

II

THE LITTLE REVIEW

A MAGAZINE OF THE ARTS

MAKING NO COMPROMISE WITH THE PUBLIC TASTE

“DOROTHY RICHARDSON’S NOVELS”

by

May Sinclair

THE EGOIST

This journal is not a chatty literary review: its mission is not to divert and amuse: it is not written for tired and depressed people. Its aim is rather to secure a fit audience, and to render available to that audience contemporary literary work bearing the stamp of originality and permanence: to present in the making those contemporary literary efforts which ultimately will constitute 20th century literature.

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THE LITTLE REVIEW

THE MAGAZINE THAT IS READ BY THOSE
WHO WRITE THE OTHERS

APRIL, 1918

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THE LITTLE REVIEW

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APRIL, 1918

No. 12

THE NOVELS OF DOROTHY RICHARDSON

May Sinclair

Pointed Roofs.

Backwater.

Honeycomb.

(*Duckworth and company, London.*)

I HAVE been asked to write — for this magazine which makes no compromise with the public taste — a criticism of the novels of Dorothy Richardson. The editors of the *Little Review* are committed to Dorothy Richardson by their declared intentions; for her works make no sort of compromise with the public taste. If they are not announced with the same proud challenge it is because the pride of the editors of the *Little Review* is no mate for the pride of Miss Richardson which ignores the very existence of the public and its taste.

I do not know whether this article is or is not going to be a criticism, for so soon as I begin to think what I shall say I find myself criticising criticism, wondering what is the matter with it and what, if anything, can be done to make it better, to make it alive. Only a live criticism can deal appropriately with a live art. And it seems to me that the first step towards life is to throw off the philosophic cant of the XIXth Century. I don't mean that there is no philosophy of Art, or that if there has been there is to be no more of it; I mean that it is absurd to go on talking about realism and idealism, or objective and subjective art, as if the philosophies were sticking where they stood in the eighties.

In those days the distinction between idealism and realism, between subjective and objective was important and precise. And so long as the ideas they stand for had importance and precision

those words were lamps to the feet and lanterns to the path of the critic. Even after they had begun to lose precision and importance they still served him as useful labels for the bewildering phenomena of the arts.

But now they are beginning to give trouble; they obscure the issues. Mr. J. B. Beresford in his admirable introduction to *Pointed Roofs* confesses to having felt this trouble. When he read it in manuscript he decided that it "was realism, was objective." When he read it in typescript he thought: "this . . . is the most subjective thing I have ever read." It is evident that, when first faced with the startling "newness" of Miss Richardson's method and her form, the issues did seem a bit obscure to Mr. Beresford. It was as if up to one illuminating moment he had been obliged to think of methods and forms as definitely objective or definitely subjective. His illuminating moment came with the third reading when *Pointed Roofs* was a printed book. The book itself gave him the clue to his own trouble, which is my trouble, the first hint that criticism up till now has been content to think in clichés, missing the new trend of the philosophies of the XXth Century. All that we know of reality at first hand is given to us through contacts in which those interesting distinctions are lost. Reality is thick and deep, too thick and too deep and at the same time too fluid to be cut with any convenient carving knife. The novelist who would be close to reality must confine himself to this knowledge at first hand. He must, as Mr. Beresford says, simply "plunge in". Mr. Beresford also says that Miss Richardson is the first novelist who has plunged in. She has plunged so neatly and quietly that even admirers of her performance might remain unaware of what it is precisely that she has done. She has disappeared while they are still waiting for the splash. So that Mr. Beresford's introduction was needed.

When first I read *Pointed Roofs* and *Backwater* and *Honeycomb* I too thought, like Mr. Beresford, that Miss Richardson has been the first to plunge. But it seems to me rather that she has followed, independently, perhaps unconsciously, a growing tendency to plunge. As far back as the eighties the de Goncourts plunged completely, finally, in *Soeur Philomène*, *Germinie Lacerteux* and *Les Frères Zemganno*. Marguerite Audoux plunged in the best passages of *Marie Claire*. The best of every good novelist's best work is a more or less sustained immersion. The more modern the

novelist the longer his capacity to stay under. Miss Richardson has not plunged deeper than Mr. James Joyce in his *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*.

By imposing very strict limitations on herself she has brought her art, her method, to a high pitch of perfection, so that her form seems to be newer than it perhaps is. She herself is unaware of the perfection of her method. She would probably deny that she has written with any deliberate method at all. She would say: "I only know there are certain things I mustn't do if I was to do what I wanted." Obviously, she must not interfere; she must not analyse or comment or explain. Rather less obviously, she must not tell a story, or handle a situation or set a scene; she must avoid drama as she avoids narration. And there are some things she must not be. She must not be the wise, all-knowing author. She must be Miriam Henderson. She must not know or divine anything that Miriam does not know or divine; she must not see anything that Miriam does not see. She has taken Miriam's nature upon her. She is not concerned, in the way that other novelists are concerned, with character. Of the persons who move through Miriam's world you know nothing but what Miriam knows. If Miriam is mistaken, well, she and not Miss Richardson is mistaken. Miriam is an acute observer, but she is very far from seeing the whole of these people. They are presented to us in the same vivid but fragmentary way in which they appeared to Miriam, the fragmentary way in which people appear to most of us. Miss Richardson has only imposed on herself the conditions that life imposes on all of us. And if you are going to quarrel with those conditions you will not find her novels satisfactory. But your satisfaction is not her concern.

And I find it impossible to reduce to intelligible terms this satisfaction that I feel. To me these three novels show an art and method and form carried to punctilious perfection. Yet I have heard other novelists say that they have no art and no method and no form, and that it is this formlessness that annoys them. They say that they have no beginning and no middle and no end, and that to have form a novel must have an end and a beginning and a middle. We have come to words that in more primitive times would have been blows on this subject. There is a certain plausibility in what they say, but it depends on what constitutes a beginning and a middle and an end. In this series there is no drama, no situation,

no set scene. Nothing happens. It is just life going on and on. It is Miriam Henderson's stream of consciousness going on and on. And in neither is there any grossly discernible beginning or middle or end.

In identifying herself with this life which is Miriam's stream of consciousness Miss Richardson produces her effect of being the first, of getting closer to reality than any of our novelists who are trying so desperately to get close. No attitude or gesture of her own is allowed to come between her and her effect. Whatever her sources and her raw material, she is concerned and we ought to be concerned solely with the finished result, the work of art. It is to Miriam's almost painfully acute senses that we owe what in any other novelist would be called the "portraits" of Miriam's mother, of her sister Harriet, of the Corries and Joey Banks in *Honeycomb*, of the Miss Pernes and Julia Doyle, and the north London school-girls in *Backwater*, of Fräulein Pfaff and Mademoiselle, of the Martins and Emma Bergmann and Ulrica and "the Australian" in *Pointed Roofs*. The mere "word painting" is masterly.

" . . . Miriam noticed only the hoarse, hacking laugh of the Australian. Her eyes flew up the table and fixed her as she sat laughing, her chair drawn back, her knees crossed — tea was drawing to an end. The detail of her terrifyingly stylish ruddy-brown frieze dress with its Norfolk jacket bodice and its shiny leather belt was hardly distinguishable from the dark background made by the folding doors. But the dreadful outline of her shoulders was visible, the squarish oval of her face shone out — the wide forehead from which the wiry black hair was combed to a high puff, the red eyes, black now, the long, straight nose, the wide, laughing mouth with the enormous teeth."

And so on all round the school tea-table. It looks easy enough to "do" until you try it. There are thirteen figures round that table and each is drawn with the first few strokes and so well that you see them all and never afterwards can you mistake or confuse them.

You look at the outer world through Miriam's senses and it is as if you had never seen it so vividly before. Miriam in *Backwater* is on the top of a bus, driving from North London to Piccadilly:

"On the left a tall grey church was coming towards them,

spindling up into the sky. It sailed by, showing Miriam a circle of little stone pillars built into its spire. Plumy trees streamed by, standing large and separate on moss-green grass railed from the roadway. Bright, white-faced houses with pillared porches shone through from behind them and blazed white above them against the blue sky. Wide side streets opened, showing high balconied houses. The side streets were feathered with trees and ended mistily.

"Away ahead were edges of clean, bright masonry in profile, soft, tufted heads of trees, bright green in the clear light. At the end of the vista the air was like pure saffron-tinted mother-of-pearl."

Or this "interior" from *Honeycomb*: . . . "the table like an island under the dome of the low-hanging rose-shaded lamp, the table-centre thickly embroidered with beetles' wings, the little dishes stuck about, sweets, curiously crusted brown almonds, sheeny grey-green olives; the misty beaded glass of the finger bowls — Venetian glass from that shop in Regent Street — the four various wine glasses at each right hand, one on a high thin stem, curved and fluted like a shallow tulip, filled with hock; and floating in the warmth amongst all these things the strange, exciting dry sweet fragrance coming from the mass of mimosa, a forest of little powdery blossoms, little stiff grey — the arms of railway signals at junctions — Japanese looking leaves — standing as if it were growing, in a shallow bowl under the rose-shaded lamp."

It is as if no other writers had ever used their senses so purely and with so intense a joy in their use.

