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THE CRITERION

A QUARTERLY REVIEW

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A QUARTERLY REVIEW

VOL. III, No. II APRIL 1925

A COMMENTARY

IT is regretted that, owing to severe illness, Mr. T. S. Eliot has been unable to prepare his essay on " A Neglected Aspect of George Chapman " for this number; also a review of " The Sanskrit Theatre," by Professor A. B. Keith, and a review of " Restoration Comedy," by Bonamy Dobree.

The Study of Greek.

THE Head Master of Eton, writing on " The Praise of Greek " in *The Evening Standard*, has put in a couple of columns the usual arguments in favour of the study of Greek. Any argument in favour of the study of Greek is a good argument—though it is a pity that Doctor Alington thought to reinforce his case by quoting some turgid generalities by Professor Gilbert Murray —and we have no quarrel with those advanced in " The Praise of Greek." It would be as well, however, if advocates of Greek would occasionally expound the best reasons, as well as those most likely to persuade the modern public. The latter are those attached to the romantic conception to which Mr. Frederic Manning has given the title of " Hellas." They include the rather doubtful assertions that Greek is " the greatest of languages " and that Greek literature is " the greatest of literatures ": assertions doubtful because the standards for such a comparative judgment cannot be found. The former, *i.e.* the unpopular, reasons include two which immediately occur to my mind. One is that the study of a dead language is the study of a language not in process of change, and therefore an exact study; and the study of Greek is the exact study of an exact

language, a language of refinement and precision. And the other reason is that the study of Greek is a part of the study of our own mind. Our categories of thought are largely the outcome of Greek thought; our categories of emotion are largely the outcome of Greek literature. One of the advantages of the study of a more alien language, such as one of the more highly developed oriental languages, is to throw this fact into bold relief: a mind saturated with the traditions of Indian philosophy is and must always remain very different from one saturated with the traditions of European philosophy—as is *every* European mind, even when untrained and unread. What analytic psychology attempts to do for the individual mind, the study of history—including language and literature—does for the collective mind. Neglect of Greek means for Europe *a relapse into unconsciousness.*

Mr. Saintsbury's Last Scrap Book.

THE appearance of a new book[1] by George Saintsbury is now the occasion for editorial rather than critical notice. For the readers of Mr. Saintsbury resemble the readers of Anatole France in this respect, that they receive with equal delight everything that he writes. The work of George Saintsbury, even when he writes of Quintilian or Scaliger, is extremely personal: I imagine that many persons who do not share his general point of view must find his writings antipathetic. In his literary interests, in his political views, in his culinary tastes, he is the representative of a fine tradition. I am not sure that his intimate readers will not treasure his Scrap Books more than any other of his works; for here all the sides of his personality are illustrated. And I am not sure that this personality is not as great an asset to England as was that of Anatole France to his country. But the services of Mr. Saintsbury are not such as are often distinguished, or measured, by official recognition.

Sir James Frazer and the Order of Merit.

IN recording the death of Francis Herbert Bradley I expressed the hope that his successor in the Order of Merit might be Sir James Frazer. This hope has been fulfilled. It is satisfactory that the greatest representative, in his time, of the mind of Oxford should be succeeded by the greatest representative of Cambridge. The influence of Frazer on our generation cannot yet be accurately estimated; but it is comparable to that of Renan, and perhaps more enduring than that of Sigmund Freud.

[1] *A Last Scrap Book.* By George Saintsbury. (Macmillan.) 7*s.* 6*d.* net.

OUR contemporary, *The Dial*, of New York, has justly bestowed its annual award for literature upon Miss Marianne Moore. In the dismal flood of affected and fantastical verse poured out in America within the last ten years, Miss Moore's poetry endures, "the wave may go over it if it likes." She is one of the few who have discovered an original *rhythm*—in an age when the defect of rhythm is the most eminent failure of verse both English and American. She has found a new verse-rhythm of the spoken phrase. Miss Moore's work is of international importance, and her book[1] will be the subject of review in a later number.

Miss Marianne Moore.

A GENTLEMAN writing in a contemporary monthly has made the suggestion that a tax should be levied upon imported plays. It is not quite clear whether he means this seriously, or has merely hit upon the notion as an attractive introduction to his thesis that we have too many foreign plays, and that these plays are very often worse than the native product. He has our sympathy, however, in complaining that these foreign plays (French comedies or American farces) are often bad in themselves and often very stupidly adapted: a French comedy may be expurgated into senselessness and British humour substituted in a play which structurally demands French wit. All of this is true enough; but it is a pity that this critic should have raised, even for a pleasantry, the spectre of "artistic protection." Protection is of course an economic doctrine depending for its validity upon time, place and circumstance. It is applicable to *industry*—to art only so far as art is an industry. Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish: the point at which a musician becomes an "artist" and ceases to be merely a unit, subject to trades-union rules, has been the cause of contention before now. In the doubtful cases we should like to see Governments incline a little more to the side of art.

The Closing of the Theatres to Foreign Plays.

As for Mr. Owen's main thesis, we agree about the inferior quality of many foreign plays and of the adaptations. The frequent production of the *best* foreign plays would seem to us a good thing: for it might make London a competitor of Berlin as an international centre of the theatre. But whereas we get, in London, only such foreign plays as have already appeared, and succeeded, abroad, the more enterprising producers of Berlin or New York will sometimes accept an English play on its merits *before* it has tried its fortunes here.

[1] *Observations*. By Marianne Moore. (*The Dial*, New York.) $2.00.

As this number of THE CRITERION goes to press we learn, with great regret, of the death, at the age of thirty-nine years, of Jacques Rivière, editor of the *Nouvelle Revue Française*, and a contributor to THE CRITERION. The death of this distinguished editor, who was also becoming known as one of the most subtle and penetrating of critics of literature, is a serious loss to French and to international letters. To those who knew his personal charm and enthusiasm the loss is greater still.

Jacques Rivière.

CRITES.

THE GLAMOUR OF GOLD

By G. ELLIOT SMITH

(*Professor in the University of London*)

IT is a very remarkable fact that a soft yellow metal of relatively slight intrinsic value should have exerted an influence so profound and far-reaching, both for good and ill, throughout the whole history of civilisation. The significance of gold does not depend wholly upon the fact that it has become the material of currency, the substance by which standards of monetary value and exchange are estimated. For the metal represents something more than mere riches; its influence pervades our common speech, in which it has become the usual token of excellence and uprightness, and in religious literature a symbol of immortality and untarnishable incorruptibility. No other substance—not even the pearl—has acquired such a glamour. No other material consideration can compare with the influence of gold in its imperious domination of the fate of nations ever since nationality was first devised as a social system.

In attempting to obtain some insight into the nature of the factors responsible for so curious a phenomenon, which has been made to seem obvious and matter-of-course to us by fifty centuries of tradition, it is essential not to forget that there is no instinctive craving in mankind for gold. Even at the present day many peoples in Australia, New Guinea, Africa, and elsewhere do not attach any value to the yellow metal, which they do not even bother to pick up when they find it lying about in their natural domains. The value of gold is then purely arbitrary and has been created by civilised

men as the outcome of a series of historical events, the evidence of which I believe can be discovered and interpreted. In the ancient literature of every people whose writings are known, there is ample evidence of the peculiar magical properties attributed to gold. Thus, for example, in the Indian Satapatha-Brahmana gold is said to be immortal, born of fire, the rejuvenator of mankind, conferring long life and many offspring upon its possessors. It is said to be the seed of Agni, even a form of the gods themselves, and not only immortal and imperishable, but also identified with fire, light, and immortality. Gold was endowed by the sun with its beautiful colour and lustre, and shone with the brilliancy of the sun-god. Hence it became a source of life and lustre. Thus we have clear evidence of the divine nature of gold among the Indians. It was the sun-god, it was his seed, it was the source of life and fertility.

But there are indications of other kinds to reveal that the search for gold played a dominant part in influencing men's behaviour in India many centuries before the Satapatha-Brahmana was written. If the wanderings of the earliest Aryan-speaking invaders of India are plotted out on a map, it will be found that every place mentioned in the Rig-Veda (which Sanskrit scholars have been able to identify) happens to be a site where gold occurs. The coincidence is much too exact to be merely accidental. It affords a precise demonstration of the fact that the earliest speakers of the Indo-European language to make their way into the Punjab were searching for " the divine substance," and settled at first only in those places where they found it.

The same story can be read in the early wanderings of the Persians from the references in the Avesta.

But in Southern India also, archæological evidence gives an even more emphatic proof of the fact that the earliest civilisation was introduced into the Deccan by gold-miners. The most ancient stone structures (dolmens and stone circles) are found in vast numbers in certain regions of Hyderabad,

Mysore, and elsewhere, but always in close association with extensive and long-forgotten mines of gold and copper, the very existence of which was quite unsuspected until archæological exploration revealed them in recent years.

As to the uses of the gold thus laboriously obtained, the Vedas inform us that the Aryan-speaking immigrants attributed magical powers to the aboriginal people (Asuras). They could bring the dead to life. They had vast stores of gold, jewels, and pearls, all of them life-giving.

However, it was not only in India and Persia that men were searching in ancient times for the golden elixir of life. Many centuries earlier still, in Mesopotamia, the chief deities of the Sumerians were called Lords of Gold.

Going still farther west, and to an even more remote epoch in time, the Egyptian sun-god Re, in the Pyramid Age, was believed to be the procreator of kings. He gave them life, strength, and endurance, so that in their veins coursed " the liquid of Re, the gold of the gods and goddesses, the luminous fluid of the sun, source of all life, strength, and persistence."

Thus we find in Egypt, more than two millennia earlier, the same strange beliefs of the Indian Satapatha-Brahmana, expressed in almost the same peculiarly distinctive phraseology.

One could quote from the literature of Greece and China and the folk-lore and mythology of every part of the world where men sought for the yellow metal in ancient times, to emphasise the reality and the wide geographical diffusion of these strange beliefs regarding the divine nature of gold and the potency of its magical virtues. But I have said enough to call attention to the reality of these ideas in antiquity. What I am particularly concerned to do here is to get some clue as to how such ideas came into being. The history of the search for gold in our own times is familiar enough. How it has attracted vast populations, collected from all parts of the world, to such places as California, Ballarat and Coolgardie in Australia, the Transvaal in South Africa, and Alaska ; and how in some cases, for instance in California and Australia, the people thus

drawn to the neighbourhood of a gold-field have settled down to an agricultural mode of life after the harvest of precious metal began to dwindle—these are matters of common knowledge that provide modern illustrations of the process of cultural diffusion, which has been in operation ever since, more than fifty centuries ago, men first created an artificial value for gold.

We also know how obtrusive a part the pursuit of gold played in prompting the great maritime adventures in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. They were essentially treasure hunts, the search for Eldorados and Isles of the Blest, where golden Elixirs of Life were to be had for the taking. Our maps of the world are now studded with such names as the "Gold Coast," "Costa Rica," and the "Solomon Islands," that preserve the records of the chief motives for mediæval enthusiasm in geographical exploration; and such phrases as "The River of Golden Sand," "The Mountains of Gold" (Altai), reveal even more ancient searching. But in still more remote periods the myths of the Golden Fleece, the stories of Golden Apples, and even the Golden Bough, represent a combination of traditions of the search for the metal and its magical attributes. The latter perhaps find more definite recognition in the life-giving reputation expressed in the phrase "Danæ pregnant with immortal gold." This gives expression to the very ancient belief preserved, as we have already noted, in the literature of China, India, and Egypt, and perhaps more vaguely elsewhere, that gold was the seed of the gods of procreation, the givers of life upon earth. Going back still earlier in the history of ideas, when the source of all life was attributed to the Great Mother, the Divine Cow Hathor, gold was identified with her; and the ancient Egyptian word for gold, Nub, which was particularly associated with her and the determinative (a necklace of golden pendants, probably cowrie shells) of her divinity, gave its name (Nubia) to the place whence the metal was obtained, which also was regarded as Hathor's own province. The Golden Hathor

of Egypt was undoubtedly the prototype of the Golden Aphrodite of the Greeks.

Thus there can be no doubt that when it first came into use gold had the reputation of being a divine substance. It was identified with the gods and goddesses who controlled the giving of life. But the bare statement of this fact affords no adequate idea of the vast significance such a belief implied. At the time when civilisation came into being and for the first time the idea was formulated of a masculine deity, the god (Osiris) was simply the dead king, whose existence was supposed to have been prolonged by means of certain animating ceremonies. The essential difference between the gods and men was that the former had acquired immortality; and so a distinction was created which has survived in our common speech in the use of the term "mortals" for mankind. Substances credited with the potency of prolonging existence were therefore called "divine," in the sense that they were the instruments whereby the distinctive attribute of divinity, that is, a prolongation of existence, could be conferred upon a dead king to transform him into a god.

During the past fifty centuries the Kingdom of Heaven has become so democratised that it is now open to all mankind; but originally the divine right of attaining immortality was the king's exclusive privilege. Hence the attribution of these vast potentialities to gold, its identification with the life-giving powers of the Great Mother herself, gave the metal a tremendous reputation for magical power, which not only prompted early rulers to send out expeditions to obtain the means of attaining immortality and divinity, but also laid the foundations of the glamour that has crystallised around gold in later ages.

The earliest evidence of the use of gold has been provided by the examination of the pre-dynastic cemeteries in Egypt, which proves that the metal had already come into use (as a material for covering heads of clay or soft stone) before 3500 B.C. But the most instructive examples of early goldwork are the

objects found by Professor George A. Reisner at Naga-ed-Der in Upper Egypt, and Mr. E. J. Quibell at Hierakonpolis, which belong to the time of the first Egyptian dynasty (circa 3300 B.C.).

In a grave referred to the middle of the First dynasty (possibly synchronous with King Zer) Dr. Reisner found ten beads (each made of an egg-shaped case of beaten gold filled with a light cement), twenty-four models of shells (snail-shells) made of heavy beaten gold, the model of a male gazelle in beaten gold, with the representation of a band around its neck bearing the sign of the goddess's girdle, and also a golden bull with a neck-band bearing the design of the goddess Hathor's head.

Thus the earliest examples of worked gold represent shells and other objects definitely associated with the goddess Hathor. As we have seen already, the goddess was herself identified with gold and her hieroglyphic symbol was a necklace with pendants that probably represent cowrie-shells.

Elsewhere (in *The Evolution of the Dragon*, p. 221) I have put forward a tentative suggestion in the endeavour to link up all these positive facts into a coherent explanation of how the soft yellow metal acquired the reputation for life-giving and became identified with the Great Mother herself. The study of Early Egyptian writings makes it clear that many of Hathor's attributes were afterwards conferred upon Osiris and especially —still later—upon the sun-god Re, with whom and with whose life-giving seed gold was identified. Hence the fundamental problem is to discover how Hathor, the mother of mankind, came to be associated with gold.

Long before the earliest use of gold, shells seem to have acquired a definite magical significance. Thus in Southern Europe, bodies buried during the so-called Upper Palæolithic period had a variety of sea-shells placed upon them. At Laugerie-Basse, in the Dordogne, Mediterranean cowries were used for this purpose; whereas at Mentone fragments of the shell *Cassis rufa* were found in the same stratum as the skeletons

of Upper Palæolithic men. As this shell is not known to occur in the Mediterranean, the possibility is suggested that it was brought all the way from the Red Sea.

There can be little doubt that the magical significance attached to shells was originally devised with reference to the cowrie, and probably upon the shores of the Red Sea. Elsewhere I have explained how the cowrie came to be regarded as a symbol of the life-giving powers of women; and so developed into an amulet potent to protect the living from the risks of death and to confer upon the dead a prolongation of existence. Hence in course of time a shell endowed with such maternal powers became apotheosised as the Great Mother and identified with Hathor.

Before this happened the virtues originally associated merely with the form of the cowrie came to be attributed to this mollusc as a shell, and then were transferred to many other kinds of shells. This is seen in the use of a variety of shells in the Upper Palæolithic period and in the snail-shells chosen for representation in gold as the protodynastic models found by Dr. Reisner.

Putting together all these facts, and not forgetting that Hathor's hieroglyphic symbol, the Nub-sign, meaning gold, represents a necklace with pendants that are probably models of cowries, the tentative explanation (which I put forward six years ago) can be suggested to link up all the established evidence in a rational way.

The wearing of cowrie-shells can still be seen surviving upon the upper reaches of the Nile and widespread through East Africa at the present day. When this custom began the demand for shells that were supposed to be potent to confer such considerable boons as the protection of life and existence created a widespread demand for them, which it soon became difficult to supply. The people of Egypt began to make models of these and other magical shells in clay, stone, and any other material that came to hand to take the place of the real shells as life-giving amulets. In the course of these experiments people travelling between the Nile and the Red

Sea, whence the cowries came, discovered that they could make more durable and attractive models by using the soft plastic metal that was lying about unused and unappreciated in the Nubian desert (Hathor's special province). The lightness and beauty of the untarnishable yellow metal made an instant appeal. The gold models of the shells soon became more popular than the original models, and the reputation for life-giving was then in large measure transferred from the mere form of the amulet to the metal itself. Thus in all probability gold acquired the arbitrary reputation as an elixir of life that was transferred to it from the cowrie-shell, which by the time this happened had already been identified with the great Giver of Life herself, the goddess Hathor, who thus became known as " the golden," and was identified with gold (Nub) and the gold country (Nubia) as far as the Red Sea, where the symbolism of the cowrie-shell probably originated.

This hypothesis offers an explanation of all the known facts concerning the acquisition by gold of the divine reputation as a giver of life. It reveals not only why it became an amulet but also why it was identified with the Great Mother, and associated particularly with her reproductive functions and those of her successor (after Osiris), the sun-god Re, whose powers of procreation were identified with gold.

When the kings of Egypt accepted the belief that the prolongation of their existence after death (and the consequent attainment of the immortality to make gods of them) depends upon making adequate material preparations for effecting their purpose, expeditions were sent to collect gold. It was used with the almost incredible lavishness recently made known to us in the case of Tutankhamen's tomb, to make certain the attainment of divinity by the dead king. The pictures in the tomb of Tutankhamen's vizier Huy had already made us aware that vast quantities of gold were being obtained from the Sudan in the fourteenth century B.C. Dr. Reisner's recent investigations in the Sudan itself have

completed the story of the exploitation of the south by the Egyptians.

When it became a matter of national policy thus to search for gold, the mere demand for the metal further enhanced the value that its use for making personal amulets had created. Hence even in very early times the search for gold extended beyond the frontiers of Egypt. In Mesopotamia, even as early as 3000 B.C., gold is said to have been imported from Anatolia. The arbitrary value that the search and the magical reputation had given it is said to have found expression even then in making a gold currency—small stamped pieces of the metal which became a standard of values for buying and selling. It took another twenty centuries to get people to adopt this system of currency in their ordinary commercial transactions; but there can be no doubt that long before a gold currency was commonly adopted as an instrument of commerce, gold rings and bars were in common use in the Ancient East for purposes of tribute between nations. Hence the metal acquired a recognised position as a medium of exchange long before it became used, at any rate widely, as ordinary currency.

One factor that played a very significant rôle in establishing the estimation of gold and maintaining its value throughout the ages has been its use for making jewellery. It is clear that the earliest jewellery was worn primarily as amulets, and gold was the favourite material by reason of its magical significance as a giver of life, which incidentally was supposed to bring the protection of the guardian deities with whom, from the beginning of its use, the metal was identified. But the æsthetic factor in the golden amulets, their beauty and lightness, as well as their durability and freedom from corrosion, must in time have developed an affection for such objects that was not wholly religious or magical. The love of beautiful adornments simply because they were beautiful and becoming to their wearer led to the survival of golden amulets as jewellery long after their original magical significance was forgotten.

The Dark Ages, when men were still searching for the elixir of life and the philosopher's stone to transmute base substances into divine gold, represent the stepping-stone from ancient times, when the semi-religious and magical reputation of gold was still obtrusive, to the frankly commercial and æsthetic values of gold, respectively as currency and jewellery, in modern times.

If it be true that the almost wholly arbitrary value of gold has been acquired as the outcome of the peculiar set of circumstances suggested in this essay, it is utterly unlikely that such a remarkable history occurred more than once. Hence the mere fact that men have embarked upon the most hazardous adventures, involving untold dangers by sea and land, to obtain a metal of little value, is in itself the most emphatic demonstration of the reality of cultural diffusion in ancient times. Not only does it prove the diffusion of culture, but it also represents the chief lure that impelled men in antiquity to engage in maritime adventure and long expeditions by land prospecting for gold. It also determined the localities where these wanderers settled, and incidentally planted in foreign lands the germs of the civilisation of their own country. Such events have been the chief factor in the spread of civilisation throughout the world.

If the search for gold was responsible in greater measure than any other factor in disseminating throughout the world the germs of our common civilisation, it must not be forgotten that its influence was not wholly beneficent. The growth of the appreciation of gold made it not merely the basis of currency, but also the instrument of greed and the chief incentive of strife. Gold has, perhaps, played a more important part in exciting discord and provoking warfare than almost any other material factor; and there can be no doubt that the era of peace and happiness among men, which Hesiod with unconscious irony has called the Golden Age, was, in fact, brought to an end mainly by the quarrelling excited by the greed for gold.

At a moment when the actual use of gold coinage has been in abeyance for ten years and the return to such currency is imminent, it might be interesting to speculate whether the arbitrary value that was created for the yellow metal as the result of a peculiar set of historical circumstances is an adequate justification for the return to a gold currency. But quite apart from the strictly economic aspect of the issue there is a sentimental interest in gold. Whether or not it is essential to maintain an arbitrary material of currency, there is a widespread faith in the stability that gold coinage is believed to confer upon commercial transactions; and the glamour of the word "gold" and the idea of respectability and probity associated with it are assets of some value if they suggest honest dealing.

If the metal is a symbol of riches, it also implies moral virtues and æsthetic excellence; and the glamour that we associate with the mere word, is probably to some extent a survival from those ancient times when men regarded the metal as itself a god and the divine giver of life. This tradition has perhaps been helped to survive because the word is synonymous with wealth, in the sense that implies the means of sustaining existence and preserving life.

The Glamour of Gold has been the most potent factor in the history of civilisation.

SOME LETTERS OF LIONEL JOHNSON

(Published by the Courtesy of the Literary Executors)

To Louise Imogen Guiney

GRAY'S INN,
July 8, 1897.

MY DEAR MISS GUINEY,

All thanks for your letter, and more than all for your "Patrins": but of these presently. We were sore affrighted by your illness: indeed, I am not sure, but Mrs. Hinkson and I began to compose our *Lacrimæ Musarum*; our laments for the "matchless Orinda" of Auburndale, the Mrs. Anne Killigrew of Massachusetts. Premature by scores of years, *laus Deo!* And I do trust, you are perfectly recovered from those ill and evil ways: "No knockings on the head in *this* family, if you please!" as Miss Betsy Trotwood said. For my unworthy self, I am my customary self: though the weather and the Jubilee have tried my patience. Of the weather, a priest sighed to me: "After this, Purgatory has no terrors, and Hell can't be much worse." Of the British Jubilee, I will but say that it was British, and highly distasteful to an Irishman, who loves his country; to a recluse, who loves solitude and silence; to a poeticule, who loves a decent beauty, not the art of vestrymen and upholsterers. Jubilee Day was S. Alban's Day, the day of my reception into the Church, in S. Etheldreda's, by dear Fr. Lockhart, Newman's old Littlemore friend: God rest him! So I spent it up here alone, reading by my windows, and looking over the quiet gardens; all gold-green leaves and lawns in the sunlight: *à la* Marvell and *à la Merveille*. Your "Patrins" delight

me: but oh! "God bless your Eminence, and forgive your cook," said an Irish convent cook to Cardinal Manning, as she knelt before that emaciated saint. So I: "God bless your ladyship, and forgive your printers!" Lucan for Lucian: that blaring rhetorician for the delicately elegant and debonair Lucian: 'tis *lèse-majesté*, no less. I have ventured, by the way, to wonder if there be a misprint in your dedication: I think not; and yet, should "these wild dry whims" be "these wild dry *whins*"? That were to sustain the metaphor not inaptly: but mine is a *lectio valde suspecta* by myself. But enough of this odious theme: there are certain misprints in my pair of books which curdle my blood unto this day. A thousand thanks for "Quiet London," with its "Gray's Inn limes" and infinite memories: it drips honey of sweet remembrance. And on bended knees I thank you for the "Inquirendo." I am like Hume, who had, says Burke, an "unaccountable partiality" for Charles II: or like the dearer doctor, who had for him, says Boswell, an "extraordinary partiality," and called him the last British king who was "a man of parts." But, indeed, the whole book captivates me: and you have not forgotten the praise of the dog. Very many thanks for your Egdon poem: it recalls to me, oh, what days and nights in that haunted countryside! I love to sleep under the stars, with no roof between us: in Wales and Cornwall I have spent marvellous nights: one on Tintagel, when the souls of the Celtic knights were abroad on the sea-wind. But Egdon was terrible: purple vault above, purple plain around; the oldest loneliness in the world. I lay in the heather, dreading to wake, and find myself accompanied by wondering vast mammoths; or worse, by sinister little dark men, fresh from the ancestral ape. "The Fear" was upon me badly. But Wareham set me right next day: dear, quaint Wareham, where you expect to meet Julius Cæsar arm-in-arm with George III. Were you there of a Sunday, I wonder, and heard Mass at the little Passionist chapel? It was after Mass there, that I wrote the lines in my book, called

" To a Passionist." The celebrant had a face of beautiful austerity, and was vested in a wondrous white chasuble broidered with purple passion-flowers. By the way: I possess " Patrins " under false pretences, for I possess the Mangan too! Calling one day upon Lane, I found him reading it: whereupon I reminded him, that by your kind commands, I was entitled to a copy. He explained the delay of the English publication, and said that this was his private copy of the American, but very much at my service. Knowing that the excellent but limited Lane cares no more for Mangan than for Aquinas, I carried it off. Congratulations! It is the best service yet done to poor Clarence. If we differ about him at all, it is as to the relative value of his Irish and his other translations: to me, the Irish are by far the finer. " Oh, mournful is my soul this night for Hugh Maguire! Darkly, as in a dream, he strays: before him and behind, Triumphs the tyrannous anger of the wounding wind; The wounding wind, that burns as fire! "

I have no words to express my prostrate adoration of those lines: nothing more magnificently terrible and lovely in Æschylus or Lucretius. I have burst out a-chaunting them in Piccadilly and Cheapside, to the amused amazement of the public. And the Dark Rosaleen: you cannot read it aloud; I have often tried, and always found my voice quivering and breaking, my heart thumping, my eyes half-blind with tears: I once quoted three stanzas at an Irish meeting in the East End, and made myself a spectacle to gods and men, by falling back into the chairman's arms, *à la* Sheridan and Burke. These, and two or three more, are more than human: they came straight from Heaven, and have an absolute beauty. You praise them loyally and splendidly: but can you indeed maintain, that Mangan's genius was " happier on Saxon than on Celtic ground "? Here be treasons, or misprisions of treason, surely! I cannot agree with the " faun from Sligo "; I thank you for that word; who asserts that " only his Irish work is permanently interesting ": but I do think it worth

all the rest of his work. And, ochone! how infamously he could write: without question, his uninspired Irish poems are his very worst: *corruptio optimi.* And I fear, I have little sympathy with German poetry not of the first rank: your Uhlands, and Rückerts, and Körners, and Freiligraths, and the rest of them, they are all to me as cats or brass bands in the moonshine: they wail or rant, and they reek with sentiment. Then their sham romanticism! The wildest Hugoesque excesses of 1830 are better than that. I love Heine, enjoy Goethe, respect Schiller: but the rest of modern German poetry will be the sole reading of the damned; a fact which I find a strong provocation to virtue. You observe that I have my prejudices. I hope the book is going well in the States: it certainly should. Poor Mangan must be looking down with peculiar gratitude upon you and my friend O'Donoghue: I'm sure they have given him a beautiful Irish harp, and he plays it softly to himself under the trees. Do you know Frank Mathew's touching sketch of him in "At the Rising of the Moon"? "The Golden Urn" is a pleasing whimsy of the incalculable Bernhard [Berenson]: and I found the hands of other friends at work upon it. The Urn itself upon the cover was drawn by Herbert Horne, and the grotesque stories are by Pearsall Smith, an Oxford American friend of mine. Berenson is now in town, and I hope to see him shortly. And I shall be delighted to make the acquaintance of Miss Morgan,[1] if she will honour me with an invitation. Who is the imaginative person, who invented for me a cloistal and clerical life in Great Ormonde Street? It does him, or her, great credit: and it may come to that, or something like it, yet! The Holy Father has just made Fr. Clarke a Doctor of Divinity. The Hinksons and the dog are as you would wish them to be: all three bearing marks of sun and wind and sea, at St. Margaret's Bay. The Meynells and Shorters are likewise flourishing. I was amused by the advertisement of sound Catholic literature that you sent me:

[1] Of Brecon: collaborator with L. I. G. on Henry Vaughan.

more especially, to find "Patrins," with its "Inquirendo," guaranteed as an excellent prize book for schools: has Mother Church forgiven his Most Sacred Majesty [Charles II] in consideration of his deathbed? I was a little sorry to see Fr. Tabb's countenance: it has a certain ecclesiastical sharpness and 'cuteness, which always distresses me. I like stern faces, austere and mortified faces, but not smart, clever, knowing faces. Fr. Tabb's face plays his poetry false.

I enclose some verses of mine, for no worth of their own, beyond that of their sincerity. Much of my time just now is taken up with committees for the centenary celebration of '98: I owe it, by way of reparation; for my great-grandfather was one of the Generals upon the wrong side in '98: though he was thoroughly Irish at heart. Greet our common friends for me: I wish there were more of them, and that you knew George Santayana, assistant lecturer in metaphysics at Harvard: the "Spanish Friend" of one of my poems, and a man of singular charm.

