is as much an artist as Paganini—indeed, he is an artist of a higher type, for he needs a more vivid musical imagination, and he never descends to mere virtuosity. Were a mathematical inventor to ask such a man to bring out the unknown loveliness of tone which theoretically is latent in a new invention with a peculiarly promising set of harmonics his reception would be cold and curt. Adams modestly asking Airy and Challis to demonstrate the truth of his calculations by the use of the Northumberland telescope gives us a faint idea of such an interview. After all, Challis was

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himself a Senior Wrangler and understood the nature and power of mathematical analysis ; but to the organ-pipe voicer mathematical research is an unknown shibboleth, and the notion of applying it to his art would be unintelligible nonsense.

In this case it is the mathematicians who are to blame. The letter in *Nature* above referred to shows that the mathematicians have stuck in a groove more closely than the organ-builders themselves. When writing that letter I referred to two books, Lord Rayleigh's *Theory of Sound* (1894), and a smaller elementary book by Basset on Hydrodynamics (1890). These two books tell the organ-builder nothing beyond what he has found out for himself by experience and rule of thumb. There is one half-hearted exception. Lord Rayleigh points out that, although open conical pipes have the same pitch and overtones as cylinders, yet their " nodes " are in a different place. But he does not tell the organist where to find those " nodes " ; he merely says their position can be found by carrying out his calculations in that direction ; which could only be done by someone who is on the level of a Cambridge wrangler.

The reason of this is obvious. Neither of these writers shows any interest in, or special knowledge of, organ-pipe construction. They are little more than mathematicians. And the Nemesis of such one-sided intellectualism makes itself glaringly manifest in Basset's book.

I do not imagine that any organ-builder knows enough mathematics to follow Basset's calculations. But if he did, and then found on p. 180, ll. 1-10, that a conical pipe open at the end gives a lower note than the same pipe when the end is closed, and found this paradox repeated and emphasized on the last page in a concluding note, he would throw down the book in disgust, and would be confirmed in his belief that, however useful mathematics may be as a mental

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gymnastic, they are worse than useless in organ-building.

Basset's statement is demonstrably untrue ; and it is easy to see how he fell into this mistake, which no practical organist would ever have tolerated for a moment. This section of his book is avowedly an epitome of Lord Rayleigh's work. But he takes no notice of Lord Rayleigh's work on open conical pipes. Instead he bases his own whole work on what Lord Rayleigh had proved about a purely abstract theorem, *viz.*, the rate of spherical vibrations diverging from a fixed centre, and shut in by a rigid spherical concentric envelope. The answer is found from a trigonometrical equation. The first solution of this equation is obviously zero ; but, as this solution had no practical use, Lord Rayleigh left it unnoticed, and worked out an approximate value for the next higher root. He was not thinking about organ pipes ; consequently the distinction between fundamental notes and overtones was for him irrelevant. But it so happens that the method of this spherical investigation is applicable to conical organ pipes, if you take the trouble to put in the conditions required by a mouth near the narrow end. Basset, slavishly following Lord Rayleigh has neglected to do this, and has found out the notes of a mouthless cone, either closed or open at the broad end. Such a pipe is as fabulous as a cockatrice : Lord Rayleigh certainly was not thinking of it when he worked out his approximate root ; which Basset, ignoring the zero root, supposes to be the fundamental note of a closed conical pipe. It is really its first overtone. All that Basset has proved is the proposition, almost self-evident to any practical organist, that the fundamental note of any open pipe is lower in pitch than the first overtone of the same pipe when the end is closed.

If he had taken the trouble to find the condition for a mouth near the narrow end, he would have discovered

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the theory of Ouseley's *Pyramidon*, which I have given in *Nature* : and from that he would have deduced the meaning of the zero root, which in the case of an organ-pipe cannot be neglected. He would then have seen that, for a given closed cone, the nearer the mouth is taken to the vertex the lower is the pitch of the fundamental note ; and that this process of lowering goes on without limit. Roughly speaking, every time we make this distance of the mouth from the vertex one quarter of what it previously was, we lower the tone by a whole octave. But we may go on quartering a small distance for ever, without reducing it to absolute zero : hence, in the limit, the fundamental note of Basset's mouthless cone is an infinite number of octaves below the lowest note of any real organ.

That Lord Rayleigh's solution corresponds to the first overtone is easily demonstrable. In a closed pipe, when speaking its fundamental note, the whole air-column vibrates as one ; the length of swing gradually changes from zero at the closed end to its maximum at the open mouth. But when speaking its first overtone, the column breaks into two—the shorter part next the stopper vibrates as a closed pipe in perfect unison with the longer part next the mouth, which vibrates as an open pipe. If Basset had taken the trouble to work out the figures he has given he would have found that the air-column in his closed cone had really broken up into two : a part, about seven-tenths of the entire length, vibrating as an open cone in exact accordance with his own formula ; while the remaining three-tenths, next to the stopped end, was vibrating like Ouseley's *Pyramidon*. He has fallen into the blunder of mistaking an overtone for a fundamental note ; and he has done this simply through his entire neglect of the practical realities of organ manufacture.

Nothing short of a world war would have compelled our lamp manufacturers to attend to the results of

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mathematical research. But such a remedy would be worse than the disease in organ-building ; for *inter arma silent organa*. The only hope lies in the Universities. The art of the organ-voicer will never attain its greatest triumphs till some college at Oxford or Cambridge gives fellowships to enthusiastic musical mathematicians who intend to devote their lives to organ-building as a profession. But in the present state of Europe such an idea is a useless dream. The one problem on which the whole future of humanity hangs is how to inaugurate a permanent world-peace. Till that problem is finally solved, to concern one's self about inventing novel organ-pipes is to fiddle while Rome burns.

The Master

By Wilfred Gibson

NIGH to the window-sill the snow
Had drifted when 'twas time to go,
And, lifted shoulder-high, we bore
The master from Starkacre door.

His well-beloved fields in snow
Were shrouded when 'twas time to go,
And in the shieling snug and warm
His flock was sheltered from the storm.

Stormbound and blinded by the snow
Nor sheep nor pasture saw him go
Although his whole heart's hopes and fears
Had been bound up in them for years.

Indifferent to the driving snow
He went when it was time to go,
And yet 'tis hard to think that he
Left flock and field indifferently.

THE DREAM

By Mary Arden

A PERFECT morning. . . . To toss about all night—toss in an agony of unrest, never expecting a wink of sleep, to drop suddenly into dark unconsciousness just as the dawn is breaking, and then to awake—awake to this! Awake! Awake! Francis thought that the word had a lovely sound, but he said it dreamily, calmly. It didn't rouse him, it soothed him, it gave him a sort of bliss. Very still he lay, careful not to move a muscle, careful not to think. And yet, why careful not to think? He knew somehow that this morning would be different. Yes, different. He'd no longer be afraid of his thoughts. Something had happened in that last deep sleep of his. He felt that he was changed. Slowly, slowly he moved his arms, stretching them out, slowly he moved his legs, extending them across the width of the great, broad bed. It seemed cool and vast and delicious as he lay there alone. He loved its coolness. He loved his aloneness. There was something precious in this morning solitude of his. There was a delicate, exquisite thing that knew, but not as he knew, himself and his employment, his existence between suburb and city, his wife, his children, his home, that realized, far more acutely, far more vividly than he did, the scent of lilac that drifted in through the window and the little dancing leaves of sunlight and shadow that moved across the dressing-table, over his wife's brushes and combs, her plated hairpin tray. . . .

“Had my bath, father, and mother says—mother says——” the small Alan paused breathless, “do you want tomato with your bacon?”

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“ All right, old man, all right. Yes—yes, please,” said Francis, and after a moment or two he sat up in bed and clasped his knees.