This intensity is the effect of an extreme concentration on the thing seen or felt. Miss Richardson disdains every stroke that does not tell. Her novels are novels of an extraordinary compression and of an extenuation more extraordinary still. The moments of Miriam's consciousness pass one by one, or overlapping, moments tense with vibration, moments drawn out fine, almost to snapping point. On one page Miss Richardson seems to be accounting for every minute of Miriam's time. On another she passes over events that might be considered decisive with the merest slur of reference. She is not concerned with the strict order of events in time. Chapter Three of *Pointed Roofs* opens with an air of extreme decision and importance: "Miriam was practising on the piano in the larger of the two English bedrooms," as if something hung on her practising. But no, nothing hangs on it, and if you want to know on what day she

is practising you have to read on and back again. It doesn't matter. It is Miriam's consciousness that is going backwards and forwards in time. The time it goes in is unimportant. On the hundredth page out of three hundred and twelve pages Miriam has been exactly two weeks in Hanover. Nothing has happened but the infinitely little affairs of the school, the practising, the "Vorspielen", the English lesson, the "raccomodage", the hair-washing. At the end of the book Fräulein Pfaff is on the station platform, gently propelling Miriam "up three steps into a compartment marked Damen-Coupé. It smelt of biscuits and wine." Miriam has been no more than six months in Hanover. We are not told, and Miriam is not told, but we know as Miriam knows that she is going because Pastor Lahmann has shown an interest in Miriam very disturbing to Fräulein Pfaff's interest in him. We are not invited to explore the tortuous mind of the pious, sentimental, secretly hysterical Fräulein; but we know, as Miriam knows, that before she can bring herself to part with her English governess she must persuade herself that it is Miriam and not Mademoiselle who is dismissed because she is an unwholesome influence.

In this small world where nothing happens "that dreadful talk with Gertrude", and Fräulein's quarrel with the servant Anna, the sound of her laugh and her scream, "Ja, Sie Können Ihre paar Groschen haben! Ihre paar Groschen!", and Miriam's vision of Mademoiselle's unwholesomeness, stand out as significant and terrifying. They *are* terrifying; they are significant; through them we know Gertrude, we know Fräulein Pfaff, we know Mademoiselle as Miriam knows them, under their disguises.

At the end of the third volume, *Honeycomb*, there is, apparently, a break with the design. Something does happen. Something tragic and terrible. We are not told what it is; we know as Miriam knows, only by inference. Miriam is sleeping in her mother's room.

"Five o'clock. Three more hours before the day began. The other bed was still. "It's going to be a magnificent day", she murmured, pretending to stretch and yawn again. A sigh reached her. The stillness went on and she lay for an hour tense and listening. Someone else must know . . . At the end of the hour a descending darkness took her suddenly. She woke from it to the sound of violent language, furniture being roughly moved, a swift, angry splash-

ing of water . . . something breaking out, breaking through the confinements of this little furniture-filled room . . . the best gentlest thing she knew openly despairing at last."

Here Miss Richardson "gets" you as she gets you all the time — she never misses once — by her devout adhesion to her method, by the sheer depth of her plunge. For this and this alone is the way things happen. What we used to call the "objective" method is a method of after-thought, of spectacular reflection. What has happened has happened in Miriam's bedroom, if you like; but only by reflection. The firsthand, intimate and intense reality of the happening is in Miriam's mind, and by presenting it thus and not otherwise Miss Richardson seizes reality alive. The intense rapidity of the seizure defies you to distinguish between what is objective and what is subjective either in the reality presented or the art that presents.

Nothing happens. In Miriam Henderson's life there is, apparently, nothing to justify living. Everything she ever wanted was either withheld or taken from her. She is reduced to the barest minimum on which it is possible to support the life of the senses and the emotions at all. And yet Miriam is happy. Her inexhaustible passion for life is fed. Nothing happens, and yet everything that really matters is happening; you are held breathless with the anticipation of its happening. What really matters is a state of mind, the interest or the ecstasy with which we close with life. It can't be explained. To quote Mr. Beresford again: "explanation in this connection would seem to imply knowledge that only the mystics can faintly realise". But Miss Richardson's is a mysticism apart. It is compatible with, it even encourages such dialogue as this:

"'Tea' " smiled Eve serenely.

" 'All right, I'm coming, damn you, aren't I ?'

" 'Oh, Mimmy!'

" 'Well, damn *me*, then. Somebody in the house must swear. I say, Eve!'

" 'What?'

" ' Nothing, only I *say*.'

" ' Um. ' "

It is not wholly destroyed when Miriam eats bread and butter thus: "When she began at the hard thick edge there always seemed

to be tender places on her gums, her three hollow teeth were uneasy and she had to get through worrying thoughts about them — they would get worse as the years went by, and the little places in the front would grow big and painful and disfiguring. After the first few mouthfuls of solid bread a sort of padding seemed to take place and she could go on forgetful."

This kind of thing annoys Kensington. I do not say that it really matters but that it is compatible with what really matters. Because of such passages it is a pity that Miss Richardson could not use the original title of her series: "Pilgrimage," for it shows what she is really after. Each book marks a stage in Miriam's pilgrimage. We get the first hint of where she is going to in the opening of the tenth chapter of *Pointed Roofs*: "Into all the gatherings at Waldstrasse the outside world came like a presence. It removed the sense of pressure, of being confronted and challenged. Everything that was said seemed to be incidental to it, like remarks dropped in a low tone between individuals at a great conference." In *Backwater* the author's intention becomes still clearer. In *Honeycomb* it is transparently clear:

"Her room was a great square of happy light . . . happy, happy. She gathered up all the sadness she had ever known and flung it from her. All the dark things of the past flashed with a strange beauty as she flung them out. The light had been there all the time; but she had known it only at moments. Now she knew what she wanted. Bright mornings, beautiful bright rooms, a wilderness of beauty all round her all the time — at any cost."

And yet not that:

"Something that was not touched, that sang far away down inside the gloom, that cared nothing for the creditors and could get away down and down into the twilight far away from the everlasting accusations of humanity Deeper down was something cool and fresh — endless — an endless garden. In happiness it came up and made everything in the world into a garden. Sorrow blotted it out; but it was always there, waiting and looking on. It had looked on in Germany and had loved the music and the words and the happiness of the German girls, and at Banbury Park, giving her no peace until she got away.

"And now it had come to the surface and was with her all the time."

There are two essays of Rémy de Gourmont in *Promenades Littéraires*, one on "l'Originalité de Maeterlinck," one on "La Leçon de Saint-Antoine." Certain passages might have been written concerning the art of Dorothy Richardson: —

"Si la vie en soi est un bienfait, iet il faut l'accepter comme telle on la nier, le fait même de vivre le contient tout entier, et les grands mouvements de la sensibilité, loin de l'enrichir, l'appauvrissent au contraire, en concentrant sur quelques partis de nous-mêmes, envahies au hasard par la destinée l'effort d'attention qui serait plus uniformément reparté sur l'ensemble de notre conscience vitale. De ce point de vue une vie où il semblerait ne rien se passer que d'élémentaire et quotidien serait mieux remplie qu'une autre vie riche en apparence d'incidents et d'aventures" . . . "Il y a peut-être un sentiment nouveau à créer, celui de l'amour de la vie pour la vie elle-même, abstraction faite des grandes joies qu'elle ne donne pas à tous, et qu'elle ne donne peut-être à personne . . . Notre paradis, c'est la journée qui passe, la minute qui s'envole, le moment qui n'est déjà plus. Telle est la leçon de Saint-Antoine."

THE CRITERION

"Art", said the chimpanzee, "which *I* have to *study* before *I* can understand it, is fatally lacking somewhere." "Upon this principal", said the chimpanzee, "we must reject Mr. Browning's *Sordello*."

ELIMUS

B. Windeler

DRIVING rain beat on the deserted quay, clearing black scum from the man-messed waters of the basin —

Derelict bottles jostled against the hard stone sides, and the vulture cranes kept sentinel, wrapped in their own warm steam.

Elimus leaned on the bulwarks.

He did not like it.

He had imagined other lands sunny; the family had never spoken of rain — that was wrong of them — perhaps they didn't know — he must tell them.

There was shouting from a tug; he could not hear what they were saying: —

JOHN PARKER

COLLINGWOOD

Collingwood was an admiral —

Sweat drips squeezed from octopus hawsers, clutching their prey — a coir rack wringing staccato cries from engine room bells, stilling slow pulse throbs.

The cranes turned on their iron heels noseing fresh carcass to be disembowled; little bunches of oilskin-men swayed on the quay — black phrases hugging its wharf doll.

Elimus shuddered should he give the steward a sovereign?

That was a lot!

There was a trample of feet overhead; the gangway was down — narrow path to destinies: — He was almost afraid of it.

His hand-bag was on the seat behind him — that was all right, people were such thieves abroad; he must guard against that.

The steward, pale vacuous face with mendicant smile on stubb, sidled along the deck.

— Perhaps fifteen shillings!

He only shaved every other day because he said it made his face sore — gentlemen shaved every day.

— A sovereign.

Thank you, Sir, . . . er, will you pay your wine bill?

— Of course he would.

He was rather proud of his wine bill, he paid it and told the steward to keep the change. He put the receipt in his notebook, in his breast-pocket, and buttoned his coat:

— That made more than a sovereign he had given him!

He was sorry to leave the ship: the steward was very kind.