Now, for a last word, be exceedingly well, and come back to quiet London, and honour these ancient rooms with your presence: here, to quote myself—

> "Here are the Gardens, loved by Lamb;
> Here stayed my mighty namesake, Sam;
> Here dwelled the venal Verulam."

Another sight of them would set you up for ever!

Ever sincerely yours,

LIONEL JOHNSON.

To Louise Imogen Guiney

7, GRAY'S INN SQUARE,
GRAY'S INN, LONDON.
March 30, 1898.

MY DEAR MISS GUINEY,

First, a word of apology for my long silence, and acknowledgement of your kindliest letter in December. I have been grievously ill with repeated influenza, and attendant

weaknesses of body and mind, to a degree which has made all writing painful and almost impossible. I have not even had the energy to see the Hinksons, Meynells, and others of our friends! It is nothing serious; but persistent mild malady tries me worse than dangerous illness: that can be bracing, this is worrying and wearying.

Now, to dear Aubrey Beardsley. Unhappily, I have not seen him since he became a Catholic: he has constantly been abroad, and he was no letter-writer, especially as his end drew near and inevitable. I fear then, that what I can say will hardly be of service. But I *can* say, emphatically, that his conversion was a spiritual work, and not an half-insincere æsthetic act of change, not a sort of emotional experience or experiment: he became a Catholic with a true humility and exaltation of soul, prepared to sacrifice much. He withdrew himself from certain valued intimacies, which he felt incompatible with his faith: that implies much, in these days when artists so largely claim exemption, in the name of art, from laws and rules of life. His work, as himself declared, would have been very directly religious in scope and character: he would have dismissed from it all suggestion of anything dangerously morbid: he would have made it plain that he was sometimes a satirist of vices and follies and extravagancies, but not, so to say, a sentimental student of them for their curiosity and fascination's sake. There was always in him a vein of mental or imaginative unhealthiness and nervousness, probably due to his extreme physical fragility: this, he was setting himself to conquer, to transform into a spiritual and artistic source of energy. He died at twenty-four: his whole work was done in some five or six years: he won extraordinary praise and blame: and only his personal friends can truly realise his inexpressibly frail hold upon life, during the few years of his passionate devotion to his art. His consciousness of imminent death—the certainty that whatever he might do in art, in thought, in life at all, must be done very soon, or never—forced him to face the ultimate

questions. I do not for an instant mean that his conversion was a kind of feverish snatching at comfort and peace, a sort of anodyne or opiate for his restless mind: I only mean that, being under sentence of death, in the shadow of it, he was brought swiftly face to face with the values and purposes of life and of human activity, and that he "co-operated with grace," as theology puts it, by a more immediate and vivid vision of faith, than is granted to most converts. All that was best in his art, its often intense idealism, its longing to express the ultimate truths of beauty in line and form, its profound imaginativeness, helped to lead him straight to that faith, which embraces and explains all human apprehensions of, and cravings for, the last and highest excellences. The eye of his body was quick to see: the eye of his soul was quickened to see. He was sorry, he said at the last, to die so young, and leave his work unfinished: but he was "ready to obey God's Will." I believe that he had some thoughts of entering some order or congregation, in which he could have followed his art, and dedicated it directly to the service of the faith: in any case, that was the temper or tendency of his thoughts towards the end. He was strangely gentle and winning, though passionate and vehement in his intellectual and æsthetic life: such passion and vehemence, tempered by his spiritual docility, might have achieved great and perfect things. As I have suggested, there was a side to his nature which might have led him far in the direction of technical excellence in the extreme, coupled with spiritual perversity in the extreme: he lived long enough to show that his course would have been otherwise. I ascribe all in his work, which even great friends and admirers find unwelcome, partly to his febrile, consumptive, suffering state of body, with its consequent restlessness and excitability of mind: partly to sheer boyish insolence of genius, love of audaciousness, consciousness of power. He was often ridiculed, insulted, misconstrued: and he sometimes replied by extravagance. But despite all wantonness of youthful genius, and all the morbidity

of disease, his truest self was on the spiritual side of things, and his conversion was true to that self. He was not the man to play with high things, still less with the highest of all: he would never have been a fantastical, dilettante trifler with Catholicism, making it an emotional foil to other and base emotions. All the goodness and greatness in him, brought face to face with the last reality of death, leapt up to the sudden vision of faith, as their satisfaction and true end: and after a lingering period of strong daily pain, he died in quiet peace and happiness. Requiescat: with all my heart.

This, I think, is the strict truth: and if you can make the smallest use of it, I shall feel more than glad. But pray keep my name back: if you must give any sort of authority, merely say to Fr. Gasson, or others, that this comes from a Catholic friend of Beardsley and of yourself in England. If you think it worth copying out for Fr. Gasson, tell him that the writer has considered carefully every word: but that, if it conflict at all with other testimony, or contain anything which does not commend itself to him as a priest and director of souls, I do not profess to be absolutely in the right, but only to have given, with entire sincerity, my own strong impressions of the truth. Had I seen Aubrey since his reception, I might have sent you something of value: yet, since I knew him well, and talked much with him of many matters, and heard much of him, up to the last, from friends, I think my impression may at least give a suggestion that may be helpful.—Aubrey Beardsley, twenty-four: Hubert Crackanthorpe, twenty-six: my friends die young! . . .

I close abruptly, to catch the mail.

Ever sincerely yours,

LIONEL JOHNSON.

(To be continued.)

NECESSE EST PERSTARE?

By F. M.

A FLURRY of snow in the sky,
Cold blue English sky,
And then the lunch party broke up
And people said they must go
And there was an end (for a session)
of the eternal Aldous Huxley—
Elizabeth Bibesco—Clive Bell—
unceasing clamour of inanities.

I looked at you and you had stretched
your arms up above your head
With such an air of weariness,
Like some very old monkey.

I looked at you and you looked at me.
I longed to speak to you,
but I didn't. I longed
To come and stand beside you at the window and
look out at the fleering
cold English sunshine and say,
Is it necessary—
Is this necessary—
Tell me, is it *necessary* that we go through this?

THE FIELD OF MUSTARD

By A. E. COPPARD

ON a windy afternoon in November they were gathering kindling in the Black Wood, Dinah Lock, Amy Hardwick, and Rose Olliver, three sere disvirgined women from Pollock's Cross. Mrs. Lock wore clothes of dull butcher's blue, with a short jacket that affirmed her plumpness; but Rose and Amy had on long grey ulsters. All of them were about forty years old, and the wind and twigs had touzled their gaunt locks, for none had a hat upon her head. They did not go far beyond the margin of the wood, for the forest ahead of them swept high over a hill, and was gloomy; behind them the slim trunks of beech, set in a sweet ruin of leaf hoar and scattered, and green briar nimbly fluttering, made a sort of palisade against the light of the open, which was grey, and a wide field of mustard, which was yellow. The three women peered up into the trees for dead branches, and when they found any Dinah Lock, the vivacious woman full of shrill laughter, with a bosom as massive as her haunches, would heave up a rope with an iron bolt tied to one end. The bolted end would twine itself around the dead branch, the three women would tug, and after a sharp crack the quarry would fall; as often as not the women would topple over too. By and by they met an old hedger with a round belly belted low, and thin legs tied at each knee, who told them the time by his ancient watch, a stout timepiece which the women sportively admired.

"Come Christmas, I'll have me a watch like that!" Mrs. Lock called out. The old man looked a little dazed as he

fumblingly replaced his chronometer. "I will," she continued, "if the Lord spares me and the pig don't pine."

"You . . . you don't know what you're talking about," he said. "That watch was my uncle's watch."

"Who was he? I'd like one like it."

"Was a sergeant-major in the Lancers, fought under Sir Garnet Wolseley, and it was given to him."

"What for?"

The hedger stopped and turned on them: "Doing of his duty."

"That all?" cried Dinah Lock. "Well, I never got no watch for that a-much. Do you know what I see when I went to London? I see'd a watch in a bowl of water; it was glass, and there was a fish swimming round it. . . ."

"I don't believe it."

"There was a fish swimming round it. . . ."

"I tell you I don't believe it. . . ."

"And the little hand was going on like Clackford Mill. That's the sort of watch I'll have me; none of your Sir Garney Wolsey's!"

"He was a noble Christian man, that was."

"Ah! I suppose he slept wid Jesus?" yawped Dinah.

"No, he didn't," the old man disdainfully spluttered. "He never did. What a God's the matter wid ye?" Dinah cackled with laughter. "Pah!" he cried, going away. "Great fat thing! Can't tell your guts from your elbows."

Fifty yards further on he turned and shouted some obscenity back at them, but they did not heed him; they had begun to make three faggots of the wood they had collected, so he put his fingers to his nose at them and shambled out to the road.

By the time Rose and Dinah were ready Amy Hardwick, a small, slow, silent woman, had not finished bundling her faggot together.

"Come on, Amy," urged Rose.

"Come on," Dinah said.

"All right, wait a minute," she replied listlessly.

" O God, that's death ! " cried Dinah Lock, and heaving a great faggot to her shoulders she trudged off, followed by Rose with a like burden. Soon they were out of the wood, and crossing a highway they entered a footpath that strayed in a diagonal wriggle to the far corner of the field of mustard. In silence they journeyed until they came to that far corner, where there was a hedged bank. Here they flung their faggots down and sat upon them to wait for Amy Hardwick.

In front of them lay the field they had crossed, a sour scent rising faintly from its yellow blooms that quivered in the wind. Day was dull, the air chill, and the place most solitary. Beyond the field of mustard the eye could see little but forest. There were hills there, a vast curving trunk, but the Black Wood heaved itself effortlessly upon them, and lay like a dark pall over the outline of a corpse. Huge and gloomy, the purple woods draped it all completely. A white necklace of a road curved below, where a score of telegraph-poles, each crossed with a multitude of white florets, were dwarfed by the hugeness to effigies that resembled hyacinths. Dinah Lock gazed upon this scene whose melancholy, and not its grandeur, had suddenly invaded her; with elbows sunk in her fat thighs, and nursing her cheeks in her hands, she puffed the gloomy air, saying :

" O God, cradle and grave is all there is for we."

" Where's Amy got to ? " asked Rose.

" I could never make a companion of her, you know," Dinah declared.

" Nor I," said Rose, " she's too sour and slow."

" Her disposition's too serious. Of course, your friends are never what you want them to be, Rose. Sometimes they're better—most often they're worse. But it's such a mercy to have a friend at all : I like you, Rose ; I wish you was a man."

" I might just as well ha' been," returned the other woman.

" Well, you'd ha' done better ; but if you had a tidy little family like me you'd wish you hadn't got 'em."

" And if you'd never had 'em you'd ha' wished you had."

" Rose, that's the cussedness of nature, it makes a mock

of you. I don't believe it's the Almighty at all, Rose. I'm sure it's the devil, Rose. Dear heart, my corn's a-giving me what-for ; I wonder what that bodes ? "

" It's restless weather," said Rose. She was dark, tall, and not unbeautiful still, though her skin was harsh and her limbs angular. " Get another month or so over—there's so many of these long, dreary hours."

" Ah, your time's too long, or it's too short, or it's just right but you're too old. Cradle and grave's my portion. Fat old thing ! he called me."

Dinah's brown hair was ruffled across her pleasant face, and she looked a little forlorn, but corpulence dispossessed her of tragedy. " I be thin enough a-summertimes, for I lives light and sweats like a bridesmaid ; but winters I'm fat as a hog."

" What all have you to grumble at then ? " asked Rose, who had slid to the ground and lay on her stomach staring up at her friend.

" My heart's young, Rose."

" You've your husband."

" He's no man at all since he was ill. A long time ill, he was. When he coughed, you know, his insides come up out of him like coffee grouts. Can you ever understand the meaning of that ? Coffee ! I'm growing old, but my heart's young."

" So is mine, too ; but you got a family, four children grown or growing." Rose had snapped off a sprig of the mustard flower, and was pressing and pulling the bloom in and out of her mouth. " I've none, and never will have." Suddenly she sat up, fumbled in her pocket, and produced her purse. She slipped the elastic band from it and it gaped open. There were a few coins there and a scrap of paper folded. Rose took out the paper and smoothed it open under Dinah's curious gaze. " I found something lying about at home the other day, and I cut this bit out of it." In soft tones she began to read :

" The day was void, vapid ; time itself seemed empty. Come evening it rained softly. I sat by my fire turning over

the leaves of a book, and I was dejected, until I came upon a little old-fashioned engraving at the bottom of a page. It imaged a procession of some angelic children in a garden, little placidly-naked substantial babes, with tiny bird-wings. One carried a bow, others a horn of plenty, or a hamper of fruit, or a set of reed-pipes. They were garlanded and full of grave joys. And at the sight of them a strange bliss flowed into me such as I have never known, and I thought this world was all a garden, though its light was hidden and its children not yet born."

Rose did not fold the paper up; she crushed it in her hand and lay down again without a word.

"Huh, I tell you, Rose, a family's a torment. I never wanted mine. God love, Rose, I'd lay down my life for 'em; I'd cut myself into fourpenny pieces so they shouldn't come to harm; if one of 'em was to die I'd sorrow to my grave. But I know, I know, I know I never wanted 'em; they were not for me; I was just an excuse for their blundering into the world. Somehow I've been duped, and every woman born is duped so, one ways or another in the end. I had my sport with my man, but I ought never to have married. Now I'd love to begin all over again, and as God's my maker, if it weren't for those children, I'd be gone off out into the world again to-morrow, Rose. But I dunno what 'ud become o' me."

The wind blew strongly athwart the yellow field, and the odour of mustard rushed upon the brooding woman. Protestingly the breeze flung itself upon the forest; there was a gliding cry among the rocking pinions as of some lost wave seeking a forgotten shore. The angular faggot under Dinah Lock had begun to vex her; she too sank to the ground and lay beside Rose Olliver, who asked:

"And what 'ud become of your old man?"

For a few moments Dinah Lock paused. She too took a sprig of the mustard and fondled it with her lips. "He's no man now; the illness feebled him, and the virtue's gone; no

man at all since two years, and bald as a piece of cheese—I like a hairy man, like . . . do you remember Rufus Blackthorn, used to be gamekeeper here ? "

Rose stopped playing with her flower. " Yes, I knew Rufus Blackthorn."

" A fine bold man that was ! Never another like him hereabouts, nor in England neither ; not in the whole world—though I've heard some queer talk of those foreigners, Australians, Chinymen. Well ! "

" Well ? " said Rose.

" He was a devil," Dinah Lock began to whisper. " A perfect devil. I can't say no fairer than that ; I wish I could, but I can't."

" Oh come," protested Rose, " he was a kind man. He'd never see anybody want for a thing."

" No," there was playful scorn in Dinah's voice, " he'd shut his eyes first ! "

" Not to a woman he wouldn't, Dinah."

" Ah ! Well—perhaps—he was good to women."

" I could tell you things as would surprise you," murmured Rose.

" You ! But—well—no, no. I could tell *you* things as you wouldn't believe. Me and Rufus ! We was—oh my—yes ! "

" He *was* handsome."

" Oh, a pretty man ! " Dinah acceded warmly. " Black as coal and bold as a fox. I'd been married nigh on ten years when he first set foot in these parts. I'd got three children then. He used to give me a saucy word whenever he saw me, for I liked him, and he knew it. One Whitsun Monday I was home all alone, the children were gone somewheres, and Tom was away boozing. I was putting some plants in our garden—I loved a good flower in those days—I wish the world was all a garden ; but now my Tom he digs 'em up, digs everything up proper and never puts 'em back. Why, we had a crocus, once ! And as I was doing that planting someone walked by the garden, in such a hurry. I looked up and there was Rufus,

all dressed up to the nines, and something made me call out to him. 'Where be you off to in that flaming hurry,' I says. 'Going to a wedding,' says he. 'Shall I come with 'ee?' 'Ah yes,' he says, very glad, 'but hurry up, for I be sharp set and all.' So I run in-a-doors and popped on my things and off we went to Jim Pickring's wedding over at Clackford Mill. When Jim brought the bride home from church that Rufus got hold of a gun and fired it off up chimney, and down come soot, the bushels of it! All over the room, and a chimney-pot burst and rattled down the tiles into a perambulator. What a rumbullion that was! But no one got angry—there was plenty of drink, and we danced all the afternoon. Then we come home together again through the woods. O Lord—I said to myself—I shan't come out with you ever again, and that's what I said to Rufus Blackthorn. But I did, you know! I woke up in bed that night and the moon shone on me dreadful—I thought the place was afire. But there was Tom snoring, and I lay and thought of me and Rufus in the wood, till I could have jumped out into the moonlight, stark, and flown over the chimney. I didn't sleep any more. And I saw Rufus the next night, and the night after that, often, often. Whenever I went out I left Tom the cupboardful—that's all he troubled about. I was mad after Rufus, and while that caper was on I couldn't love my husband. No."

"No?" queried Rose.

"Well, I pretended I was ill, and I took my young Katey to sleep with me, and give Tom her bed. He didn't seem to mind, but after a while I found he was gallavanting after other women. Course, I soon put a stopper on that. And then—what do you think? Bless me if Rufus weren't up to the same tricks! Deep as the sea, that man. Faithless, you know, but such a bold one."

Rose lay silent, plucking wisps of grass; there was a wry smile on her face.

"Did ever he tell you the story of the man who was drowned?" she asked at length. Dinah shook her head.

Rose continued. " Before he came here he was keeper over in that Oxfordshire, where the river goes right through the woods, and he slept in a boathouse moored to the bank. Some gentleman was drowned near there—an accident it was—but they couldn't find the body. So they offered a reward of ten pound for it to be found. . . ."

" Ten, ten pounds ! "

" Yes. Well, all the watermen said the body wouldn't come up for ten days. . . ."

" No more they do."

" It didn't. And so late one night—it was moonlight—some men in a boat keeping hauling and poking round the house where Rufus was, and he heard 'em say, ' It must be here, it must be here,' and Rufus shouts out to them, ' 'Course he's here ! I got him in bed with me ! ' "

" Aw ! " chuckled Dinah.

" Yes, and next day he got the ten pounds, because he *had* found the body and hidden it away."

" Feared nothing," said Dinah, " nothing at all, he'd have been rude to Satan. But he was very delicate with his hands, sewing and things like that. I used to say to him, ' Come, let me mend your coat,' or whatever it was ; but he never would, always did such things of himself. ' I don't allow no female to patch my clothes,' he'd say, ' 'cos they works with a red-hot needle and a burning thread.' And he used to make fine little slippers, out of reeds."

" Yes," Rose concurred, " he made me a pair."

" You ! " Dinah cried. " What—were you . . . ? "

Rose turned her head away. " We was all cheap to him," she said softly, " cheap as old rags ; we was like chaff before him."

Dinah Lock lay still, very still, ruminating ; but whether in old grief or new rancour Rose was not aware, and she probed no further. Both were quiet, voiceless, recalling the past delirium. They shivered, but did not rise. The wind increased in the forest, its hoarse breath sorrowed in the yellow

field, and swift masses of cloud flowed and twirled in a sky without end and full of gloom.

"Hallo!" cried a voice, and there was Amy beside them, with a faggot almost overwhelming her. "Shan't stop now," she said, "for I've got this faggot perched just right, and I shouldn't ever get it up again. I found a shilling in the 'ood, you," she continued shrilly and gleefully. "Come along to my house after tea and we'll have a quart of stout."

"A shilling, Amy!" cried Rose.

"Yes," called Mrs. Hardwick, trudging steadily on. "I tried to find the fellow to it, but no more luck. Come and wet it after tea!"

"Rose," said Dinah, "come on." She and Rose, with much circumstance, heaved up their faggots and tottered after, but by then Amy was turned out of sight down the little lane to Pollock's Cross.

"Your children will be home," said Rose as they went along; "they'll be looking out for you."

"Ah, they'll want their bellies filling!"

"It must be lovely a-winter's night, you setting round your fire with 'em, telling tales, and brushing their hair."

"Ain't you got a fire of your own indoors," grumbled Dinah.

"Yes."

"Well, why don't you set by it then!" Dinah's faggot caught the briars of a hedge that overhung, and she tilted round with a mild oath. A covey of partridges feeding beyond scurried away with ruckling cries. One foolish bird dashed into the telegraph wires and dropped dead.

"They're good children, Dinah, yours are. And they make you a valentine, and give you a ribbon on your birthday, I expect?"

"They're naught but a racket from cockcrow till the old man snores—and then it's worse!"

"Oh, but the creatures, Dinah!"

"You . . . you got your quiet trim house, and only your

man to look after, a kind man, and you'll set with him in the evenings and play your dominoes or your draughts, and he'll look at you—the nice man—over the board, and stroke your hand now and again."

The wind hustled the two women closer together, and as they stumbled under their burdens Dinah Lock stretched out a hand and touched the other woman's arm. "I like you, Rose; I wish you was a man."

Rose did not reply. Again they were quiet, voiceless, and thus in fading light they came to their homes. But how windy, dispossessed and ravaged, roved the darkening world! Clouds were borne frantically across the heavens, as if in a rout of battle, and the lovely earth seemed to sigh in grief at some calamity all unknown to men.

". . . AS SCARLET . . ."

By WILFRID GIBSON

SCARLET the toadstools burn
In black mould by the linn,
Yet not more fiery red
Than my soul's sin.

Sodden as last year's leaves,
My life seemed cold and dead,
When suddenly the black
Burst into red.

Fall quickly winter snow
To bury all from sight
In drift on drift of deaths
Cold dazzling white !

FRANÇOIS VILLON[1]

By RICHARD ALDINGTON

A CENTURY ago the name of Villon was known to the literary public through a couplet of Boileau (who had probably never read a line of his work), praising him because he was able :—

> " . . . Le premier dans ces siècles grossiers
> Débrouiller l'art confus de nos vieux romanciers."

There was a reprint of Marot's edition as late as 1742 ; the first modern edition was Prompsault's in 1832. Only within the last fifty years has it been possible to compose an authentic and critical biography of Villon, thanks to the labours of Longnon, Marcel Schwob, and M. Pierre Champion. At the present moment Villon is held unanimously to be the greatest French poet of the fifteenth century. The swing of the pendulum is complete. Indeed the danger is now that our " povre petit escollier " may be over-estimated. We find him placed with Dante and Catullus ; described as " the first modern poet," " the greatest poet of the Middle Ages," " the greatest poet of fifteenth-century Europe." Such adulation disconcerts the most sincere admirer of Villon. We are tempted to rebel, to point out how small a portion of Villon's work is really perfect ; how much of it is obscure, trivial, awkward ; how limited and premature his genius.

Sometimes we cannot help feeling that there is something

[1] *François Villon. Œuvres.* Édition critique avec notice et glossaire, par Louis Thuasne. (Paris. Picard. 3 vols.)

Histoire Poétique du Quinzième Siècle. Par Pierre Champion. (Paris. Champion. 2 vols.)

a little factitious and forced in this excessive admiration; Villon, like Donne and Baudelaire, is the kind of poet who is liable to become the victim of coteries. The enthusiasm of Schwob, of M. Champion, and M. Thuasne is a different matter. They are our masters in the study of Villon; if we really wish to understand the *Lais* and the *Testament*, we must sit at their feet; and to carry the task through we need all their enthusiasm. Villon is really a most difficult poet; the keenest *flair*, the quickest appreciation of poetry will only enable us to skim the surface, to "feel" a few of the ballades and stanzas. But, even so, we are liable to grotesque misconceptions; and, without expert guidance, we cannot possibly expect to comprehend the *Lais* and the *Testament* as a whole. Without such guidance we may receive a very pleasant "henid" of Villon's work, but we cannot know it.

The language difficulty is perhaps the least troublesome, though that is formidable enough. M. Thuasne's interesting commentary occupies two volumes of small type, and a considerable portion is devoted to explanations of language difficulties. A great mediæval scholar like Gaston Paris confessed several times that he was baffled by a couplet, a line, a phrase; and an expert like M. Thuasne says there is not a *savant* in the world who completely understands the ballades in *jargon*, and he is gently ironic at the expense of those who claim to know all about Villon. If the greatest experts in France admit their ignorance, how careful we English amateurs should be before laying down the law, and attempting a critical estimate of Villon! This caution is not pedantry; for how can we justly appreciate a poem we only partly comprehend or interpret erroneously? But there are other difficulties. Villon is one of the most personal and allusive of poets. He himself is the whole substance of his work; *Le Testament* is one long soliloquy, where he passes in review his life, his misfortunes, his sufferings, his degradation, his loves, his hatreds, even his crimes. To follow the

thread of his meditation we must know his life " by heart," and even then something will elude us, because we have only an incomplete biography. Moreover, Villon wrote for a very small circle of *clercs*, and he constantly uses topical and local allusions, familiar enough to a fifteenth-century student at Paris, incomprehensible to us without a huge commentary. And then, again, he " ris en pleurs," he is ironic and paradoxical, jokes with tears in his eyes, is apparently solemn and even pathetic when he means to be satirical and amusing.

These facts, which could easily be supported by examples from Villon's poetry, fully justify (if any justification be needed) this large new edition of Villon, with its biography, critical " apparatus," and most interesting commentary; indeed, the commentary is not only a remarkable piece of scholarship, but is a kind of compendium of mediæval French literature. The necessity for so elaborate and bulky a commentary is itself a criticism of Villon—if seven hundred pages of explanation are needed for less than three thousand lines of verse, might it not be argued that Villon is a specialist's poet, not the world's poet as Shakespeare and Horace and even Ronsard are? But then, how few people really *know* Shakespeare and Horace and Ronsard. How few of us can feel that we understand Milton as even Macaulay understood him. Villon is not one of those charming pocket-poets like Herrick and Horace, who are equally good company on a country walk, on a railway journey, or by the fireside—who wants a commentary on " Gather ye Rosebuds "? We must use the pick-axe to conquer these craggy lines of Villon, but then they are worth the labour. No doubt the " mere " lover of poetry will quail at attacking—how many scores of thousands of lines is it?—the *Roman de la Rose* or even the baffling ascent of Dante's *Paradiso*; but Villon is worth the trouble we must give to understand him. He is unique; he encourages us from the first with a few things like the *Ballade of the Ladies of Old Time* and the *Ballade des Pendus*, which

anyone can understand; and there is not too much of him. Sometimes, no doubt, the reward is scarcely worth the pains. Take, for example, these four lines:

> "Item, laisse *le Mortier d'Or*
> A Jehan, l'espicier, de la Garde,
> Et une potence Saint Mor,
> Pour faire ung broyer a moustarde."

Unless one has the genius of the born critic, those lines at first appear perfectly meaningless. Then we learn that "le Mortier d'Or" was a common sign over grocers' shops; that Jehan de la Garde was a rich gouty grocer of Paris against whom Villon had a grudge (possibly because the grocer would not lend him money); that a "potence Saint Mor" means a "crutch used by the gouty"; and that "broyer a moustarde" has three meanings, "to grind mustard," "to be hypochondriacal" and—an obscene *sous-entente*. The whole thing falls rather flat, and is hardly worth the trouble of working out; possibly one-fifth of Villon's work is on that level, or not much above it. The rest is poetry, and sometimes great poetry.

The general outline of Villon's life is fairly generally known. We all know that he was a poet, a lover and a poor scholar, a thief and a vagabond; that he was several times in prison, once under sentence of death; that his abrupt disappearance from contemporary records means that he either died of misery or was hanged. Stevenson's "A Lodging for the Night" is a very clever "arrangement" of Villon's character which errs perhaps by making him too much of a careless "Bohemian" and by ignoring the mediæval Christian oscillating between "sin" (which covered any crime, however heinous) and the "repentance" which gave complete absolution. The intensely personal nature of Villon's work renders knowledge of his life essential.

He was born at Paris in 1431, during one of the most disastrous and miserable epochs of French history—the last

stages of the Hundred Years War. He tells us himself that his parents were poor :

" Povre je suis de ma jeunesse,
De povre et de petite extrace ;
Mon pere n'ot oncq grant richesse. . . ."

When he speaks of his mother she is always " ma povre mere," " la povre femme " ; and in the *ballade* he makes for her " pour prier Nostre Dame " she describes herself as :

" Femme je suis povrette et ancienne,
Qui riens ne sçay ; oncques lettres ne lus."

His name was François de Montcorbier or François des Loges ; the name of Villon was derived from Guillaume de Villon, a " worthy chaplain " who adopted him, after the death of his father, between 1438 and 1440, when François was between seven and nine. This Guillaume de Villon treated his *protégé* with extraordinary kindness, even when he took to evil and criminal ways ; and, in his fashion, Villon was not ungrateful. In both the *Lais* and *Testament* his first legacy is for Maistre Guillaume ; in the one Villon leaves him " mon bruit " (" my fame "), and in the other " ma librairie " and the *Roman du Pet au Deable*—a lost work written when he was a student. In that touching, pathetic style Villon could use so effectively—not without a suspicion of blarney—he writes :

" Item, et a mon plus que pere,
Maistre Guillaume de Villon,
Qui esté m'a plus doulx que mere
A enfant levé de maillon :
Degeté m'a de maint bouillon. . . ."

The meaning of the obscure last line is that he had helped François out of many a scrape. For at least until he was twenty-one, François was a credit to his protector. In 1449 he became Bachelor of Arts of the University of Paris, and

Master of Arts on August 26, 1452. He was received at the house of Robert d'Estouteville, Provost of Paris, for whose wife, Ambroise de Loré, he wrote an acrostic ballade, "Au point du jour, que l'esprevier s'esbat," inserted in the *Testament*. One must not be too impressed by Villon's title of Master of Arts; in the fifteenth century the words do not create the same instantaneous impression of culture and learning they do in the twentieth century. Villon's learning was probably enough to secure him his degree, and no more. The book he knew best was the *Roman de la Rose*. His classical learning was that singular and sometimes charming deformation of antiquity, created out of legend and mis-read history by the Middle Ages. There is one delightful example of this learning in the Ballade of the Ladies. Probably many readers have been puzzled by that *Archipiada* who was "cousine germaine" to Thais. Villon probably found them in Renaut de Louhans's very free translation of the *De Consolatione Philosophiæ* of Boëthius; and Archipiada, it appears, is Alcibiades, who by some curious mediæval whimsy was transformed into a woman "de gentil et plaisant corsage," much frequented by the disciples of "Aristotes."