“ What an extraordinary thing it is ! ” he thought. “ I feel absolutely different. Yes . . . yes, I do. By Jove,” he cried, kicking the sheet about, “ everything’ll turn out all right somehow ! It will. It will. I don’t care *what* anyone says. No. They can all go to the dogs and stay there. I’m a human being, my dear friends. I’m not a damned African slave . . . ” and, full of elation, he jumped out of bed, grovelled for his slippers, shook himself into his dressing-gown, and started for the bathroom. . . . But, dash it all, he’d left his sponge and flannel behind, and back he had to come ! Shaving, his hand suddenly trembled, and he got a beastly little cut on the jaw ; his shirt somehow managed to get on inside out, and the stud had gone. What next ? But all this he bore with marvellous patience. It was part of a conspiracy to “ hold him down.” He’d have none of it. And when the devil himself, yes, the devil himself, flew in at the window and hid one of his socks, he said mildly :

“ Confound the thing ! Where can it have gone ? ” and rummaged about in the drawer for a clean pair.

“ Oh, Francis, *do* hurry up ! It’s fearfully late. You’ll *never* catch your train. Alan’s started to school by himself.”

“ Sorry, darling, sorry. Don’t worry. I’ll go by the 9.20.”

“ Yes, yes, you know, don’t worry. Nothing like it. Good as a tonic every time,” he thought as he went briskly downstairs.

“ You’re sure it won’t matter, your not going till the 9.20, dear ? ”

“ Oh, no. I don’t think so . . . ” he stood still, a little disconcerted because she hadn’t looked up when he came into the dining-room. No, just went on

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spreading bread and marmalade for Peggy, who sat near her. Peggy looked up and smiled slowly. On top of her very small head she wore a big blue and white check hair-ribbon. On someone not quite so little it would have said: "Oh! Oh, *really!*" But it belonged to such a small round placid person that it didn't at all.

"Well, of course—that's all right," said Sheila, tightening her lips, "*You* know best . . ." And at last she looked up. A peaky little woman she was, rather like some kind of bird. Francis, the robust and stalwart, always felt enormous beside her, simply a giant.

"I've a great feeling," he began, as if he were going to make a speech, "that everything'll turn out absolutely for the best, absolutely," and then realizing all at once that this was an utterly wrong way to begin, he went forward, put his arms round her and held her tight.

"Darling, I don't know—I can't imagine how or why, but I really do feel that it will. I mean, everything really will turn out for the best, be quite all right."

She dropped her head on to his shoulder and he felt she was struggling with tears.

"All right?" she said, a little hysterically, "All *right?*"

"Yes, yes, all right." And he knew then that he couldn't possibly explain. It was hopeless.

"I know I'm a beast to you," he said, "always unpunctual, all that sort of thing. I know . . ."

"No, no, you're not, you're not. Don't let's worry about that—now."

Francis was troubled. He stroked her hair clumsily across and across.

"Well, darling, there's just this. I can't tell you how, but I *know* somehow, that if old Sidgwick button-holes me to-day it'll be all right. It won't—matter."

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“ I—I’m glad,” she said, but it was as if there were many things, oh, many things she would have said, only she was so—tired.

An errand boy went by in the road whistling cheerfully, a sunbeam poured in on to the rather thread-bare carpet, the knives and forks and plates glittered like sunny water. Ah, where are the shadows on such a morning? They creep away into corners and hide their faces. You would scarcely know they existed at all. . . .

One o’clock. Over. Francis put down the letter he was answering and waved to the stenographer, “ You may go.” He had a feeling even now that Sidgwick wouldn’t want to “ talk to him ” at all. No. He would escape. And why, when one came to think of it, shouldn’t he? Fate could be so very kind when she liked, so kind, so kind! He took his hat and stick from their peg and went forth out of the beastly little dark room he hated, and, with a little sense of holiday, which, for some reason, he always felt at lunch time, pressed the lift bell, saw the domed top ascending and heard the click of the gates.

“ Splendid weather we’re having,” he said to the pale-faced youth, and put one foot into the cage, but just as he did so a fat man came panting up.

“ Hullo, Robson,” he said to Francis, “ I went and looked in your room, but you’d gone. Wanted to ask you to come and have lunch with me. Have a bit of a talk.”

“ Thanks very much, sir, delighted,” said Francis.

“ Now remember,” he told himself, “ it’ll be all right. Don’t get down in the mouth or worry. . . . By Jingo, I’m in a bit of a funk, though . . . Idiot! ”

But as soon as he got out into the sunlight a warm softness crept round his heart. Everyone in the crowded street seemed fitting, right, part of a pattern. Ah, yes, part of a kind of mosaic, part of the blue and gold of the glorious early summer day!

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“ There are just some days,” he said to Sidgwick, “ when even the city responds, I think.”

“ Mm,” Sidgwick nodded abstractedly, and led the way into a dark place called The Tavern Restaurant where you got “ quite a good feed ” for half-a-crown.

“ This is where I usually go. Not at all bad on the whole.”

“ Oh, excellent, excellent, I’m sure. . . .”

“ The fact is,” said Sidgwick, as he sat down and hitched up his trousers, “ the fact is, Robson, that I don’t see how things are to go on like this. Might as well get to the point at once, eh? ” and he lowered his voice a little. “ Frankly the business can’t afford to employ a—a—an assistant of so little use. Can’t do it. Funds can’t stand it.”

“ No,” said Francis, “ I quite see that.”

“ You do? My dear fellow, do believe me—I’m sorry. I’ve persuaded myself again and again when we’ve had these talks together that it was inexperience. Merely you had to become accustomed to the work, and so on and so forth, but—when constantly—constantly, Robson, your reports have practically to be done again, it seems—it’s more than that.”

“ I’m afraid so.”

“ I’m the last to relish turning a—a personal friend out of his job. It’s very painful to me, and I’m sure you know, my dear Robson, that I have a very high opinion of you, very. Only I can’t help being surprised that you embarked upon the work at all. It seems so utterly alien to your type of mind. But of course,” he added, glancing quickly at Francis, “ it was a case of letting no chance slip, wasn’t it? ”

“ It was.”

“ Tell me. Is there any particular walk of life in which you feel your powers could—” Sidgwick paused —“ as it were . . . express themselves to the best

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advantage. What, for instance, were your ambitions as a lad I wonder?"

"Except—well, except when I passionately longed to be a postman, I don't remember any time when—"

"Nothing later than that?"

"I don't think so."

"Well. . . ."

"Well, I might," said Francis slowly, feeling that Sidgwick would think him mad and not caring, "I might possibly—sell baskets in a caravan."

"Come, come now," said Sidgwick kindly, "don't give way."

Francis smiled to himself and twiddled his pudding fork. He had a suspicion that he was becoming light-headed. He had a very strange sense of being in a wood where a lot of birds kept twittering.

"No, no," he said. "You're—very kind."

"What'll you take to drink?"

"Only water, thanks."

"Sure?"

"Yes. . . ." Twitter, twitter! went the birds in the wood. Francis wondered vaguely what was happening. It was as if he were sinking into a kind of dream. . . .

And they left the restaurant, and again he was in his little room, and no one who spoke to him seemed quite real, and it seemed as if all this—all this were falling away. . . . He got into the crowded train at Cannon Street, and they steamed out of the station, and there was a brilliant evening sky.

No more dinginess, no more office, no more London, no more grind. The open country now, blue sky and birds singing, hedges with flowers. He pictured it all some beautiful June day with warm sun, clean-cut dark shadows on the white road and scent of hay. So beautiful! Such an exquisite dream! And he thought:

"All life, yes, yes, all life," he thought, "is living in my dream. . . ."

THE HOPI SNAKE DANCE

By D. H. Lawrence

THE Hopi country is in Arizona, next the Navajo country, and some seventy miles north of the Santa Fé railroad. The Hopis are Pueblo Indians, village Indians, so their reservation is not large. It consists of a square tract of greyish, unappetising desert, out of which rise three tall, arid mesas, broken off in ragged, pallid rock. On the top of the mesas perch the ragged, broken, greyish pueblos, identical with the mesas on which they stand.