Over the gangway, cinema-moving of wet people and the sharp form of the sixpence hunter. 'Times' plutocrats lolled collar and coatless, dealing in unseen futures, loftily watching needy affluence — minute-racked jobbers on life's exchange. He saw his box hoisted from the forehold, and dumped on the quay; it fell in a puddle.

They were very rough —

He asked a man if there were any cabs.

The man said:

— "Search me."

More boxes swung into the wet air: camouflage of Ego's nakedness cased in variegated wrappers, jibbeted, — a grease paint give away, to the cold gaze of unconcerned by-passers.

Someone brought a trolley from the open door of a warehouse; Elimus found one and pushed his box inside.

His socks felt wet: he should have put on his thick boots — but the brown ones looked better.

He could leave his box inside if he liked.

— Take it off the trolley . . . someone else wanted that! They didn't give receipts. — Should he leave it? — Hard faced expletive men nodded to each other. There was labour of camaraderies' old jest, giving birth to new laughter: a smell of damp clothes and onion breath.

He felt very lonely.

He took an envelope from his pocket and read the address; he knew it by heart already.

Electric Light, Power and Telephone Co.,
121 West Street.
Mr. Spurge.

— A paper pass to the Olympic games of chance fortunes.

It was nice of Uncle Robert to give him that: he wished he had taken a higher degree; but telephones. — He felt safe on telephones.

Rains, grey back cloth lifted, and the evening sun sank throwing a last beam: yellow limelight through cloud shutters on a Noah's Ark town.

West Street was the third turning up the hill, he couldn't miss it. He could see the church.

Dabbled feet trod with knight-moves over wet cobbles as he walked from the wharf up the main street, closely gripping his bag in the quick falling dusk.

Saloon-bar's harbour lights gleamed on a pavement sea — bright ports of synthetic sunshine.

A door opened flinging stale smoke-borne gusts of tongues, clinking glass and spitting, on to the damp air of the darkening street.

Elimus thought he would go in — he was a man now. He might miss Mr. Spurge though! . . . that wouldn't do; he mustn't start like that.

He tramped on.

— Sixty-nine, seventy-one, seventy-three . . . some had no numbers — a hundred and seventeen, a hundred and nineteen

— A low building squat on wood piles puffed its chest to the reflected glory of the "Power and Telephone" sign in red and white lamps across its bosom. One felt it wore a dicky.

There was a boy at a desk, ambushed behind bunches of globe fruit on brass stalks in the window.

Elimus went in stumbling over two steps at the door.

The boy sat behind a hard wood counter, nail biting — a smell of ceiling wax and boredom.

Was Mr. Spurge in?

The boy said:

— What time?

Elimus felt for his watch, he had not expected that.

The boy turned round solemnly:

— Gee, here's a guy — noap, — say, mister, happen you've heard of appointments! — Are you called any?

Elimus vaguely felt something was wrong, he proffered his talisman.

— I have a letter for Mr. Spurge: — my name's Elimus — Elimus Hackett. (This an afterthought.)

— My . . . believe you me mister, Mr. Spurge ain't takin no talk from most anyone — noap: that's so, sure.

Elimus grappled with this, chewing it over cow-like; he could make nothing of it and was beginning again, when a door opened on the left and a small man came in.

Sallow with pince-nez over mild eyes, he had a dull beard and looked rather dusty. The boy indicated Elimus with his thumb: — “got a letter.”

— Are you Mr. Spurge? Elimus asked. He was.

— Uncle Robert — Robert Hackett; he's my uncle, you know.

— Who did you say?

— Uncle Robert — Robert Hackett; he's my uncle, you know.

— Dear me, dear me; . . . yes, yes; Hackett! I remember Hackett, . . . come inside.

They went through the door labelled “Mr. Spurge” — the R was missing: there was a big desk and two hard chairs, all covered with the extraordinary charms of a metaphone vividly depicted on small pamphlets.

— Ah, . . . let me see, yes . . . um, we have so few openings you know . . . Ah, . . . telegraph — telephones — yes, yes: — and how was the family?

Elimus did not care about the family, he knew his subject and he talked: panic of early failure seized him — he would take anything.

A new line to be run up north — yes, he didn't mind roughing it.

Dugdale was on it — capable man, Dugdale; — no, he didn't know him yet.

— Out there now, at Rocklake; not far though — about a hundred miles . . . he could start at once — yes, — he would call again in the morning and settle things up. That would be very nice.

Elimus found himself in the street again, a wild joy hugged him, dragging him along breathless, splashing in wet puddles. The syren song of future's success whistled in his ears, magnified in anticipation's megaphone — he must write to the family — that was it — write to the family. Bright lights laughed back at him reflecting spark torrents from hope's volcanic eruption.

A knot of men appeared before him — they were good fellows
. . . . they were all good fellows.
— Come on, . . . eh?

Bright glare from unshaded globes on bottle array; there is winking amongst the glass people on oblivion's door-step — pewter beams from the back row: table islands with shadowy rock men on a sawdust sea: — thick noise, smoke, and white faces seen a long way off.

— The bar-tender's face came very close, Elimus wanted to smack it!

— He shook hands instead.

— "All right, old chap," — another drink all round. — Pulsing life, buoyant, glorious: he felt it was a fine place and said so — he said it was a fine country.

His mind revelled, unharnessed from family's infecting go-cart, kicking over the smug traces of suburban exemplarity. Loosed in this tiny paddock he took for life's prairies, he ambled gingerly about, conceiving himself as buck jumping in a vast ring of sun-splashed freedom.

A woman laughed behind him. He turned round and took off his cap elaborately. He offered her a chair — he would show them how to treat ladies!

— She would have port.

— Two ports

His mind sensed a new interest; he felt protective

She said he was a nice boy.

She called for a "green mint" — port gave her heart burn.

Elimus was very sorry had she tried hot water? —

She threw back her cloak and opened a small reticule; she had a tiny mirror and powdered her nose: a faint smell of patchouli, and a slight stirring beneath the convex folds of her thin white blouse.

Elimus was deeply interested!

She smiled — he was aware of her smiling before he could raise his eyes — he smiled too: they were great friends . . . he had only just arrived: — No, he hadn't thought of an hotel yet, were they really all so dirty? Of course he wouldn't like that — he was most particular himself.

His mind groped for something to say, he wanted to be amusing

and felt vaguely dull, hypnotised by the rhythmical movement beneath the white blouse.

He ordered a cigar. She ordered a "green mint." —

The bar-tender's name was George —

Elimus remembered his box — that troubled him — he must get his box: damn boxes!

She said:

— All right, kiddie — and stroked his hand: he liked that, she was very kind.

He felt a little sleepy; she would look after him — she knew of a nice place.

He had to lean forward to hear what she was saying — that was a nice smell

— Should they go home?

Elimus nodded, he got up, kicking a brass spittoon as he rose and stood watching it spin solemnly it did not spin any more.

She took his arm, calling him "dearie" — he felt quite safe — very happy.

It was cold outside. —

— They would soon be home now.

2

The morning sun shone on broad hats, shadowing dark faces, diamonding chins, catching the scurrying recollections of night's "moments de delices" to spill them in its shade: — mind's morning mouth wash drowning smug toffee thoughts of a past evening. — Amazon rug beating, and private views at intimate garments galleries.

Elimus walked down the main street; there was a difference; he looked at it much as one revisiting half forgotten scenes of childhood.

— How small it appeared now!

He remembered that doorway — the cabbage smell came from there; it had a man in it then — pipe smoking: he wondered if he were inside. There was the same tin in the gutter at the corner — he had trodden on that — and lower down the rusty hoop iron from a tub.

West Street would be up there, and at the bottom the *old* wharf and his *old* ship.

His mind already clothed these with the dust fog of gaudy chariot wheeled progress, looking back on them as past sign posts of family-museum interest to a generation yet unborn.

He was accustomed to spend some time in this museum of his: the "objets d'intérêts" with which his recollective imagination would crowd it, held for him a subtle attraction.

— The house in which he was born, his early games, his nurse; the coloured cows, — age seven! — He was very artistic it would be of interest one day.

Himself as a young man — series of photographs in a heavily bound lbum, or better, a complete cinema roll showing his many activities.

He saw the ship and the wharf now as models, with an inscription:

The ship on which grandfather Elimus sailed!

The wharf at which grandfather Elimus landed!

— It seemed a long while ago.

A shell-less animal collecting such protective covering as he could find from the mis-fits thrown off by forceful individuality, he would reflect, chameleon-like, a caricatured matching of environments background, rapidly, and without any effort.

He had landed in the warmth of Uncle Robert's bland suitings, and was not quite sure what he had on now. He felt rather naked, and became surly — antagonistic.

The wharf, piled with lumber, a forest's morgue; echoed to the clatter song of winches — children on a nursery floor playing with toy bricks — waving derrick arms, grasping, swinging, flinging down first one pile then another. Keen aired activity's song mocked the dull minors of his foot steps.

He asked for his box brusquely: — it was there, in the same place, he could take it.

— No one smiled.

Active antagonism died, leaving morose lava flow. He took his box and went out.

He supposed he could get lunch somewhere —.

— He would find an hotel.

* * * *

Mr. Spurge said he could take the evening train to Rocklake; he had wired Dugdale.