Unfortunately for him, Villon was acquiring other knowledge more dangerous and practical than these fine classical flourishes. He fell into bad company—two of his closest student friends were subsequently hanged—and, which is almost worse for a poor man, into the company of the rich, the "gracieux galans"—

> "Si bien chantans, si bien parlans,
> Si plaisans en faiz et en dis."

Wine and women occupied much of his attention. He shows a remarkable familiarity with the Parisian taverns; the Pomme de Pin, la Mule, le Grant-Godet de Grève, and several others, where no doubt the "repues franches" of tradition took place. Villon appreciated good living; he

dwells regretfully and enviously upon the idea of a cozy canonry :

" Sur mol duvet assis, ung gras chanoine,
Lez ung brazier, en chambre bien natee,
A son costé gisent dame Sidoine,
Blanche, tendre, polie et attintee. . . .

" Lors je cogneus que, pour dueil appaisier,
Il n'est tresor que de vivre a son aise."

He pictures to himself, in his cold and hungry garret, the good cheer of the " grans maistres " of this earth :

" Bons vins ont, souvent embrochiez,
Saulees, brouetz et gros poissons ;
Tartes, flaons, œfz fritz et pochiez. . . ."

And, what with his unfortunate love-affairs, and those little affairs with other people's money-chests which were always coming to light at inopportune moments, and his present misery and cold, and regret for what might have been, poor Maistre Villon feels very low indeed :

" Hé Dieu ! se j'eusse estudié
Ou temps de ma jeunesse folle,
Et a bonnes meurs dedié,
J'eusse maison et couche molle.
Mais quoy ? je fuyoie l'escolle,
Comme fait le mauvais enfant. . . .
En escripvant ceste parolle,
A peu que le cuer ne me fent."

But, even worse for Villon than bad company and excessive love of good living, was what Dr. Johnson described in himself as his " amorous propensities." Here, indeed, is one of the paradoxes of Villon's character ; how, we wonder, could the man who always remembered with a pang his hopeless passion for Catherine de Vauselles, who represents himself as the victim of love—how could he sink to the degradation of living as *souteneur* to La Grosse Margot ? Catherine de Vauselles cannot be identified with certainty, though a family

of that name lived close to Saint-Benoît. What is certain is, that she rejected the poet's advances:

" . . . celle . . . .
Qui m'a si durement chassié,"

And that she played fast and loose with him:

" Quoy que je luy voulsisse dire,
Elle estoit preste d'escouter
Sans m'acorder ne contredire;
Qui plus, me souffroit acouter
Joignant d'elle pres m'accouter,
Et ainsi m'aloit amusant,
Et me souffrait tout raconter;
Mais ce n'estoit qu'en m'abusant."

Villon finally grew angry and—so we may suppose—satirised his mistress in one of those rather bawdy songs for which court pages were whipped. The same fate—whipping—befell our luckless poet, either as an official punishment or as a private vengeance of Mlle Catherine. Hear him confess:

" De moy, povre, je vueil parler:
J'en fus batu comme a ru telles,
Tout nu, ja ne le quiers celer.
Qui me feist maschier ces groselles,
Fors Katherine de Vauselles? "

And yet, in spite of this irrevocable breach, Villon never forgot her; the bitterness of his disappointed love is always finding expression in some passionate phrase, even in that half-buffooning epitaph where he says of himself: " Qu'amours occist de son raillon." Long before that he had sought consolation among light ladies, like Marion l'Ydolle and Jehanne de Bretaigne, and all those " jolies marchandes " whose names he tells us. These light loves were at once the cause of his crimes, his misfortunes, and his poetry. It was in a quarrel over a girl named Ysabeau that Villon killed a man (June 5, 1455), and was compelled to fly from Paris until his friends could obtain him the King's pardon. Who can doubt that the idleness he so laments was the result of their influence or that his desperate thefts had for their principal motive an

imperious necessity to obtain money for the purchase of mercenary charms? It was the grim spectacle of an old prostitute, La Belle Héaulmière (who really existed), which set him off upon that tremendous and immortal meditation over the fragility of earthly beauty and pleasure. In the harshness of the poverty they brought upon him he learned those accents of bitter sincerity which render his poetry so superior to the flimsy cobwebs of " courteous " love-verse spun by his contemporaries. What is it that makes Villon a great poet? Primarily, this naked sincerity, this truth to reality. When he leaves mere railing and buffooning, and soars into stanza after stanza of immortal verse, the energy which gives him wings is the anguish of his own unhappy life, his cruel poverty, his torture (he suffered the " question by water ") and dreary weeks of semi-starvation in a noisome dungeon, his unhappy loves, his bitter meditation upon life and death. He conceals nothing, except that he was a thief. In Villon's poetry there is no poetic convention, no false shame, and no feigned repentance or cringing for pity. He is simply a weak man who " sins " and suffers and cries out in pain ; who repents and sins again, and is wounded deeper than ever. To us he appears strangely volatile and inconstant. At one time he is meditating upon the " neiges d'antan " ; at another asking a loan from the Duc de Bourbon. When he is under sentence of death he writes that poignant *Epitaphe Villon*—

" Frères humains qui après nous vivez,"

which would wring indulgence and a momentary pang of commiseration from a hangman ; and when he has finished it, luxuriated in the emotion, he writes this perky quatrain :

" Je suis François, dont ce me poise,
Né de Paris emprès Pontoise,
Qui d'une corde d'une toise
Sçaura mon col que mon cul poise."

This vagabond, this " Coquillard," or member of the fraternity of rogues and thieves, dead apparently to all generous

and disinterested feelings, surprises us with a patriot's invective against all those—

" Qui mal vouldroit au royaume de France ! "

But the most extraordinary paradox of all is his varying reactions to women. We may remind ourselves of human inconsistency, that man is both beast and angel, that Villon himself was one of the most " ondoyant et divers " of characters ; even so, it is hard to realise that such extremes of delicacy and coarseness could be touched by the same spirit. We read the Ballade of the Ladies and dwell upon lines like—

" Qui beaulté ot trop plus qu'umaine."

and—

" La royne Blanche comme lis."

There surely is a poet of delicate sensibility with a wonderful respect for, and devotion to, women. We turn the pages ; here is Villon sending his Lady Catherine a ballade ending in " R "—which was a sort of metaphysical insult—choosing as the messenger to carry it Pernet de la Barre (whose occupation was that of a police inspector of prostitutes) and directing him :

" . . . S'il rencontre en son erre
Ma demoiselle au nez tortu,
Il luy dira, sans plus enquerre,
' Orde paillarde, dont viens tu ? ' "

What more curious contrast than the *Ballade-prayer to Our Lady* made for his mother, and the revolting *Ballade de la Grosse Margot* ?

" Ordure amons, ordure nous assuit " ;

so he describes, without palliation, his life with this horrible Margot. What poet has so exquisitely expressed the physical beauty of women, or so cruelly described its lamentable wreck ? Who, but the tenderest of lovers, could have written :

" Corps feminin, qui tant es tendre,
Poly, souef, si precieux."

And who, but the same lover, shocked into horror, or the most heartless of cynics could have written that terrible description of the old Héaulmière ?

" Le front ridé, les cheveux gris,
Les sourcilz cheus, les yeulx estains . . .
Oreilles pendantes, moussues,
Le vis pally, mort et destains,
Menton froncé, levres peaussues. . . .

" C'est d'umaine beaulté l'issue !
Les bras cours et les mains contraites,
Des espaules toute bossue ;
Mamelles, quoy ? Toutes retraites ;
Telles les hanches que les tettes ;
Du sadinet, fy ! Quant des cuisses,
Cuisses ne sont plus, mais cuisettes
Grivelees comme saulcisses."

No doubt Villon had been in more than one scrape through his devotion " aux tavernes et aux filles " between his university days and 1455, but in June of that year he became guilty of manslaughter through killing a priest named Sermoise in a street brawl. The " letters of remission " granted to Villon by the King, bearing date January 1456, are in existence, and make most interesting reading. They are, unfortunately, far too long to quote. During these months of absence from Paris Villon must have wandered about the country in misery. It is possible that he was concerned in the theft of a considerable sum of money from a small town of Anjou in October 1455. Perhaps it was at this time he joined the " Coquillards " and learned their *jargon* and their thievish habits. At all events, he was back in Paris early in 1456, still in love with Catherine de Vauselles, but, as a pardoned criminal, with less hope than ever. He formed a plan of going to Angers, where he had an uncle in an abbey, and, before setting out on the journey, composed his *Lais*, or *Petit Testament* as it is frequently called.

A little circumstance, which Villon omitted mentioning in his poem, delayed him for a day or two. One December

night in 1456, a disreputable companion, Colin de Cayeux, proposed to Villon that they and others should rob the Collège de Navarre of a large sum of money. There was a dinner at the Taverne de la Mule, where the matter was discussed between Villon, Colin, Guy Tabarie, a Picardy monk Dom Nicholas, and one Petit Jehan, a clever pick-lock. The theft was successful, and after a dinner of celebration at the Pomme de Pin, Villon left Paris. Unluckily, Guy Tabarie, who had merely acted as watcher, while the others were breaking open the chest, confided the secret to a *curé*, who gave the name of the thieves to the police. Villon, of course, heard of this, and kept away from Paris. His wanderings about the country were a long Odyssey of miseries, relieved by a few brief periods of success at the courts of local potentates. Charles d'Orléans received him kindly, and gave him a pension; the ballade, *Je meurs de seuf aupres de la fontaine*, was written for a competition organised by the duke. But this ballade itself shows that Villon was already in disgrace with the duke and implores his forgiveness for some unknown offence.

We trace the poet at Bourges, at Saint-Satur-sous-Sancerre, at Moulins, where he met Jean II, duc de Bourbon, and borrowed six crowns from him. A ballade "asking for more" was unsuccessful, and Villon "moved on" to Roussillon in a lamentable state of poverty and distress. In the middle of 1460 we find him in prison, and apparently for something serious, since he thought he was in danger of death. He was liberated through one of those curious customs of the Middle Ages; on July 17, 1460, the Duke and Duchess, and their three-year-old daughter entered Orléans, and all prisoners were set free. Villon expressed his gratitude for this lucky escape in the poem to Marie d'Orléans:

> "O louee conception
> Envoiee ça jus des cieulx," . . .

What Villon did with his freedom is not known. Next summer (1461), he was in prison again, in Meun, by order of

the Bishop of Orléans, Thibault d'Auxigny, who kept him in a dungeon on bread and water. Villon pours out his fury and indignation against the Bishop in the opening stanzas of the *Testament.* He would probably have remained in this episcopal dungeon for the rest of his life, had he not been released owing to the opportune visit of Louis XI to Meun in October 1461.

This is the origin of Villon's extravagant and loyal praise of that artful monarch to whom, in the fulness of his heart, the grateful poet wished the frightful encumbrance of " twelve male children," all " born in lawful wedlock."

At the beginning of 1461, or beginning of 1462, Villon was hidden in one of the suburbs of Paris, where he wrote the *Testament,* inserting in appropriate places several of his earlier poems. In November 1462 he was imprisoned in the Châtelet on the old charge of theft. He came to an arrangement with the Collège de Navarre, agreeing to pay six score gold crowns (supplied or guaranteed, no doubt, by the good Guillaume de Villon) and was released about the 7th of November. A year later he was concerned, merely as a spectator, in a street brawl, and was at once arrested. Mediæval justice, which had so often pardoned the poet for real crimes, now condemned him to death for no crime at all. Villon wrote his magnificent *Ballade des Pendus,* and appealed against his sentence, which was commuted to ten years' banishment. The ballades *Question au clerc de Guichet* and *Louenge a la Court* must have been written on or about January 3, 1463, when the sentence of death was withdrawn.

And this is the last we hear of Maistre François Villon.

" Repos eternel donne a cil,
Sire, et clarté perpetuelle,
Qui vaillant plus ni escuelle
N'ot oncques, n'ung brin de percil.
Il fut rez, chief, barbe et sourcil,
Comme ung navet qu'on ret ou pelle,
Repos eternel donne a cil."

A NOTE ON THE CLASSICAL PRINCIPLE IN POETRY

By H. P. COLLINS

THE classicism of Marvell (who may be taken as the best representative of an interesting period) is more partial than that of Milton and of a kind more native to the English spirit. Marvell's work is essentially the product of a Latin culture. He has the grace and good-breeding, the absence of provincialism, that marked the circle of Augustus. A certain diffidently revealed depth of sensibility allies him to Catullus. As Catullus, by reason of his preponderating care for the tragic nature of love and for the pathos of man's mortality, was more romantic than, say, Horace, so Marvell was *a fortiori* a less pure classicist than Dryden; nearer to the tragic preoccupations of Donne. A smaller poet than Donne, he has yet a literary balance that Donne lacked. The "Coy Mistress," for all its emotional intensity, derives firmness of outline and imagery from a kind of intellectual *sanity* foreign to romantic poetry. The emotional content is clearly perceived, kept within bounds, and related directly to the physical symbol.

> I would
> Love you ten years before the Flood. . . .
> I always hear
> Time's wingèd chariot hurrying near. . . .
> Let us roll all our strength and all
> Our sweetness up into one ball. . . .

This is certainly not the voice of a typical classical spirit; yet the language is unmistakably that of one to whom intellectual apprehension of life is the stuff of poetical perceptions. The soul and the senses operate *within* the action of the mind; they do not precede the conscious effort of quite rational thought. There is a close connection between the autonomy of reason in poetical creation and concreteness of the image. When reason, or wit, is in the ascendant, there is a tendency to denote or state an emotional condition by direct reference; when the imagination is unbridled it inclines to vague equivalence, to the limitless *suggestion* of other emotional states, not so clearly realised in the mind's eye of the reader. As an instance of what even our modern romantic poetry might derive from a touch of the former, consider how unusually satisfying is the impression left by Mr. Edgell Rickword in the two opening lines of a sonnet called " Intimacy."

> Since I have seen your stocking swallow up,
> A strong black wind, the flame of your pale foot.

There is a characteristic modern weakness in the word " pale," which carries an uncomfortable aura of sensuo-spiritual implication which " white " would have avoided; but, for the rest, the simple image is as memorable as anything in the minor poetry of recent years. Wit, in the Jacobean sense, is present. It need not be inferred, however, that this quality is necessary to, or even compatible with, the highest poetry.

There is perhaps some antithesis between the most pure and exalted romantic imagination and this sharp intellectual contact which provides such delightfully tangible images. Yet in Marvell's highest flights he never wholly loses the faculty:

> All before us lie
> *Deserts* of vast eternity.
> By industrious valour *climb*
> To ruin the great work of Time.
> And *cast* the kingdoms old
> Into another *mould*.

For the finest instances of the simplified symbol in English one must look to prose: but there the function of the intellect is different—for in prose language is created by, rather than creates, meaning.

"That long for death, and it cometh not; that dig for it more than for hid treasure."

Perhaps it is the last limitation of classicist poetry that the necessary ascendancy of reason over absolute imagination brings it a little way in the direction of prose.

Since Marvell's literary method is being praised somewhat to the disparagement of the modern tradition, let us by way of test place the Horation Ode beside the most famous poem of Lionel Johnson, which happens to be on a similar theme. Few enthusiasts of modern poetry, I think, would disclaim it as representative, or object that Marvell's sensibility to the particular theme was finer.

That thence the Royal actor borne
The tragic scaffold might adorn:
While round the armèd bands
Did clap their bloody hands;

He nothing common did or mean
Upon that memorable scene,
But with his keener eye
The axe's edge did try;

Nor called the gods, with vulgar spite,
To vindicate his helpless right;
But bowed his comely head
Down, as upon a bed.

Lionel Johnson's poem is too long to quote entirely; but it will be remembered that his occasion is the statue of Charles at Charing Cross, and his setting the stars and the night.

Comely and calm he rides
Hard by his own Whitehall:
Only the night wind glides:
No crowds, nor rebels brawl. . . .

Alone he rides, alone,
The fair and fatal king :
Dark night is all his own,
That strange and solemn thing . . .

Although his whole heart yearn
In passionate tragedy :
Never was face so stern
With sweet austerity.

Vanquished in life, his death
By beauty made amends :
The passing of his breath
Won his defeated ends.

Armoured he rides, his head
Bare to the stars of doom :
He triumphs now, the dead,
Beholding London's gloom.

Our wearier spirit faints,
Vexed in the world's employ :
His soul was of the saints :
And art to him was joy.

King, tried in fires of woe !
Men hunger for thy grace :
And through the night I go,
Loving thy mournful face. . . .

The comparison, æsthetically, is not of course absolutely *in pari materia*. The modern romantic aims at a wider spiritual revelation ; is in a sense more ambitious. But even those—and I am not with them—who consider Johnson's poem a success, must admit that, in comparison with Marvell's incidental lines, it lacks grip of reality. It is not a question of the falsity of his characterisation of the Charles of history ; that is not necessarily an æsthetic objection. Nor is it merely that the relation of the king to the silence of night and the starry courtiers is a rather strained romantic fancy—I am considering the view of those who like that sort of thing. Nor is Johnson relatively shallow in imagination or infelicitous in phrasing. But the presentation lacks tangibility ; makes an

impression on the reader's mind which, compared with Marvell's passage, is vague. There is, too, a " third movement," the idea, hinted at but not assimilated into the imaginative scheme, of a posthumous " triumph " in the king—

> Beholding London's gloom,

which, from its own point of view, is weak, as it certainly does not harmonise with the transcendental vision to which—

> The stars and heavenly deeps
> Work out a perfect will,

which is in a wider spiritual dimension. And how disconcerting, with all regard to the romantic freedom of fancy, is the hazy, groping feeling of the whole poem when brought to the touchstone of Marvell's intellectual sanity. Yet Lionel Johnson was a man of strong, almost austere intelligence: in a happier tradition he might have been a minor poet of real value. The greatest deficiency of the King Charles poem is its lack of solid imagery. Idea melts vaguely into idea and equivalence into equivalence. There is no precise location and limitation of the perceptions. One becomes conscious of exaggeration, a lack of common sense, a prodigality of superlatives quite remote from the imaginative abandon of a type of great poetry. A " vast silence " reigns instead of the simple and impressive word " silence," where the whole context has gone to make vastness self-evident: the silence later on becomes " splendid," a most unhappy instance of the lack of significance into which romantic phrasing is liable to fall whenever the creative tension relaxes. Charles is " the saddest of all kings "—why? The whole poem goes to imply that he has a kind of serenity. That superlative has no æsthetic justification. Again the poet asks:

> Which are more full of fate:
> The stars, or those sad eyes?
> Which are more still and great;
> Those brows; or the dark skies?

It is not a condition of poetical questions, certainly, that they be answerable; but it is required that they stimulate the reader's imagination. This stanza, however comfortably rotund it may sound, inspires nothing. Did I believe this to be due to a defect in Johnson's poetical apprehension, it would serve no purpose in the argument; but what I wish to suggest is that it is weak through a weak tradition of language; that it is a surrender to a phrase that resembles the fashionable conception of evocative power. A true poetic comparison *challenges* in a different way.

> Exegi monumentum aere perennius. . . .
>
> Shall I compare thee to a summer's day ?
> Thou art more lovely and more temperate. . . .
>
> You meaner beauties of the night,
> That poorly satisfy our eyes. . . .
> What are you, when the moon shall rise ? . . .
> You violets that first appear,
> By your pure purple mantles known. . . .
> What are you, when the rose is blown ?
>
> Avez-vous observé que maints cerceuils de vieilles
> Sont presque aussi petits que celui d'un enfant ?

These comparisons are all, in their different ways, *realizable*, they relate the immediate perception to a correspondence in the visible world.

But, for the benefit of those who admire Marvell as being very much of a spiritual romantic, or who perhaps do not bow to Lionel Johnson, I will make one further comparison, between a very unpopular Augustan poet and a modern who has received more unqualified homage than Johnson. The theme of both is one of the beautiful commonplaces of political feeling. Pope's lines " To the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady " do indeed, with the close of the *Dunciad*, represent the summit of his sheer lyrical achievement; but his greatest admirer

and the doyen of our Augustan critics dismissed them in a phrase of immortal and immortalising absurdity.[1]

> Is there no bright reversion in the sky
> For those who greatly think or bravely die ?
> Why bade ye else, ye powers, her soul aspire
> Above the vulgar flight of low desire ? . . .
> Most souls, 'tis true, but peep out once an age,
> Dull, sullen pris'ners in the body's cage ;
> Dim lights of life, that burn a length of years
> Useless, unseen, as lamps in sepulchres ;
> Like Eastern kings, a lazy state they keep,
> And, close confined to their own palace, sleep.
> From these, perhaps (ere nature bade her die),
> Fate snatched her early to the pitying sky. . . .
> What can atone (O ever-injured shade !)
> Thy fate unpitied, and thy rites unpaid ?
> No friend's complaint, no kind domestic tear,
> Pleased thy pale ghost, or graced thy mournful bier. . . .
> What though no weeping loves thy ashes grace,
> Nor polish'd marble emulate thy face ?
> What though no sacred earth allow thee room,
> Nor hallow'd dirge be mutter'd o'er thy tomb ?
> Yet shall thy grave with rising flowr's be dress'd,
> And the green turf lie lightly on thy breast :
> There shall the morn her earliest tears bestow,
> There the first roses of the year shall blow :
> While angels with their fairy wings o'ershade
> The ground now sacred by thy relics made. . . .
> A heap of dust alone remains of thee ;
> 'Tis all thou art, and all the proud shall be !

Here are some lines, roughly parallel in occasion to Pope's from Dr. Bridges' " Elegy on a Lady, whom Grief for the Death of her Beloved Killed." The poem is pretty well known, but it may be mentioned that the missing portion contains no " third movement " as was in Lionel Johnson's, and has no specific modernity in feeling or conception that renders it more ambitious than Pope's, no attempt at wider comprehension.

[1] " Sir, . . . poetry is not often worse employed than in dignifying the amorous fury of a raving girl."

Assemble, all ye maidens, at the door.
And all ye loves assemble; far and wide
Proclaim the bridal, that proclaimed before
Has been deferred to this late eventide. . . .

Cloak her in ermine, for the night is cold,
And wrap her warmly, for the night is long;
In pious hands the flaming torches hold,
While her attendants, chosen from among
Her faithful virgin throng,
May lay her in her cedar litter,
Decking her coverlet with sprigs of gold,
Roses, and lilies white that best befit her. . . .

Now to the river bank the priests are come:
The bark is ready to receive its freight:
Let some prepare her place therein, and some
Embark the litter with its slender weight:
The rest stand by in state,
And sing her a safe passage over;
While she is oared across to her new home,
Into the arms of her expectant lover. . . .

Modern complaisance does not, it is true, go so far as to claim that Dr. Bridges is a greater writer than Pope. Pope has his dignified niche, in a kind of traditional museum, and he is not lightly challenged—or, indeed, disturbed. But it is tacitly accepted that he is not a real poet; that there is nothing in him to enrich or edify an enlightened modern sensibility. He was a mordant satirist, inclined to duplicity in his personal dealings; he had no soul. His conception of beauty is dismissed as abnormal to English right feeling by a great many people who have certainly been at little pains to ascertain in what literary media this feeling finds its most genuine outlet. But it is possible to feel from the present comparison that Pope's poetry is after all more native and less exotic; more robust and less derivative emotionally, than that of the Laureate. That of course is not necessarily an absolute valuation, a judgment of greater or less; it is just one aspect. Nor is Dr. Bridges's perception, the quality of his temperament, defective. It would be rather dangerous

to suggest that Pope's is the finer æsthetic or moral sensitiveness. The original sensitiveness of a writer is neither heightened nor impaired by the manner of language he employs.

The impression given by Dr. Bridges's poem is much the less vivid. The perceptions felt by the poet and conveyed to the reader are less sharp and clear-cut. The modern resonance of—

> Cloak her in ermine, for the night is cold,
> And wrap her warmly, for the night is long,

veils a tautology; and, on consideration, one sees that ermine might as fitly or more fitly go with the long night, and warm wrapping has a closer connection with the coldness than with the length of the night. So neither phrase is compulsive, final, inevitable. There is a looseness of grasp and construction which one could not possibly imagine in the writings of Pope or any competent heritor of his traditions. One of the most serious losses their posterity has sustained is the habit of compression, which is a strength and a safeguard against many pitfalls. Compare the impact on the sensibility of—

> There the first roses of the year shall blow

with that of—

> Decking her coverlet with sprigs of gold,
> Roses, and lilies white that best befit her,

and you see that elaborate and cultivated effort has failed to achieve what the seeming insouciance of real mastery does unquestionably.

Neither of these elegies has any claim to rank as major poetry; both are derivative and proceed from too tenuous "fundamental brainwork." But they are unoriginal in different ways, and the difference is instructive. Neither poem is strong with the strength of fresh perceptions. But Pope built upon acceptance of conventionalised ideas; Dr. Bridges—

a much more serious limitation—on acceptance of conventionalised phrasing, a mode of language that has grown so familiar as to distract attention from the true significance of the objects to which it refers.

In fact, the derivative nature of a "philosophy" such as Pope instils into his poetry does not greatly matter. An artist in the slighter forms does not necessarily require a new and personal attitude towards the universe—the phrase is unavoidable if pompous. Related to this is an even more important critical premiss, of which the classicists have usually been more aware than the romantics. The *major* poet, he whose comprehension has a universal applicability, will be always a man of deep understanding; but his achievement does not require that he put into his poetry the most subtle and exhaustive intellectual processes of which he is capable. The great English romantics, except Shakespeare, have come through in indifference to this; whence the proverbial inability of genius to distinguish its favourite work from its best. Shelley loved the tortuous mental processes of *Epipsychidion* and *The Revolt of Islam*, and Browning thought that in *Sordello* his genius was grappling with obstacles which to overcome was the condition of artistic triumph. Keats devoted the best powers of his young intellect to technical virtuosity—a less dangerous heresy, which he had already discarded for fuller emotional liberation in the later *Hyperion*. Wordsworth displayed more reasoning power in the Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads* than in any of his imaginative creation, and he never wrote worse than when he was trying to extend his critical intelligence into a shaping factor of his poems. The best of Mr. Hardy's lyrics are those in which his intensely temperamental view of life touches with an exquisitely simple verisimilitude some commonplace incident and shows it as an epitome of the complex nature of things, without intellectual insistence upon the complexity. The phrase of Rossetti which I quoted is an excellent one, but he himself, in his *House of Life*, and all the poets of his group—except his sister—

conspicuously forgot the significance of the word "fundamental."

The classicists, whose essence a modern critic has recently defined as "submission to an exterior spiritual authority," have been more immune from the metaphysical heresy, since the habits of their intellect in artistic creation are different, inclined to observation rather than to speculation. Neither Ben Jonson nor Dryden gives in his imaginative work any hint of the critical genius and the culture that differentiated them from the world about them, and involved a very profound divergence from the spirit of the artistic limitations which each cheerfully accepted. They submitted to the exterior authority, though if I were going to adopt that phrase I would extend it to embrace intellectual submission as well. The classicist does not conceive of his intellect as the instrument of spiritual inquiry, and so it does not have the same chance of mastering him. No poet can afford to be dictated to by a restless discursive faculty.

The exterior authority to which our neo-classical writers deferred was simple, but it is not often recognised by literary historians. It was a matter of "Church and State." The values of the polite Augustan writer were based upon a principle of rank and order in an unquestioned social hierarchy. Pope is generally most magnificent when he treats of the English aristocracy in the pomp of power or the pathos of decay, implying its—largely fallacious—cultural and spiritual ascendancy. What more impressive, and given the key necessarily so, than the famous—

> In the worst inn's worst room, with mat half-hung,
> The floor of plaster, and the walls of dung . . .
> The George and Garter dangling from that bed
> Where tawdry yellow strove with dirty red,
> Great Villiers lies—alas, how changed from him,
> That life of pleasure and that soul of whim!

The whole cogency lies in the really artificial recognition of the greatness of a Buckingham; the actual poetical signifi-

cance of the wretched nobleman's squalor is not the compulsive factor, it is quite a different thing from the power of—

> Ei mihi. Qualis erat! Quantum mutatus ab illo
> Hectore, qui redit exuvias indutus Achillis,

which is also unromantic, built upon acceptance of an exterior conception, but more simple and spontaneous; classical, and not proceeding from the artificial and half-deliberately narrowed sensibility of the neo-classicist. I do not, of course, imply that Virgil was a thorough classic; but here he spoke from a genuinely Homeric vein of feeling. It is interesting to observe the last traces of the Augustan assumptions in the prose of Macaulay, whose happiest rhetorical splendours are inspired by the traditional continuity of these purely social "greatnesses" as the staple background of the national evolution which it was always his chief delight to contemplate. The effects which light up and give interest to all Macaulay's writings illustrate in a very suggestive way the essence of the neo-classical convention in our literature, surviving in odd contrast to the Whiggish spirit and the pretentious moral striving of the early nineteenth century—qualities of which he was no insufficient embodiment!

But the special nature of English neo-classicism is only relative to the wider theme of the general classical tendency in art; and, since its significance is hardly of the future, it must detain us no longer here. I must allow what I have said of the older English Augustan poets to stand in general terms for their younger brethren.

It is important, however, that we should not merely substitute a new and slightly different, for an older complacency; and that the modern type of self-sufficiency, unproved, should not be accepted as richer in æsthetic possibilities than an old, proved and admittedly narrow acquiescence, because we happen to take account of more impressive spiritual questions. "Philosophical acquiescence" is of the nature of classicism; to a romantic tradition it is quite subversive.