The nearest village, Walpi, stands in half-ruin high, high on a narrow rock-top where no leaf of life ever was tender. It is all grey, utterly dry, utterly pallid, stone and dust, and very narrow. Below it all the stark light of the dry Arizona sun.

Walpi is called the "first mesa." And it is at the far edge of Walpi you see the withered beaks and claws and bones of sacrificed eagles, in a rock-cleft under the sky. They sacrifice an eagle each year, on the brink, by rolling him out and crushing him so as to shed no blood. Then they drop his remains down the dry cleft in the promontory's farthest grey tip.

The trail winds on, utterly bumpy and horrible, for thirty miles, past the second mesa, where Chimopova is, on to the third mesa. And on the Sunday afternoon of August 17th, black automobile, after automobile lurched and crawled across the grey desert, where low, grey, sage-scrub was coming to pallid yellow. Black hood followed crawling after black hood, like a funeral cortège. The motor-cars, with all the tourists, wending their way to the third and farthest mesa, thirty miles

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across this dismal desert where an odd water-windmill spun, and odd patches of corn blew in the strong desert wind, like dark green women with fringed shawls blowing and fluttering, not far from the foot of the great, grey, up-piled mesa.

The snake dance (I am told) is held once a year, on each of the three mesas in succession. This year of grace 1924 it was to be held in Hotevilla, the last village on the furthest western tip of the third mesa.

On and on bumped the cars. The lonely second mesa lay in the distance. On and on, to the ragged ghost of the third mesa.

The third mesa has two main villages, Oraibi, which is on the near edge, and Hotevilla, on the far. Up scrambles the car, on all its four legs, like a black-beetle straddling past the schoolhouse and store down below, up the bare rock and over the changeless boulders, with a surge and a sickening lurch to the sky-brim, where stands the rather foolish church. Just beyond, dry, grey, ruined, and apparently abandoned, Oraibi, its few ragged stone huts. All these cars come all this way, and apparently nobody at home.

You climb still, up the shoulder of rock, a few more miles, across the lofty, wind-swept mesa, and so you come to Hotevilla, where the dance is, and where already hundreds of motor-cars are herded in an official camping-ground, among the piñon bushes.

Hotevilla is a tiny little village of grey little houses, raggedly built with undressed stone and mud around a little oblong plaza, and partly in ruins. One of the chief two-storey houses on the small square is a ruin, with big square window-holes.

It is a parched, grey country of snakes and eagles, pitched up against the sky. And a few dark-faced, short, thickly built Indians have their few peach trees among the sand, their beans and squashes on the naked sand under the sky, their springs of brackish water.

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Three thousand people came to see the little snake dance this year, over miles of desert and bumps. Three thousand, of all sorts, cultured people from New York, Californians, onward-pressing tourists, cowboys, Navajo Indians, even negroes; fathers, mothers, children, of all ages, colours, sizes of stoutness, dimensions of curiosity.

What had they come for? Mostly to see men hold *live rattlesnakes* in their mouths. *I never did see a rattlesnake, and I'm crazy to see one!* cried a girl with bobbed hair.

There you have it. People trail hundreds of miles, avidly, to see this circus-performance of men handling live rattlesnakes that may bite them any minute—even do bite them. Some show, that!

There is the other aspect, of the ritual dance. One may look on from the angle of culture, as one looks on while Anna Pavlova dances with the Russian Ballet.

Or there is still another point of view, the religious. Before the snake dance begins, on the Monday, and the spectators are packed thick on the ground round the square, and in the window-holes, and on all the roofs, all sorts of people greedy with curiosity, a little speech is made to them all, asking the audience to be silent and respectful, as this is a sacred religious ceremonial of the Hopi Indians, and not a public entertainment. Therefore, please, no clapping or cheering or applause, but remember you are, as it were, in a church.

The audience accepts the implied rebuke in good faith, and looks round with a grin at the "church." But it is a good-humoured, very decent crowd, ready to respect any sort of feelings. And the Indian with his "religion" is a sort of public pet.

From the cultured point of view, the Hopi snake dance is almost nothing, not much more than a circus turn, or the games that children play in the street. It has none of the impressive beauty of the Corn Dance

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at Santo Domingo, for example. The big pueblos of Zuni, Santo Domingo, Taos have a cultured instinct which is not revealed in the Hopi snake dance. This last is grotesque rather than beautiful, and rather uncouth in its touch of horror. Hence the thrill, and the crowd.

As a cultured spectacle, it is a circus turn: men actually dancing round with snakes, poisonous snakes, dangling from their mouths.

And as a religious ceremonial: well, you can either be politely tolerant like the crowd to the Hopis; or you must have some spark of understanding of the sort of religion implied.

"Oh, the Indians," I heard a woman say, "they believe we are all brothers, the snakes are the Indian's brothers, and the Indians are the snakes' brothers. The Indians would never hurt the snakes, they won't hurt any animal. So the snakes won't bite the Indians. They are all brothers, and none of them hurt anybody."

This sounds very nice, only more Hindoo than Hopi. The dance itself does not convey much sense of fraternal communion. It is not in the least like St. Francis preaching to the birds.

The animistic religion, as we call it, is not the religion of the Spirit. A religion of spirits, yes. But not of Spirit. There is no One Spirit. There is no One God. There is no Creator. There is strictly no God at all: because all is alive. In our conception of religion there exists God and His Creation: two things. We are creatures of God, therefore we pray to God as the Father, the Saviour, the Maker.

But strictly, in the religion of aboriginal America, there is no Father, and no Maker. There is the great living source of life: say the Sun of existence: to which you can no more pray than you can pray to Electricity. And emerging from this Sun are the great potencies, the invincible influences which make shine and warmth

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and rain. From these great inter-related potencies of rain and heat and thunder emerge the seeds of life itself, corn, and creatures like snakes. And beyond these, men, persons. But all emerge separately. There is no oneness, no sympathetic identifying oneself with the rest. The law of isolation is heavy on every creature.

Now the Sun, the rain, the shine, the thunder, they are alive. But they are not persons or people. They are alive. They are manifestations of living activity. But they are not personal Gods.

Everything lives. Thunder lives, and rain lives, and sunshine lives. But not in the personal sense.

How is man to get himself into relation with the vast living convulsions of rain and thunder and sun, which are conscious and alive and potent, but like vastest of beasts, inscrutable and incomprehensible. How is man to get himself into relation with these, the vastest of cosmic beasts?

It is the problem of the ages of man. Our religion says the cosmos is Matter, to be conquered by the Spirit of Man. The yogi, the fakir, the saint try conquest by abnegation and by psychic powers. The real conquest of the cosmos is made by science.

The American Indian sees no division into Spirit and Matter, God and not-God. Everything is alive, though not personally so. Thunder is neither Thor nor Zeus. Thunder is the vast living thunder asserting itself like some incomprehensible monster, or some huge reptile-bird of the pristine cosmos.

How to conquer the dragon-mouthed thunder! How to capture the feathered rain!

We make reservoirs and irrigation ditches and artesian wells. We make lightning conductors, and build vast electric plants. We say it is a matter of science, energy, force.

But the Indian says No! It all lives. We must approach it fairly, with profound respect, but also with

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desperate courage. Because man must conquer the cosmic monsters of living thunder and live rain. The rain that slides down from its source, and ebbs back subtly, with a strange energy generated between its coming and going, an energy which, even to our science, is of life : this, man has to conquer. The serpent-striped, feathery Rain.

We made the conquest by dams and reservoirs and windmills. The Indian, like, the old Egyptian, seeks to make the conquest from the mystic will within him, pitted against the Cosmic Dragon.