Elimus thanked him: he was on probation; he would show them! The company gave him his ticket — first class, that was nice; he felt they were discriminative — he liked that too.

He passed a small printing office and thought of having cards printed with the name of the firm on the bottom.

Mr. Elimus Hackett,
Electric Light, Power and Telephone Company

He would see about that.

The hotelmanager had shares in it and said it was a good thing. Elimus talked; it would seem that he had been specially sent for! Mr. Spurge was an old friend — a family connection, they were going to do big things. —

The company was all right, Elimus could tell him that. Would he join in a drink? The manager "didn't mind" — he listened. He was not busy.

Afterwards he thought of his shares and went to see Mr. Spurge. Elimus took some sandwiches and a bottle of whiskey; there would be a "diner" on the train.

He said that was quite right: he didn't mind roughing it! There was too much dining at home — too much luxury — he didn't believe in that!

The Station — two stones of coloured bricks, a red and yellow reflection of the growing rays of townships' sunrise — beamed on its acolytes.

They were proud of it. Elimus was proud of it! He said it was *fine!*

Train's orchestra, beating its rhythmical song into the night, woke word echoes in his lulled senses: I'm going to get on — I'm going to get on — I'm going to get on; changing to gradients, I said I would, I said I would, I said I would — as the flag stations passed.

The conductor called Deerleap! He changed there. The cylindrical heater in the waiting room was cherry red — a smell of oil lamps and resin.

— It was cold outside . . . How late the loop train was. —
The oil lamps of Rocklake's log station smiled wanly on Elimus' pale face.

He felt very tired.

There was a buggy outside. The man said:

— You're for Mr. Dugdale, you've to come to the farm.

Elimus said:

— Sure.

The buggy driver looked at him and sniffed. Elimus thought him very dull: they drove in silence.

Log's firelight twinkled on the wood floor of the kitchen as Elimus went in; he was glad of the warmth. A man was standing alone warming his back.

— Are you Mr. Dugdale? Elimus asked.

— Yes, you Hackett?

Elimus said he was, and that he had just arrived. Dugdale nodded to a chair. The family had gone to bed it was nearly ten o'clock.

The line was being worked further north — a few miles. — This was the base — Dugdale had his waggons here. Elimus would go up in the morning, there was a canvas shack for him.

Dugdale gave him supper, and asked what he knew. Elimus would go up in the morning, there was a canvas shack for him.

Dugdale gave him supper, and asked what he knew. Elimus told him: he offered him a "fag". Dugdale didn't smoke cigarettes.

It was all very strange: he thought of his Uncle and the platform at Paddington, they had come to see him off. Aunt Agatha had kissed him! The porter had smiled. — It was silly of Aunt Agatha to kiss him, he was a man now . . . Dugdale was very hard — so was he — he would show them!

Frost's bright fingers clutched at the hard earth — a twinkling in still pine woods, and the sharp call of fur-people over still air.

Muffled men tramped with metallic feet, hugging thoughts of hot coffee and camp froust. From the west heavy cloud-banks of snow, grey blankets of premature dusk, drifted up over the iron world.

Men said there would be a "fall."

Elimus had been out a fortnight: there had been little progress. That morning he had shifted his pitch, the cook had helped him.

— It was getting dark!

A cold wind swept over the ground with a low moan — burdened with the knowledge of past aeons of time.

Elimus looked up.

Someone said they had better get back!

Stray wind puffs snatched vicious handfuls of snow from the grey air flinging them before their feet as they moved towards the camp — swan's down strewn over a dark sea. There was wailing above their heads. Men started to run — Elimus followed.

Reaching his shack as the storm broke, he flung himself on the bed panting; he would tell Dugdale about it — they couldn't work in this weather! Dugdale should know that — Dugdale wasn't fair!

Elimus shivered and looked at the instrument. There had been no call for an hour.

Outside, the crying snow lashed by cold wind thongs clung to his canvas hut seeking shelter.

— Raffale-beats on the fabric sides drummed his dulled senses. He hoped nothing would tear, and thought of going over to the men's quarters: it would be warmer there — they weren't all alone! . . .

— Ouf, it was too bad to move . . . he'd better stop where he was.

He put on his great-coat, standing over the oil stove to collect the heat. He wondered what Spurge was doing?

He felt that his brain was rather wasted out here — he would write to Spurge about that.

He moved over to his little table and sat down. His coat was too big: that was a pity — big coats cold coats. The tailor said big coats hung well.

The oil stove came from Birmingham.

— How cold it was! Two tots, to keep out the damp. It was snow that made the side bulge so, and the drips made the stove hiss: it was funny to watch that — little steam puffs, pis! Pis!

To keep out the damp — to keep out the damp.

Birmingham was in England: that was a long way off; — they couldn't see him Three tots —.

— No one could see him.

“Cheer O, nobody” it was warmer now.

The snow-flakes piled on the roof squeezed one another into the

warmth, forcing their way through the canvas to drop — drip, drip, in a tiddlewink game with the tins set to catch them. They missed the tins sometimes: that was annoying.

If he smoked more he would have more tins for drips. — Damn drips!

His bed would be wet too: then he need not undress — it was nice not to undress — it was nice to be in bed. — Another . . . How light the bottle was!

The line would be down somewhere: he would have to see about that.

Perhaps Dugdale would — he was a good chap.

Tick, tick: ticky, tick. — Those were drips.

He did not mind drips now, and the bed was a long way off.

He would make up his mind — that was it, make up his mind!

— Uncle Robert had punch when it was cold: that was a warm thing.

Tick, tick: — how they bothered him.

— Ah, . . . that was better!

It would be better tomorrow.

He was much warmer — but the bed was too far. He could not hear the wind now — that was odd!

The bed was to sleep. It was odd to sleep: —

No wind . . . sleep . . . warm.

Tick, tick: tick, tick.

— Warm to sleep—.

There was a scrabbling at the low door and a man came in with a gust of wet cold air.

— Hackett! . . . Hackett!

— No answer.

Dugdale had come over to see what was the matter; he found it strewn on the wet floor.

— Drunk, he muttered, and went out.

Elimus spent the following week thinking things over: at least that was what he believed himself to be doing. He was in reality grappling with the resuscitated “Thow-shalt-not-isms” of early school days, long dormant.

He remembered them as grey preventive beasts that he had known — even hobnobbed ^{with} in a cousinly way. He had left

them behind he thought. They appeared now ubiquitous tenets, grown up, vigorous, swollen to Ichthisaurian dimensions, overwhelming his pigmy freedom — stunning him to sensibility by their direct and unexpected appearance.

He had no sop for them, no morsel of ignorance, no fat and juicy “misunderstanding” to proffer — “please, Sir, I did not know” — mocked back at him from the twilight of youth’s Zoological garden. The cage bars were down, he was faced with these man-made obstructive monsters, communities artificially fed pets. There was then no escape from them!

Dugdale had given him a talking to, everybody knew that. The men all looked at him.

— How silly they were! — What silly faces they had! It was intolerable. Surely they could understand a chap. They would at home, there was more freedom there — after all he was a man.

He kept on repeating this, and would stand with puckered brow, smoking innumerable cigarettes, outside his shack. Glaring at his surroundings through assumed mists of abstruse calculations. He tried this for several days, but found it unsatisfactory: no one seemed impressed — no one even asked what he was thinking about.

The imagined freedom of home life became an obsession, he could think of nothing else.

This job was no good — there wasn’t enough scope for him.

— He would go.

He told Dugdale this, and his disappointment in Dugdale’s easy acquiescence surprised him.

It all seemed suddenly very flat.

Quite what he expected Dugdale to say he did not know, but he felt somehow it should have been different. He said he was off — he was going to get another job!

Dugdale said:

— All right.

That was wrong. It would serve Dugdale right if he stayed after that.

He was a man anyway: what did it matter what Dugdale said? — but — he might have said something.

Elimus left.

The journey back seemed very long. Of course he was right

to go. He wondered how far they would get the line that day; he wondered how Dugdale would get on! . . . West Street looked just the same; he walked up to number a hundred and twentyone and went in.

The boy was still there, and seemed surprised to see him.

Had they heard anything from Dugdale?

— No: Dugdale didn't write often.

There was nothing for him?

— No.

Dugdale had not telegraphed for him to go back then. The finality of the step he had taken suddenly stood before him in startling nakedness. He felt rather weak.

— Hm . . . could he see Mr. Spurge?

— "Walk right in," said the boy — always in to any of us. He was not one of them any more — how quickly it had happened.

Mr. Spurge looked up hurriedly from his desk.

— Hullo! . . . Anything wrong?

— No, nothing, Sir, — (the "Sir" slipped out; a tribute to the memory of the wrong he felt he was doing them) . . . that is — at least . . . I'm leaving you — I'm going to get another job!

Mr. Spurge was very surprised. What was the matter?

There was nothing, nothing the matter — it was quite all right really, only . . . only.

The hopelessness of the whole thing surged up, choking him.

I was a fool he said . . . a fool! — And, I got . . . well drunk you know: it was — so lonely out there . . . I couldn't stand it.

He was sniveling, he felt it, and made an effort.

— Anyway I'd better go . . . I'm all right really, only I'd better go.

Spurge looked at him kindly through his mild pince-nez eyes.