NIGHT CLUB

By FEIRON MORRIS

"LOVE," said Sibylla at the night club, "you don't know what you're talking about. And I'm sure I don't anyhow," she added carelessly, leaning her elbows on the table, and her chin in her hands. She stared about her.

"But look here——" her companion began to reply in a tone full of emotion. His young face was beaded with perspiration. Sibylla glanced at him and noted that.

"Love," she said, "why there isn't such a thing nowadays that I know of. You're out of date. Nobody wants *love*"—she flicked a crumb off the table—"nobody gets it either, for that matter. Don't you worry about love, my poor fellow, or you'll soon be in the soup or the cart or whatever it is you people like to be in at the moment."

"But——"

"Honestly," she continued, "you take it from me, no one wants your love. I don't know what they do want *I'm* sure, and I don't care either—your money probably, or your brains, not that you've got any. But love, O hell. 'I cannot lofe Weenifred,'" she mimicked absently, remembering an old German woman she knew—"'I cannot lofe hairr.'"

She turned slightly round and leaning now her head on one hand looked full into her admirer's face with clear grey eyes holding an expression of the most primæval innocence that he or anyone in that hot and crowded room had ever hoped to see. Her cynical good-natured and unending chatter combined with that gaze of blank purity finished him; his mystification and agony of mind reached a climax.

"Look here Sibylla," he said, "to hear you talk I don't know *what* anyone would think, they might think anything. *I* don't pretend to understand you God knows——"

"I don't know of anyone who does as far as that goes,"

said Sibylla, " not that I care. Who wants to be understood ? Not me for one. I hate people who are always poking round understanding you. It bores me to tears to be understood. Besides, there's nothing to understand that I know of—can't we dance this ? "

" O Lord yes, come and dance." They walked out on to the floor, and started to dance. " You know you dance better than anyone in this infernal room, you dance gloriously, you extraordinary little thing——"

" Shut up now, don't talk. Surely you know I can't dance and talk. What a horrible idea to talk while you're dancing. Don't speak another word for God's sake, or I'll kill you——"

* * *

" That's my brother over there," Sibylla murmured as they walked back to their table, indicating a very tall and very dark young man coming towards them. His black moustache and his black eyebrows were pointed, and his dark head slanted upwards. He was with a thoroughly efficient woman.

" Hullo sister," he said with careless geniality as they passed, " I like your new surplice," and he glanced down at her frock. " Hullo Horace," Sibylla replied rather meekly, " I'm glad you like it."

" Your brother seems a very stout fellow," said her companion as they sat down.

" Oh he is, a very stout fellow indeed," Sibylla agreed. " Almost incredibly stout."

" Have a drink, it'll buck you up."

" No thanks, I don't need bucking, and I can't drink. I wish to God I could," she continued, " I can't even smoke. Can't drink and can't smoke. What a horrible woman. Oh I am an awful woman—when I think what an awful woman I *am*, can't even smoke a cigarette——"

" Who is this elderly being bearing down on you ? " the young man interrupted with some alarm, " not one of that highly cultivated crowd you've got such a click with, is he ? "

Sibylla looked round.

" Oh no," she said, " you'd never see any of the highly cultivated here, they'd have a paralytic seizure the minute they entered the door—and a good job too—oh no, they stay in their little homes and read a nice book round the fireside."

At this point the elderly being arrived at their table.

" This, Sibylla," said he, " I must confess is an exceedingly pleasant surprise. To encounter you here is not what I had anticipated, but it gives me a very great deal of pleasure—a great deal MORE pleasure, my dear girl," he added warmly, " than probably you suspect, or understand. What ? " he said, putting his hand to his ear, " I can't hear what you say —this infernal band—a most abominable noise, and I must say a most abominable place—I can't hear you—and I certainly don't wish to interrupt," he added, turning towards the younger man ; " I have no desire to make an unwanted third, and I quite understand that you two young people—but my dear child, if you will allow me to call you so—we are old friends," he interpolated, looking again at the young man with a well-disguised but very sharp scrutiny, " old friends aren't we Sibylla ? and all I want to tell you—I can't hear what you say, I wish I could—is that Viola is over there, and she sends you her very cordial love. And we have got the car waiting for us, and if we could be of use to you in any way—— As a matter of fact," he said in a sudden burst of irritation, " I want to get out of this damned hole now. God knows why we ever came. I am quite sure *you* don't want to leave yet, but all the same, my dear girl, I must in honour bound as an old friend say that I think, in fact *I have an absolute conviction*, in fact I KNOW, that you would be a great deal better off in bed than staying on in this pestiferous atmosphere."

Sibylla stood up suddenly. She hardly dared to look at the devastation in her partner's face.

" Don't fuss for the love of Mike," she muttered hastily,

plucking him by the sleeve, " but I must go—I must—I'm awfully sorry—I can't explain—I've enjoyed it *frightfully*—O misery can't you see I must go, I'll tell you another time—I'll see you to-morrow—no not to-morrow—I'll see you very soon. Look here, I'll telephone—wait till I telephone—don't you ring me up—you know I can't stand that," she warned him, backing away with the elderly being, " it's all right, *really* it's all right. It's only that I'm tired, can't you see. I'm tired and I want to go to bed—I do—I know you'll never see it, but if you'll only believe me, it isn't that I don't like you——" By that time she was out of earshot.

Seated in the luxurious car between her elderly friend and his wife, Sibylla relaxed.

" And now tell us about yourself," said the former, leaning eagerly forward, and turning his face towards her.

" But not if you are too tired dear," said Viola kindly.

" Don't bother her now, she's too tired," she said to her husband, slightly raising her voice.

Sibylla slid a hand under the arm of each ; the blinding electric glare of Piccadilly had vanished behind them, and drowsily she watched the glistening black streets flow past. At the door of the Mansions she slipped lightly out of the car after an affectionate good-night. The elderly being stood on the step in his shining top hat, with the folds of his evening cape flung back. He was an exceedingly elegant elderly being.

" Are you sure you have the right key ?—will anyone be waiting up for you ?—now are you all right ?—are you sure you can get in, my dear child ?—Take care of yourself, I beg—good-night, good-night—that abominable place—we should all have been much better off at home. When will you come to see us ?—won't you come to dinner to-morrow ?—just ourselves——"

" Good-night," croaked Sibylla, disappearing through the door.

Secure in her flat she hastily muffled the telephone bell with a woollen scarf, filled her hot water bottle, and turning on the reading lamp she got into bed.

ON THE NATURE OF ALLEGORY[1]

By BENEDETTO CROCE

WHEN we believe that we have demonstrated, with all possible clarity, where the difficult point of a question lies, and then observe that readers have attached no weight to our remarks, and continue to dwell upon its superficial side, we confess to some little astonishment. Such was my lot when I had reconsidered and defined the non-æsthetic nature of allegory, and had deduced from that the reasons why allegorism is of necessity extraneous to the poetry of Dante, as to all other poetry.[2] I was told in several quarters that allegory is a *form of expression*, like all the others, and that, like all of them, it can be well or ill employed, according to the capacity and to the greater or less talent of the poet.

Since the real question does not lie in this simplicist definition, it is well that I should repeat my demonstration, with the aid of a few historical illustrations, and (an important point) inverting its order—that is to say, beginning by refuting the judgment referred to above, which I regret that I am not even able to term an objection.

To assert that allegory is a form of expression like the others, amounts to saying that it is one of the many forms at one time

[1] This Essay was first read at the meeting of the Royal Academy of Moral and Political Sciences at Naples on April 26, 1922. It may be added that Benedetto Croce had previously given a definition of myth, for which his *Æsthetic* may be consulted.

[2] See my book, *The Poetry of Dante* (English translation by Douglas Ainslie, New York, Henry Holt & Co.).

recognised in Rhetoric, and still distinguished in the schools; all of which, once they have been submitted to philosophical criticism and reduced to concrete from abstract that they were, become resolved into the infinite individuations of the one poetical form.

Now the real question is just this: is, or is not, allegory a form of expression? I had flattered myself precisely with having demonstrated that allegory *is not a form of expression.*

Those who are acquainted with literary matters, and possess good memories, should have a vague sense or presentiment of this truth, prior to clear and distinct knowledge of it, when they recall to mind the aversion to allegory manifested in modern æsthetic criticism. Now, so far as I am aware, neither metonomy, apostrophe, hypotyposis, nor indeed any other rhetorical figure or trope, has had the honour of such aversion. Hegel declined that allegory was cold and squalid (*frostig und kahl*), a product of the intellect, and not of the concrete intuition and profound feeling of the imagination, without internal solidity, prosaic, and remote from art.[1] Vischer saw in allegory the complete dissolution of the original relation between idea and image. He held it to be an indication, either of artistic decadence or immaturity, pointing out its inorganic characters, and speaking of it satirically, as certainly surrounding itself with mystery (*Geheimnisstheuerei*) but as not being profound with mystery (*Geheimniss*).[2] I shall not add further instances, but limit myself to merely mentioning the polemic against allegorism constantly carried on by our De Sanctis. "Allegorical poetry, tiresome poetry," is a saying that vies with that other saying of his: "Political poetry, bad poetry."

Allegory in the rhetorical sense of Quintilian is certainly to be found in other ancient as well as in such modern writers as De Colonia and Blair. For Quintilian, it was (as he translated) the *inversio*, which *aut aliud verbis, aliud sensu ostendit, aut etiam contrarium*, and in this latter sense it took the name

[1] *Vorles. über Æsthetik, I.*, 499–501.
[2] *Æsthetik*, II, 467–71.

of irony [1]; for Blair, it was continued or *prolonged* metaphor.[2] A remark of Cicero's applied to allegory taken in this sense: *Equidem ceteras tempestates et procellus in illis dumtaxat fluctibus contionum semper Miloni putavi esse subeundas*; or Terence's phrase, *Suo sibi gladio hunc jugulo*[3]; or Horace's Ode to the Ship, which is simply an emotional poetic fancy. But allegory in this rhetorical sense is not the same which presents a difficulty in Dante and other poets; it is not this rhetoric which has merited the aversion of æsthetic and of modern criticism; nor, finally, is it this rhetoric which has been the cause of a special investigation, and of a special scientific conception, or of the kind that rhetoricians attempt to distinguish empirically from " similitude " or " metaphor " in general.

There is no necessity to seek the tradition of allegory, properly so called, in the history of rhetoric, but in that of philosophy, pointing out the censures directed by the first Greek philosophers against the poets and the strictures of the Homeric poems by such writers as Pythagoras, Xenophanes, and Heraclitus, in this respect precursors of Plato. Poetry, says an historian of Greek criticism, was on the point of succumbing, together with its fables, beneath the condemnation of the philosophers, when well-intentioned apologists came to the rescue, and, since they could not save the letter of Homer, they interpreted him in such a way as to satisfy the two opponents. *On chercha sous les vers du poète un sens différent du sens vulgaire, un sous-sens* (ὑπόνοια), *comme dit le grec avec une précision difficile à reproduire en français : c'est ce qui plus tard s'appela l'allégorie, mot inconnu aux plus anciens philosophes.*[4] And what was done by Theognes of Reggio, Anaxagoras, Stesimbrotos of Taso, Metrodorus of Lampsacus, and especially the Stoics, was repeated, as is known, in a conspicuous manner at

[1] *Inst. or.*, VIII, 6, 44.

[2] *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* (London, 1823, pp. 158–9).

[3] See texts of the rhetoricians and instances in R. Volkmann, *Die Rhetorik der Griechen und Römer* (Leipzig, 1885), pp. 429–33.

[4] Egger, *Essai sur l'histoire de la Critique chez les Grecs* (Paris, 1886). See pp. 96–102.

the beginning and during the course of the Middle Ages, with the intention of effecting a reconciliation between the new religion and pagan authors. The result of this was the doctrine of the "four senses." Allegory, then, is for the present writer, not an *inversio* of the rhetorician, but the "hyponoia" of the philosophers.

Modern criticism and æsthetic had generally recognised, as remarked above, the mutual repulsion between this allegory, or hyponoia, and poetry and art; they had even suspected and confusedly described its peculiar nature, as a work of the "intellect" (*Verstand*) and not of the "imagination," as an inorganic and therefore a "mechanical" work. Yet they had not gone to the bottom of the process proper to allegory, satisfied with having driven it out of the circle of æsthetic as being a crude, artificial, and immature form of expression, and persuaded that they knew its character and had correctly placed it in its cold country of origin, called the "intellect," or "abstraction." This merely approximative criticism did not sever the root of the evil, and could not prevent the legitimacy of allegory from again becoming the theme of discussion, either as an enrichment or as a potentialising of the intuition by the intellect, or as a particular mode of expression. For these reasons it seemed to me to be indispensable not to limit myself to a mere negation and rejection of allegory, but to proceed to a better and more positive description of the thing in itself, as it functions, thus placing, in a clear light, its substantial difference from art, which had previously been rather glimpsed and asserted than demonstrated. I thus defined allegory (and I believe that I was the first to do so)[1] as a practical act, a form of writing (for writing is practical), a cryptography, if the term can be applied to the

[1] Home (in his *Elements of Criticism*, 1762–5, London edition, 1824, p. 351) perceived the profound difference between metaphor and allegory, compared the latter to hieroglyphs, but he did not go more deeply into the thought which had flashed into his mind and which was afterwards disputed by Sulzer (possibly making direct allusion to Home) in his *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste* (Leipzig, 1792), I, 95.

use of images spoken or figured, instead of letters and numerals; and from this definition I obtained the laws of allegory and explained why, where the express declaration or the authentic interpretation of their authors are wanting, where a solidly established cryptographic system with the keys appertaining to it are not available, the task of deciphering allegories is altogether desperate, perpetually conjectural, and capable at the most of laying claim to a greater or less degree of probability.

It has been said above that allegory arose in Greek antiquity, and recovered strength, as a canon of interpretation, in the Middle Ages. Borgognoni observes, in a short discussion of Dante's allegory, which is among the most acute and the most sensible that have ever been written, and is perhaps for that reason generally ignored by Dante scholars,[1] that " the allegorical method employed by the learned in the Middle Ages was, for him who pays close attention to it, a system of hermeneutics, rather than an inventive process: it was held to be axiomatic that one not only could, but should, be able to discover moral and spiritual meanings, gradually rising higher and higher; but I believe that nobody ever understood this to signify, in the true Middle Ages, the classic Middle Ages, that such meanings should be the guides of the artist in the process of imaginative creation. It was, on the contrary, the application to works of profane art of the hermeneutic method employed in the study of the Bible ever since the fifth century, according to which moral and mystical meanings ought to be discovered in the facts there narrated, in accordance with the new religion." But we must stress more sharply the distinction between the inventive process of the artist and the inventive process of the allegorist, and in so doing recognise that that interpreting, that allegorical method of reading, that discovery of secondary, tertiary, and quartan meanings, was indeed the inventing and the composition of allegory. To

[1] *Scelta di scritti danteschi*, a cura di R. Truffi (Città di Castello, 1897), pp 124 et seq.

this must be added that this composition of allegorical cryptograms was not, and is not, the work of readers and commentators of poetical works alone, but of the poets themselves, who, once they had composed their imaginative works, were quite ready to allegorise them (they do so even to-day), by attributing ulterior significations to what they had composed in the unique signification of poetry. Such indeed is, as a rule, the allegorising of poets, a work of supererogation, external to the poetry, and therefore harmless. This does not, however, exclude the fact that poets sometimes (and here Borgognoni is with us) start their poetical work with the idea of allegorising in their heads —that is to say, with the intention of creating an imaginative whole, which shall have value, both as a poem and as a secret script, containing certain religious, moral, political, historical, or other thoughts. This (as Borgognoni says, in accordance with the judgment of the whole of modern æsthetic and criticism) is " a thing profoundly antagonistic, indeed contradictory, to art, since it negates, and necessarily impedes, its independence and free development." It would have the most deleterious results were it not, as a matter of fact, " impossible," as it is impossible to serve two masters at once. I have elsewhere described what actually takes place : either the poet forgets the world of ends for the world of imagination and abandons himself altogether to poetical inspiration (save to supply an allegorical commentary after the completion of the poem, where it can do no harm) ; or he is constantly introducing his world of ends into his imaginative world, thus breaking up the æsthetic coherence of the work and producing something that is not poetry, and possesses solely a cryptographic value. These are naturally two extreme typical cases, between which various middling and mixed instances must find their place, for there exist poets of genius who betray the traces of allegorism with which they set forth, in a few scarce *maculæ*, and there are allegorists who here and there allow some trait of fresh sensation, some flash of vivid poetry, to appear in their work.

(I note, in parentheses, that an analogous case is to be found in historiography, where a perfectly critical historical narrative can be allegorised, and applied to a hortative or generally rhetorical end, and here the historical work remains uncontaminated; or this end may penetrate the work itself and change its character, and we have historiography with an end to serve, which is no longer history, but rhetoric; and here, too, middling cases are numerous.)

All this confirms my conclusion that the critic of art should only take notice of allegory claiming to be poetry with a view to rejecting it, as he rejects any other poetical vacuity or ugliness. He has no need to trouble himself about allegorical interpretation in general, because, where attention is paid to allegory, it is not paid to poetry, and where poetry receives attention, allegory is not considered. Allegory is almost always external to the poetry of Dante, just because he is one of the greatest poetical geniuses of humanity; it is the rarest possible occurrence, when it enters into the poetry, and if it seem so often to enter into it as to do so continuously, this is the fault of the commentators, who have weighed down with allegory what is winged poetry.

There remains over, as a separate study, extraneous to artistic criticism, the interpretation of the allegories taken in themselves, the reading of the cryptograms. This pursuit forms the delight or the perplexity of many men, or at least of many Dante scholars, and I do not now deny contemptuously, nor have I ever denied, that such researches are not without possessing a slight interest of curiosity, when they are conducted with a view to arriving at a certain degree of probability. But I recall to mind a certain phrase towards the beginning of the *Phædrus*, where Socrates, when asked to give his view of the topographical myth of Boreas and Orithyia begins by mentioning the naturalistic explanations which had been given by ingenious people, but declares that, so far as he is concerned, he renounces such subtle researches because (he says), were I to undertake the explanation of the myth of

Boreas and Orithyia, I should then have to explain the reasons for the form of the Centaurs and then of Chimera, and then of the Gorgons and the steeds of Pegasus. This would take too long, and time would fail me for fulfilling the Delphic oracle, and knowing myself, the Typhons and the other forms, furious or benign, which are myself. But, dropping all parable, I for my part leave such researches and discussions to those who have time to waste, or (to end with a saying of Dante) to those, who are less averse to wasting their time, since they know less.

(*Translated by* DOUGLAS AINSLIE)

THE VIGIL OF JULIAN'S FRIEND BY HIS DEAD BODY

By T. STURGE MOORE

HOW long, dear Sleeper, must I wait,
Watching this calm deny thy death,
Ere thou returnest still elate,
Like victor, crowned with parsley wreath,
From some Elysian haven green ?—
Ere 'neath slow-lifting lids are seen
Thy dreamy eyes, which yet behold
Those friends of an heroic mould,
Who pledge thee there, in Hippocrene ?

" Pledge thee " ? . . . and prize ! Then nevermore
Will they release thee from their home !
And thou, on that rare-fruited shore,
Must needs forget earth's honeycomb,
And the joys checkered with distress,
Of friends who do not love thee less,
Yet lack the port of those who dance
On wave-smoothed sands, as in a trance
Buoyant with everlastingness !

Ah, no ! this is my dream, not thine !
Void of the soul that shaped it well,
Thy beauty lies, a fragile shell !
It is the past that was divine,
And nursed thy form and spirit fine !
All perishes ! those days are fled,
And Memory's art cannot restore
Her fading pictures of the dead,
That come, come faintlier, come no more !

THE THEATRE

THE MADDERMARKET THEATRE, NORWICH

WHAT chiefly impresses one about the Elizabethan stage as used at the Maddermarket Theatre, Norwich, is the way in which the scene of action can be contracted and expanded at the will of the producer. Instead of having to devote his ingenuity to the filling up of the unalterable space bounded by the boxes, the orchestra, and the roof, he finds himself in a position to control, by purely technical devices, the varying intensities of concentration which he is to demand from his audience. The central back stage is divided horizontally by a balcony, and from the sides it opens out to the full breadth of the auditorium. The front of the platform forms an " apron," and the wings on each side of the " apron " are divided from the main stage by two wooden pillars. These devices ensure the creation of three or perhaps four different types of stage, and to distribute the play over them so as to use each of them to the best advantage must be a fascinating problem to the director.

Apart from the occasions when it would obviously be desirable to have a balcony, the upper part of the central back stage is used for little scenes which can be made to do the same duty as cinema close-ups. Two of these I remember as beautifully effective—the scene from *Henry IV, Part II* (usually omitted), where the Archbishop of York plots his conspiracy, and the scene between Helena and the widow in *All's Well that Ends Well.* In the latter play a curtain representing a Florentine house, painted a bright orange colour, and fitted with Romanesque door and windows, was hung before the balcony, and when the window was open, the whole

formed a perfect frame for the delightful miniature of the acting. It should be noted, however, that this particular setting was much more elaborate than those generally adopted.

The central stage below the balcony is used for interiors—the court of justice, the duke's palace, the general's tent, the room in the inn—the exact nature of each one being (in the case of Elizabethan plays) indicated quite simply by the nature of the properties displayed, while for Restoration or eighteenth-century comedy a back curtain is hung to represent the interior of the coffee-house, the lady's boudoir, or Tilbury Fort for the setting of *The Critic*. These are somewhat simpler in style and less purely decorative, but not unlike those used by Nigel Playfair in his plays of the same period; and all are the work of artists intimately associated with the Maddermarket. When treated in this way the smaller stage is framed with an imitation of the pseudo-classical stucco of the time, designed on the model of a theatre interior, while the curtain is painted with a street of sedate Queen Anne mansions. One of the settings for *All's Well that Ends Well* combined both stages in a rather original way. A single back-cloth, representing a romantic " prospect " of the Pyrenees, occupied the distance behind the balcony which, fitted with graceful columns, became a covered Italian arcade, raised a few steps above the level of the courtyard and joining two wings of the Renaissance château of Roussillon.

Loose curtains can be swung across the whole of this back area, and the third stage thus formed is available for the brief " bridge " scenes which enable the space behind to be reset. The proper opening and closing of these curtains is always carefully arranged for in the action of the players who open or conclude such a scene. The foremost part of the platform, jutting out beyond the wooden pillars, is used for soliloquies, so that the semblance of collaboration between character and audience is more artfully and naturally obtained than is possible on the normal stage.

Owing to the intimate nature and size of the theatre (I

should not think its seating capacity is over four hundred), face, voice, and gesture can all work for subtle effects impossible under other circumstances. I could not help contrasting in this connection the recent performance of *Epicene* by the Phœnix Society with similar work done in the Maddermarket. At Norwich scarcely one of the subtle flavours which Jonson so craftily distilled from his immense erudition and which make his plays such delicacies to the literary epicure but would have played its part in the production. With the Phœnix, however, only the more sweeping effects were apparently aimed at, and the heavily charged speeches were delivered with a breathless gusto which made it impossible to seize more than an implication here or a phrase there, so that they were reduced to the level of being mere clogs on the action of a broad and not too thrilling farce.

The players are non-professional and maintain strict anonymity. Everything in their acting is organised towards the attainment of a complete unity of dramatic tone. Their diction is generally beautiful, simple and direct. The poetry is always well spoken—neither declaimed nor reduced to the level of hurried and badly constructed prose—but given its full value of emotion and rhythm. During the long speeches (as is customary also at the experimental theatre of l'Atelier at Paris) there is little physical movement. I have heard this justified on the ground that a constant attitude is characteristic of any given emotional period, and that a change of attitude only comes with a change of emotion. Great attention is paid to the grouping and poise of the people occupying the stage. The effect of this subordination of bodily movement to vocal and facial expression is to treble the impressiveness of a sudden irruption of violent activity, such as sweeps across the scene in *Cymbeline* with the fight between the Romans and Britons.

During the three seasons I have frequented the Maddermarket, the following productions have particularly impressed me. Among Shakespeare's plays—*Othello* and *Hamlet*. The

first of these gained greatly by the speed at which it could be taken, and the unchecked advance of the action. One point in the interpretation was remarkable. The passage where Othello speaks of the magic properties of the stolen handkerchief was so delivered that for one thrilling moment one almost believed that Iago, for all his cocksureness and deliberation, was merely the tool in the hands of that same malignant witch. The *Hamlet* was interesting for the direct and literal interpretation given to the name-part. With the super-subtle philosopher of Coleridgian tradition completely out of the mind for the moment, one could appreciate this lonely and intellectual young man, slightly arrogant in his dealings with the meaner minds around him, liable to sudden fits of ferocity, and completely misunderstood by people who went on trying to be " helpful " with the complacent futility of " plain men." The complicated problems of the play seemed to vanish before this unlaboured " Elizabethan " rendering of the character.

A most fascinating and unique performance was that of two of the *Noh*, given one Thursday evening in the autumn of 1923 as a pendant to a lecture by the producer. They brought home to one the intense dramatic feeling attainable within the very strict conventions of these plays. The Reader to suggest trains of thought to the Dreamer, to ask questions of him or discuss him from the point of view of the audience, the odd telling of the story by implication, and the monotonous beating of the drum, accelerated as the climax approached—all these technical details justified themselves by their emotional effectiveness. When, five months later, I saw the Pitoëffs perform *L'Histoire du Soldat* in Paris I could not help realising that in that puzzling work Stravinsky had really been writing incidental music to a modern *Noh*. All the essential elements of the Japanese plays were there.

The treatment of Restoration and eighteenth-century drama deserves special mention. Among recent examples are *The Way of the World*, *The Gentleman Dancing-Master*, *The Critic*,

and a *Commedia dell' Arte—The Magic Casement*—whose scenario, filled in by Monck himself (along the lines of improvisation followed by the original actors), provided opportunity for the exercise of a peculiarly sardonic humour more akin to the seventeenth century than to our modern world. Such works as *The Beggar's Opera* and *The Duenna* have also been done, the musical element (invariably taken directly from contemporary sources) being supplied either by a harpsichord or a string quartet. It should be added that wherever any of the above has been performed in London, the Norwich performance has been the earlier of the two.

When introducing plays of this kind, either almost unknown to his audiences or never before regarded by them in the light of immediate entertainment, Monck does not apparently think it necessary to treat the Augustan Age as a funny joke perpetrated for the exclusive benefit of modern frivolity. His productions are free from the pantomime tricks which disfigure much of the work at the Lyric Theatre; and, to my mind, they gain by being so. Presented on the lines of serious comedy, with every legitimate development that the deft technique of the very clever comic players of this company can offer, they give a more accurate notion of the spirit of their age than anything I have seen outside the Comédie Française—an age critical, brilliant, and given to burlesque, but sound and sober beneath its airy cynicism.

BENJ. GILBERT BROOKS.

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

WHAT a flawless, exquisite fairy story! What a bubbling, rollicking comedy, yet with the elusive fantastic element all intermingled! What a galaxy of stars in the theatrical firmament! Surely the combination should produce the perfect performance. And yet? . . . Is it a trifle too sophisticated? somewhat over-staged? Has the limpid spontaneity—one had almost said the momentariness—of the *Dream* by some evil chance been lost, overweighted? One was left with an odd sensation of having been buffeted, in one's imagination,

The Palace and Court at Athens. In a flash one remembers the long record of spectacular drama at the Lane. How gorgeous, what lavish display, how pompous, how expensive! And Fairy Land—no, we are mistaken, it is Pantomime—and the pity of it, for it need never have been. It was within an ace of being true Fairy Land, compact all of imagination and beauty, baffling wonder and mystery, half fear and half desire. There was one moment, as the scene opened, when the sheer beauty and evanescence made one hold one's breath. Alas, it is over almost as soon as begun, and we are fairly launched into pantomime. It would have been so easy to have let us stay in that land of Heart's Desire; it only meant strangling the limelight man, especially the arch-criminal, with the rose-coloured light. (Rose-colour should be taboo when fairies are about, they are an intimate part of the woods and earth, and should only be distinguishable by their movements; the moment you pick them out with light you make them just humans.) If only the limelight man had been strangled, and the stage set in that magical moment 'twixt night and dawn, or at nightfall (not sunset) then it would never have occurred to us that the fairies were monstrous tall, and there would have been no insistent rows of light-coloured silk-stockinged legs to kill illusion—and you would have had, instead, elfish, fantastic, unbelievable fairies, all dun and green and shimmering as for a moment were Peas-blossom, Cobweb, Moth, and Mustard-seed as they crouched in the Shadow before Bottom. And how lovely M. Fokine's Ballets would have been, for their patterns and movements were beautiful—in particular a movement, quite new to me, which really gave the imponderability of fairies! they were fluttering, on tip-toe for flight. Frankly Miss Ffrangeon-Davies was a great disappointment—she was a Pre-Raphaelite figure strayed into pantomime. One was haunted by *The Immortal Hour*. Where were the waywardness, the laughter and irresponsible gaiety, the glamour that makes Titania's hideous infatuation to be unhesitatingly accepted by her fairy court? Where the eternal child? Where the magic that casts the spell and bewitches all? Miss Ffrangeon-Davies was so grave and so sweet, the movements of the arms and the long, thin, blue draperies so measured and deliberate, dare we say monotonous? True, the most ideal Titania would find it difficult to be convincing if doomed to climb up at bed-time and get into a rather small rose-coloured cave, with funny patterned walls, and go to sleep with the limelight trained on her face. But Miss Ffrangeon-Davies was never, even when she was dancing with the fairies, the Fairy Queen.