We must remember, to the animistic vision there is no perfect God behind us, who created us from his knowledge, and foreordained all things. No such God. Behind lies only the terrific, terrible, crude Source, the mystic Sun, the well-head of all things. From this mystic Sun emanate the Dragons, Rain, Wind, Thunder, Shine, Light. The Potencies or Powers. These bring forth Earth, then reptiles, birds, and fishes.

The Potencies are not Gods. They are Dragons. The Sun of Creation itself is a dragon most terrible, vast and most powerful, yet even so, less in being than we. The only gods on earth are men. For gods, like man, do not exist beforehand. They are created and evolved gradually, with aeons of effort, out of the fire and smelting of life. They are the highest thing created, smelted between the furnace of the Life-Sun, and beaten on the anvil of the rain, with hammers or thunder and bellows of rushing wind. The cosmos is a great furnace, a dragon's den, where the heroes and demi-gods, men, forge themselves into being. It is a vast and violent matrix, where souls form like diamonds in earth, under extreme pressure.

So that gods are the outcome, not the origin. And the best gods that have resulted, so far, are men. But gods frail as flowers ; which have also the godliness of things that have won perfection out of the terrific

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dragon-clutch of the cosmos. Men are frail as flowers. Man is as a flower, rain can kill him or succour him, heat can flick him with a bright tail, and destroy him : or, on the other hand, it can softly call him into existence, out of the egg of chaos. Man is delicate as a flower, godly beyond flowers, and his lordship is a ticklish business.

He has to conquer, and hold his own, and again conquer all the time. Conquer the powers of the cosmos. To us, science is our religion of conquest. Hence through science, we are the conquerors and resultant gods of our earth. But to the Indian, the so-called mechanical processes do not exist. All lives. And the conquest is made by the means of the living will.

This is the religion of all aboriginal America, Peruvian, Aztec, Athabascan : perhaps the aboriginal religion of all the world. In Mexico, men fell into horror of the crude, pristine gods, the dragons. But to the pueblo Indian, the most terrible dragon is still somewhat gentle-hearted.

This brings us back to the Hopi. He has the hardest task, the stubbornest destiny. Some inward fate drove him to the top of these parched mesas, all rocks and eagles, sand and snakes, and wind and sun and alkali. These he had to conquer. Not merely, as we should put it, the natural conditions of the place. But the mysterious life-spirit that reigned there. The eagle and the snake.

It is a destiny as well as another. The destiny of the animistic soul of man, instead of our destiny of Mind and Spirit. We have undertaken the scientific conquest of forces, of natural conditions. It has been comparatively easy, and we are victors. Look at our black motor-cars like beetles working up the rock-face at Oraibi. Look at our three thousand tourists gathered to gaze at the twenty lonely men who dance in the tribe's snake-dance !

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The Hopi sought the conquest by means of the mystic, living will that is in man, pitted against the living will of the dragon-cosmos. The Egyptians long ago made a partial conquest by the same means. We have made a partial conquest by other means. Our corn doesn't fail us : we have no seven years' famine, and apparently need never have. But the other thing fails us, the strange inward sun of life ; the pellucid monster of the rain never shows us his stripes. To us, heaven switches on daylight, or turns on the shower-bath. We little gods are gods of the machine only. It is our highest. Our cosmos is a great engine. And we die of ennui. A subtle dragon stings us in the midst of plenty. *Quos vult perdere Deus, dementat prius.*

(To be concluded.)

THE EPILOGUE TO "CLAREL"

By Herman Melville

If Luther's day expand to Darwin's year
Shall that exclude the hope—foreclose the fear?

Unmoved by all the claims our times avow
The ancient Sphinx still keeps the porch of shade
And awes Despair, whom not her calm may cow,
And coldly on that adamantine brow
Scrawls undeterred his bitter pasquinade.
But Faith, who from the scrawl indignant turns,
With blood warm-oozing from her wounded trust,
Inscribes even on her shards of broken urns
The sign of the cross—*the spirit above the dust!*

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Yea, ape and angel, strife and old debate—
The harps of heaven and dreary gongs of hell—
Science the feud can only aggravate ;
No umpire she betwixt the chimes and knell.
The running battle of the star and clod
Shall run for ever—if there be no God.

Degrees we know, unknown in days before ;
The light is greater, hence the shadow more ;
And tantalized and apprehensive man
Appealing : *Wherefore ripen us to pain?*
Seems there the spokesman of dumb Nature's train.
But through such strange illusions have they passed
Who in life's pilgrimage have baffled striven—
Even death may prove unreal at the last
And stoics be astounded into heaven.

Then keep thy heart, though yet but ill-resigned—
Clarel, thy heart, the issues there but mind ;
That, like the crocus budding through the snow—
That, like a swimmer rising from the deep—
That, like a burning secret which doth go
Even from the bosom that would hoard and keep,
Emerge thou mayst from the last whelming sea
And prove that death but routs life into victory.

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CONSCIOUSNESS.—The word is one of those useful labels we use to indicate a state, or function, that we cannot define. If we could define it we should know what man is ; and be able to guess, perhaps, at the nature of God. But in common usage we know fairly well what we mean by consciousness or its psychological synonym “awareness” ; although, even so, we find ourselves in deep water when we ask : awareness of *what*? Certainly not, for instance, of the outer world ; and if of ourselves, of what part or function of ourselves? And how far can we be said to be “conscious” in our dreams?

But I do protest against Mr. Murry's vague use of the phrase “modern consciousness” as used in his article on Keats ; in which he tells us (a) that Chaucer “anticipated the modern consciousness” ; (b) that it would be nonsense to imply that this modern consciousness is “somehow superior to Chaucer's” ; and (c) that this modern consciousness “is not a thing which actually exists,” but is “rather a potentiality of the human spirit which is occasionally realized.”

Now, taking (a) and (b) and comparing them with other references in the article, we might infer that Mr. Murry intends by his phrase that Chaucer and presumably many earlier classical writers before him had a clearer realization of themselves in relation to the sensible world than was common in their own times, and that this same clearer consciousness of relationship is now become a distinctive feature of the modern mind. Not only have we an immensely larger content of experience, whether actual or literary, than was possible for the average intelligent man of Chaucer's period ; but we have, also, a remarkable tendency to transcend this larger content by the mere fact of regarding it as

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“experience,” thereby explicitly differentiating between subject and object.

This simple and comprehensible inference is, however, completely upset by (c), which—or so it seems to me—refers to an entirely different condition, namely, that state of heightened sensibility which produces exaltation, and is most commonly associated with genius. And is it possible to combine these two inferences without some reasonably clear idea of what we mean by consciousness in this connection?

Have we, in the first place, any sort of ground for believing that the fact of our having a larger content of experience together with our sceptical regard of it as object, is likely to encourage states of exaltation? If we could demonstrate this—upon which deduction I do not feel competent even to express an opinion—we should at once be able to reconcile Mr. Murry's three quoted statements.

In the second place, assuming that my last question be answered in the affirmative, are we to infer that the amplification of consciousness is due to the increase of the means of knowledge, or to increased susceptibility of the instrument. It is possible, of course, that these two alternatives are, to a certain extent, interdependent, either being precedent.

I give these questions, sincerely hoping that someone may be inspired to attempt an answer, because I believe that this problem of consciousness is the most important in the world at the present time. It confronted me, most intriguingly, for example, when I read in the same number of *THE ADELPHI* the following sentence from Mr. Sullivan's "Sketch of Einstein's Theory": "The suggestion is . . . that what we call matter is, indeed, only the way in which our minds perceive the existence of certain geometrical peculiarities of the four-dimensional continuum." Whence we must infer that "matter" is only a mode of consciousness, and can have

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no existence apart from it. This is not, of course, a new concept, philosophically ; but it is interesting to find it re-arising from a basis of purely mathematical theory.—J. D. BERESFORD.