— I'll get another job . . . I'm all right, but I wanted to tell you . . . you took me on you see, and I — I wanted to . . . to thank you.

What was he saying! — this was all wrong, he had not meant to talk like that! Oh, Lord — what was he saying?

— He didn't know — anyway, what did it matter. — He was very miserable.

Spurge was talking now. Young men must pull themselves together — find their feet.

— Yes, yes, that was all right . . . why wouldn't he let him go? He wanted to go—.

Uncle Robert? — of course Uncle Robert expected a lot from him—. No, he didn't want to disappoint anyone. — What was that?

There was a vacancy in the office, a sudden vacancy! Spurge wanted to fill it.

— Elimus could take it if he liked — he would give him another chance!

Pride's thin voice, muffled in fears of the cold world outside choked and was silent.

— He might not find another job.

Another chance! . . . warm tears started to his eyes: take it — yes, he would take it, he would show them this time; there would be no more . . . no more

— Nonsense; Spurge broke in. See—Hackett? I won't have any more nonsense: punctuality, tidiness—office sharp at eight o'clock, eh?

— Yes, Sir. — He quite understood that — he would be punctual; sharp at eight — Uncle Robert always said he was a punctual . . . Well, good-day.

Hackett! To-morrow morning, mind.

— No don't thank me —.

Elimus went out into the street again, he thought of the evening a few weeks, or was it months before? When he first left the office, rioting on his initial success.

Well he was still in the company anyway: that was good.

It was nice to be back in the town again, it had been very lonely out there.

— Ha, here was the printing shop — he would go in and order his cards.

The church clock at the corner of West Street struck eight. It was a bright sunny morning, frosty, keen.

Spurge got up from his desk and went into the office, the boy was there — no one else.

— He went back and sat down.

Half past eight.

Long syren blasts from a tug at the wharf fussing noisily at its morning toil.

Elimus opened his eyes sleepily, vaguely aware of his surroundings. The bed — those curtains.

— Yes, of course . . . this was where he had come that first night.

He was aware of her warm body close beside him: there was a tinkle of crockery outside the door.

A slut brought in two cups of warm coffee and went out. —

He felt soft, damp hands about him, and turned over on his pillow, yielding lazily.

— She whispered . . . Elimus didn't mind.

UNANIMISM

Ezra Pound

THE space in the February number permitted me to give scant attention to any one author. Mr. F. S. Flint in August 1912 gave I think the first notice of Jules Romains in English, my articles in the *New Age* appeared the year after. It is not my fault that only a brief notice of Romains appeared about that time in America. Certain fusty old crocks have pretended to look after American "culture", they have run fat, dull, and profitable periodicals for their own emolument, or emollition, and for the card-boardizing of the American mind. One should express one's contempt for these people, and for the Concord school, in fact for the gensdelettres of our country from Emerson to Mabie, with a certain regularity, with a certain unemphatic passivity. They have existed, nothing will alter that fact. It is deplorable, but we can do nothing about it. We can bury their remains with as much celerity as is convenient, but it is useless to expend fury or emotion in the process.

As some of them still exist in the flesh, and as they still maintain

contact with numerous "presses", I may say frankly that their actual physical demise would give me no pain, but on the contrary.

As long as they exist in the flesh they will go on deadening and blanketing America's perception of the rest of the world, and of the rest of the world's art and letters.

Here lies the pasteboard tradition. It is still unburied, its odour mounts stalely toward Boston, from Boston, through Boston. These suave old gentlemen, and these vulgar middle-aged automatons have given us a long example of intellectual cowardice; all their lives they have striven to prevent the impact of any real value, of any equation of life, from reaching the minds of their readers. The permission of circumstance is their first consideration, never the question of value.

It was truly a great day for American letters when the saintly and gentle and in every way model Gilder turned Stevenson out of his office. It was the symbolical act of his generation. The clarion names of Hamilton Mabie, Underwood Johnson, etc., etc., will, with plenteous synonyms, arise in the mind of the reader.

And these known names are but the peaks of the rubbish heaps; beneath them repose the 10,000 stuffed effigies, the 10,000 mannekins who wanted to be Gilders, Mabies and U. Johnsons. I am not a bloodthirsty man; I do not desire their extermination by any violent means, but I long for beneficent deities, for Gods of vivid divinity who would change them by an ironic magic into permanent figures of cardboard, who would actualize this new touch of Midas. Paper currency would be correct for our age, or even those little figures, eagles and slippers which they make out of pulped old dollar bills.

The English translation of Romain's "Mort de Quelqu'un" has, more recently, provoked various English and American essays and reviews. His published works are "L'Ame des Hommes," 1904; "Le Bourg Régénéré," 1906; "La Vie Unanime," 1908; "Premier Livre de Prières," 1909; "La Foule qui est Ici", 1909; in 1910 and 1911 "Un Etre en Marche", "Deux Poèmes", "Manuel de Deification", "L'armée dans la Ville", "Puissances de Paris", and "Mort de Quelqu'un," employing the three excellent publishing houses of the *Mercure*, Figuiere and Bansot.

His "Reflexions" at the end of "Puissances de Paris" are so good a formulation of the Unanimiste Aesthetic, or "*Pathétique*",

that one will do more to disabuse readers misled by stupid English criticism than would any amount of talk about Romains. I let him speak for himself.

Reflexions

"Many people are now ready to recognize that there are in the world beings more real than man. We admit the life of entities greater than our own bodies. Society is not merely an arithmetical total, or a collective designation. We even credit the existence of groups intermediate between the individual and the state. But these opinions are put forth by abstract deduction or by experimentation of reason.

People employ them to complete a system of things and with the complacencies of analogy. If they do not follow a serious study of social data, they are at least the most meritorious results of observations; they justify the method, and uphold the laws of a science which struggles manfully to be scientific.

These fashions of knowing would seem both costly and tenuous. Man did not wait for physiology to give him a notion of his body, in which lack of patience he was intelligent, for physiology has given him but analytic and exterior information concerning things he had long known from within. He had been conscious of his organs long before he had specified their modes of activity. As spirals of smoke from village chimneys, the profound senses of each organ had mounted toward him; joy, sorrow, all the emotions are deeds more fully of consciousness than are the thoughts of man's reason. Reason makes a concept of man, but the heart perceives the flesh of his body.

In like manner we must know the groups that englobe us, not by observation from without, but by an organic consciousness. And it is by no means sure that the rhythms will make their nodes in us, if we be not the centres of groups. We have but to become such. Dig deep enough in our being, emptying it of individual reveries, dig enough little canals so that the souls of the groups will flow of necessity into us.

I have attempted nothing else in this book. Various groups have come here into consciousness. They are still rudimentary, and their spirit is but a perfume in the air. Beings with as little consistence as la Rue du Havre, and la Place de la Bastille, ephemeral as the company of people in an omnibus, or the audience at l'Opéra Comique, can not have complex organism or thoughts greatly elaborate. People will think it superfluous that I should unravel such shreds in place of rēcarding once more the enormous heap of the individual soul.

Yet I think the groups are in the most agitated stage of their evolution. Future groups will perhaps deserve less affection, and we shall conceal the basis of things more effectively. Now the incomplete and unstable contours have not yet learned to stifle any tendency (any inclination). Every impact sets them floating. They do not coat the infantile matter with an hard or impacting envelope. A superior plant has realized but few of the possibilites swarming in fructificatory mould. A mushroom leads one more directly to the essential life quality than do the complexities of the oaktree.

Thus the groups prepare more future than is strictly required. Thus we have the considerable happiness of watching the commencement of reign, the beginning of an organic series which will last as did others, for a thousand ages, before the cooling of the earth. This is not a progression, it is a creation, the first leap-out of a different series. Groups will not continue the activities of animals, nor of men; they will start things afresh according to their own need, and as the consciousness of their substance increases they will refashion the image of the world.

The men who henceforth can draw the souls of groups to converge within themselves, will give forth the coming dream, and will gather, to boot, certain intuitions of human habit. Our ideas of the being will undergo a correction; will hesitate rather more in finding a distinction between the existent and non-existent. In passing successively from the Place de l'Europe to the Place des Voges, and then to a gang of navvies one perceives that there are numerous shades of difference between nothing and something. Before resorting to groups one is sure of discerning a being of a simple idea. One knows that a dog exists, that he has an interior and independent unity; one knows

that a table or a mountain does not exist; nothing but our manner of speech cuts it off from the universal non-existing. But streets demand all shades of verbal expression (from the non-existing) up to the autonomous creature.

One ceases to believe that a definite limit is the indispensable means of existence. Where does la Place de la Trinité begin? The streets mingle their bodies. The squares isolate themselves with great difficulty. The crowd at the theatre takes on no contour until it has lived for some time, and with vigour. A being (*être*) has a centre, or centres in harmony, but a being is not compelled to have limits. He exists a great deal in one place, rather less in others, and further on a second being commences before the first has left off. Every being has, somewhere in space, its maximum. Only ancestor individuals possess affirmative contours, a skin which cuts them off from the infinite.

Space is no one's possession. No being has succeeded in appropriating one scrap of space and saturating it with his own unique existence. Everything over-crosses, coincides, and cohabits. Every point is a perch for a thousand birds. Paris, the rue Montmartre, a crowd, a man, a protoplasm are on the same spot of pavement. A thousand existences are concentric. We see a little of some of them.