The Comedy—here criticism is silenced; it was perfect. Puck, Quince, Snug, Bottom, Flute, Snout, Starveling, incarnate (there is no other word) in Hay Petrie, Frank Cellier, Alfred Clark, Wilfrid

Walter, Clifford Mollison, Miles Malleson, H. O. Nicholson, are beyond praise. The whole thing is so utterly, almost outrageously English. No other people could be so simple and so serious, could so play the fool without a suspicion of self-consciousness, could be so laughable and ready to laugh at themselves, so imaginative and at the same time so naturalistic. One realised this vividly by the manner of playing of these actors. It was in reality an occasion, and worth a long, long journey thus to see Shakespeare's comedy made alive (and of to-day) by this fine flower of English acting. It was a rare unity, each inimitable in the part, yet each subordinating his part to the perfect whole. (And the colour of the room in Quince's home, how beautiful, the whole so low in tone, and so absolutely in key.)

The famous scene between Hermia (Athene Seyler) and Helena (Edith Evans) was excellent. It too was of no time or place—but human nature as it was, is, and will be. The lines beautifully spoken.

. . . . .

In the short interval I too had a dream. That Drury Lane should be that much-talked-of, much-desired, and above all much-needed National Theatre, where English drama from its beginnings, through its heyday, would be played. Where the young actors should be given their opportunity, and those who have attained should prize, as their greatest honour, that they play in the National Theatre. For what other race can show a Shakespeare—and the Elizabethans ? The English public alone can make the dream come true. I wonder if the Provincial Repertory Theatres are not even now working towards that end.

ZOË HAWLEY.

NEW YORK. THREE PLAYS AND THE FOLLIES

IT was not easy, in the three nights at my disposal, to choose the plays to see. In New York there are two of Mr. Fred Lonsdale's, perhaps the most popular writer in New York, and an Englishman, which should be good propaganda.

There was the new play, *The Dark Angel*, by Trevelyan, also an Englishman and obviously coming to London. There was the tremendously successful *What Price Glory ?* a war play, or *The Show Off*, a farce which was a failure in London. All these, for reasons good and bad, I discarded in favour of two plays done by the Theatre Guild, Eugene O'Neill's *Emperor Jones*, and, as being the most national, or at least the most famous of all their productions, the Ziegfeld Follies ; added to these the matinee of a film—and two cabarets after plays.

The first play I saw was starring Richard Bennett and Pauline Lord —an excellent title it had, *They Knew what they Wanted*, by a young man called Sidney Howard, an enormously sentimental, enormously successful play—neither a comedy nor a tragedy—and every point, whether sob or laugh, was taken twice over by the vast audience. I stood at the back of the stalls—they have no pit. A great play agent said to me on the subject of writing plays for the American stage, as a general observation: " Remember, our stalls is your pit."

The story was assembled round an Italian colony in a Californian vineyard, where Italians are called " wops." Pauline Lord answers an advertisement and comes from her poor city to marry Richard Bennett, " the wop," because she loves the country. Richard Bennett, who, as the wop, is getting oldish, and has incidentally broken two legs just before his entrance, loves her; but Pauline Lord has meanwhile fallen in love with the Tristan of the business, a younger wop, hale and hearty—complications, magnanimity of older wop, and all get what they want, all very touching and distressing, and, so far as the acting goes, natural. And if only they wouldn't sing " O Sole Mio," without which the American cannot visualise an Italian, one would have been moved to tears quite often.

Pauline Lord reminded me of Marie Tempest and Ethel Irving, yet with a touch of American modernity which is peculiar to Pauline Lord.

Bennett gave a fine, unselfish performance, such as only an artistic English actor can give.

But the muddle of accents and the muddle of technique was greater than in England—indeed I found it so in all the plays. The unity which one gets on the French stage, or on the Russian I should imagine, and certainly in the Irish Players most of all, was absolutely lacking; but then, when half the actors are English, half Southern, half Western, half Canadian, how can there be unity ? They are foreigners to each other, playing in what seems to them the same language.

In the Ziegfeld Follies, of course, this mixture did not matter, was rather useful in fact, and when dear little Lupino Lane appeared in a cockney bowler, with cockney jokes, it was very great fun. Will Rogers, a great comedian who chews gum and twirls a lassoo-rope, made marvellous jokes on all topical news—the sort of thing being, when asked what he thought of Prohibition, he answered: " Prohibition—they don't talk about it any more now, and they don't write about it in the papers, and actors don't talk about it on the stage any more; the whole country's just settled down to steady drinking ! "

The girls so raved about, though completely nude, more nude than I have ever seen them in Paris, were not so beautiful in face as I expected; it was chiefly their legs that were lovely—and their looking so

fit and athletic. One in particular, six feet high, who danced a contortionist dance, I mentally registered as my favourite.

The film was of the most luxurious description, divans to lie on in an immense theatre, with an orchestra the size of that of Queen's Hall to play to me, and Alice Terry, most beautiful of film actresses, on the screen; this was our rest from plays. We became "film-fans," which is the cinematograph equivalent expression to stage-struck.

But it was only a moment's respite. *The Emperor Jones*, at a small theatre called the 52nd Street Theatre, was our next move.

I am a great admirer of Eugene O'Neill's plays, but, with all respect, I think they are actors' plays, much better performed than read, and in each moment of them the actor can wallow.

Mr. O'Neill feels, first and foremost, for the actor, not for the spectator or reader. The plays certainly lose in the reading, and particularly *en masse* in the immense two-volume edition just brought out.

The *Emperor Jones* gives a bronze-black gladiator with a voice on which he plays and draws out the stops, a unique opportunity to show his powers. His name is Robeson—and the play is practically a monologue—it made one thrill, or shudder, but it was neither quite acting nor quite a play.

The next thing was the most interesting of the performances—some called it indescribable trash, some said, "You ought to see that"; all were mysterious.

The moment I came in I thought "this isn't quite American—it must have been suggested by something"—it was; by the new German type of play called "expressionistic," having, I suppose, its sources in the same movement that makes for "significant form" in painting, and what Stravinsky calls "the juxtaposition of tonal values," in music.

It was full of expression, light and small emotion and liberty of speech and gesture—but let us beware of it as a school, because it is the back door to writing plays. Its object is to avoid construction law and order, and that is death except to those who *know*—know and have the latch-key to the front door and then prefer the back.

There was an actress called June Walker who must be heard of soon; she seemed to me the reincarnation of Meggie Albanesi—her lovely strange voice and her ease and technique—but lacking Meggie's beauty. English managers will soon be after her.

What a pity, by the way, that we cannot have once a week a summary of American plays in our newspapers, instead of devoting so many columns to films, which are, after all, uncriticisable. I noticed in *The New York Herald* an excellent page devoted to English plays and acting and giving long paragraphs to Nigel Playfair, Dean, and Macdermott. What managements do we in London know, what actors or what

theatres ? We are completely cut off except what we hear by chance from Fred Lonsdale in clubs, or from some too successful English actor, who returns and blows his own trumpet—our ignorance, for instance, of John Barrymore until his arrival here was something colossal. He found it quite impossible to get a theatre, and discouragement at the lack of interest nearly kept us from the great privilege of watching his Hamlet.

VIOLA TREE.

A DIARY OF THE RIVE GAUCHE

II

YESTERDAY I met Agatha in the garden of the Tuileries. It was a "spring evening," mild and damp and hyacinth-scented. The fountains and the neat parterres of early spring tulips, firm, erect, magnificent; in the distance the dim obelisk of the Concorde; on the one hand the Pont Royal, and on the other the row of lights along the Rue de Rivoli showing here and there through the shrubbery; the murmur of voices, the rattle and scream of a thousand taxis and the deep and vibrant electric glow of the great city; and behind us the huge grey mass of the Louvre, thrusting out its wings, impending, magnificent, imperial—triumphant symbol of the one city and of the one people which has supreme belief in its own power and its own destiny. . . .

Agatha is having trouble with her bridge-playing aunt at their pension in Auteuil. The deaf old lady, who has always been so useful as a "fourth," is convinced that she has been cheated out of a franc. She refuses to play any more, and sits by, snorting, while poor Agatha is forced by her aunt to take her place. They play every evening and often all the afternoon! Agatha only escaped to meet me by stealth. As we stood on the bridge to watch the lights in the water, before we said good-night, I told Agatha of my plan to go down the steps some evening and walk along the path at the edge of the river. I have always longed to do it, although I feel it would be very dangerous. It looks such a sinister path. Agatha implored me not to do it.

"There would be rats," she said. "But I don't *mind*

rats, that's where I'm so unnatural." " Yes, but there might be drunken tramps," said Agatha, " and *French* drunken tramps would *not* be nice." No, well, perhaps—" *Promise* me you won't walk along the path, Fanny," Agatha said, and I had to. We looked silently for a long, long time up the river, and then, crossing the bridge, we gazed down the river. " We will come back in June," we both exclaimed at the same time, and as we spoke we looked at each other, and Agatha's eyes said so clearly and so mournfully: " but we know we *shan't* come back in June." My eyes must have said it just as plainly, for Agatha said, " But life *owes* it to us to come back here in June—life owes us that."

I walked home rather slowly. Probably, of all the people who are at this moment in Paris, life owes it to us most of all to come back here in June. And for that reason, if for no other, Agatha, we know we shall not come. If we were two hearty females having " a good time in Paris," buying clothes and " bumming around " as I once heard an American say, we should slap each other on the back and say, " Look here, old thing, let's come again in June." And back in June we should come, to buy clothes and to " bum around." But Agatha and I, we are not the kind of people life pays its debts to. At least, not this kind of debt. There are debts, however, about which life is to us most punctilious in payment.

What is it about Agatha and me? Do we perhaps approach life too timidly, with too much delicacy, as we do some of our friends, treat her as one of ourselves? Possibly we are quite wrong about life. Life is perhaps a coarse-fibred creature—almost a " hearty female," and the proper approach is the slap on the back. Oh well, I give it up—life is unchangeable, and Agatha and I are unchangeable.

My mind reverts to its particular problem of the moment, the problem of changing my hotel. I must change my hotel. My friends and the looking-glass have convinced me at last. The bad food, the stuffiness combined with lack of warmth, the noise, the dirt, the dust, the coming and going—yes, I

must change my hotel. But I have been a pensionnaire in this little *salle d'attente* for so long a time that, even if the finding of a better hotel presented no problem, I should be terrified to leave. *How* shall I leave? I ask myself a hundred times a day. How shall I dare? I cannot conceive of myself, actually in cold blood saying to Monsieur, Madame, the cash-desk lady, to Marie, Camille, Victorine and the old woman who scrubs down the stairs, that I am leaving. Imagine it—

Monsieur, I am leaving your hotel in a week; I thank you for your kindness and your hospitality. Madame, I am leaving your hotel; I thank you for your kindness and your hospitality. Camille, I am leaving—no no, this is absurd. I shall never do it. I should faint away by the time I told Marie. There must be another way. I must escape. A telegram recalling me to England is useless, for Camille always accompanies departing foreigners to the station, hatless, in his white apron, and, having got them securely into their carriage, stands grinning with his last tip in his hand until the train departs. No, I must escape in some other way.

I have already and long ago reached the conclusion that there is only one way for me to live in Paris—that is to say, only one way for me to live on £5 a week. Not for me the pension at Auteuil, well warmed and padded, with its polite conversation at meal-times, and its eternal evening bridge. What arching of eyebrows, when, with a mumbled excuse, I disappeared after dinner into my bedroom, never to be seen again! The unpopularity which would be caused by my savage and rebellious conduct would soon eat into me, and I should die. Not for me the French "home life" which has been offered to me by the too amiable Madame Denais, who yearned to guide me about Paris, to comfort me, to cherish me, to guard me from every danger, to restore my health and finances, and, in short, to make my fortune. As an introduction to this mode of existence, she invited me to tea at her modern and elegant flat. I found myself immediately sur-

rounded by fourteen French ladies, each of whom offered me an introduction to her dressmaker (of a talent the most remarkable); to her milliner (of a chic the most unheard-of); to her coiffeur (an extraordinary artist); to her manicure, to the lady who made her cosmetiques, to her chiropodist, to the lady who made her chemises (Ah! what chemises!). Displaying all the English gaucherie which could have been expected of me, I broke away from the crowd and fled panting down the stairs. I should have been ruined in a fortnight. Even my very toothbrush I could not have called my own. I shudder at my escape. I *must* have my freedom, as the housemaids say. I don't know whether they really do say it, but it's the sort of thing they ought to say.

By this time I arrive at my own door. Camille is peering into the street, and grins broadly at me as I enter. "Vous êtes en retard, Madame," he says, and looks at me as if he and I had some horrible secret in common. What now? I think, as I respond coldly to his greeting. As I pass the cash-desk I wearily anticipate some insult from its occupant. None comes, however; she is buried in her novel. But, just as I reach the foot of the stairs, *mademoiselle de la caisse*, having allowed me to get well past her cage, suddenly shrieks after me: "O, il y a un monsieur est venu vous chercher ce soir, Madame . . . Tiens, il a laissé une lettre quelque part" . . . and she begins to toss over the contents of her bureau with a disapproving air. This of course accounts for Camille's horrid grin. I see him now lurking in the corner, enjoying every moment of my discomfiture. After a great deal of fumbling and frowning, the cash-desk lady hands me my letter, with a world of disapproval in her expression. And it was only from old John after all! But *how* they have all thumbed it, and gossiped, and commented, and shrugged their shoulders about me all the evening! I know what an English girls' boarding school is like, but I solemnly assure you that its atmosphere is licentious compared to that of a small Paris hotel. Where and how did the Myth of the Gay Free-

dom of Paris spring up? Who are the people who have fostered it? Those, I presume, who take their holidays *en famille* in English villages. To go out to post a letter after dinner, in Paris, is enough to damn you for life. And to have poor old John come in on his way from his studio for a few minutes' public conversation in the salon means practically that you will be expelled from the hotel. How is it that nobody has discovered this aspect of Parisian life except myself?

FANNY MARLOW.

(To be continued.)

MUSIC

Contemporary Principles

CONTEMPORARY music is not a result of the war; it is even escaping from the effects of the peace. Neither in England nor elsewhere had the war any real artistic influence on music. Schönberg and Stravinsky were well known to progressive English musicians before 1914; the effect of a state of war was to hasten processes which had already begun. It brought César Franck a momentary popularity as an *Ersatz* for Brahms, and prepared the way for M. Diaghileff and the Russian Ballet, whose greatest triumphs (from a purely musical point of view) were in "The Good-humoured Ladies" with the eternal, Voltairean freshness of Domenico Scarlatti, and in the vital rhythms and harmonic austerity of "The Three-cornered Hat." War-conditions, of course, made the giving of choral and orchestral concerts a matter of some difficulty. And so, owing to causes which were economic rather than artistic, the number of chamber concerts increased and there was a revival of interest in old music. The German classics were not less beloved than before, but English composers, alive and dead, were given more opportunities of a hearing than they had ever known. The music caused by the peace was an ephemeral by-product, comparable with Dada-ism; moreover, it was a falling back into the *fin-de-siècle* habits of mind of the eighteen-nineties. Musically speaking, the present century is not twenty-five years old, but only fifteen; musicians, like the rest of mankind, have been through a period of ten years' wandering in the wilderness, and are only just beginning to look round and take stock of the country now that their wanderings are over.

In the period immediately after the armistice, the inter

national criticism of new music was mostly performed in Paris ; while in England a good deal of it fell into the hands not of real critics but of hack writers of publishing houses, who took their cue from Paris, and were anti-German for purely commercial reasons. It is a sign that we are at last escaping from the effects of both the war and the peace that all the writers in the symposium on contemporary music, which has lately filled an entire number of the excellent Italian review, *L'Esame*, are writers of authority and repute. One of them, Herr Philip Jarnach, is a composer of Spanish extraction, resident in Germany—the most important, perhaps, of all the new German school ; two others, M. Henri Prunières and Mr. E. J. Dent, have earned a European reputation as musical historians. Jarnach, as a pupil of Busoni, has a firm intellectual grasp of the problems with which he is faced ; he makes an effort to deal not in personalities but in principles. This also is the aim of the historians, though M. Prunières is inclined to be superficial, and is a little hampered, a little uncomfortable perhaps, by the feeling that he must do the best he can for his own countrymen. Mr. Dent, on the other hand, goes down to fundamental considerations, and has produced one of the most significant essays that have ever been written on English music—an essay which should immediately be translated back into English and published by itself.

Since he is writing in the first instance for Italians and for readers who are not necessarily musicians—musicians being, as a rule, singularly averse to reading about music, unless they are professionals in search of press-notices—Mr. Dent begins by pointing out how close a relation there has always been between cultivated men in England and in Italy. The key to the culture and character of Englishmen (he says) is this : that while we are Teutons in sentiment, and even in sentimentality, we are Latins by education, and we are indebted to Italy, far more than to France, for the education of our intellect. Our language gives expression to both these sides of our personality. It also permits and even encourages

a subtle interchange between emotion and intellect; so that, in cultivated minds, there is an emotional reaction to things of the intellect not always understood by critics in other countries.

English composers have always been more at home in writing for voices than for instruments. This fact alone makes the most personal part of their music unintelligible to musical criticism made in Paris, since few Frenchmen, unless they know English very well (as well as Professor Legouis, for instance), can ever grasp the fact that it is possible for poetry to exist along with a sense of rhythm and declamation entirely different from the French. Latin nations, again, usually regard singing as an intensification of the personality; an Englishman, on the contrary, unless he is singing out of doors or in his bath, will always subordinate his own personality to that of the composer; just as English song-writers have always subordinated their musical personality to that of the poet whose words they are setting. A continental virtuoso comes before his audience as much as to say: "I am a superman; my interpretation is the greatest show on earth." An English musician treats his audience rather as if they were guests in his own house, and seems to say to them, as he begins his piece: "I love this, don't you?"

"Prometheus Unbound"

The rebirth of English music is most conveniently dated by the performance of Parry's "Prometheus Unbound" in 1880. It was above all an affair of men who had had a classical education, and possessed a deep feeling for English poetry and the beauties of the English language. It owes a great debt to the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Parry met with considerable difficulty at first. For a country squire to be an atheist and a bit of a socialist was pardonable, as being eccentricities to which every Englishman had a right; besides, he went to church and even read the lessons, as a matter of duty to his dependents. But for such a man to be

a musician—and not a church musician either, though he had a passion for setting the words of the Bible—was something that had never been known. Yet Parry raised the status of music in the opinion of educated men in England, and gained a reputation abroad as an historian of profound learning, to which study he was able, as a composer, to bring an understanding of the composer's attitude which not all historians have possessed. Meanwhile Stanford began his great work as a teacher, and his compositions earned the respect of foreign musicians for their variety and unfailing technical accomplishment. So great has been the influence of his teaching that, with the exception of Arnold Bax and Lord Berners, almost all the contemporary English composers are either pupils of Stanford or pupils of his pupils.

Contemporary musicians all over Europe (though they may not know it) are following the advice given by Verdi to the generation of 1871. *Tornate all' antico* (he said) *e sarà un progresso.* In Germany, turning back to the classics means a return to Mozart and Bach; in France, to Rameau and Couperin. But in Italy and in England it means going back to the period of the great madrigalists, a return which, with us, has been greatly helped by the folk-song movement, accustoming our ears to the older tonalities and freer rhythms of the sixteenth century. The most thoroughgoing exponent of this return is Dr. Vaughan Williams, and it may be because of his downrightness and sincerity that Vaughan Williams is the only English composer chosen this year by the jury of the International Society for Contemporary Music for performance at the festivals at Prague and Venice.

"Atonality" and Quarter-tones

The great difference between the new music and the old is the difference in rhythm. Next to that comes the weakening of the sense of key and key-relationship, leading to music which sounds as if it were written in several different keys at once, or in no key at all. To many listeners it may amount

to much the same thing, whether a piece of music is " polytonal " or " atonal " ; but in theory there is all the difference —as much, in fact, as there is between a polytheist and an atheist. The clowns of modern music, Milhaud, Poulenc, and Co., have had their day, as was proved at the Salzburg festival last year. Polytonality and atonality are means to an end ; they are not an end in themselves, as some of the disciples of Schönberg seem to have thought, and they are not a joke, as is held by the " Bloomsbury " circles of Paris. The best contemporary composers are looking for new means of expression in counterpoint and in rhythm. The sense of hearing (as Herr Jarnach puts it in his excellent study of modern German music, printed in *L'Esame*) is always becoming more sensitive and refined ; it has enriched the art of music with means of expression which are as potent as they are unexpected. They have still all the fun and excitement of novelty ; but used systematically and exclusively they can only produce, as the ear grows accustomed to them, an impression of mechanical triviality which spoils the whole effect of the work. The exaggerations of " atonality " are the inevitable outcome of a complete change of style, following a period of stagnation. It is not yet possible to foresee the results of the change ; but they will certainly end in a new outburst of real creative activity.

Some of the principles of non-European music are, at the same time, being adapted to Western forms. Alois Haba has written quartets and vocal works on a system of quarter-tones ; while certain institutions in Berlin, with an enterprise which would hardly be possible in other countries, have encouraged him in his work, first of all by having two grand-pianos tuned for him a quarter of a tone apart, and then by combining them in a specially constructed instrument with two keyboards. If the result has struck some hearers as being like the traditional jangling piano of a lodging-house parlour, it is not to say that real progress in music may not eventually come of it ; while the four ladies of Frankfurt

who sing in quarter-tones have convinced even sceptics that there is something in the idea.

Strangely enough, *L'Esame* seems not to mention (except in its bibliography) two contemporary composers who many people think have written more vital music than any of the others: the Hungarian Béla Bartók and the Spaniard Manuel de Falla. Both these composers have, apparently, a following in London; they have their own audiences, as may be seen when any important or new work of theirs is performed. Both are developing the resources of music in much the same way—in the oriental, or, at any rate, non-European custom of using strongly contrasted rhythms at the same time, in making their counterpoint, in fact, not with melodies but with rhythmic figures—a practice which, again, is to a certain extent a return to the classics, for the principle was known to the madrigalists and other composers of the sixteenth century. Bartók and Falla, however, combine an oriental feeling for rhythm with a sense of form which is definitely European.

Busoni

The leaders of contemporary music (we shall all agree with Jarnach) have been Schönberg and Busoni. They are, undoubtedly, the representatives of an aristocracy of musical intellect, without which a period can never be said to have a style of its own. Yet it is precisely in style that they differ. Schönberg has been influenced by the last quartets of Beethoven; it is he and his pupils, and not "le bon père Franck," who have begun where Beethoven left off.

"Busoni, though he discovered in Bach the principles of a sovereign polyphony of inexhaustible possibilities, found the echo of his own aspirations in Mozart. His nature was profound, yet clear to the depths; he always remained impervious to romanticism, and not least to that kind of romanticism which, in its later form, as a mixture of impressionism and literature, occupied the end of the nineteenth century

and the beginning of the twentieth. . . . He was probably the only composer of his time who completely escaped the influence of Wagner; and the only innovator who, while setting aside the bonds of traditional harmony, was able to remain true to his own melodic style. . . . His music always preserves that sense of clearness and proportion, that purity of line which characterises the classic work of art. Busoni himself defined the artistic creed, of which (in music) he was the founder, as 'Neo-classicism.' For him, the word 'classical' did not signify a concept of æsthetics; he took the word in the absolute sense, to define and include every quality in a work of art, ancient or modern, which gave it lasting worth."

J. B. TREND.

A NOTE FROM PARIS

PARIS.

EVERYBODY writes nowadays. Statistics show that more than a thousand novels appeared in France last year. Add the poetry, the essays, the criticism, history and philosophy, and it will be clear that, if I were to try to review the quarter's output, this letter would hardly be long enough even for a bare list of names. And this is certainly not what your vigilant mind is looking for. You want a selection.

How am I to choose from this rich harvest? How can I give you even a faint image of so much fertility and variety? For although there is, of course, much more bad than good in these publications, it is none the less true that we are passing through a period unusually rich in vigour and talent.

I must, therefore, make nice distinctions. But by what standards? Success? When it is a success based on worth, this is no bad standard; but success so seldom goes with genuine worth. By the influence a book exercises? But time is needed to measure this. You see my predicament?

However, three certain signs may be distinguished: the fresh developments of the curve of a proved talent; the novel sound of a work; and, lastly and most important, the indication or the finished expression of a current towards which the scattered efforts of many writers converge.

It so chances that for this first letter a book has appeared which unites, in various ways, these three qualities—the *Plainte contre Inconnu* by Drieu La Rochelle.

Drieu had already published some books of verses, and an essay full of savour. Those who knew these were expecting great things of him, and he has not disappointed them. His last book gives a definite form to many rough sketches and trial essays, for it is the most perfect expression up to date of

the state of confusion of those of the younger generation whom the war has left alive.

This state of mind cannot be defined in a few lines. Doubtless, you are equally well acquainted with it in your country, but I do not know what aspect it has assumed there nor its extent. In France almost everyone bears its mark. You do not for nothing pass in the company of death the years in which mind and body are formed, dependent on death alone, not knowing what to-morrow may bring, with no regard for consequences, as if cause and effect had been done away with. It has not been possible to fit in habits thus acquired with what is called a normal existence. Hence a lack of equilibrium, a continual dissatisfaction, a dull uneasiness.'

By a curious but natural effect, by a kind of infection, this uneasiness has been transmitted even to those who were too young to fight. It has, of course, taken a different form with them, but one equally acute. After the lapse of a century, we have again the phenomenon which followed that other turmoil and confusion made by the wars of the Revolution and the Empire: 1920 is a repetition of 1820. The "Dadaists" are merely the exasperated and somewhat ridiculous heirs of the Romantics.

A transvaluation of values is at work. A breath of instability is passing over men's minds. A thirst which they can neither define nor assuage is wasting their strength. This is what M. Marcel Arland, a young writer with a penetrating mind, calls the "nouveau mal du siècle." He has tried to depict it in a recently published novel, *Étienne*, but, in my opinion, he has only been partly successful.

Others, and they are very numerous, have tried it consciously or unconsciously. The *Diable au Corps* of that young genius, Raymond Radiguet, was an amazing prefiguration of it. What this writer, who died at twenty, did for youth, Drieu La Rochelle, with less art and less analysis, but with brutal strength, has tried to do for young men.

His book is truly terrible. It is a picture of loss of balance,

of weakened will, of sluggish stupor, which fills the reader with agony. The hypnotic world of the " bars," the listless abandonment to facile pleasures, the indolence of mind, and, above all, a premature tiredness, a morbid lack of desires, are all set down pitilessly and without shade. The solid pages are bathed in the light of electric lamps.

A singular talent animates them. It might almost be said that Drieu La Rochelle's thoughts are born in an agony that he must endure and that tears the ligaments. His language bears the trace of this. It is often involved and it trails dross with it. It seems to be struggling with itself. But this gives it compactness and a sort of heavy frankness, the frankness that forms the deep attraction of *Plainte contre Inconnu.*

M. Ramon Fernandez, in a remarkable article, published by the *Nouvelle Revue Française* has found the right word for the attitude of *Drieu La Rochelle,* " satirical complicity." M. Ramon Fernandez is uneasy about this complicity. Perhaps he is rightly uneasy on behalf of the books that will follow. But for this one the complicity seems to me a healthy sign. It is this alone which has allowed the author to paint a picture so exact, so rich, and so agitated. A purely satirical reaction would have been more superficial or more monotonous. The writer could not have endowed his characters with so much real life had he not felt himself, even if only for a moment, to be their brother.

But do not therefore conclude that this book has anything of the air of a confession. Nothing could be more detached from the author, nothing more objective, than the queer heroes who haunt the four stories of which the book is composed.

Drieu La Rochelle owes this chiefly to his exceptional gifts as a portrait-painter. He knows how to fix features and bodily shapes in lively touches that remain in the memory. How could one forget the man he paints thus :

" Guy La Marche was a lieutenant in a tank corps. He was tall, like many Frenchmen. His shoulders were broad, almost thick ; his waist was not narrow enough ; his legs

sufficiently long. You were glad to see that he had fallen short of being very handsome; he had escaped that accident which would have set him as a landmark among men. He had powerful hands, nails bitten short, and the texture of his skin was soaked in grease."

"Later I noticed his scanty eyebrows, all the shade coming from his heavy lids, his nostrils, his thin lips, his fine hair lying at the extreme end of a slightly receding forehead. The complexion of the men of those days—sun, rain, wine, smoke, and sweat."

The talent of Drieu La Rochelle is not confined to painting men. His subtle brain grasps the value and the savour of events. In him there are in equal degrees both the essayist and the novelist. Sometimes these two elements clash, and hinder each other. But often they are in powerful harmony. It is by this means that Drieu has been able to render the sound of the metal forged by the war and falsified by the peace, a sound unmistakable to ears that have heard it. I know few lines which by their force and their simplicity move me so much as these:

"In a domain narrow and deep, we had done our deeds. In our blood, as it flowed, we had seen an amazing love. It was not yet exhausted. We should have loved to have done something more. If men had only dared, if women had only known! But the people all turned their backs."

I should have liked to talk of a strange writer who comes from the East, and whose books are young and wise as the earth at its birth. I have been carried away by a too absorbing subject. I shall have a chance later to talk to you about this writer who tells stories like a Scheherazade. For the time being, note his name, Panaït Istrati.

J. KESSEL.

THE BALLET

The Dance: An Historical Survey of Dancing in Europe. By the late Cecil J. Sharpe (Founder of the English Folk Dance Society) and A. P. Oppé. Halton and Truscott Smith. 30*s.*

Mudras: The Ritual Hand Poses of the Buddha Priests and Shiva Priests. By Tyra de Kleen. Introduction by A. J. D. Campbell (Indian Section of the Victoria and Albert Museum); with 60 full-page plates. Kegan Paul. 15*s.* net.

The late Cecil Sharp was a scholar of many services to the study of English ballads, English dance, and English music, and it is a pleasure to observe that this book, which is in a sense a memorial to him, has been produced as such a book ought to be. Mr. Oppé has performed his work well, and carried out the design of Mr. Sharp by providing a number of illustrations which are of great interest in the history of dancing, and which the publishers have had beautifully reproduced. The text of Cecil Sharp makes us admire his erudition and deplore his premature death. It should have been much longer. Short as it is, it shows the result of years of study.