A REPLY TO MR. BERESFORD.—I hasten to confess, in reply to Mr. Beresford's justified protest, that my use of the term "the modern consciousness" is vague, though I doubt whether it is vaguer than most uses of the ambiguous word "consciousness." I do not know whether I can reconcile the three statements, which Mr. Beresford finds irreconcilable, to his satisfaction. But I will do my best.

First, as regards the general scope of the phrase, I would say that the adjective "modern" should have implied that this "consciousness" of which I was speaking is not a constant. It varies from age to age and from man to man. I suppose it would be more exactly described as "the content of consciousness"—but I doubt whether that would be helpful. I used the phrase instinctively, without a clear sense of outline, as a less vague and less misleading form of our old friend the *Zeitgeist*.

But though I do not think it can be *defined*, I think it can be fairly exactly described, though only in terms of its origins. The modern consciousness arises out of a precise sense of the subject-object distinction, which could only begin when there was (as there was at the Renaissance) freedom to regard the external world as mere object, for exploration. This freedom was obviously in the vast majority of men merely potential. It could be anticipated by such a one as Chaucer (*a*). But since even now the freedom has been but very incompletely realized by the bulk of men, it would be nonsense to imply that this modern consciousness is "somehow superior to Chaucer's" (*b*). Nevertheless since this freedom is the basis of all modern intellectual

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activity it is legitimate to speak of it as the prime element in "the modern consciousness." Still, it exists only in potentiality, for the capacity of following out the implications of this precise sense of the subject-object distinction is still, speaking generally, in embryo. It is realized only occasionally (*c*).

That is the connection between my three statements. Mr. Beresford has evidently been misled by my mention of the word "genius" in connection with (*c*). That also is a troublesome word, I know. But I do not think my use of it gave any grounds for supposing it referred to "a state of heightened sensibility, which produces exaltation." My words were chosen deliberately to avoid this suggestion. I spoke of "a truly comprehensive genius." To define what I mean by "a truly comprehensive genius" would only be to anticipate all that I have to say concerning Keats. I propose to show how "a truly comprehensive genius" does follow out the subject-object distinction to the last verge of implication. It may be that to Mr. Beresford the truly comprehensive genius, as I shall describe him, will always appear the victim of states of exaltation, simply because the faculty of knowledge he possesses is not intellectual and rational. I can only refer Mr. Beresford to my essay in this number of *THE ADELPHI*, and suggest to him that the assumption that the universe is rational is merely an assumption—a necessary axiom of a particular kind of thinking—and that there is another kind of thinking, equally cogent, and to most minds (however unconscious of it they may be) more permanently satisfying, and more obviously true to the perceived nature of reality.

A state of "exaltation," as I understand it, is a supersession of the subject-object distinction by abolishing the object. A state of "knowledge" is a supersession of that same distinction by a deep acceptance of the reality of both subject *and* object. This "knowledge" is a

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complete realization of the potentialities of the modern consciousness. But, of course, the modern consciousness, as an actual condition, is at present hopelessly bogged in a bewildered and cynical awareness of the subject-object distinction *merely* as distinction. That is a state of transition. In trying to struggle out of it one has to take risks—among others the risk (which I cheerfully accept) of appearing to the literary editor of *The Nation* as a reincarnation of Pecksniff. As he says :—

I am one of those old-fashioned people who want messages to be expressed in words and sentences which have a precise meaning; Mr. Murry is not. He objects to definitions; he uses words like "knowledge," "faith," "religion," "God," to mean what they do not ordinarily mean, but he does not explain what *he* wants them to mean. Consequently his message degenerates into either platitudes like "the good things are the things which make for life, and bad things are things which make for decay," or vague injunctions about loyalty, passionate desires for truth, isolation, and "holding the fort" of your editorial chair.

It may be unduly optimistic in me, but I cherish the hope that those old-fashioned people will become *very* old-fashioned in the course of another generation.—
J. M. MURRY.

THE QUARREL BETWEEN COLERIDGE AND WORDSWORTH.—In his recent book of reminiscences, Mr. St. Loe Strachey prints a strange and startling remark of Coleridge's (to which my attention was drawn by "Affable Hawk" of *The New Statesman*).

To be feminine, kind and genteelly dressed, these were the only things to which my head, heart, or imagination had any polarity, and what I was then, I still am.

That was obviously written towards the end of his life when, under the cotton-wool solicitude of the Gillman's, he was becoming "sleepy" like a pear. In such conditions a sad lucidity of soul is not unusual.

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But an added interest of this unfamiliar self-judgment is the light it throws on Coleridge's relations with Wordsworth.

In *THE ADELPHI* of April last (p. 926) Mr. Murry discussed these relations, and "ventured his guess" at a solution of the problem why, after these two poets had parted from one another, their powers so conspicuously failed.

The reason was (Mr. Murry guessed) that each of these two men needed the other in order to believe in his own belief. For those beliefs, being high and deep, were not of a nature to be maintained alone.

Coleridge's remark suggests that the condition of things was rather different. In the thrilling and productive days of their collaboration it was he who did the believing; he believed in Wordsworth's gospel as proclaimed in *Tintern Abbey*, and gave Wordsworth confidence and himself backbone. And that suits better with our impression of Wordsworth as a rather ungenerous soul, pleased to sniff up incense as his due and resentful when he no longer received it. Was he not angry at *Biographia Literaria*—the most open-handed, critical tribute ever paid by one living poet to another, in which Coleridge showed a positively pathetic concern for Wordsworth's feelings? Wordsworth never did much believing in Coleridge, and his lips must have shut with a snap when Coleridge—in lines both feminine and kind—ventured to utter his doubt of the sufficiency of Wordsworth's philosophy.

O William, we receive but what we give;
And in our life alone doth nature live.

In order to corroborate this impression of Coleridge's "femininity" I hunted up my copy of *Anima Poetae*, the selection from S.T.C.'s notebooks published in 1895. By hazard the book opened at his notes for

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1804, when he was at Malta. On one page I found this :

Oh, said I, as I looked at the blue, yellow-green and purple-green sea, with all its hollows and swells and cut-glass surfaces—oh, what an *ocean* of lovely forms ! And I was vexed, teased that the sentence sounded like a play of words. . . .

And, on the opposite page, this :

One travels along with the lines of a mountain. Years ago I wanted to make Wordsworth sensible of this.

Nothing could be more like a woman's sensibility ; one feels it is a woman writing. And the second quotation gives a hint of the part that Coleridge played in the collaboration, or the *Concern* as they called it.

Coleridge (and Dorothy Wordsworth, no doubt) was the sensibility. He did not only the believing, but also the perceiving. There is a good example under September, 1st, 1800 :

The beards of thistle and dandelions flying about the lonely mountains like life—and I saw them through the trees skimming the lake like swallows.

That, as E. Hartley Coleridge pointed out, is the original of Wordsworth's

And, in our vacant mood
Not seldom did we stop to watch some tuft
Of dandelion seed, or thistle's beard,
That skimmed the surface of the dead calm lake. . . .

And, as one glances through these notes of Coleridge, one comes, with no feeling of surprise on this first evidence of the rift within the lute (October 26, 1803). Coleridge is frightened like a woman at "dear and honoured William's" audacity of pantheism.

A most unpleasant dispute with Wordsworth and Hazlitt. I spoke, I fear, too contemptuously ; but they spoke so irreverently, so malignantly of the Divine Wisdom that it overset me. . . . But *thou*, dearest Wordsworth—and what if Ray, Durham, Paley have carried the observation of the

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aptitude of things too far, too habitually into pedantry? O how many worse pedantries! How few so harmless with so much efficient good. Dear William, pardon pedantry in others, and avoid it in yourself, instead of scoffing and reviling at pedantry in good men and a good cause and *becoming* a pedant yourself in a bad cause—even by that very act becoming one. But, surely, always to look at the superficialities of objects for the purpose of taking delight in their beauty, and sympathy with their real or imagined life, is as deleterious to the health and manhood of intellect as always to be peering and unravelling contrivance may be to the simplicity of the affection and the grandeur and unity of the imagination. O dearest William, would Ray or Durham have spoken of God as you spoke of Nature?