How can we go on thinking that an individual is a solitary thing which is born, grows, reproduces itself and dies? This is a superior and inveterate manner of being an individual. But groups are not truly born. Their life makes and unmakes itself like an unstable state of matter, a condensation which does not endure. They show us that life, at its origin, is a provisory attitude, a moment of exception, an intensity between two relaxations, not continuity, nothing decisive. The first entireties take life by a sort of slow success, and extinguish themselves without catastrophe, the single elements do not perish because the whole is disrupted.

The crowd before the Baraque Foraine starts to live little by little, as water in a kettle begins to sing and evaporate. The passages of the Odeon do not live by night, each day they are real, a few hours. At the start life seems the affair of a moment, then it becomes intermittent. To be durable; to become a development and a destiny; to be defined and finished off at each end by birth and death, it needs a deal of accustomedness.

The primitive forms are not coequal. There is a natural hierarchy among groups. Streets have no set middle, no veritable limitations; they hold a long vacillating sort of life which might flatten out almost to nothingness. Cross-roads and squares take on contour, and gather up the nodes of their rhythms. Other groups have a fashioned body, they endure but a little space, but they have learned, almost, to die; they even resurrect themselves as by a jerk or dry spasm, they begin the habit of being, they strive toward it, and this puts them out of breath.

I have not yet met a group fully divine. None has had a real consciousness, none has addressed me, saying: "I exist." The day when the first group shall take its soul in its hands, as one lifts up a child in order to look in its face, that day there will be a new god upon earth. This is the god I await, with my labour of annunciation."

NOTE

It is of course wholly ridiculous that I should leave off my work to make translations. There are three hundred younger and less occupied writers, each one searching for subject matter, or at least void of any specialité. They are all of them clamouring to be printed, but none of them, apparently, has the patience or intelligence to take up this simple labour of importation, or to select things of interest from foreign literature, or to combat the diluted dilutions of wrong impressions that "float" to us of it.

Indeed the American "conours" to us, *The Little Review*, has been for the past year almost negligible. A few people, the very few in America who know that the *Mercure de France* has been for some years in existence, are willing to grant, for argument, that there ought to be something of the sort in English or American.

The only notable effect that I can see is that one millionaire has set himself up to be a "garden and a sanctuary" and hopes to preserve the cardboard tradition of the older magazines in a "contemporary" publication. He has translated Sam McClure's memorable phrase about the barber's wife in the middle west into something more tame and Galsworthian, something uplifting and communal, etc. Passons!

Passons. My brief excerpt from Romaine gives the tone of his thought. In so far as he writes in the present tense he carries

conviction. He broaches truly a "new", or at least contemporary "pathétique". He utters in original vein phases of consciousness whereinto we are more or less drifting, in measure of our proper sensibility.

Quant à moi? Caveat!
Beware of agglomerates.

E. P.

U L Y S S E S

James Joyce

E p i s o d e II

— YOU, Cochrane, what city sent for him?
— Tarentum, sir.

— Very good. Well?

— There was a battle, sir.

— Very good. Where?

The boy's blank face asked the blank window.

Fabled by the daughters of memory. And yet it was in some way if not as memory fabled it. A phrase, then, of impatience, thud of Blake's wings of excess. I hear the ruin of all space, shattered glass and toppling masonry, and time one livid final flame. What's left us then?

— I forget the place, sir. 279 B. C.

— Asculum, Stephen said, glancing at the name and year in the gorescarred book.

— Yes, sir. And he said: *Another victory like that and we are done for.*

That phrase the world had remembered. A dull ease of the mind. From a hill above a corpsestrewn plain a general, speaking to his officers, leaned upon his spear. Any general to any officers. They lend ear.

— You, Armstrong, Stephen said. What was the end of Pyrrhus?

— End of Pyrrhus, sir?

— I know, sir. Ask me, sir, Comyn said.

— Wait. You, Armstrong. Do you know anything about Pyrrhus?

A bag of figrolls lay snugly in Armstrong's satchel. He curled them between his palms at whiles and swallowed them softly. Crumbs adhered to the tissues of his lips. A sweetened boy's breath. Well off people, proud that their eldest son was in the navy. Vico Road, Dalkey.

— Pyrrhus, sir? Pyrrhus, a pier.

All laughed. Mirthless high malicious laughter. Armstrong looked round at his classmates, silly glee in profile. In a moment they will laugh more loudly, aware of my lack of rule and of the fees their papas pay.

— Tell me now, Stephen said, poking the boy's shoulder with the book, what is a pier.

— A pier, sir, Armstrong said. A thing out in the water. A kind of bridge. Kingstown pier, sir.

Some laughed again: mirthless but with meaning. Two in the back bench whispered. Yes. They knew: had never learned nor ever been innocent. All. With envy he watched their faces: Edith, Ethel, Gertie, Lily. Their likes: their breaths, too, sweetened with tea and jam, their bracelets tittering in the struggle.

— Kingstown pier, Stephen said. Yes, a disappointed bridge. The words troubled their gaze.

— How, sir? Comyn asked. A bridge is across a river.

For Haines's chapbook. No one here to hear. Tonight deftly amid wild drink and talk, to pierce the polished mail of his mind. What then? A jester at the court of his master, indulged and disesteemed, winning a clement master's praise. Why had they chosen all that part? Not wholly for the smooth caress. For them too history was a tale like any other too often heard, their land a pawnshop.

Had Pyrrhus not fallen by a beldam's hand in Argos or Julius Caesar not been knifed to death. They are not to be thought away. Time has branded them and fettered they are lodged in the room of the infinite possibilities they have ousted. But can those have been possible seeing that they never were? Or was that only possible which came to pass? Weave, weaver of the wind.

— Tell us a story, sir.

— Oh, do, sir. A ghoststory.

— Where do you begin in this? Stephen asked, opening another book.

— *Weep no more*, Comyn said.

— Go on then, Talbot.

— And the story, sir?

— After, Stephen said. Go on, Talbot.

A swarthy boy opened a book and propped it nimbly under the breastwork of his satchel. He recited jerks of verse with odd glances at the text.

*Weep no more, woful shepherd, weep no more
For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead.
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor.*

It must be a movement then, an actuality of the possible as possible. Aristotle's phrase formed itself within the gabbled verses and floated out into the studious silence of the library of Saint Genevieve where he had read, sheltered from the sin of Paris, night by night. By his elbow a delicate Siamese conned a handbook of strategy. Fed and feeding brains about me: and in my mind's darkness a sloth of the underworld, reluctant, shy of brightness, shifting her dragon scaly folds. Thought is the thought of thought. Tranquil brightness. The soul is in a manner all that is: the soul is the form of forms. Tranquility sudden, vast, candescent: form of forms.

Talbot repeated:

*Through the dear might of Him that walked the waves
Through the dear might.*

— Turn over, Stephen said quietly. I don't see anything.

— What, sir? Talbot asked simply, bending forward.

His hand turned the page over. He leaned back and went on again, having just remembered of Him that walked the waves. Here also over these craven hearts his shadow lies, and on the scoffer's heart and lips and on mine. It lies upon their eager faces who offered him a coin of the tribute. To Caesar what is Caesar's, to God what is God's. A long look from dark eyes, a riddling sentence to be

woven and woven on the church's looms. Ay.

— *Riddle me, riddle me, randy ro.
My father gave me seeds to sow.*

Talbot slid his closed book into his satchel.

— Have I heard all? Stephen asked.

— Yes, sir. Hockey at ten, sir.

— Half day, sir. Thursday.

— Who can answer a riddle? Stephen asked.

They bundled their books away, pencils clacking, pages rustling.
Crowding together they strapped and buckled their satchels, all gabbling gaily:

— A riddle. Ask me, sir.

— O, ask me, sir.

— A hard one, sir.

— This is the riddle, Stephen said:

*The cock crew,
The sky was blue:
The bells in heaven
Were striking eleven.
'Tis time for this poor soul
To go to heaven.*

— What is that?

— What, sir

— Again, sir. We didn't hear.

Their eyes grew bigger as the lines were repeated.

After a silence Cochrane said:

— What is it, sir? We give it up.

Stephen, his throat itching, answered:

— The fox burying his grandmother under a hollybush.

He stood up and gave a shout of nervous laughter to which their cries echoed dismay.

A stick struck the door and a voice in the corridor called:

— Hockey.

They broke asunder, sidling out of their benches, leaping them. Quickly they were gone and from the lumber room came the rattle of sticks and clamour of their boots and tongues.

Sargent who alone had lingered came forward slowly, showing an open sopybook. His thick hair and scraggy neck gave witness of unreadiness and through his misty glasses weak eyes looked up pleading. On his cheek, dull and bloodless, a soft stain of ink lay, date-shaped, recent and damp as a snail's bed.

He held out his copybook. The word *Sums* was written on the headline. Beneath were sloping figures and at the foot a crooked signature with blind loops and a blot. Cyril Sargent: his name and seal.

— Mr. Deasy told me to write them out all again, he said, and show them to you, sir.

Stephen touched the edges of the book. Futility.

— Do you understand how to do them now? he asked.

— Numbers eleven to fifteen, Sargent answered. Mr. Deasy said I was to copy them off the board, sir.

— Can you do them yourself? Stephen asked.