When so much has been said—for the volume is a precious one—there are several qualifications to be made by the critical mind. Sharp was an historian, but not a philosopher or an anthropologist: consequently his brief notes are not only inadequate, but are even conducive to error. For to the study of the dance, including its highest forms—the ballet and the mass—several interests and qualifications are necessary. Anyone who would penetrate to the spirit of dancing—and, therefore, anyone who would contribute to our imagination of what the ballet may perform in the future—should begin by a close study of dancing amongst primitive peoples—*vide* the Australian ceremonies described by Spencer and Gillen and Hewett; of dancing amongst developed peoples, such as the Tibetans and the Javanese. He should have, furthermore, a first-hand knowledge of the technique of the ballet from bar practice to toe work. He should frequent the society of dancers, musicians, choreographers, and producers. He should have studied the evolution of Christian and other liturgy. (For is not the High Mass—as performed, for instance, at the Madeleine in Paris—one of the highest developments of dancing?) And, finally,

he should track down the secrets of rhythm in the (still undeveloped) science of neurology.

This ideal critic of the dance—who should combine the learning of Rome, Cambridge, and Harley Street—does not yet exist. We cannot reproach Cecil Sharp for not fulfilling this ideal. But it is not irreverent to the dead to observe that Cecil Sharp's limited knowledge—and of course limited interests—lead him to a very partial view, and to very doubtful conclusions. It is obvious that Sharp had never really understood the modern ballet (such as that of Diaghilev). He did not, for one thing, analyse the essential difference between " dancing " and " acrobatics." This is a capital point, for it calls into question both his judgment and his sensibility.

The difference between acrobatics and dancing may be observed in any music-hall: it is a difference of total effect, of the faculty to which the performer appeals. The acrobat, however bad or good, appeals to the mind rather than to the senses. We admire his *skill*, we say, that is difficult, and, we could not do that—or we are pleased by *mere* surprise or novelty (this includes the pot-house patron as well as the reader of these lines). There are acrobats, such as Rastelli, whose juggling appeals to our sense of beauty of form; but this is an added gift. The primary appeal of acrobatics is to the mind. In *dancing*, the physical skill is ancillary to another effect. You must have the skill, or you cannot produce this effect; but the appreciation of skill is for the trained critic alone, not for the general audience.

An ignorance of this distinction gives to the writing of Cecil Sharp a somewhat smug, Margaret Morris, Chelsea-cum-Golders Green flavour. He is all against " acrobatic virtuosity " and " toe dancing." Why ? I fear that some prejudice, unworthy of the serious student of an art, is operative.

And Cecil Sharp is a confirmed—and I must say dangerous—radical. For he seems to have wished to substitute for the traditional ballet a *native* ballet (another " protectionist fallacy," when the ballet is so completely international ?) " founded on folk-dance technique." Here, again, I believe that he fails from negligence of distinctions. (Incidentally, he observes that one fault of the traditional ballet is that it uses the legs only ! . . . as if every aspirant to a pantomime chorus did not have to devote years of study to arm and hand poses —as if there were no difference between the Russian and the Italian ways of turning the hand.) Here Cecil Sharp fails to distinguish between *founding* and borrowing. There is certainly much that can be borrowed. And, as an example of the possibilities of the latter, I refer to an interesting book—*Mudras*—a book of much more interest and value to the student of the dance than even Mr. Sharp's. Here

is a study, with most valuable illustrations, of the arm and hand movements and poses of the priests of Bali (an island near Java). I believe that the ballet could *borrow* a great deal from the beautiful and varied movements of the hands exhibited in this book.

But, as for *founding*—for founding a new ballet on a dead ritual—that is a different matter. Of what value is it to "revive" the Sword Dance, except as a Saturday afternoon alternative to tennis and badminton for active young men in garden suburbs? For you cannot *revive* a ritual without reviving a faith. You can *continue* a ritual after the faith is dead—that is not a conscious, "pretty" piece of archæology—but you cannot *revive* it. But the question of what the ballet of the future should be "founded on" must be reserved for a further note.

T. S. ELIOT.

BOOKS OF THE QUARTER

Principles of Literary Criticism. By I. A. Richards. (Kegan Paul.) 10*s.* 6*d.* net.

Ethics: An Historical Introduction. By Stephen Ward. (Oxford University Press.) 2*s.* 6*d.* net.

From one point of view the present condition of criticism in England may be seen as the end of a reaction. Largely through making the mistake which we can only describe as putting the cart before the horse, Ruskin, and, to a lesser degree, Matthew Arnold, brought discredit on any attempt to relate the values of art to the values of life in general. The result was the reaction which we have come to call Æstheticism—adequately defined as "art for art's sake." That the movement was not purely a reaction against local influences may be gathered from the analogous developments in other countries—especially in France, where English influences were not much in question. Whether in this wider aspect, or merely in its local application, there is every sign that the reaction, never well supported by brains, is at the end of its tether. The consequent dangers are: a simple swing back of the pendulum to the moralistic confusions of Ruskin, or contentment with the merely nugatory results of scientific documentation. From these dangers there are several ways of escape, but it seems fairly certain that the revision of most of our terms in the light of modern psychology is the indispensable preliminary to any proper understanding of the way art is created and of the way it works. Equally needed may be a revision of our conception of values in general; it may even be possible, with a new understanding of ethics, to begin with Ruskin again: he did at any rate represent a progress in criticism; and his achievement was in the grand manner.

Principles of Literary Criticism is an important contribution to the rehabilitation of English criticism—perhaps, because of its sustained scientific nature, the most important contribution yet made. Mr. Richards begins with an account of the present chaos of critical theories and follows with an analysis of the particular fallacy in modern æsthetics—"the assumption that there is a distinct *kind* of mental activity present in what are called æsthetic experiences." Mr. Richards

has no difficulty in showing that such experiences are only " a further development, a finer organisation of ordinary experience, and not in the least a different kind of thing." He is equally at ease with " that paralysing apparition Beauty "—" and many other Mystic Beings, for the most part of a less august nature, sheltering in verbal thickets. Construction, Design, Form, Rhythm, Expression . . . are more often than not mere *vacua* in discourse, for which a theory of criticism should provide explainable substitutes."

Mr. Richards's own reasoning distinguishes two elements in art—communication and value. He elucidates the nature of these elements by means of a theory of value and a theory of psychology. Mr. Richards himself has reduced the expression of these two theories to utmost conciseness, and any further reduction tends to distort them. But for the purposes of a review this danger must be risked. As to value, he argues that the difference between experiences which are valuable and those which are not can be fully described in psychological terms, without any additional distinctive " ethical " or " moral " idea of a non-psychological nature. Accordingly " anything is valuable which will satisfy an appetency without involving the frustration of some equal or *more important* appetency. . . . Thus, morals become purely prudential, and ethical codes merely the expression of the most general scheme of expediency to which an individual or a race has attained." The utilitarian nature of this view is fully admitted. The importance of an impulse is defined (again without the introduction of an ethical idea) as " the extent of the disturbance of other impulses in the individual's activities which the thwarting of the impulse involves." The artist thus becomes an adept in the organisation of his impulses, and in the adequate communication of this organisation. " His experiences, those at least which give value to his work, represent conciliations of impulses which in most minds are still confused, intertrammelled and conflicting. His work is the ordering of what in most minds is disordered."

Mr. Richards's theory of psychology has its main application in his analysis of the part played by *communication* in art. His particular thesis is that " stimuli are only received if they serve some need of the organism, and the form which the response takes depends only in part upon the nature of the stimulus, and much more upon what the organism ' wants,' i.e. the state of equilibrium of its multifarious activities." The part played by such factors as pleasure-unpleasure, emotion and memory are clearly stated by the author, but we cannot attempt to repeat his extremely concise and illuminating discussion here. His chapter on " The Analysis of a Poem " is perhaps the most sustained piece of analysis in the work; but we must

content ourselves now with a few disjointed aphorisms, which, however, develop the general sketch of Mr. Richards's ideas we are attempting:

"The assumption, natural before investigation, that all attentive and sensitive readers will experience the same images, vitiates most of the historical discussions from that of Longinus to that of Lessing."

"It cannot be too clearly recognised that individuals differ not only in the type of imagery which they employ, but still more in the particular images which they produce."

"Poetry may be almost devoid even of mere sense, let alone thought, or *almost* without sensory (or formal) structure, and yet reach the point than which no poem goes further."

"Feelings are commonly signs, and the difference between those who 'see' things by intuition, or 'feel' them, and those who reason them out is commonly only a difference between users of signs and users of symbols."

"Emotions are primarily signs of attitudes, and owe their great prominence in the theory of art to this. For it is the attitudes evoked which are the all-important part of any experience. Upon the texture and form of the attitudes involved its value depends. It is not the intensity of the conscious experience, its thrill, its pleasure, or its poignancy which gives it value, but the organisation of its impulses for freedom and fullness of life."

"Too great insistence upon the quality of the momentary *consciousness* which the arts occasion has in recent times been a prevalent critical blunder."

The principles thus enunciated are pursued in more particular aspects of literary criticism, always with a clear zest and consequent elucidation. Parallel applications to the arts of painting, sculpture, and music form the subjects of three chapters. Another important chapter deals with the availability of the poet's experience. "The answer, at least in part, to the problem of how the poet's experience is more than usually available to him is that it is, as he undergoes it, more than usually organised through his more than usual vigilance. Connections become established for him which in the ordinary mind, much more rigid and exclusive in its play of impulses, are never effected, and it is through these original connections that so much more of his past comes to be freely revivable for him at need." The chapter on "Levels of Response and the Width of Appeal" establishes a useful distinction between art which builds up its attitudes with the simplest impulses, satisfying the undeveloped mind and yet serving the needs, through a process of further elaboration, of the more mature mind, and art which is built up from impulses which, except in a personality capable of very nice adjustments, do not unite in any very valuable

way. The chapter on " The Imagination " is perhaps the least animated of any in the book: it emphasises, without in any radical way developing, Coleridge's definition from the fourteenth chapter of *Biographia Literaria*. This definition is little more than descriptive: " the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities," with particular instances subsumed, such as emotion and order, does not, as a definition, explain the mental process involved; nor does it explain the reality of the imaginative experience—how, for example, a good artist can imagine, on the basis of his own experience, the quality of experience in general. Mr. Richards does not really carry us any further towards the solution of the problems associated with this vague faculty, the imagination.

In considering Mr. Richards's book more generally, the attentive reader is most likely to pause at his theory of value. Of the importance of the value element in art there can be no question, and any theory of æsthetics which neglects it (and most modern theories do) deserves no consideration. But obviously all will depend on the definition of value. We doubt if that advanced by Mr. Richards is acceptable. He himself admits its vagueness, but he does not stop to consider the nature of this vagueness. But vagueness, we might say, to apply a favourite distinction of our author's is in the thinking mind and not in the objective facts. Why is Mr. Richards vague when he comes to this essential theme, the crux of his argument? Is it because he is timid to avow the real nature of the element of value in art? Or is it merely that he has not carried his thought far enough? He assumes, rather arbitrarily, that ethics is necessarily a matter of " such crude valuations as may be codified in a moral." But what if the difficulty of associating moral values with art is a question, not so much of a wrong conception of art, but rather of a wrong conception of ethics? If the association of art and ethics in the past has resulted in a completely false criticism, the fault may be in the nature of the ethics quite as much as in the fact of association. Mr. Richards despairs of ethics without examining the possibilities of a reconstruction of that science as vital as the one he would effect in literary criticism—and one that is to be effected largely by the same psychological means.

Mr. Richards would avoid the difficulty by a frank acceptance of utilitarian or prudential ethics. To embark on a refutation of such ethics is outside the scope of a review; we can merely point to another book where not only will the reader find the final rout of such ethical falsities, but will find also much towards the establishment of a moral standpoint consistent with modern psychology and free from that blind reliance on the Abstract Entities so rightly deplored by Mr. Richards. Possessing the ethics of Mr. Ward and the general

method of Mr. Richards, we are almost within reach of a tolerable science of literary criticism.

Mr. Stephen Ward's short primer, published in a popular series at an insignificant price, will probably escape the attention it deserves. The present reviewer came across it by chance, and was at once converted to its attitude and engaged by its style. A resort to the author's earlier book, *The Ways of Life*, only confirmed and consolidated these results. In this short history of ethics Mr. Ward begins with a refreshing intention: to be personal where he cannot pretend to be authoritative, and to sacrifice completeness rather than such life as may exist in his own convictions. The result is a rapid survey of the growth of ethical standards from early Greek times to the present day, extraordinarily complete because so unerringly confined to essentials. It would be a pleasure to quote a hundred finely phrased aphorisms from this extremely well written and acute book, but there is really no reason to suppose anyone reading this review obtuse enough (or poor enough) not to want to spend half-a-crown on his own enlightenment or pleasure. Our present concern, however, is with the relation of ethics to art, and on this subject Mr. Ward can throw some light. His exposition of his own point of view, in the final chapter of this short history, and in *The Ways of Life*, is rather subtle, as befits a philosophy which has, though it does not boast, a psychological basis. Life and activity are regarded "not as a progress to a moral ideal; not even as a progress at all, but rather as an experiment. Their ceaseless change and eternal variations are not faults or deficiencies, as almost inevitably they tend to be interpreted under the immutable concepts of reason or morality, but an essential character. . . . (Life) is first and foremost an expression in terms of form, or of that which in certain aspects we call beauty. The first impulse of life is not to rationalise, or moralise, but to express. . . . Thus to the idea of beauty or form for its own sake a new standing or validity has been given. Instead of being regarded as an inferior derivative of the good or the true, if not a mere illusion, its independence is recognised, and it is used to explain just those aspects of life which had proved so refractory to reduction to other conceptions. So far as life is changeable, experimental, creative, artistic, it is so because it is striving to express itself in terms of form; and from this effort spring its diversified concreteness and individuality."

This new conception of ethics has obviously close affinities with Mr. Richards's conception of art as the organisation of impulses. But obviously, too, the latter's insistence on the non-ethical and purely utilitarian character of value will not agree with Mr. Ward's position;

such a conception of value is unmoral, because in the end it reduces to self-interest. The fact that Mr. Richards ignores, or denies, is the existence of a moral consciousness. Mr. Ward is as wary of Abstract Entities as Mr. Richards, and writes well of the vanity of preserving goodness at the cost of exile. On the other hand, he recognises in the moral consciousness an indubitable fact, a matter of experience, " an aspect and consequence " of the exercise of reason, implying creative freedom as its only possible basis. " The moral consciousness," to quote from *The Ways of Life*, " is supreme but impotent; life is worthless, but not to be denied. Out of these is born the sense of obligation, the ' ought.' Man is faced with conditions, which, morally, are valueless, and the impulse which condemns them is also the impulse which would change them: *what is ought not to be*—that is the ultimate form of the moral consciousness."

It seems, then, that Mr. Richards has not reckoned with the character of one of our impulses, a character that transcends and modifies all other impulses. This oversight does not in any manner vitiate his general argument (which rather, as when he writes of the organisation of impulses for " freedom and fullness of life," implies a moral impulse which he elsewhere wilfully ignores). It does mean, however, that we should add to his conception of value a quality which we cannot help describing as depth and colour. It is not enough to believe that art is a mechanical and unrelated harmony of impulses or balance of appetencies. Art demands a sanction, as every other activity. Some direction is implied—an orientation to prevent chaos. Such an orientation may not accord with the present forms of life, but that does not alter the reality of its force.

HERBERT READ.

Those Barren Leaves. By Aldous Huxley. (Chatto & Windus.)

Mr. Aldous Huxley has acquired a remarkable position among the younger novelists; and there can be no question that he is—to use advisedly a term perhaps a little invidious—a very accomplished writer. It has been freely suggested that he is brilliant; it has been taken for granted that his position is unique. Of his three novels, and three volumes of tales, it has been urged that they witness to the evolution of an " artist " in fiction: it has even been suggested that the artist thus posited may, ultimately, prove to be great. If this attitude is a trifle solemn, nevertheless one willingly enough subscribes to a part of it. Mr. Huxley *is* exceptionally accomplished; his talent *is*, in the contemporary medley, conspicuous; and it is not for nothing that critics have so unanimously pronounced him to be ophidianly

clever. The latter quality, indeed, has occasioned a particularly loud chorus of encomium. The critics, and Mr. Huxley's audience, have been pleased to dwell on something a little sinister in it, and a little naughty. It has been seen as a peculiarly delicious blend of the best wit and most ingenious *morbidezza* of the "nineties" with the very latest fashions (and modern improvements) in morals and ideas from Paris and Vienna. There is also, it is pointed out, his erudition. How astonishing his ease and copiousness of allusion! And what could be more appropriate, in this post-war world of sad, gay disillusionment and scientific luxury, than Mr. Huxley's macaronic *mélange* of the classical and the up-to-date, of Peacock and the *fin-de-siècle*, of Folengo and Freud? Mr. Huxley's affinities, in this respect, are easy to find. During the last decade there has been what one might almost call a macaronic "school"—an international school concerned with satire, with burlesque, and, in the absence of any stable convictions concerning art or morals, with the breakdown of forms and the extensive use of reference and quotation. If Mr. Huxley does not go as far as some in the direction of the *cento*, he at any rate shares in that tendency.

It is this absence of conviction that most impresses one in his work; it is in this that his cleverness, his wit, his queer, uncomfortable ingenuity of fancy seem to strike their somewhat shallow roots; and one begins to wonder, after reading his sixth book of fiction, how likely it is that a basis so insubstantial can make of Mr. Huxley the writer one would like to see him become. Mr. Huxley seems himself to be in some doubt about this. He has steered a somewhat uncertain course. He has always had a little the air of one who could not quite decide how serious he dared to be, or to what extent the act of being serious is a kind of naïve confession of credulity, a lack of sophistication which might be too maliciously enjoyed in drawing-rooms. This ambiguity was pretty clear in his first book, *Limbo*. The beginning of a serious attempt at seriousness can be seen there in such stories as "Happily Ever After" and "Richard Greenow"; but in both of these the impulse to be clever, to be sophisticated, finally triumphed, with the result that they were not successful either as satire or as credible fiction; neither very amusing nor wholly true. In *Crome Yellow*, his next book, it was natural that, taking so frankly the Peacockian model, Mr. Huxley should also take a step backward, a step further away from the actual. *Crome Yellow* is as artificial, as flimsy, and, alas, as unreadable as a clever book can be. The occasional note of sincerity, of verisimilitude, of feeling, of seriousness, which now and then almost brought his characters alive in *Limbo*, has here been deliberately exorcised; and in its place Mr. Huxley

abandons himself to his terrible passion, a passion positively narcissistic, for conversation. His *personæ*, totally lifeless and indistinguishable one from another, are merely ventriloquist's puppets, the device by which he can indulge himself, as often and as long as he likes, in witty talk. Has Mr. Huxley a frustrated desire to be a great conversationalist? The question is an impertinence, but it is one that it is difficult to refrain from asking; for, despite its ingenuities, *Crome Yellow* is simply an apotheosis of talk, talk in the most exasperating drawing-room style. One sees, of course, what Mr. Huxley was after —he indeed tells us himself, describing the " great Knockespotch, who delivered us from the tyranny of the realistic novel. . . . Oh, those Tales—those Tales! How shall I describe them? Fabulous characters shoot across his pages like gaily dressed performers on the trapeze. There are extraordinary adventures and still more extraordinary speculations. Intelligences and emotions, relieved of all the imbecile preoccupations of civilised life, move in intricate and subtle dances, crossing and recrossing, advancing, retreating, impinging. An immense erudition and an immense fancy go hand in hand. All the ideas of the present and of the past, on every conceivable subject, bob up among the Tales, smile gravely or grimace a caricature of themselves, then disappear to make place for something new. The verbal surface of his writing is rich and fantastically diversified. The wit is incessant." . . . There, of course, but for the grace of God, goes Mr. Huxley. He, too, has a passion for the superlatively and purely articulate, for intelligences (but not emotions) relieved of imbecile preoccupations, for immense erudition, immense fancy, incessant wit, and a verbal surface richly semined (to borrow his method) with oddities that smell of camphor. He shares, also, with the great Knockespotch, his passion for ideas. One imagines him sitting with Bartlett in one hand and *The Times* in the other, compiling thus his *omnium gatherum* of the antique and the quotidian, and turning it all into airy talk: setting it in motion with his easy and skilful rhetoric; giving it the accomplished twist that imparts a sparkle. One is aware that he regards this purely as a kind of boring game; he wishes to give the impression of employing his skill automatically, as if without too much lending to the performance either mind or heart; but one also perceives, as noted above, a secondary Mr. Huxley who wants, a little timidly, to do something else.

For in *Mortal Coils*, *Antic Hay*, *Little Mexican*, and now in *Those Barren Leaves*, it is perhaps not altogether fanciful to guess a growing doubt in Mr. Huxley's mind, a doubt as to whether the great Knockespotch is, after all, the best model. To be incessantly frivolous, to try in every phrase to be diverting, to round unctuously and a little

smartly every sentence, to conduct with so Mozartian a grace his glassy passages of sustained bravura from page to page—can one, by this method, achieve the best? It is true that occasionally he manages this sort of thing with delightful skill. *Nuns at Luncheon* could hardly be better. It is perhaps as triumphant an example of a dexterous and heartless *playing* with a tragic theme as one could find. Not wholly satisfying—for the click of the spring at the end is too sharp, too prepared, too small, and serves only to reveal the story as an anecdote (like many of Mr. Huxley's stories) comparatively empty of beauty, of feeling, or intensity, and indeed actuated more by a desire to toy with the theme, holding it at arm's length, than by any deeper concern. This externalism has a peculiar and delightful effect in this instance: an effect as of an inverted sentimentality, a deliberate frolic in the presence of tragedy. But the method is not one that can be used *passim*; and, unfortunately, the habit of doing so, of trying always to remain cynically aloof, has been indulged by Mr. Huxley too long to be easily broken. In *Antic Hay* it is obvious that he wants to concern himself more deeply and frankly with his characters, and invites his readers to do so; but the Mr. Huxley who enjoys buffoonery and burlesque insists on introducing his satirical ingenuities, which are ungainly rather than diverting, and his saffron interludes, which are pawky rather than frank. It is not, in consequence, a satisfactory satire, since one believes in the characters too much; it is not a satisfactory novel, since one believes in them too little.

The same difficulties must be urged against *Those Barren Leaves*. It is Mr. Huxley's best work, and it marks, perhaps, the sharpest single advance that he has made. It is rich, it is witty, it is admirably if ornately written. But if Mr. Huxley the buffoon is less in evidence, Mr. Huxley the non-stop conversationalist, and Mr. Huxley the cynical onlooker, are still all too tediously here. It is difficult, therefore, to judge his capacity for "seeing" a character in the round. Has he, indeed, as yet, created a single character in whom one can believe, who escapes the Huxleyan gesture and intonation, and obeys a *daimon* of his own? He comes closer to Miss Thriplow and Irene than he did to their many prototypical predecessors, with whom they share their bell-like bobbed hair, round eyes, and doll-like faces. Chelifer and Calamy and Cardan—these, too, have moments when they come alive, are perhaps a little more recognisably and dimensionally real than Gumbril, with his pneumatic breeches and false beard, or Mercaptan with his sofa. But Mr. Huxley still has his uncontrollable appetite for talk, still strives to be that "miracle of nature, breathing libraries." Scarcely has a character begun to take on the warmth of the actual, or the action to be enticing, when off he goes once more

into endless discussion; the drawing-room style puts on its quotation marks; effective phrase is added to effective phrase, paragraph to paragraph, page to page, no matter who it is who happens to be speaking; the reader's will to believe is remorsely defeated; and we are presented at last not so much with a story, or a series of character studies, as with another tremendous example of Mr. Huxley's highly cultured conversation. Chelifer, Cardan, and Calamy become interchangeable shadows, and, if all three are divinely articulate, it is not themselves they talk into existence, but their author. Chelifer's "autobiography" is indistinguishable in tone from any other part of the story. Was it—one asks after closing the book—Calamy who was the poet, and Chelifer, who, wearying of his amorous successes, became a mystic? Was it in this novel, or in *Crome Yellow*, that the dashing young lord, with his lisp and his high-powered car, flew from one house-party to another? Was it Calamy or Chelifer or Cardan who talked so well, and who so perpetually and wearily fell into love and out again?

But this is ungrateful. The book is, when one has weathered the first hundred pages, extremely entertaining. The Chelifer section is managed with a technical virtuosity that any novelist must envy; and many of the interpolated discussions—notably that of Cardan on art—contain admirable criticism. If only Mr. Huxley could abjure his habit of cynical intrusion, and wear for a little, without shame, his heart on his sleeve, one feels that he might achieve something very find indeed. Could he not also, for a time, give up these emancipated house-parties and exquisite boudoirs? We encounter them, in his pages, far too often.

CONRAD AIKEN.

Contemporary Criticism of Literature. By Orlo Williams. The Contemporary Series. Vol. V. (Parsons.) 7*s.* 6*d.* net.
The Critic's Armoury. By Cyril Falls. (Cobden-Sanderson.) 7*s.* 6*d.*

No situation is so difficult and delicate for a reviewer as that he occupies when passing judgment on *confrères*, even when they are personally unknown to him. Praise with difficulty escapes being that most "risible" of performances, "the mutual civility of authors"; and censure, however measured, is easily interpreted as the result of envy. Trial by a jury composed in part of sympathetic friends, and in part of rivals, is not justice; yet that must in general be the fate of every professional critic who publishes a book. Perhaps this explains how it is that extremely unpopular books, such as works of criticism, are so widely reviewed and generally with such ingenious perfidy or

undisguised puffing. There are honourable exceptions, and among them is Mr. Orlo Williams. He is a critic sitting in judgment upon other critics, and he has accomplished the task with urbanity and impartiality. The first chapter of his book, we are informed, was published as a leading article in *The Times Literary Supplement*; Mr. Williams's whole book is in accordance with the traditions of that journal. As a survey of the whole of contemporary criticism, it is doubtless far from complete; critics like Dr. Whibley and Mr. Sturge Moore are barely mentioned, and rather too much space is given to journalists. But the book deserves praise as an exposition of tendencies and for the ideal of critical practice it recommends.

In reading Mr. Williams's book I marked a number of passages, some of which I shall proceed to quote as the easiest and most certain method of arousing interest in his book:

"An average English reader of reviews and literary studies desires general enlightenment on the nature and value of the work discussed rather than a dissection of its vital structure from which its value would be left to be inferred. But the danger of this safe, but somewhat indolent state of mind, is that it encourages laxity of taste and want of discrimination: and its result is that, besides the work of genuine critics, there are many ill-written books published, and devoured by a very imperfectly educated public, which are composed on the principle of ecstatically praising the work of all authors in whom there is the slightest enjoyment to be found. The writers of these books corrupt the literary palate of their generation by encouraging their readers to gorge themselves promiscuously. The mental indigestion which results from this diet is a common malady in England" (p. 57).

"It is not surprising if the critical biography or monograph, a literary genre in which we excel, and in which the delineation of an author's worldly figure, gracefully and sympathetically carried out, is agreeably illustrated by allusion to his works, prevails over the really determined focusing of thought upon the work of art alone; nor that in most of our periodicals where books and writers are discussed, entertaining commentary and graceful appreciation should be found in profusion, but that grasp of historical connection, interest in sequence of ideas, and fierce desire to capture artistic truth for its own sake are seldom to be found" (p. 63).

"A truth, however, emerges from this confusion about Aristotle's attitude in literary criticism, which is that literary criticism is not a perfectly appropriate field for the purely scientific activity" (p. 86).

"Nearly all Clutton Brock's critical writing shows that an author's work afforded him primarily an approach to an author's personality" (p. 109).

"To exclude emotion from the criticism of art seems to me no less arbitrary than to exclude logic: and if Mr. Eliot really wishes to do so, may it not be only a temperamental reaction on his part against excessive emotionalism in others?" (p. 151).

" An Englishman finds exceeding difficulty in combating the instinct to judge the literature of his own country by, broadly speaking, parochial standards, on a kind of tacit assumption that the bulk of contemporary Europe writes nothing worth considering at all " (p. 176).

" . . . Even a life-long study of a foreign nation's literature in all its historical, intellectual, and social conditions will rarely place a critic in the position to say one word of real value or originality to the cultivated minds of that particular nation, much less to offer it advice " (p. 182).

" . . . It is foolish and harmful to proclaim that the immediate enjoyment of the greatest numbers is a final test of value, that taste is a worthless idiosyncrasy, and that the higher sensibility which invariably grows from the study and analysis of great works of art is a possession of no account. Since commercial standards rule so much of human action at present, it is not surprising to find this view frequently asserted or tacitly assumed ; but its absolute acceptance would mean the death of art more certainly than the dictation of the most decadent electicism " (p. 212).

These extensive quotations (which I trust will not be thought excessive) will show how intelligently Mr. Williams has dealt with the problems of contemporary criticism, and what sound advice he has to offer, even though his manner is at times a little patronising. Everyone who has ever written a review or thinks of writing a review should possess and study Mr. Williams's book. The effort to maintain in reviewers a standard of knowledge, probity, intelligence, and impartiality is of great importance for the future of English literature and English culture. There is still far too much slack, ignorant, and even dishonest reviewing, and it cannot be too much condemned. The minor literary periodicals are filled with reviews that are slovenly, illiterate, and betray gross ignorance in every paragraph. If Mr. Williams's book only succeeds in making these writers ashamed it will have performed a valuable service.