That, surely is extremely interesting not only for its blend of feminine solicitude and feminine fear, but for its hint that the rock on which the friendship split was precisely the Wordsworthian apotheosis of Nature. Mr. Murry's quotation of the two lines which I have requoted above had already suggested this. But this passage brings a powerful corroboration; and more yet comes from a note towards the end of 1805.

The *thinking* disease is that in which the feelings, instead of embodying themselves in acts, ascend and become materials of general reasoning and intellectual pride. The dreadful consequences of this perversion instanced in Germany, *e.g.*, in Fichte *versus* Kant, Schelling *versus* Fichte, and in Verbidigno *versus* S. T. C.

Verbidigno is Coleridge's name for Wordsworth. I imagine that it was coined after the estrangement had begun. Coleridge is making the same accusation against Wordsworth that Keats made a dozen years afterwards, namely, that he was "an intellectual monopolist." That even Charles Lamb stomached Wordsworth's intellectual arrogance with difficulty we can gather from his letter to Manning (February 26, 1808).

Wordsworth, the great poet, is coming to town; he is to have apartments in the Mansion House. He says he does not see much difficulty in writing like Shakespeare, if he

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had a mind to try it. It is clear then nothing is wanting but the mind. Even Coleridge is a little checked at this hardihood of assertion.

Nevertheless, the actual occasion of the quarrel remains mysterious. It is generally supposed to have occurred in 1810, when Coleridge, having left the Wordsworths and abandoned the publication of *The Friend*, came to London to stay with the Montagus. Montagu repeated "a warning phrase" of Wordsworth's concerning Coleridge's difficult habits as a guest. In the phrase the word "nuisance" occurred. Coleridge was bitterly hurt, and straightway left the Montagus.

But it seems plain that the estrangement had begun long before then, for it was some time in 1806 or 1807 that Coleridge wrote in his notebooks, in Latin :

Alas! what misery to be wounded by him of whom you cannot complain! Alas! what misery of miseries to be wounded by him of whom you cannot complain by reason of your love of him!—

ARTHUR INGLEBY.

ANNOTATION TO A LETTER.—I am writing a paper on "Significance." With the egotism usual in a microcosm, I envisage myself as a Galahad among scientists, searching just across the boundaries of biology for the thing which you call truth, and of which you have said that it is incomprehensible; or that your version of it is incomprehensible—but not negative—and involves you in something like mysticism, although you have come to it by no mystical "way."

It is curious: you, as critic, say that truth has to be lived, and that a man's life is the test of it. I, as biologist, am driven to say that all my life-science is barren of meaning unless I can demonstrate that an organism, *in its relations*, has significance; and that significance must be apart from its bionomic adaptation, its place in

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the nutritive chain. I shall say that this "truth" of your recent editorials, and this "meaning" of my paper hinges on relations; but that these are not the relations of a cog in the machine.

It is curious; you say that you are not a mystic,—and yet perhaps you are. Before I read your words I had typed this query: "Why am I called a mystic, who assert that the only *significance* and the only 'values' lie in a consciousness of relations, that are both immediate and free? Because I use the word 'immediate'? But therein I show more of common sense than of mysticism, which (some) experts define as a philosophy of the Absolute, reached through abstraction. I have no philosophy of the sort, and if I had I would not have reached it through an abstraction. What I have is probably a philosophy of the *relative* (since it hinges on relations and out of these grow the only values it knows) and I have reached it through the concrete experiences that I, as an organism, have had."

It is curious. You have said that "life and death are true opposites" and that these two "in their magnificent opposition, *must* be a formulation of that which is beyond them, and is one"; and before I read your statement I had been writing, "in order to understand life we must familiarize death." I had used a transitive verb, meaning much more than to familiarize ourselves with *an idea about death*. What I *meant*, you have *implied* in your own statement; but the full meaning is one of those "lost secrets" which still hangs in the mind, like a great web of which we have grasped the nearest node.

The occasion of my writing is this; I am full of an inchoate philosophy, allied to mysticism, which scorns dialectic (for its own uses) but would formulate its position for the sake of real relations, in which it believes. Its whole impulse is to find expression in an art; but

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friends and human contacts divert this impulse and compel an effort in the direction of formulation, in the lines indicated by this theme. "For the sake" denotes my recognition of the fact that personal satisfaction, found in equilibrium—a mind-state in which ultimate philosophies are dissolved—is not an adequate good. I would even stoop to ratiocination (which to me is almost an evil) to make my own grasp of "significance" available to an unsatisfied world; but that I find the "death-instinct" predominant in my own living, and can identify it with the ultimate beauty of life . . . as I am doing in a forthcoming book.

Unamuno, passionate, struggles with an aspect of this same theme in his "Tragic Sense of Life."

Santayana, passionless, resolves an aspect of it in his "tragic Realm of Truth."

Freud, apostle of the libidinous, at last uncovers an important speculative protagonist of his "libido" in "Beyond the Pleasure Principle," but cannot rise with it above the mechanism, which is his only concern.

Chapman, classicist and humanist, finds neither light nor dignity in science, and is an acrid critic of the cultures in which science has a part.

I sympathize with all of them and care only to synthesize them in thought.

Meanwhile the world seems to fall into two classes: those who are indifferent, and those who go violently astray on the *real* significance of what is thought.—
HENRY CHESTER TRACY.

MR. DE LA MARE.—Mr. Walter de la Mare has attained a completely individual position among modern English poets. Amid all the contention (expressed or unspoken) of literary coteries, he stands apart and in his own sphere unchallenged. No one is against him; everyone for him: and of late he has achieved a measure of popular fame which he richly deserves. Wherever

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poetry is read in England, Mr. de la Mare's poetry is now read, sometimes with an admiration which touches extravagance.

For Mr. de la Mare is not a great poet : but he is a true one. And at a time when England is distinctly lacking in poets, it is not surprising that he should occasionally be set on an equality with poets of the past whose range is much greater than his. I have heard him called our finest lyric poet since Shakespeare, which is preposterous. The well-known critic Mr. J. C. Squire has been at once courageous and prudent by comparing him to Coleridge : he has declared that Mr. de la Mare is the equal of Coleridge. That is not so extravagant as it sounds to people who unconsciously make it an article of faith that the present in literature is never as good as the past. There is a very real affinity between Coleridge and Mr. de la Mare ; and it is certainly true (in my opinion) that Mr. de la Mare has written more *good* poetry than Coleridge, and in something of the same *kind*. Coleridge was a very unequal poet ; Mr. de la Mare is a very equal one. He is never commonplace ; he never fails to maintain a high level of distinction and technical excellence. But it must be recognized also that he has never touched the heights attained by Coleridge in "The Ancient Mariner," or "Christabel," or "Kubla Khan." Mr. de la Mare remains within the world of fancy ; he scarcely enters the realm of imagination.

Mr. de la Mare's poetry, in other words, always represents an escape from the world of reality ; it is, *par excellence*, a poetry of dreams. So, it may be said, is Coleridge's. But Coleridge's dreams have a singular strength and power ; in "The Ancient Mariner" they assume a symbolical significance. One would be inclined to say that Coleridge was inspired by some direct mystical experience. No one would have the same feeling towards Mr. de la Mare's poetry. It is charm-

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ing, whimsical, beautiful, but (in comparison with Coleridge's) it lacks intensity. Mr. de la Mare's dreams are almost day-dreams. "Almost," I say; for at their best they are something more. At their best they are thrilled with the anguish of desiderium for the kingdom of beauty and perfection which is denied to mortality. It is at this moment, when Mr. de la Mare is turned slightly aside from his creation of a dream-beauty, when the beauty he creates suddenly appears to him as the symbol of a perfection from which he is shut out, when he voices—in exquisite words—the secular longing of humanity for some changeless abiding-place,

"Where all things transient to changeless win,"

that he comes nearest to satisfying the deepest demands we make upon poetry.