— No, sir.

Ugly and futile: lean neck and thick hair and a stain of ink, a snail's bed. Yet someone had loved him, borne him in her arms and in her heart. But for her the race of the world would have trampled him under foot, a squashed boneless snail. She had loved his weak watery blood drained from her own. Was that then real? The only true thing in life? She was no more: the trembling skeleton of a twig burnt in the fire, an odour of rosewood and wetted ashes. She had saved him from being trampled under foot and had gone, scarcely having been. A poor soul gone to heaven: and on a heath beneath winking stars a fox, red reek of rapine in his fur, with merciless bright eyes scraped in the earth, listened, scraped up the earth, listened, scraped and scraped.

Sitting at his side Stephen solved out the problem. He proves by algebra that Shakespeare's ghost is Hamlet's grandfather. Sargent peered askance, through his slanted glasses. Hockeysticks rattled in the lumberroom: the hollow knock of a ball and calls from the field.

Across the page the symbols moved in grave morrice, in the mummery of their letters, wearing quaint caps of squares and cubes.

Give hands, traverse, bow to partner: so: imps of fancy of the Moors. Gone too from the world, Averroes and Moses Maimonides, dark men in mien and movement, flashing in their mocking mirrors the obscure soul of the world, a darkness shining in brightness which brightness could not comprehend.

— Do you understand now? Can you work the second for yourself?

— Yes sir.

In long shaky strokes Sargent copied the data. Waiting always for a word of help his hand moved faithfully the unsteady symbols, a faint hue of shame flickering behind his dull skin. *Amor matris*: subjective and objective genitive. With her weak blood and wheysour milk she fed him and hid from sight of others his swaddlingbands.

Like him was I, these sloping shoulders, this gracelessness. My childhood bends beside me. Too far for me to lay a hand of comfort there, one or lightly. Mine is far and his secret as our eyes. Secrets, silent, stony, sit in the dark palaces of both our hearts; secrets weary of their tyranny: tyrants willing to be dethroned.

The sum was done.

— It is very simple, Stephen said as he stood up.

— Yes, sir. Thanks, Sargent answered.

He dried the page with a sheet of thin blotting paper and carried his copybook back to his desk

— You had better get your stick and go out to the others, Stephen said as he followed towards the door the boy's graceless form.

— Yes, sir.

In the corridor his name was heard, called from the playfield.

— Sargent.

— Run on, Stephen said. Mr. Deasy is calling you.

He stood in the porch, and watched the laggard hurry towards the scrappy field where sharp voices were in strife. They were sorted in teams and Mr. Deasy came stepping over wisps of grass with gaitered feet. When he had reached the schoolhouse voices again contending called to him. He turned his angry white moustache.

— What is it now? he cried continually without listening.

— Cochrane and Halliday are on the same side, sir, Stephen cried.

— Will you wait in my study for a moment, Mr. Deasy said,

till I restore order here.

And as he stepped fussily back across the field his old man's voice cried sternly.

— What is the matter? What is it now?

Their sharp voices cried about him on all sides: their many forms closed round him, garish sunshine bleaching the honey of his illdyed head.

Stale smoky air hung in the study with the smell of drab abraded leather of its chairs. As on the first day he bargained with me here. As it was in the beginning, is now. On the sideboard the tray of Stuart coins, base treasure of a bog: and ever shall be. And snug in tehir spooncase of purple plush, faded, the twelve apostles having preached to all the gentiles: world without end.

A hasty step over the stone porch and in the corridor. Blowing out his rare moustache Mr. Deasy halted at the table.

— First, our little financial settlement, he said.

He brought out of his coat a pocketbook bound by a rubber thong. It slapped open and he took from it two notes, one of joined halves, and laid them carefully on the table.

— Two, he said, strapping and stowing his pocketbook away.

And now his strongroom for the gold. Stephen's embarrassed hand moved over the shells heaped in the cold stone mortar: whelks and money cowries and leopard shells: and this, whorled as an emir's turban, and this, the scallop of Saint James. An old pilgrim's hoard, dead treasure, hollow shells.

A sovereign fell, bright and new, on the soft pile of the tablecloth.

— Three, Mr. Deasy said, turning his little savings box about in his hand. These are handy things to have. See. This is for sovereigns. This is for shillings, sixpences, halfcrowns. And here crowns. See.

He shot from it two crowns and two shillings.

— Three twelve, he said. I think you'll find that's right.

— Thank you, sir, Stephen said, gathering the money together with shy haste and putting it all in a pocket of his trousers.

His hand, free again, went back to the hollow shells.

Symbols too of beauty and of power. A lump in my pocket. Symbols soiled by greed and misery.

— Don't carry it like that, Mr. Deasy said. You'll pull it out

somewhere and lose it. You just buy one of these machines. You'll find them very handy.

Answer something.

— Mine would be often empty, Stephen said.

That same room and hour, the same wisdom: and I the same. Three times now. Three nooses round me here. Well, I can break them in this instant if I will.

— Because you don't save, Mr. Deasy said, pointing his finger. You don't know yet what money is. Money is power, when you have lived as long as I have. I know, I know. If youth but knew. But what does Shakespeare say: *Put money in thy purse.*

— Iago, Stephen murmured.

He lifted his gaze from the idle shells to the old man's stare.

— He knew what money was, Mr. Deasy said. He made money. A poet, yes, but an Englishman too. Do you know what is the pride of the English? Do you know what is the proudest word you will ever hear from an Englishman's mouth?

The seas' ruler. His seacold eyes looked on the empty bay; it seems history is to blame: on me and on my words, unhating.

— That on his empire, Stephen said, the sun never sets.

— Ba! Mr. Deasy cried. That's not English. A French Celt said that.

He tapped his savingsbox against his thumbnail.

— I will tell you, he said solemnly, what is his proudest boast.

I paid my way.

Good man, good man.

— *I paid my way. I never borrowed a shilling in my life.* Can you feel that? *I owe nothing.* Can you?

Mulligan, nine pounds, three pairs of socks, ties. Curran, ten guineas. McCann, one guinea. Fred Ryan, two shillings. Temple, two lunches, Russell, one guinea, Cousins, ten shillings, Bob Reynolds, half a guinea, Köhler, three guineas, Mrs. McKernan, five week's board. The lump I have is useless.

— For the moment, no, Stephen answered.

Mr. Deasy stared sternly for some moments over the mantelbox.

— I knew you couldn't, he said joyously. But one day you must feel it. We are a generous people but we must also be just.

— I fear those big words, Stephen said, which make us so unhappy.

Mr. Deasy stared sternly for some moments over the mantelpiece at the shapely bulk of a man in tartan fillibegs: Albert Edward, Prince of Wales.

— You think me an old fogey and an old tory, his thoughtful voice said. I saw three generations since O'Connell's time. I remember the famine in '46. Do you know that the orange lodges agitated for repeal of the union twenty years before O'Connell did or before the prelates of your communion denounced him as a demagogue? You fenians forget some things.

Stephen sketched a brief gesture.

— I have rebel blood in me too, Mr. Deasy said. On the spindle side. I am descended from Sir John Blackwood who voted against the union. We are all Irish, all kings' sons.

— Alas, Stephen said.

— *Per vias rectas*, Mr. Deasy said firmly, was his motto. He voted against it: and put on his topboots to ride to Dublin from the Ards of Down to do so.

Lal-the-ral-the-ra: the rocky road to Dublin. A gruff squire on horseback with shiny topboots. Soft day, sir John. Soft day, your honour . . . Day . . . Day . . . Two topboots jog jangling on to Dublin. Lal-the-ral-the-ra, lal-the-ral-the raddy.

— That reminds me, Mr. Deasy said. You can do me a favour, Mr. Dedalus, with some of your literary friends. I have a letter here for the press. Sit down a moment. I have just to copy the end.

He went to the desk near the window, pulled in his chair twice and read off some words from the sheet on the drum of his typewriter.

— Sit down. Excuse me, he said over the shoulder, *the dictates of common sense*. Just a moment.

He peered from under his shaggy brows at the manuscript by his elbow and, muttering, began to prod the stiff buttons of the keyboard slowly, sometimes blowing as he screwed up the drum to erase an error.

Stephen seated himself noiselessly before the princely presence. Framed around the walls images of vanished horses stood in homage, their meek heads poised in air: lord Hastings' *Repulse*, the duke of

Westminster's *Shotover*, the duke of Beaufort's *Ceylon, prix de Paris*, 1866. Elf in riders sat them, watchful of a sign. He saw their speeds and shouted with the shouts of vanished crowds.

— Full stop, Mr. Deasy bade his keys. *But prompt ventilation of this all important question*

Where Cranly led me to get rich quick, hunting his winners among the mudsplashed brakes, amid the bawls of bookies and reek of the canteen, over the motley slush. Even money *Fair Rebel*. Ten to one the field. Dicers and thimblerriggers we hurried by, after the hoofs, the vying caps and jackets and past the meatfaced woman, a butcher's dame, nuzzling thirstily her clove of orange.

Shouts rang shrill from the boys' playfield and a whirring whistle. Again: a goal. I am among them, among their battling bodies in a medley, the joust of life. You mean that knock-kneed mother's darling who seems to be slightly crawsick? Jousts. Time shocked rebounds, shock by shock. Jousts, slush and uproar of battles, the frozen deathspew of the slain, a shout of spearspikes baited with men's bloodied guts.