Mr. Cyril Falls is what Mr. Williams calls " a practical critic," and his practice illustrates both the virtues and the vices which Mr. Williams attributes to this sort of critic. Mr. Falls writes genially and attractively ; he admires and sometimes over-admires his authors ; he is remarkably English in taste and views for a man who has obviously read a good deal of French ; he has nothing particular to say except that so-and-so is very jolly, and you ought to read him. He gives an impression of being pleasantly and ever so slightly behind the times. Here again we may allow the author to appear in his own words :

" Marvell cannot sing a song such as Lovelace and Davenant achieve in their happiest moments, still less such as Herrick and Carew trill out joyously time and time again. With the poets in question the

art of pure singing dies, not to be reborn—and then as a more complicated, less inevitable art—till the days of Shelley and Byron. But, placid as it is, it is also limpid and extremely delicate. The poet conjures up every now and then visions of pure beauty that match those of Spenser. Some of these jewels are known to all. . . ."

It is not true that the art of song-writing disappeared with the Carolines. And if Mr. Falls has now read the delightful anthology called *Rogues in Porcelain* compiled by Mr. John Austen, he will doubtless recognise his error. But what does comment of this sort reveal to us, that we did not know before ? The following paragraph is perhaps even more typical :

" In a country *château* also, the same tradition is to be rewon. The king-wood and gilt and inlay, the curves of *Louis Quinze*, the austere fragility of *Louis Seize*, the Beauvais tapestry on the wall, even the slightly less congruous portrait of ' mon arrière grand'mère de ——,' by Winterhalter, which hangs beside it, form a world of their own, into which the visitor is projected till he feels that he is living history over again. Perhaps, let it be added as a caution, the effect is unlikely to be permanent to an Englishman, if he ever becomes more than a visitor. Presently his philistine soul will yearn for an English smoking-room, a huge leathern ' club ' chair—the French cannot make an arm-chair any more than the English a woman's hat—*The Field* on the table at his elbow as companion to a cut-glass whisky-decanter and a pound canister of tobacco, and sporting prints after Alken on the walls."

RICHARD ALDINGTON.

Sidelights on Elizabethan Drama. A Series of Studies dealing with the Authorship of Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Plays. By H. Dugdale Sykes. (Oxford University Press.)

All readers of Mr. Dugdale Sykes's *Sidelights on Shakespeare* will welcome his new volume. They are perhaps not numerous, but they are pretty sure to be students ; and they will value Mr. Sykes accordingly. To the difficult problems of right assignment of authorship in the confusing field of Elizabethan and post-Elizabethan drama he brings an important qualification—the eye and memory for turns of phrase and tricks of manner, clues which may and do lead to real detections. And in both of his books he achieves results of real value. In the present volume he reprints his Shakespeare Association paper on *The Taming of a Shrew* and *The Famous Victories of Henry V*, also his papers in *Notes and Queries* on *Timon of Athens, Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany, Lust's Dominion*, and other problem plays, together with his article " John Ford the Author of *The Spanish Gipsy*,"

and an interesting new essay, "Webster's *Appius and Virginia*: A Vindication": clearly a solid and yet a stimulating budget.

The new essay is particularly noteworthy, as illustrating alike the value and the defects of Mr. Sykes's method. The important challenge to tradition given by Rupert Brooke's assignment of *Appius and Virginia* to Heywood moves Mr. Sykes to sheer resistance. On the face of the case, it is not clear why. Every student has recognised the broad unlikeness of *Appius* to the rest of the work assigned to Webster, its relative fluency of versification and its lack of his peculiar force. Mr. Sykes himself admits this, and offers no solution save that "Webster is here attempting an entirely fresh *genre*," which formula he evidently takes to be conclusive. Here we have a crucial issue. *Appius*, admittedly, contains a number of peculiar words, special to Heywood. It also contains a number of phrases and ideas which are found in Webster's accepted plays. On Brooke's theory, these are either copyings by Heywood or insertions by Webster—or, it might be added, results of Heywood's versification of primary matter by Webster. Mr. Sykes simply takes for granted that the Webster phrases and ideas prove Webster's authorship, accounting for the Heywood words as adopted by Webster from his friend's vocabulary; and, as aforesaid, assuming without a word of argument that Webster could and did absolutely transform his versification through a whole play.

Such a proposition cannot possibly pass. Words and phrases may be copied; but that a writer who through all his unquestionable plays is markedly irregular, harsh, and rhythmless in his verse should suddenly become fluent and easily regular through the bulk of five Acts, is a thing critically inconceivable. To argue that there is some fluent and regular verse in the *Cure for a Cuckold* is merely to force the question whether there are not more than two hands in that play—a question which Brooke ought to have raised, but did not.

This dismissal of the vital style tests in reliance on verbal and phrasal clues is the standing trouble in Mr. Sykes's otherwise valuable investigations. Following this method, he has assigned to Massinger the Shakespearean speeches in the *Two Noble Kinsmen*—things that the student of verse knows Massinger *could not* have done. In the same fashion he insists on giving to Peele the first scene of *Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany*, simply because a passage in it is echoed in Peele's *David and Bethsabe*. Recently Mr. Sykes has made the interesting discovery that both passages point to Du Bartas; and he has elsewhere argued that this excludes the view that the scene in *Alphonsus* is Marlowe's. The argument is obviously null. Whether or not Du Bartas be the source, Peele *could not* have written the *Alphonsus*

scene, of which the versification, the diction, the sentiment and the conception are all alike Marlowe's. Again and again Mr. Sykes collates Marlowe lines with lines of Peele which closely copy their structure and assigns both to Peele, never noting that the diction in one case is vigorous and pregnant, in the other feeble and tautological. Peele, he admits, was an imitative writer; but he cannot realise that power is not imitable by the powerless; and a mere verbal or structural imitation is for him a proof of identity. Were this principle of assignment systematically applied by Mr. Sykes, it would commit him to endless enormities.

In practice, he applies it, generally speaking, merely to support foregone conclusions. In his meritorious and instructive paper on *Timon of Athens* he avows that, after having found Day's hand in the prose matter, he was at first "disposed to ignore" the convincing thesis of Mr. William Wells, that the hand of Middleton is largely present in the play. In this case he happily consented to face the evidence, with the result that he accepted the well-supported Middleton theory. Still, however, he is merely "disposed to ignore" the evidence from vocabulary and diction that Chapman had some share in the play; and the critical verdict must be that until the critic approves himself ready to face all evidence, ignoring nothing, he cannot claim to have given us a truly scientific result. The loyal inference from the data as to *Appius* would be that Webster had some share in the play, whether as drafting parts or interpolating, but that the bulk of it cannot be his in respect of the versification, of the fluent regularity of which he has shown himself congenitally incapable.

When, after these experiences, we find Mr. Sykes claiming to prove Ford the author of *The Spanish Gipsy*, published as Middleton's, we are greatly interested, half-persuaded, but left doubtful. He starts from, and practically proceeds upon, a close parallel of rhymed couplets between the *Gipsy* and two of Ford's plays. There are other parallels, all striking and suggestive; but Mr. Sykes chooses to bar queries by telling us that the "particular kind of double rime" first in question is specially characteristic of Ford, and absent from Middleton's plays. And this is sheer oversight. Double rimes are common in Middleton, and there are two of this "particular kind" in the first scene of *The Roaring Girl*. In the same fashion, by the way, Mr. Sykes claims that in *Appius* there are a number of the apophthegmatic couplets affected by Webster, and that such couplets do not occur in Heywood. He is quite wrong. He may find at least half a dozen such couplets in the single Mermaid volume of Heywood (pp. 23, 99, 106, 173, 343, 382), and, further, a batch of sententious couplets in *Lucrece* (III, iii, p. 375) which closely resembles in manner

the batch in *Appius*, III, ii, near end. And equally wrong, one must add, is Mr. Sykes's confident assertion that a passage of rant which he cites from *Appius* cannot be matched in Heywood. It can there be matched, for manner and for force of rhetoric, twenty times over.

If these difficult problems of assignment of authorship in the Elizabethan drama are ever to be convincingly solved, it can only be by the faithful application of *all* relevant tests, and in particular of the vital style tests. Mr. Sykes may be right about the *Gipsy*, but we cannot be sure of it until he faces the problem of distinguishing between the blank verse of Ford and that of Middleton—both pretty bad, but necessarily bad with a difference. In the meantime, we owe him honest thanks for an abundance of diligent work and striking suggestion.

J. M. ROBERTSON.

A Fool i' the Forest. Richard Aldington. (George Allen & Unwin.) 5*s.* net.

A man is playing on a sort of saxophone fiddle outside my window. Sometimes I hear the tune, sometimes the roar of the buses, sometimes voices suddenly raised, and as suddenly quiet; sometimes I catch a glimpse of his odd ruined face, sometimes of a group of guardsmen in bright uniforms lounging against a coffee-stall, and now people, in sombre clothes, are flocking out of the dull great church, that looks like the remains of a railway accident. And that, after all, is life as it happens. Why shouldn't poetry happen in the same way, with a snatch of tune running through, and binding together buses, voices, fiddling beggars, guardsmen, churchgoers and their church? Why not, indeed, asks Mr. Aldington, and proceeds to prove in *A Fool i' the Forest* that it can be done. More than that, he reminds us that it is the only way in which it has ever been done. For there are worse (and better) definitions of poetry than life with a tune in it.

And there is a great deal of life in *A Fool i' the Forest.* Here "I," "Mezzetin," and "The Conjurer"—three persons and yet one—set out to discover what this thing may be.

"I" "is intended to be typical of a man of our own time," "Mezzetin" "symbolises the imaginative faculties," and "The Conjurer" "the intellectual faculties." They have heard of life, these three, and now they think that they may as well see about it, not in bits, but all, wishing, you guess, that life had only one neck that they might fall upon it—or wring it! The quest starts, as it should, with the search for a fool, "a true, a bitter fool, who's looked at life." It

seems that none of Shakespeare's fools are available, and all the Harlequinade is broken up. Remains only Scaramouch, but he won't do. He's too " fat and clean to be a fool." Scaramouch is the one for soft, darling Venice.

> " Nights of Venice ! Nights of Venice !
> Drifting along the still canals of Venice
> Hand in hand with Death—
> She had red cherries on her hat.
> Tintoretto strode along the walls
> And Verdi swam with Chinese lanterns
> Far out in the lagoon. . . ."

(Do you observe the tune ? Very well, then !)

So then we may as well find Mezzetin, and set out for Athens, and the beginning of all beauty. And while we are at sea, what's the matter with a gramophone, as for example :

> " How lovely are the Bournemouth bands,
> that warble on the pier,
> With here and there a Communist,
> and here and there a peer."

Re-enters the tune, even though this time the infatuated Conjurer intones it :

> " O break the silver trumpet and the lyre,
> sully the marble, cut the crispèd bronze ;
> Byron is dead."

(Crispèd bronze, like mobled Queen, is good, Mr. Polonius-conjurer !) All this time, however, Mezzetin has been busy otherwise, having bought :

> " A pair of horned-rimmed spectacles,
> Six litres of white wine, and two of red,
> And pounds of olive, bread and sausages,
> And several heads of garlic."

(There, you see, is my coffee-stall. An' why not ?) But there is a danger of sentimentality after wine and when—

> " The pure Athenian air grew dark
> Like violet wine that drop by drop
> Tints a clear pool.
> . . . . .
> A rigid dragon-fly sank moaning in the sea."

(Damn the tune !) Yes, damn the tune, cries Mezzetin, and so sings to the—

> "Nine million hearts (that) beat on to Bethnal Green
> O Evening Star,
> You bring *The Evening News*,
> You bring the tired business man
> Back to his tired spouse :
> Sappho and Shelley you no longer bring."

But it's no good, Mezzetin. The moon over Athens is too much for you.

> "Mezzetin shakes the moonlight from his strings. . . .
> Here and there a crimson butterfly
> Rose and floated through the heavy air,
> Then swooped down and settled on my heart."

Fortunately this time the Conjurer intervened with—

> "You're drunk, you bloody fool,
> Your nonsense makes me ill."

Stop singing then, Mezzetin, and let's get on with the buses. What has happened to Athens " that rose like sunlight from the sea " and to the sunlight she rose with ? Mechanics—yes, that's it. We have substituted the god for his car. The god isn't in the car, the car is in the god. So then we tumble sheer into Hell; and what happened there ?

> "Miss and Mrs. God were calling
> In the new Rolls-Royce war-chariot
> (Ninety cherubim power, self-starting)
> On the Abrahams and Isaacs. . . .
> All the angels drove to work in tanks.
> . . . . .
> Showers of wounded grouse fell at my feet."

Better leave the grouse, though, for fear we lose our tempers, and consider instead the Sixth Eclogue. But that won't wash the bitter taste out of the mouth.

> "Not all the waters in the rough rude sea "

can wash that balm off. Let's try ragging instead, and jazz to :

> "And down in Boston, where they bake the beans,
> They know what Happappazouglos means,"

and then, since the English (and the American) languages are, not unnaturally, giving way under the strain, let us try French, shouting :

" Chiens savants de l'Éternel
Voulez-vous bien me foutre la paix,"

leaving " I " in a position to observe :

" Ainsi je compte achever mes vacances d'infini."

But in spite of all, the Tune returns with the dark :

" Nothing,
Nothing in the darkness but our breathing,
And the heavy silhouette of pillars
And the dusty faint smell of violets."

(Dusty ? Do you hear the saxophone fiddle ?) And with the dust we go back to the source of it—a new Hell with a new Mammon—

" A cold and mitred god of porphyry,
Grasping in one hand a curious rod."

We make a bolt from this back to youth and the Gulf of Naples, when—

" All my being towered into a splendid flame."

But youth goes, and the Conjurer remains. How ? Can't you guess ? As the Sergeant-Major—

" Get your rifles, men, and come along."
(" It appeared that Mezzetin and I were privates,
But the Conjurer (of course) was Sergeant-Major.")

And so, with its curious excellence of aim, war kills Mezzetin, and in the " List of Recent Wills "—

" Sir Hanley Podge, broker, wholesale provision dealer,
Receiver of stolen goods, £1,325,498.
Mezzetin (the famous clown) £1 10 in silver."

And then back to post-war London, with the poet dead. And, alas ! Mr. Aldington died a little with his poet. For here is undiluted, unbroken bitterness that Mezzetin would have sent whistling into shards with rag-time. No need to follow into tea-parties, into the British Museum, along the midnight streets, except once when the ghost of Mezzetin promises an end of the pavements, whispering—

" Time is patient."

Finally, having killed the poet, we drown the thinker, and " I " remains alone.

But then suddenly the grave opens, and clear from the dead comes the tune, Mezzetin singing:

> " To the palace of the Ancient King I come,
> Leaning heavily upon my staff
> Singing one last song."

The saxophone-fiddler has stopped too.

HUMBERT WOLFE.

Intelligence in Expression. By Leone Vivante. Translated by Prof. Brodrick Bullock. With Foreword by H. Wildon Carr, D.Litt. (C. W. Daniel Company.) 10*s.* 6*d.* net.

Leone Vivante. Note sopra la originalità del pensiero (Estratto della Revista di Cultura, fasc. 11 e 12—Anno IV.) (Maglione and Strini.)

Recent developments in psychological science are no doubt largely responsible for the tendency of modern metaphysics to concentrate upon the problem of the self, and its relation to the human organism. Whereas physics inclines to explain matter in terms of something non-material, psychology, by a reverse process, is apt to reduce mental phenomena to a series of cerebral modifications, and so offers a direct challenge to idealism. Of the three great modern systems, each approaches the problem from its own peculiar standpoint, Bradley and Bosanquet from the logic of rationalistic idealism, Bergson from biology, and Croce from æsthetics and the theory of art; and it is unfortunate that their differences in method should rather have obscured the ultimate compatibility of the three systems.

The present book is, therefore, very welcome because it has to a great extent avoided the dangers of a facile eclecticism and succeeded in presenting a constructive compromise. The author, a critical Crocean, develops an application of Croce's theory of art to the wider problem of organic life in its full biological meaning, and more especially to questions connected with the mind-body complex, his thesis being that the neuro-cerebral organisation is related to the original expressive activity of the mind in the same way that the plastic material of art stands to the intuition of the artist. This theory, which does not attain its most explicit statement until the concluding essay of the book, grows gradually out of a fusion of Crocean æsthetics with the essentials of Bergsonian evolution, and the distinction between intuition, or knowledge from within, and the external analytical concepts of science—that is to say, between creation and construction.

The latter theory has frequently been misinterpreted as an attempt to invalidate the claims of logic and to substitute loose emotionalism and empirical illustration for the more rigid paths of discursive thought. A good deal of Signor Vivante's argument is therefore devoted to formulating a logic of the spirit destined to forestall criticism of this kind. There is a formal logic which deals with fixed entities and causal relations in a spatial scheme, but there is also a logic of quality where quality is itself active, and is not made a mere existent of pseudo-scientific thought; and it is in this logic that we can find the only access to an intrinsic knowledge of psychical activity and of life. The point is further explained by a distinction between the abstract concept which is generic—an average or working compromise for the practical reason, and the concrete concept which is the " possible," or universal of a given moment of expression. It is only in the latter that the unity of form and content can become intelligible, just as in art the sensible material does not appear as anything distinct from the concept expressed in it.

The greatest handicap of the book as a whole is the Crocean dialectic which the author has scarcely had the courage to abandon. It is frequently cumbersome, and not infrequently obscure, and the niceties of distinguished synonyms too often lose in clarity what they gain in precision. The theory itself, however, is at its worst a stimulating analogy, at its best a contribution of real philosophic value, and it has the great merit, in an intuitive theory, of avoiding the desperate doctrine that " mind " and " matter " are mere abstractions for the convenience, and ultimately for the confusion, of human reason.

Signor Vivante has lately published a short essay applying his theory to the criticism of modern psychological and psycho-analytical writings. Freud is uncompromisingly condemned as the apostle of mechanism. More interesting and more sympathetic is his criticism of McDougal, e.g. in his theory of Laughter, where Vivante argues that laughter is a spontaneous reaction of the spirit from a strong logical necessity, and cannot therefore be explained by " relief " theories which postulate an external end which is subconsciously present to the subject. We laugh because we must, not because we think we shall feel the better for it. But the necessity is spiritual not physiological or mechanical. Even in the hysterical laughter of the tragic spectator the horror is only the *condition*, and the break in continuity the *occasion*, of a phenomenon to which no *cause* can be assigned but the intrinsic necessity of the active spirit.

Most of which was said by Hobbes in two words, " Sudden Glory."

W. A. THORPE.

Henry James at Work. By Theodora Bosanquet. (Hogarth Press.)
Criticism. An Unpublished Essay by Walt Whitman. (Troutbeck Press, Amenia, N.Y.)

The very brief and very characteristic note on criticism, written by Whitman in the sixties or seventies, and now unearthed and published by Mr. Spingarn, is, if not exciting, sufficiently interesting to send one back to Whitman's prose again; and its appearance simultaneously with Miss Bosanquet's admirable and charming note on the later method of Henry James provokes one to renewed wonder at the scene and era which could produce two men so remarkably unlike. Whitman, Poe, Hawthorne, James, Melville, Emily Dickinson—it is an extraordinary troupe; and its heterogeneity bears witness, if witness were needed, to the fact that when we speak of American literary origins we have, even yet, scant right to generalise regarding scenes and eras. There is no such thing as the American scene—more precisely, there are as many as we have the patience to find. And every era, in America, is not one but a dozen.

Whitman and James can conveniently be placed at opposite ends of a given spectrum. One is tempted to suggest that the only thing they had in common was their perception of an American scene which was, morally, socially, and æsthetically, the same; they saw substantially the same thing; but their responses to it were another matter. Whitman, as we know, "embraced" the United States, collectively and severally; and James, after a long and earnest look, departed. What they thus perceived, and thus differently responded to, was the vulgarisation (to give the word its full Latin sense) which, in its first stages, democracy was achieving for the Anglo-Saxon in America, and which the War of Secession, by thinning out the good stock, greatly accelerated. James's disillusionment with this new America was, if early, not so early as has been supposed. At the age of twenty-three we find him writing: "This democratic, liberty-loving, American populace, this stern and war-tried people, is a great civiliser. It is devoted to refinement. If it has sustained a monstrous war, and practised human nature's best in so many ways for the last five years, it is not to put up with spurious poetry afterwards." Perhaps, in this judgment of his country's devotion to refinement, the wish was father to the thought. Within five years his own devotion to refinement had transported him to Europe; and within another decade, in his study of Hawthorne, he had gone almost to the opposite extreme, and had concluded that America was both vulgar and provincial.

In this devotion to refinement, on many planes, one may excusably

see a major principle of James's life and work. Miss Bosanquet throws a good deal of light on this—her account of James's anxious maternal revision of his earlier novels is delightful, and contains some excellent criticism. But it must be noted that James had not at all, in this anxiety, changed. From beginning to end his view of art was exclusively æsthetic ; and his growth as an artist was not an alteration, but a heightening of consciousness, the principle which his consciousness most cherished being that a work of art must primarily deal with the supremely " workable," and must, above all, be superlatively *worked.* It is no wonder, therefore, that Whitman disgusted him. What Whitman saw and loved, in America, was exactly what he himself saw and fled from ; and what Whitman " did " with this scene was the one thing which to James was wholly inexcusable—it was, in his view, a mere unselected and unarranged outpouring, made worse by the fact that it was " insincere." The remark of James which I have quoted above is from his review of *Drum Taps*—invidiously entitled, *Mr. Walt Whitman*—published in 1865. The review left, of poor Whitman, almost nothing. " It has been a melancholy task," wrote James, " to read this book ; and it is a still more melancholy one to write about it. Perhaps since the days of Mr. Tupper's *Philosophy* there has been no more difficult reading of the poetic sort. It exhibits the effort of an essentially prosaic mind to lift itself, by a prolonged muscular strain, into poetry." Again : " Every tragic event collects about it a number of persons who delight to dwell upon its superficial points—of minds which are bullied by the *accidents* of the affair. The temper of such minds seems to us to be the reverse of the poetic temper ; for the poet, although he incidentally masters, grasps, and uses the superficial traits of his theme, is really only a poet in so far as he extracts its latent meaning and holds it up to the common eyes." In regard to Whitman's " prosaic " form : " There is, fortunately, but one attempt at rhyme. . . . But what if, in form, it *is* prose ? Very good poetry has come out of prose before this. To this we would reply that it must first have gone into it. Prose, in order to be good poetry, must first be good prose. As a general principle, we know of no circumstance more likely to impugn a writer's earnestness than the adoption of an anomalous style. He must have something very original to say if none of the old vehicles will carry his thoughts." He decides, of course, that what Whitman has to say is neither original nor edifying. It is " monstrous," because it " pretends to persuade the soul while it slights the intellect ; because it pretends to gratify the feelings while it outrages the taste." " We find art, measure, grace, sense, sneered at on every page." At the end, he advises Whitman : " You must be *possessed,* and you must strive to possess your possession. If, in

your striving, you break into divine eloquence, then you are a poet."

It is interesting to find that James so completely missed the flavour of Whitman; not surprising, however, if we reflect on the extent to which flavour, in Whitman's poetry, is identifiable with what James would have termed vulgarity—immersion in the quotidian mob-soul, the here-and-now, combined with a conscious disregard of traditions. Presumably, as time went on, James somewhat modified his original view. It is doubtful, however, if he could ever have gone as magnanimously far toward meeting the tenets of the "opposition" as Whitman, on *his* side, succeeded in doing. From 1860 to the end of his life Whitman steadily grew in tolerance, steadily widened and deepened his view of the aims and uses of art. It is true that he never did, and never could, abandon his belief that art has a religious or social function, and that any merely æsthetic measure of it must be fatally inadequate. "Has it never occurred to any one," he asks, "that the real test applicable to a book is entirely outside of literary tests; and that any truly original and grand production has little or nothing to do with the rules and calibres now in mode? . . . I have fancied the ocean and the daylight, the mountain and the forest, putting their spirit in an utterance—and that utterance a judgment on our books, and especially on the current poetry production of this country and Europe. I have fancied some lofty and disembodied human soul giving its judgment; and fancied emotional Humanity, in some single representative, giving its . . ." That view, allowing for the characteristic mythopœia, is a functional one, and underlies all of Whitman's work, as the æsthetic view underlies all of James's. But Whitman could and did find a place, in his scheme, for the "æsthetic." While he regarded it as a product of feudalism, and could assert that "the spirit of English literature is not great . . . is almost always material, sensual, not spiritual—almost always congests, makes plethoric, not frees, expands, dilates—is cold, anti-democratic, loves to be sluggish and stately . . . ," nevertheless, he increasingly emphasised the importance (for American letters) of a close study of the literature of Europe. If he could complain that Poe's verses "without the first sign of a moral principle . . . or the simpler affections of the heart . . illustrate an intense faculty for technical and abstract beauty . . ." and "probably belong among the electric lights of literature, brilliant and dazzling, but with no heat," he could add that "Poe's genius has yet conquered a special recognition for itself, and I too have come to fully admit it, and appreciate it." And if he ridiculed the *beauty disease*, from which American poetry then suffered (quoting aptly from Baudelaire), he could none the less praise Tennyson highly.

" Poetry here of a high (perhaps the highest) order of verbal melody, exquisitely clean and pure, and almost always perfumed, like the tuberose, to an extreme of sweetness."

This, certainly, is a more complex and conscious Whitman than the Whitman whom James saw. It makes one wonder, amusedly, how far, had he lived, Whitman could have got with " The Golden Bowl." If one suspects that he would have done better by James than James did by him, perhaps in that we measure justly a deficiency in James. James was the *subtler* critic, in the sense that he was immensely more perceptive and finely analytic of the communicative aspects of art; but Whitman was the wiser. He was a shrewd, though slipshod judge of literature's psychological values, seeing more clearly the functional position of art in the human scheme. There was room, thus, for James in Whitman's republic; but no room for Whitman in James's ivory tower.

CONRAD AIKEN.

The London Spy Compleat. In eighteen parts. By Ned Ward. With an introduction by Ralph Straus. (Casanova Society.) Edition limited to 1,000 copies. 25*s*.

This, we are informed, is the first reprint of *The London Spy* since the eighteenth century. It is certainly worth reading for several reasons, and Mr. Straus deserves our thanks for taking the trouble and sparing the time to edit the reprint—always a tedious job, even to the enthusiast.

The genteel contemporary portrait of Ward prefixed to this edition is genteelly labelled " Edwardus Ward "; but he was Ned to his customers, both in the pamphlet and publican trades, and Ned he remains to us. He was no Person of Quality, not even one of those " Oxford men extremely read in Greek," who glutted the book-stalls with pedantry, but a Grub Street scribbler of " low extraction " and " small education " who had sense enough to keep a tavern instead of starving in a garret or lackeying the great. There was no pretence at finery in Ned Ward's life; and there is an expression of coarse honesty and good-humour in his face, which is not displeasing. He was a strong Tory and Church of England man, and relates with gusto how he was cup-shotten with a couple of parsons and a Quaker, and how one of the parsons put the Quaker down in an argument. Ned was a fertile rhymester, and sharp enough at extempore verse (if we may take literally his account of the christening); but there is nothing very memorable in his songs and verse characters and Hudibrasticks. And no sane person would offer his prose as a model. But in *The London Spy* he

discovers qualities which are not to be despised ; he knew the underworld of London, with an extensive and peculiar knowledge that beats Sam Weller's, he knew London slang in all its varieties from St. James's to Billingsgate, and he could set down his knowledge with the unlimited and picturesque *verve* of what is known as the Burlesque School. He was no match for the gentlemen of *The Spectator* on their own ground, but he tells us things about old London which Mr. Addison scorned as low, or perhaps never knew. Dr. Whibley says that Ned Ward in our days would have been an ornament to the sporting press. So he would, but he was a notch above that ; the sporting gent is rarely conscious of the peculiarities of his environment, and still more rarely able to describe them. Ned had the seeing eye, and he could put down what he saw in racy fantastical prose, whose flow of Cockney wit and ingenious metaphor never flags.

The burlesque style of writing was derived from France, but Ned's prose is obviously founded on English models—and his own whimsies. He derives, as Dr. Whibley remarks, from the pamphleteers of an earlier age, like Dekker and Nashe. The style of that extraordinary pamphlet, *The Black Book*, attributed to Middleton (1604), is very like Ward's, and shows how early this genre was cultivated in London. Says Middleton in *The Black Book :*

" The bare privities of the stone walls were hid with two pieces of painted cloth, but so ragged and tottering that one might have seen all nevertheless, hanging for all the world like the two men in chains between Mile-End and Hackney. The testern, or the shadow over the bed, was made of four ells of cobwebs, and a number of small spinner's-ropes, hung down for curtains : the spindle-shank spiders, which show like great lechers with little legs, went stalking over his head, as if they had been conning of *Tamburlaine.*"

One can match that style from almost every page of *The London Spy*. Compare, for instance, this description of the " boozing-ken" in the Counter :

" I rose up and peep'd a little, to survey this subterranean boozing-ken ; and found it divided by as many partitions as the Temple House of Office, tho' I confess it smelt not quite so sweet. The walls were varnish'd with the slime of snails ; and had nothing to cover their nakedness, in the coldest of weather, but a tiffany cobweb, wherein hung spiders as big as humble-bees, that had not been molested with a broom since they were first enliven'd."

Ward had obviously read the Character writers closely, especially the later and more burlesque sort, like Cleveland, where the Character has far departed from Theophrastus, and has become almost a pamphlet in itself. There are numbers of Characters in *The London Spy* which

show the influence of Overbury and Earle. Ward is significantly fond of the word " microcosm." His Characters are among the last of those written in the seventeenth-century flamboyant manner ; a few years after their publication Addison, Steele, and Budgell gave a new turn to the Character by the imitation of La Bruyère.