Mr. de la Mare is a wholly romantic poet. His work could be, I think, compared most justly to that of Mr. W. B. Yeats. It is, like Mr. Yeats', essentially minor poetry, but real poetry; and it belongs to that tradition of English poetry which was established by Tennyson, Rossetti and Morris, on the basis of Coleridge's work, and one or two poems of Keats, such as "La Belle Dame sans Merci" and "The Eve of St. Mark." That is to say, it belongs to a tradition of English poetry which turns aside from the real world of men and women. Perhaps this was the only kind of poetry which could flourish in our high Victorian era, when the *mot d'ordre* was no one should look at the primary realities of life, that the general faith should be in the immediate perfectibility of man. In such an age, with its superficial faith in progress, two attitudes were possible for poetry: one was that of rebellion, in which case poetry might have remained true to its ideal function of representing (to use Aristotle's phrase) "the actions and passions of men." Had there been poets brave enough to take this course, the poetry of the nineteenth

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century would have been less dreamlike and futile than it was. There were only two outstanding rebels in the Victorian age, Thomas Carlyle and Thomas Hardy : both were prose-writers. But these were the only two men who, in their several spheres, did maintain by their practice that literature must be co-extensive with life ; and it is primarily because of this instinctive habit of mind that the poetry of Thomas Hardy's later years strikes the modern mind as being altogether more real and of an altogether higher order (despite its occasional technical crudity) than the romantic poetry of the century. For that romantic poetry was based upon a different attitude. The romantic poets made their peace with the age, by shutting their eyes to it. *N'importe où hors du monde*. And the world, quite naturally, had no objection to poets who were dreamers, and glorified the beauty of some imaginary mediaeval past. Dreams are not very disturbing things. And when the nineteenth century poets tacitly admitted that their function was simply to give a practically occupied age the pleasure of beauty, the age was quite ready to come to terms with them. The poet adorned it by creating beauty ; and the poet quite forgot that the highest kind of poetic beauty was never achieved by the deliberate creation of beauty.

Now, at last, with the shock of the war still jarring upon us, we begin to see that English poetry in the nineteenth century was largely ineffectual ; and in consequence it has lost its hold upon the general mind. It is not to be taken seriously ; it is an amusement, a pastime, irrelevant to man's deepest concerns. Probably that condition is not peculiar to England ; but no true judgment of modern English poetry can be formed without an awareness of it. It is not fair to any modern English poet to compare him either with the Elizabethans, or the four English poets of the beginning of the nineteenth century : Keats, Shelley, Wordsworth and Coleridge.

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They all arrogated to themselves in their different ways the whole of human life as their province. Compared to their attempts and their achievements, later poetry (with the exception of Hardy's and some of Browning's) is a narrow and to some extent an artificial thing. It is essentially an affair of dreams; the reality, for the most part, has been taken over by the novel.

In this smaller tradition of English poetry Mr. de la Mare holds a very high place, both as a consummate craftsman and a poet of individual fancy. But fancy rather than imagination is his province; and his weakness appears when he expresses himself, as he sometimes does, in prose-fiction. His stories and novels are nothing more than fairy tales. Fairy tales can be beautiful; and some of Mr. de la Mare's are beautiful. But the true beauty of prose-fiction is of a more arduous and less obvious kind.

Mr. de la Mare's greatest strength proceeds from his acknowledgment of his own limitations: he accepts the world of dreams for his province and makes no attempt to pass outside it. He is all of one piece. And one feels in his work something more than an acquiescence in limitations; it is that his work is a natural expression of himself. He is not pretending, although his world is a world of "make-believe." Make-believe is instinctive to him, just as instinctive as it is to him to write rhymes for children, or the quaint collection of epitaphs which is contained in "Ding Dong Bell." In other words, Mr. de la Mare is by nature what so many modern poets have pretended to be; they are professional dreamers, he is a dreamer born. And that difference is the measure of his vast superiority over most of his contemporaries. When Mr. de la Mare is quaint and fantastic, as he nearly always is, we do not feel that he is playing a trick upon himself or upon us. He is what he is, and that, in spite of the number of poets who pretend to it, is a rare thing.—HENRY KING.

POLITICS AND ÆSTHETICS

By The Journeyman

“THE storm seemed nothing more than usual,” wrote a friendly correspondent, in a letter faintly critical of my notes last month. “It was bad, of course, but I didn’t know how bad it was till I saw by the papers next morning that a ship had gone down near my own place, and that her men were drowned. Why don’t you write about such men,” he asked, “instead of the politicians?” And he used a word, not accurately descriptive of politicians, but quite fair as a missile to throw at such politicians as are too common with us.

Well, I don’t know why that ship sank. Her hatches came adrift, I suppose. Hatches do, now and then, and of necessity that happens when seas are sweeping the deck ; if, therefore, the hatches cannot be made fast in time, the ship founders. But, as Kingsley once reminded us, men must work, even if things go wrong occasionally in heavy weather. Kingsley’s reference, let us note, was to rough men, such as fishers. But if such rough characters did not build and sail ships, if they ceased to dig coal and iron, to lay brick on brick, to grow corn, to herd cattle, to drive engines, and to carry heavy weights about in the docks—when lucky enough to be hired—perhaps even my refined comments here might not get done. Where, in fact, would most of us be? I feel faint at the thought of it. It would be no joke to have to raise a crop of oats in a back garden and wait in hunger for them to ripen into oatmeal. That sort of thing would not engender the mood for reading the poets or pondering over Einstein. Things have

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gone on so nicely—except for that startling jar of the war—that we are inclined to fancy that the freedom in which we may deliberate the mystery of Beethoven's music and the wonders of Greece and old Egypt is the ordination of a discriminating Providence.

Yet it may not be so. Perhaps our emancipation is the gift of those who, for instance, build ships on the Clyde, and then go home to sleep four to the bed of a one-room Glasgow tenement ; and of others who will take the ships to sea in any weather, and chance the hatches, because they must ; of those who go down in mines for coal and iron, and sometimes do not come up again, and who grow corn and beef till rheumatism and the workhouse get them. On the bodies of these men we are free to make our leisure fruitful. It is their labours, unrecorded except when they happen to die at it in sufficient numbers, which Buckingham Palace crowns so nobly.

Those folk are always at it ; though as a rule we are only aware of it when they stop, when they become a bit peevish, and demand a little more for it. We tell them then that they are "attacking the public." For, curiously enough, we are the public, not they. I remember that in 1907 a Liberal Minister, now a very notable figure, by some of that artful manoeuvring which one learns in practical politics, largely nullified Samuel Plimsoll's work for the prevention of the overloading of ships. This clever statesman made the overloading of many ships possible by making it legal. It was quite simple. You merely allowed more cargo to go into them than they were designed to carry, and they were then able to carry it because their owners said it was all right. About a million sterling was added to the capital of the owners, and Jack himself was rewarded with more jam and pickles.

Did the public protest? Was that Minister arraigned? Nothing like it. Few people knew ;

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nobody cared. But ships foundered because of it, and their men were drowned. I recall that the Journeyman himself once waited for four hours to say good-bye one wild night in the Western Ocean, while the crew fought with doom about the loosened hatches of that tramp steamer. Time after time they were swept away by cataracts. It was a near thing. That ship could not rise to the seas because she was carrying 200 tons beyond her capacity, at thirty shillings the ton. The men won; and then went to their berths at 1 a.m., and turned in, wet clothes and all, without even the reward of hot coffee. No, not heroes. Desperate but patient souls. Many of them Germans, too, because Germans were cheaper than British.

Since then I have ceased to add to the applause for that Minister. I saw that night a most dramatic representation of the consequences of politics shaped by "interests," and my attention to politics after that became more acute than ever. Politics mean something. What do they mean? In the present complicated communities of Europe they mean life or death to us, but we are so inattentive to what is happening about us that we only become doubtful when our roof falls. We never knew what pensive Sir Edward Grey, and the rest of his kind in Europe, were doing for us till we got it in 1914. Has that experience made us dubious of the strong silence of these fellows? Not a bit of it. They even unveil for us the cenotaphs they predestined, and do it so well that the memorials are a tribute to their humanity and wisdom. Now, we hear, the same shrewd fellows are going to complete the building of a naval base at Singapore. That, of course, means war with Japan. Don't let us fool ourselves this time with supposing that it only means money for contractors, jobbers, office-seekers, and steel-plate makers. It means war, and they who declare that it is infamous to say so are contradicted by every wooden cross in France.

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Nevertheless, we shall still be jazzing, altering the Prayer Book, and making dividends for Rothermere and Beaverbrook, measuring the distances between the stars, filling the football grounds and the picture palaces, and arguing about Being and Becoming, when the peremptory sergeant-major with his death's head knocks at our doors again for the first-born. It is true we do not want an enemy anywhere, but the fighting caste does, and the armour-plate people do, and the rest who exist on our fears; and clearly the North Sea bogie has lost its terrors. Another must be found. We are not even invited to select our bogie. One is chosen for a democratic and fully enfranchised nation, and we have got to take it. Singapore, too, is so carefully a long way off. Our clever politicians presently will be demanding a fleet for Singapore, as well as a base—what is the good of a base without a fleet?—and they will get it, for most of us could not, without some hesitation, find Singapore in the atlas.

It will cost us about £20,000,000 to establish a basic certainty for the next war. And it is the very men who failed to provide the survivors of the last war with homes, on the score of expense, who will sink that sum on provocative quays in the tropics. The soldiers of the last war may sell matches and live six in one room because we are too poor to keep our promises to the heroes who saved us. But we can afford to turn a mangrove swamp on the equator into a pleasant home for big guns. And yet there are people who thought Shaw was joking when he said he suspected this planet was being used as a lunatic asylum by the other planets! On the very day when we promised plenty of room for guns at Singapore the papers gave us the further news that a baby had been suffocated because it had to sleep, in the very capital of this glorious Empire, with a large number of relatives in one bed.

For my part, if I were a politician, I should consider

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“ the Clyde ” as an infinitely more dangerous country than Japan. I should consider that men who had been once exalted in a national cause, but who had become bitterly disillusioned, were far more explosive than the powder of an enemy. I should consider a country not civilized, but savage and violent, whose children were suffocated in foetid homes. Is the leisure profitably used, in which some of us may discuss æsthetics while incest is normal through overcrowding in the hells we call our “ great industrial centres ”? Mr. William Bolitho tells us in a little book with the attractive title, the “ Cancer of Empire,” that “ the majority of the working families of Glasgow live and die in a misery which no passing calamity, war or earthquake, could surpass.” Forty thousand families live in one-room tenements in Glasgow ; 118,000 in a flat of one room and a kitchen. The “ best workmen of the Empire ” live starved of air, light, and space, in an unending gloom and the smell of stagnant antiquity. The general death rate of such homes is twenty-seven per thousand living. It is about nine at Hampstead. Yet if one of the ships they build goes down in a dramatic storm and its crew is drowned, our æsthetic sensibilities are moved !

No, unless we can spare some time from our contemplation of Beauty and the Absolute, or the divining of the winner of the English cup, to consider with particular care the just solutions of these problems, then some day all our poetry and achievements will go up the flue in smoke as though it were no better than curl papers.

MULTUM IN PARVO

THE PROBLEM OF REVIEWING: *Mr. A. A. Milne's explanation.*—The assertion made by “Mr. Arthur Ingleby” that “good books are very often reviewed far more severely than mediocre or trifling ones” is amplified by Mr. A. A. Milne in an essay on *The State of the Theatre*.

The following extract, taken from Mr. Mais's book *An English Course for Everybody* is relevant.

Mr. Milne's article on *The State of the Theatre* is an equally true and fine piece of dramatic criticism. He says that the newspaper critics have two standards of criticism which the public does not understand:

They go to the Bareback Theatre for the first night of *Kiss me, Katie*, and they write something like this:

“Immense enthusiasm. . . . A feast of colour to delight the eye. Mr. Albert de Lauributt has surpassed himself. . . . Delightfully catchy music. . . . The audience laughed continuously. . . . Mr. Ponk, the new comedian from America, was a triumphant success. . . . Ravishing Miss Rosie Romeo was more ravishing than ever. . . . Immense enthusiasm.”

On the next night they go to see Mr. A. W. Galsberrie's new play *The Three Men*. They write like this:

“Our first feeling was one of disappointment. . . . Certainly not Galsberrie at his best. . . . The weak point of the play is that the character of his John is not properly developed. . . . A perceptible dragging in the third act. . . . It is a little difficult to understand why. . . . We should hardly have expected Galsberrie to have. . . . The dialogue is perhaps a trifle lacking in. . . . Mr. Macready Jones did his best with the part of Sir John, but as we have said. . . . Mr. Kean Smith was extremely unsuited to the part of George. . . . The reception, on the whole, was favourable.”

You see the difference? Of course, there is bound to be a difference and Mr. Galsberrie would be very disappointed if there were not. He understands the critics' feeling,

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which is simply that *Kiss me, Katie*, is not worth criticizing, and that *The Three Men* most emphatically is. But it is not surprising that the plain man-in-the-street, who has saved up in order to take his girl to one of the two new plays of the week and is waiting for the reviews to appear before booking his seats, should come to the conclusion that *The Three Men* seems to be a pretty rotten play, and that, tired though they are of musical comedy, *Kiss me, Katie*, is evidently something rather extra special which they ought not to miss.

To add anything to this excellent illustration of the two standards of criticism that are used is, I think, unnecessary.—H. E. MUSGRAVE.

As an habitual reader of book reviews, but with no knowledge of the manner in which books (I am speaking principally of novels) are distributed among reviewers, I think that intelligent readers are seldom led astray in the value of any book under notice. They attain, gradually, a "flair" for books, a sort of instinct that enables them to judge from its review, whether signed or not, exactly the type of book it is.

When I read that *The Green Hat* is "cleverly written, intriguing, a vivid picture of modern woman, full of shrewd observation," &c., I know at once what awaits me, and from reading two or three reviews am able to construct the entire story with a good guess at the style. Few, I imagine, when reading in, say, the *Manchester Guardian* over half a column of severe criticism for *The Boy in the Bush*, by D. H. Lawrence and H. L. Skinner, and about half as much space for light praise, with perhaps the label—"a good book for a railway journey," for any of the numerous futile volumes that continually find their way into our libraries and bookshops, are in the slightest doubt as to which is the better book.

A high standard of criticism does not debar praise; no good reviewer denied that Arnold Bennett's *Riceman Steps* was a beautiful book, and the terms of this

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praise left no doubts as to its literary merits. Even in this case, the author's name is not an absolute guarantee of the book's worth, for Bennett has his Lilians as well as his Elsie.

I do not, of course, know if I have read any of Mr. "Ingleby's" reviews, but in any case, I hope he will permit me, as a member of the general reading public, to thank him for making them as honest as he can, and to assure him that many people judge books, not so much from the amount of praise or blame meted out by reviewers, but by the style of the reviews, from which they can invariably gauge the standards set.—
L. CALDERON.

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