The London Spy was first published in eighteen monthly parts, beginning on November 1698. It was reprinted several times in the early part of the eighteenth century, and appears to have been much liked by country people, and even by colonials. The plan is extremely simple. A student comes up to London from his country " hut," meets a friend who is a doctor, and is conducted about London to see the various sights. The friends go to taverns (including Ned's own, which he praises boldly and as an honest tradesman should), bawdy-houses, and liquor-dens in Wapping. They are arrested by the watch and spend a night in the Counter, which gives honest Ned an opportunity to inveigh against the unconscionable usurers or tally-men, who lent money at 100 per cent. interest and imprisoned wretched girls for a few pounds. They go to the Royal Exchange ; to Bedlam to laugh at the madmen ; to the Tower to see the lions, the armoury, and Henry VIII's codpiece ; to coffee-houses ; to Bridewell ; to the May-Fair ; to Bartholomew Fair ; to Whitehall and the Abbey. They salute the statue of the Royal Martyr at Charing Cross and lament the decay of noblemen's hospitality in the Strand. They notice the book-stalls in Farringdon Street and the ladies round Covent Garden. We are introduced to one or two roaring evenings at taverns, to a Christmas and a baptism ; we observe the nasty conduct of the rabble during a Lord Mayor's Show, and we conclude with the funeral of that incomparable poet, Mr. John Dryden.

The survey is neither complete nor antiquarian, like old Stow's, but it is amusing and a vivid picture of low life in London half a century after the Fire. Ward's eye was a sharp one, and he had a tenacious memory. Not all of those who affected to patronise him could observe character so shrewdly and describe it so amusingly. There are passages in *The London Spy* which the picaresque novelists would not have disdained to sign. The scenes in Wapping and the interchange of abuse between the Thames watermen are really well done ; a man who can write with that amount of verve and humour is not to be despised. The one objectionable habit of Ned's muse is a delight in stercorous jests ; the combat in the Counter is a cloacal nightmare. He may well have been censured for this at the time, for a welcome decline in this form of entertainment occurs before the middle of the book. There is nothing so nasty as these abominations in any of the writers before the Rebellion, and they may be taken as

evidence of a distinct coarsening of manners, owing to the miseries of the Civil War, the Plague, and the Fire.

Part XI of *The London Spy* and the end of Part X contain one of the liveliest descriptions of old Bartholomew Fair ever written. Ward's description was fairly extensively quoted by Henry Morley in his book on the Fair, but anyone interested in the subject should read it in full. If we may believe Ward, it was as noisy as a *beffana* night in modern Rome, as dirty and muddy and unsavoury as the Fleet ditch:

"At the entrance . . . our ears were saluted with Belfegor's concert, the rumbling of drums, mix'd with the intolerable squealings of cat-calls, and penny-trumpets, made still more terrible with the shrill belches of lottery-pick-pockets, thro' instruments of the same metal with their faces, that had I not been foretold by my friend of the astonishing confusions I must expect to meet with, I should have been as much frightened at this unusual piece of disorder, as Don Quevedo in his vision, when he saw Hell in an uproar. We order'd the coachman to set us down at the hospital Gate, near which we went into a convenient house to smoke a pipe, and overlook the follies of the innumerable throng, whose impatient desires of seeing Merry Andrews' grimaces, had led them ankle-deep into filth and nastiness, crowded as close as a barrel of figs, or candles in a tallow-chandler's basket, sweating, and melting with the heat of their own bodies; the unwholesome fumes of whose uncleanly hides, mix'd with the odoriferous effluvias that arose from the singeing of pigs, and burnt crackling of over-roasted pork, came so warm to our nostrils, that had it not been for the use of the fragrant weed, tobacco, we had been in danger of being suffocated."

In 1700 the Fair had not changed much from that of Ben Jonson's days. It is interesting to note that the friends saw, among other sideshows, Doggett perform in a play about Friar Bacon which, from Ward's description, might have been a re-hash of Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*.

RICHARD ALDINGTON.

The Artist and Psycho-Analysis. By Roger Fry. (Hogarth Press.) 2*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Roger Fry has a theory of art which we believe to be wrong, but like many wrong theories it is held with great sincerity and is therefore expressed with great clarity. He believes in the existence of a specific æsthetic emotion; he believes that this emotion is an emotion about form; and that it is this formal element which alone gives vitality to art. He goes so far as to say that "to one who feels the language of pictorial form all depends on *how* it is presented, *nothing* on what." And finally he betrays himself by saying that a picture by Chardin, representing a number of glass retorts, a still, and various

glass bottles, gave him " the feeling of something immensely grand and impressive " ; and the phrase that came into his mind was : " This is just how I felt when I first saw Michelangelo's frescoes in the Sistine Chapel." This is not the occasion to examine Mr. Fry's theory of art extensively ; we will merely suggest that it is the obverse of sentimentality ; that it reduces the criteria of art to merely instinctive physical reactions ; that, in fact, it only accounts for one element of art, whereas art is dual, consisting not solely of systems of formal relations (which are, however, essential), but also of mental attitudes. Mr. Fry's theory lacks a scale of values. For that reason he cannot distinguish between Chardin's bottles and the Sistine frescoes. But there is a wide and incalculable difference, and it is the difference between a mind and a mere sensibility.

But Mr. Fry is right to purge art of its " associated ideas of images." To anyone who sees the immense importance and utility of Freud's general theory, nothing is so dismaying as the utter futility of *all* the psycho-analysts in the presence of art. They cannot understand that art is a triumph over neurosis, and that the symbolistic and mystical imaginings which they ask us to consider as art are the very denial of art, lacking order, form, and discipline. Mr. Fry has made this distinction very clear, insisting " that nothing is more contrary to the essential æsthetic faculty than the dream. . . . In a world of symbolists only two kinds of people are opposed to symbolism, and they are the man of science and the artist, since they alone are seeking to make constructions which are completely self-consistent, self-supporting, and self-contained—constructions which do not stand for something else, but appear to have ultimate value and in that sense to be real."

Mr. Fry concludes with a speculation which he puts forward very diffidently, but which is deserving of serious consideration. He wonders if the response (he calls it " the emotional tone ") which we derive from formal beauty may not get its force " from arousing some very deep, very vague, and immensely generalised reminiscences." Kept to the plane of experience, this is a very plausible theory ; but Mr. Fry will drag in emotion—" emotional colours of life," " emotional significance in time and space," echoes and residual traces of emotions in life. We feel that once more the sentimentalist is betraying himself, but not, however, before making a few distinctions and definitions of very great value.

HERBERT READ.

Social Credit. By Major C. H. Douglas. (Cecil Palmer.) *7s. 6d.* net.

The forthcoming restoration of the gold standard is significant as an example of the part played by a primitive belief which has become

almost instinctive—the belief in gold—in determining the monetary standard in opposition to the dictates of theory and reason, and calls attention to an aspect of economics which offers considerable scope for inquiry. Although economists usually preface their works with some preliminary psychological speculation, few attempts have been made to discover and arrange these doctrines and beliefs from which man's everyday life receives its character and direction. The sifting of ideas and beliefs is not possible until lapse of time permits events to be viewed in true perspective. Thus, T. E. Hulme is able to indicate the doctrines of the Middle Ages and point to the ideology of St. Thomas Aquinas as the centre of civilisation, regulating the character of economic life, but any attempt to select and generalise on dominating ideas and beliefs to-day calls for objective perception and a detachment from the actual ideas and beliefs reviewed—qualities which cannot be attributed to a writer such as Major Douglas.

In *Social Credit* Major Douglas attempts to show the economic system as resting on a single doctrine. In developing his theory Major Douglas is, however, revealed as biased by an unconscious adherence to such fundamental beliefs as, for instance, in evolution and progress, and in the value of human personality. Thus, he takes for granted those humanist principles which characterise modern times as contrasted with the Middle Ages, and in which the roots of the capitalist system are likely to be found. But his argument is not only coloured by his unconscious beliefs and their resulting romantic attitude. Major Douglas is the inventor of a scheme for the granting of credit to *consumers* instead of to producers, and it is apparent that his analysis of the economic system has been inspired by the ardour of propagating this scheme. It is, therefore, not surprising that he arrives at fantastic conclusions: behind the schemes of High Finance in London, Frankfurt, Paris, and New York lies the " Invisible Government "—the hidden hand of some few financiers utilising a money power under which a misguided world approaches its doom. The " invisible Government " derives its power from the exploitation of the doctrine of rewards and punishments, a doctrine which Major Douglas maintains not only supplies a machinery which imposes on the world the policy of limitation and inhibition dictated by the classical attitude toward life—his conception of classicism is commonplace, the classical and moral mind, he asserts, is characterised by a devastating rigidity of thought—but also the doctrine which Labour nurtures through the conviction that work alone gives title to the fruits of production.

Major Douglas accordingly argues that lack of purchasing power is the only obstacle barring the way to a millennium of abundance which science, invention, and large-scale production bring within sight. His

constructive programme provides for an unprecedented creation of purchasing power, and is nothing more nor less than a disguised and insidious form of inflation. He bases his theory of money on an assertion that the money problem is not a problem of value measurement—an assertion on the validity of which, he declares, stands or falls anything he has to say about money.

In denying the existence of a problem of value measurement Major Douglas ignores the keystone of the whole mechanism of the intricate system of credit and international trade. When gold passed from hand to hand at every transaction the measuring function of money was merged in the physical qualities which selected gold to function as the medium of exchange; but with the evolution of the credit instrument the relation of money's two functions has been reversed, and it is by virtue of the capacity to measure value that the credit instrument enables goods to be exchanged for goods. The chaos and dislocation of trade which accompany inflation and deflation have their chief cause in money becoming an unreliable measure of value, and, in assuming that the problem of value measurement is illusory, Major Douglas has based his proposals on a fallacy which renders them wholly inflationist in character. The mathematical equations adduced contribute no evidence to the contrary.

Social Credit is an extravagant and pretentious book. Its style is so peculiar that one is at a loss to understand the arguments, and one's attention is distracted on every page by irrelevant asides and by Major Douglas's attacks on Fascism and Communism, on Fabianism, on Zionism and on Society. But its worst fault lies in a confusion of philosophy and economics—a confusion which, for want of a better term, Hulme has called a bastard phenomenon.

J. MACALPIN.

Orphan Island. By Rose Macaulay. (Collins.) 7*s.* 6*d.* net.

Orphan Island is an ingenious comic story of a satirical nature which should have a wide popularity. It should appeal generally, and I venture to think only, to that mass of people to which reading means novel-reading. Particularly it should appeal to people brought up in the mid-Victorian era who are trying to throw off their Victorianism, to those for whom a delicate facetiousness stands for wit, and to those who admire skill in workmanship in preference to new ideas; there is, I believe, a large class of persons whose only joy in literature is to be able to say, "*How well that is put—that is what I have always thought* (*or observed, or deduced*) *myself.*"

I. P. FASSETT.

Bly Market. By Bernard Gilbert. (Cecil Palmer.) 42*s.* net.
Village. By Robert McAlmon. (Contact Publishing Co.)

Generally these two pieces of work are alike: they are both definitely associated with that order of fiction which has been fulfilled by James Joyce. But specially, they are quite dissimilar.

Mr. Gilbert has taken infinite trouble. He must have studied the present-day novel, particularly *Ulysses*, very carefully in order to acquire for his own purpose its essential machinery; which becomes in ***his*** work "the tricks of the trade." He has collected, sorted, and fitted into place all the heterogeneous detail of a day of life in a small market town, and in externals, in form, his work is almost flawless. The completed book is like a completed jigsaw puzzle. What credit is due to a man who completes successfully a jigsaw puzzle? Only, surely, credit for perseverance; with the amendment that, except for what beneficial discipline he may have received himself, the whole business has been a wicked waste of time. It comes to this—*Bly Market* has no individuality, no *pith*. I regard it as an exploitation of that kind of fiction with which, because of its form, it is associated.

In the case of Mr. McAlmon's *Village* most of the foregoing criticism is exactly reversed. Mr. McAlmon has not, apparently, bothered much about the *machinery* of, for instance, *Ulysses*; he has not collected, sorted, tabulated, and calculated as has Mr. Gilbert. At whatever point in his life a spontaneous recognition of the significance of the modern style occurred, I do not believe he thought "Ah! I see. Here's a chance for me. I can do this too." I suggest that he was overwhelmed by the greatness of, say, *Ulysses*, that he was swept off his feet into the vortex. Not that *Village* is a particularly good book: it is a somewhat tedious history of American village life, faithfully but crudely presented. But it gives the impression of having been written in a good spirit—a spirit of understanding, of championship, of admiration of the modern movement.

Mr. McAlmon may one day write a really first class-novel; but I am sceptical about Mr. Gilbert.

I. P. FASSETT.

Myrtle. By Stephen Hudson. (Constable.) 7*s.* 6*d.*

In this collection of studies the author's form is as exceptionally firm and close as it is in any book of his which I have read, such as, for instance, *Elinor Colhouse*. His work is a model of concentration, and perhaps no novelist to-day has the gift, to the extent to which Mr. Hudson has it, of saturating one in an atmosphere with so few words and such simple phraseology. This looks to me like the dra-

matic gift. It seems to me that Mr. Hudson might write very good plays.

The trouble with Mr. Hudson's latest book, *Myrtle*, is that one cannot find Myrtle, and one is worried by looking for her all the time. The form of the book is a series of studies of characters supposed to be seen entirely in their relations to Myrtle. Nearly all of these studies are excellent, and " come off " ; perhaps only the one entitled " Marcel " fails to strike a perfectly true note, and is a little out of tune. The result is a collection of character studies of somewhat uninteresting and unsavoury persons. But, as one peers between these figures, hoping to catch sight of the supremely interesting figure of Myrtle, around which this odd assemblage is hung, one is perpetually baffled. Where is Myrtle ?

F. M.

Hero and Leander. Marlowe and Chapman. 1598. Small Quarto. (The Haslewood Books.) Price 15*s.* net.

We mention this book only to call attention again to the excellent work of the press, which has taken its place with the Nonesuch Press and the Casanova Society in the publication of beautiful reprints. This book is a very worthy successor to Sir Thomas Browne's *Letter to a Friend*, which has already been noticed in THE CRITERION.

Cold Harbour. By Francis Brett Young. (Collins.) 7*s.* 6*d.* net.

Mr. Brett Young is one of the younger novelists whose work has been favourably mentioned by competent judges. We observe that he has already published some dozen novels. This story is a " ghost " story of no great interest ; we do not suppose that it is representative of Mr. Brett Young's work, but if so, the novels that he has written are a great many too many.

There are several kinds of horror story possible : the straight tale, such as the were-wolf story in Petronius and the witch stories in Apuleius, the scientific story of H. G. Wells, the romantic story of Poe, and the " psychological " story of Hawthorne and James. Mr. Brett Young's publishers mention *The Turn of the Screw* in connection with *Cold Harbour* ; but there is this fundamental difference—that Mr. Brett Young builds up an over-elaborate setting for a very weak thrill at the end, whereas James uses the minimum of external apparatus to convey an authentic impression of human evil.

FOREIGN REVIEWS

[It is regretted that owing to illness, Mr. F. S. Flint has been unable to prepare his regular review of French and Italian periodicals for this number.]

AMERICAN PERIODICALS

The Yale Review, January.—Mrs. Wharton writes with her accustomed subtlety and charm on the subject of Marcel Proust. Her appreciation is sympathetic, but discriminating; she certainly does not lose her head, seeming to realise fully the final baselessness of that elaborate fabric. It is true she pleads that "this particular blemish"—the absence of any consistent moral sensibility—is outweighed by the general beauty of the work. But "one cannot dismiss the matter by saying that a whole category of human emotions is invisible to him, since at certain times his vision is acutest at the precise angle where the blindness had previously occurred." She quotes Proust's beautiful if quite incidental conception of a moral ideal from his description of the death of Bergotte, only to note acutely that "among the mysterious 'obligations' brought with us from that other 'entirely different' world, he omits one; the old stoical quality of courage. That quality, moral or physical, seems never to have been recognised by him as one of the mainsprings of human action." "Fear ruled his moral world: fear of death, fear of love, fear of responsibility, fear of sickness, fear of draughts, fear of fear. It formed the inexorable horizon of his universe, and the hard delimitation of his artist's temperament." Of his strength, on the other hand, the more one reads the more one sees that it is "the strength of tradition. All his newest and most arresting effects have been arrived at through the old way of selection and design. In the construction of these vast, leisurely, and purposeful compositions nothing is really wasted, or brought in at random. . . . Proust is in truth the aware and eager inheritor of two great formulas: that of Racine in his psychology, that of Saint-Simon in its anecdotic and discursive illustration. In both respects he is deliberately traditional."

Monsieur Albert Feuillerat, Professor of English Literature at the University of Rennes, contributes an interesting essay on "Scholarship and Literary Criticism." Very interesting, too, are the "Marquesan Sketches" of Mrs. Willowdean Chatterson Handy; they not only embody valuable ethnological details, but they also convey an uncommonly objective sense of the beauty of a fast disappearing culture.

1924, Nos. 3 and 4.—Mr. Waldo Frank, from an American standpoint which he has succeeded in making extremely definite, " touches " briefly but violently upon an aspect of the " defunct Dada movement." The gist of his attack is in the following paragraph: " A healthy reaction to our world must of course be the contrary of Dada: it must be ordered and serious and thorough. Dada worked well in over-mature Europe. We, by analogue, must be fundamental, formal. That indeed is the proper mood of youth. For an American to produce Dada poetry is tantamount to a Frenchman imitating the Alexandrines of Corneille, to an Italian rewriting Boethius: surrender to environment is not creation." This provokes a letter from Mr. Malcolm Cowley in the next number of the magazine, defending Dada as a discovery " that nonsense may be the strongest form of ridicule; that writing is often worst when it is most profound, saintly or devoted, and best when it is approached in a spirit of play; that associational processes of thought often have more force than the logical; that defiance carried to the extremes of bravado is more to be admired than a passive mysticism." Mr. Cowley then offers himself as an American Dada, and asks Mr. Frank to continue the debate. Mr. Frank, who has affinities with Hosea and Calvin, does so in the traditional manner: " The one statement in your letter which has the force of relevance is that in which you volunteer to be considered an American Dada. Of course, one must accept you so, since you insist upon it. I admit, however, that I for one could accept you in this guise with less regret, had not my acquaintance with your poetry convinced me that you will be fit for better things when you achieve the moral courage to confront the reality of our world, and the spiritual energy to make issue with it; instead of permitting yourself to be flung off by its centrifugal action, in the fond belief that because you fly off to nothing in a graceful pirouette and with a foreign oath upon your lips you are being any the less booted about and beshat and befooled by the very elements of life which you profess to despise."

Besides this amusing interlude, there are prose by Kenneth Burke, and poetry by Yvor Winters and Hart Crane, which in all seriousness satisfy the magazine's ideal of " autochthonous song."

The American Mercury, December and January.—In December Mr. Emory Holloway publishes a Whitman manuscript—a twenty-four-page commonplace book, belonging to the period during which the first edition of *Leaves of Grass* was evolving. The entries are not of much intrinsic interest, but they throw some light on Whitman's literary methods. " Varieties of Homo Sapiens " by D. W. Fisher is a series of " characters " in a distressingly " cute " but not ineffective manner. In the January number Mr. C. Hartley Grattan has a pretty

devastating article on Oliver Wendell Holmes: He sums up as follows:

" Pleasantness and fastidious conventionalism thus make up all there is of Holmes. His religious radicalism no longer scares anyone, and it didn't scare many of any intelligence in his own day. In him is summed up the humour of literary Boston—in *The Autocrat* and a handful of poems. His life and works are materials for a footnote to the history of an epoch. The charm of his personality made his contemporaries overrate him, and the adulators of New England continued the error. He took himself seriously, of course, though he once said slightingly that during his professorship at Harvard he had ' paid some attention to literature.' Such polite depreciation is a falsification of his real attitude. Better illustrative is an incident. When Lowell brought Howells to meet Holmes, the latter said, ' Well, James, this is something like the apostolic succession ;—this is the laying on of hands ! ' "

In the same number Mr. Edgar Lee Masters has seven " Lichee-nut Poems," in this manner:

Fifth Avenue

" In the sunshine of middle September
On Fifth Avenue,
The ladies, numerous as cherry blossoms,
Bright as peacocks and flamingos,
Pace along in never-ending files:—
Leases will expire on the last day of September ! "

There are interesting articles on " The American Cuisine " and " The Dentist as a Physician." " School Days in the Snow " is a very vivid and delightful reminiscence of how a school-mistress tamed a class of redskins in Chippewa county, Michigan. There are good short stories in both numbers, and pungent editorials by H. L. Mencken and George Jean Nathan. It would be as well to quote the following " clinical note ":

" *English Criticism.*—On its upper level, contemporary English criticism is eminently sound, fair, and honourable. But on its middle and lower levels there is no more contemptible criticism being written in the world to-day. In its attitude toward everything American is this latter criticism especially disgusting. In the place of reason, it offers merely condescension ; in the place of judgment and honest appraisal, it offers only superior sneers. It views American literature, American drama, and American taste with deliberately bilious and squinting eyes. It is, in aspect, like a clerk whining enviously because of his boss's good fortune."

The Century, January and February.—In the February number M. Romain Rolland's reminiscence of Ernest Renan is published. It

is a verbatim record of an interview Renan was gracious enough to give to the twenty-year-old enthusiast in 1886, and it conveys extremely well the serenity of the " Stoic " who proved also to be " an epicurean, a pessimist-optimist, a man of belief and doubt, above all a man human and honest."

Scribner's Magazine, December, January, and February.—In the December number Mrs. Wharton has the first of a series of three articles on " The Writing of Fiction." This first article deals with general principles, and no one, unless it is perhaps Henry James, has ever written so intelligently on this obscure subject. There is scarcely a paragraph from which one wouldn't like to quote, for the evident rightness of the views expressed, and the admirable exactitude in the manner of expressing them. This, the final paragraph, is perhaps most in need of repetition:

" A good subject must contain something that sheds a light on our moral experience. If it is incapable of this expansion, this vital radiation, it remains, however showy a surface it presents, a mere irrelevant happening, a meaningless scrap of fact torn out of its context. Nor is it more than a half-truth to say that the imagination which probes deep enough can find this germ in any happening, however insignificant. The converse is true enough: the limited imagination reduces a great theme to its own measure. But the wide creative vision, though no fragment of human experience can appear wholly empty to it, yet seeks by instinct those subjects in which some phase of our common plight stands forth dramatically and typically, subjects which, in themselves, are a kind of summary or fore-shortening of life's dispersed and inconclusive occurrences."

The Golden Galleon (Kansas City).—Published quarterly.

Palms (Guadalajara, Mexico).—Published bimonthly.

Two amateur periodicals devoted mainly to local talent.

The Saturday Review of Literature (weekly).—" Some Thoughts on Criticism," by John Middleton Murry (December 13); " The Poetry of the Brontës," by Chauncey Brewster Tinker (January 10); " Outline of a Journalist"—H. G. Wells, by Henry Seidel Canby (January 24); " Vehicles of Poetic Thought," by Robert Graves (January 31).

The Literary Review (weekly).—" From a Paris Quay," by Ford Madox Ford (December 13); " Problems of Culture," By Richard Aldington (January 31).

H. R.

GERMAN PERIODICALS

Die Literatur (Berlin: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt).—This comprehensive monthly review seems to get bulkier with every issue. It is true that a good part of the bulk is due to publishers' advertisements,

but these prove at least the material well-being of the German book-trade, while the critical contents of the review proper support the impression that Germany, in her recovery from the depths of economic depression of a year or two ago, has not thereby arrived at the intellectual stagnation which so often accompanies material contentment. One valuable result of Germany's economic recovery is that the time of intellectual isolation is over; even the poor student may now keep that contact with foreign thought and imagination which was such a marked German characteristic before the war. In the December number a specialist in current French literature, Otto Grautoff, deals with what he calls the "transformation" of French intellectual life. He refers to the educational and general cultural reactions which have followed the election of the Herriot Government. Before this event it seemed that the nationalist classical tendency in French culture, whose most remarkable legislative expression was the educational proposals of M. Léon Bérard, was going to win all along the line. But, with the fall of M. Poincaré, and the consequent fall of M. Bérard, the whole face of French culture—in Herr Grautoff's view—has changed, and he proceeds to give numerous examples of a breaking down of nationalist exclusiveness. The one black spot—according to the writer—is—the English student of current French literature would never guess—M. Albert Thibaudet. Since this critic, Herr Grautoff firmly holds, is likely to give the lead to French culture of the present generation, and since he is looked up to by the younger readers and writers of France as leader and teacher, it is a pity that he does not share more extensively in that return to cosmopolitanism which Herr Grautoff finds such satisfaction in tracing almost everywhere else. An instructive essay, even though its conclusions are very doubtful. A sounder article on the same subject, by Ernst Robert Curtius, will be noted below.

The January number follows the example of the *Neue Rundschau* and devotes itself to current English literature. Siegfried Sassoon reviews English poetry since 1914, concentrating on the work of Miss Edith Sitwell, Mrs. Charlotte Mew, Rupert Brooke, Charles Sorley, Wilfred Owen, Edmund Blunden, and Ralph Hodgson. Hermon Ould reviews English drama since the war, more comprehensively, and Osbert Sitwell contributes an entertaining article on literary coteries in London—entertaining, that is, to those who appreciate the literary associations of Bloomsbury and Chiswick, but perhaps a little puzzling to the German reader not so fortunately placed.

In the February number appear long reviews of the (in the present writer's opinion) two most important novels published in Germany in the past year—Thomas Mann's *Zauberberg* and Franz Werfel's *Verdi.*

Die Neue Rundschau (Berlin: S. Fischer).—In the December number is an excellent article by Ernst Robert Curtius entitled, "Spanische Perspektiven," with particular attention to a writer readers of THE CRITERION are more or less familiar with, José Ortega y Gasset; also an interesting if very debatable defence of the present naturalistic age, by Alfred Döblin, who seems to assert that the progress of mechanical invention leads to an increase of social co-operation.

Der Neue Merkur (Berlin: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt).—The December number was a special number devoted to contemporary poetry. It contains a number of good contributions, but the reader must not take it as characteristic. In the December number an admirable essay by Ernst Curtius on "Zivilisation und Germanismus," referred to above. It is a thorough examination of the necessary critical foundations for a renewed understanding between French and German culture. Basing himself on recent authoritative research on both sides of the Rhine, Herr Curtius maintains that the antithesis between "Germanic" and "Latin" civilisation is historically unsound. Space is unfortunately insufficient to indicate the argument in greater detail, but the reading of the whole article is strongly recommended.

In the February number a dispassionate article by Dr. Hellpach on the Catholic cultural offensive and political Catholicism, with reference to the policy of the German Centre Party, also another long review of Thomas Mann's *Zauberberg*.

A. W. G. R.

DANISH PERIODICALS

Tilskueren. December.—Hr. Bernhard Jensen discusses Holberg's play, *De Lykkelige Skibbrud* (The Lucky Shipwreck), as an expression of Holberg's whole attitude to life, his sense of the mystery of human nature, his understanding that "two people may do the same thing, and it is not the same thing," his dislike of all hasty judgments based on external circumstances. The other interesting article in this number is a review of new books by Tom Kristensen and Paul Levin. One of these is the autobiography of Troels-Lund, the Danish historian, who was born in 1840, and who began to write his life at the age of seventy. It is a description of country life—almost patriarchal—in old Copenhagen. All the chief figures of Troels-Lund's time appear. The chief impression from the book is the writer's joy in life. He says in the introduction: "I will live, I will write, I will die pen in hand." "The Girl with the Fragments of Glass," by Karin Michaels, of *Dangerous Age* fame, apparently the first part of a trilogy, is the story of a rather hysterical little girl, who carries about bits of coloured glass to put before her eyes when life seems very grey. The reviewer says that

on shutting the book, the reader will feel what is felt in it about one of the characters, Martine: "When she has been here my head swims as it did that time when your husband gave us boys a whole three-mark piece to ride on the merry-go-round at the fair." "The Rector's Pupil," by Esther Noach, a study of two women, elderly and young, is highly praised. "The Sea," by Knud Anderson, a new writer, is an intimate study of seamen; not a work of art, but a compelling book.

January.—There is one original—not critical—contribution to this number, "The Election at Langeland," by Sven Lange, an amusing sketch of politics in the eighties. The characters of the scene are well done, but the interest is rather local for English readers. Judge Paul Skadhange, in an article on the "Dark Places in the New Penal Code" (the Bill introduced by the Socialist Minister of Justice), treats sexual offences with common sense, and pleads for greater freedom in love for both men and women. *Inter alia*, it appears that, if this Bill becomes law, a man may get eight years' imprisonment for "raping" his wife.

February.—The longest article in this number is "Men with Two Countries," a review by L. Th. Arnskov, of Johan Bojer's new book *Vor Egen Stamme* (Our Own Race), which is stated to be both a remarkable novel and an eloquent contribution to one of the burning questions of the day, emigration. It is from the latter standpoint that the reviewer mainly treats the book, which is a plea to the youth of Norway to remain at home and till their own soil and not be tempted by the wealth to be won in America. But there is a vivid picture of pioneer life in the prairies and the gradual development of a new social life. "Poetry," an article by Chr. Rimestad, reviews four recent books of poems: *Bird-songs*, by Valdemar Rǿrdam, *On the Roads*, by Axel Juel, *Haymaking by the Sea*, by William Heinesen; and the *Land of Flowers*, by Harald H. Lund. Valdemar Rǿrdam is a very prolific writer, "who, every time he sits down to write, tries to forget everything he has ever written before, and is a great experimenter in new metres." Axel Juel is in contrast. He is simple, and the pleasure derived from the best of his new work is like renewing acquaintance with someone already dear. He moves because he is sincere; he never forces either his feeling or its expression. The other two, William Heinesen and Harold H. Lund, are young writers. The sea of the title of the former book is the bleak North Sea. Heinesen is sombre, and "some of his descriptions read like hallucinations of a peculiarly fatal horror." Lund's sunny Sealand is very different from Heinesen's sea. He is all mildness and sweetness and is in the line of descent from Hans Christian Andersen. He has both humour and imagination. Much in his poems is miniature art as delicate as the Japanese.

F. S. F.

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