— Now then, Mr. Deasy said rising.

He came to the table, pinning together his sheets. Stephen stood up.

— I have put the matter into a nutshell, Mr. Deasy said. It's about the foot and mouth disease. Just look through it. There can be no two opinions on the matter.

May I trespass on your valuable space. That doctrine of *laissez faire* which so often in our history. Our cattle trade. The way of all our old industries. Liverpool ring which jockeyed the Galway harbour scheme. European conflagration. Grain supplies through the narrow waters of the channel. The pluterperfect, imperturbability of the department of agriculture. Pardoned a classical allusion. Cassandra. By a woman who was no better than she should be. To come to the point at issue.

— I don't mince words, do I? Mr. Deasy asked as Stephen read on.

Foot and mouth disease. Known as Koch's preparation. Serum and virus. Percentage of salted horses. Rinderpest. Emperor's horses at Mürzsteg, lower Austria. Veterinary surgeons. Mr. Henry Blackwood Price. Courteous offer a fair trial. Dictates of common sense. All important question. In every sense of the word take the bull by the horns. Thanking you for the hospitality

of your columns.

— I want that to be printed and read, Mr. Deasy said. You will see at the next outbreak they will put an embargo on Irish cattle. And it can be cured. It is cured. My cousin, Blackwood Price, writes to me it is regularly treated and cured in Austria by cattle doctors there. They offer to come over here. I am trying to work up influence with the department. Now I'm going to try publicity. I am surrounded by difficulties, by . . . intrigues by . . .

He raised his forefinger and beat the air oldly before his voice spoke.

— Mark my words, Mr. Dedalus, he said. England is in the hands of the jews. In all the highest places: her finance, her press. And they are the signs of a nation's decay. Wherever they gather they eat up the nation's vital strength. I have seen it coming these years. As sure as we are standing here the jew merchants are already at their work of destruction. Old England is dying.

He stepped swiftly off, his eyes coming to blue life as they passed a broadsunbeam. He faced about and back again.

— Dying, he said, if not dead by now.

*The harlot's cry from street to street
Shall weave old England's windingsheet.*

His eyes open wide in vision stared sternly across the sunbeam in which he halted.

— A merchant, Stephen said, is one who buys cheap and sells dear, jew or gentile, is he not?

— They sinned against the light, Mr. Deasy said gravely. And you can see the darkness in their eyes. And that is why they are wanderers on the earth to this day.

On the steps of the Paris stock exchange the goldskinned men quoting prices on their gemmed fingers. Gabble of geese. They swarmed loud, uncouth, about the temple, their heads thick plotting under maladroitness silk hats. Not theirs: these clothes, this speech, these gestures. Their full slow eyes belied the words, the gestures eager and unoffending, but knew the rancours massed about them and knew their zeal was vain. Vain patience to heap and hoard.

Time surely would scatter all. A hoard heaped by the roadside: plundered and passing on. Their eyes knew their years of wandering and, patient, knew the dishonours of their flesh.

— Who has not? Stephen said.

— What do you mean? Mr. Deasy asked.

He came forward a pace and stood by the table. His under-jaw fell sideways open uncertainly. Is this old wisdom? He waits to hear from me.

— History, Stephen said, is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake.

From the playfield the boys raised a shout. A whirring whistle: goal.

— The ways of the Creator are not our ways, Mr. Deasy said. All history moves towards one great goal, the manifestation of God.

Stephen jerked his thumb towards the window, saying:

— That is God.

Hooray! Ay! Whrrwhee!

What? Mr. Deasy asked.

— A shout in the street, Stephen answered, shrugging his shoulders.

Mr. Deasy looked down and held for a while the wings of his nose tweaked between his fingers. Looking up again he set them free.

— I am happier than you are, he said. We have committed many errors and many sins. A woman brought sin into the world. For a woman who was no better than she should be, Helen, the runaway wife of Menelaus, ten years the Greeks made war on Troy. A faithless wife first brought the strangers to our shore here, O'Rourke's wife, Prince of Breffni. A woman too brought Parnell low. Many errors, many failures but not the one sin. I am a struggler now at the end of my days. But I will fight for the right till the end.

*For Ulster will fight
And Ulster will be right.*

Stephen raised the sheets in his hand.

— Well, sir, he began.

— I foresee, Mr. Deasy said, that you will not remain here very long at this work. You were not born to be a teacher, I think. Perhaps I am wrong.

— A learner rather, Stephen said.

And here what will you learn more?

Mr. Deasy shook his head.

— Who knows? he said. To learn one must be humble. But life is the great teacher.

Stephen rustled the sheets again.

— As regards these, he began.

— Yes, Mr. Deasy said. You have two copies there. If you can have them published at once.

Telegraph. Irish Homestead.

— I will try, Stephen said, and let you know tomorrow. I know two editors slightly.

— That will do, Mr. Deasy said. There is no time to lose to the Mr. Field, M. P. There is a meeting of the cattle trade association today at the City Arms Hotel. I asked him to lay my letter before the meeting. You see if you can get it into your two papers. What are they

— The *Evening Telegraph*

— That will do, Mr. Deasy said. There is no time to lose. Now I have to answer that letter from my cousin.

— Good morning, sir, Stephen said putting the sheets in his pocket. Thank you.

— Not at all, Mr. Deasy said as he searched the papers on his desk. I like to break a lance with you, old as I am.

— Good morning, sir, Stephen said again, bowing again to his bent back.

He went out by the open porch and down the gravel path under the trees, hearing the cries of voices and crack of sticks from the playfield. The lions couchant on the pillars as he passed out through the gate; toothless terrors. Still I will help him in his fight. Mulligan will dub me a new name: the bullockbefriending bard.

— Mr. Dedalus!

Running after me. No more letters, I hope.

— Just one moment.

— Yes, sir, Stephen said, turning hard and swallowing his breath.

— I just wanted to say, he said. Ireland, they say, has the honour of being the only country which never persecuted the jews. Do you know that? No. And do you know why?

He frowned sternly on the bright air.

— Why, sir? Stephen asked, beginning to smile.

— Because she never let them in, Mr. Deasy said solemnly,

A coughball of laughter leaped from his throat dragging after it a rattling chain of phlegm. He turned back quickly, coughing, laughing, his lifted arms waving to the air.

— She never let them in, he cried again through his laughter as he stamped on gaitered feet over the gravel of the path. That's why.

On his wise shoulders through the checkerwork of leaves the sun flung spangles, dancing coins.

(to be continued)

FRAGMENTS

Ben Hecht

THE curious and monotonous mystery of the city lies in my thought like forgotten music.

A man walking here. A man walking there. A horse standing at a curbstone with his head hanging. The oval-tinted face of a woman peering out of a taxi-cab window as it rushes by.

These things multiplied a million times

And the houses. Mile upon mile of houses crowded and flattened, flung about with a certain precision, a geometrical smear.

Mile upon mile of houses shaped like churches, like jails, like cathedrals, like battlements. There are not enough adjectives in my mind to describe them. And yet they are identical as rain.

How many windows are there in the city? Windows through which people sometimes catch cinematographic glimpses of each other.

About these houses there is something which no one has ever said or written.

About these windows there is some weird phrase which has never been born.

Criss cross of streets flanked with houses, stuffed with houses. And the signs lettered on the store window. Names which I have never encountered in fiction.

Names which I find myself curiously trying to memorize.

There is something about the city, the inexhaustible wilderness known as a city, that I would say but it never comes to my tongue. Corners of streets, each a world's end.

I walk through streets gazing with irritation: people and their perpetual houses.

Noting how men and women appear to be going somewhere.

Ah these mysterious destinations as simple as my own. A million simplicities tangled into vastness.

What is there mysterious about me and about that which I know? I move. I have the most obvious of motives.

Homes that are filled with faces I shall never see. Things that are done from moment to moment that I shall never know.

All these haunt me more than the thought of angels in heaven.

I am aware of great and invisible agitations. What this woman dreams. What this man thinks.

Multiplied by a million, and the monotony of it becomes too intricate to penetrate.

There is something about the whole shouting, sweeping interlacing arrangement of eyes and masonry-lettered store windows and moving feet which accompanies me like an unborn dream.

The man walking here. The woman walking there. The crowd. The old horse and the cab which rushes by and carries away the oval-tinted face.

They become a part of my thought.

Multiplied by a million they shift and move within my brain, the simple and insufferable parts of chaos.

Of the Swede and the Dago who are digging in the street as I pass I can make a picture.

They stand beside a fire they have made out of soap boxes to thaw the ground. The flames caught by the wind twist like the scarves of a dancer.

The flames loosed by the wind stretch their innumerable little yellow claws upward in a deft and undulant scratching.

I take a note book from my pocket and write down the line.

The fire is like a little golden fir tree in the night.

If I had time I would also jot down a line about the grave faces of the Dago and the Swede as they look at the soap boxes changing into flame.

Of such things I can make pictures.

In a thousand streets scattered criss cross about and beyond me. Through a thousand buildings. People are moving. One this way. One that way.

My blindness overwhelms me.

I can see only a Dago and a Swede and a fire that made me think of a little golden fir tree and a horse standing at a curbstone with his head hanging.

The sorrow of one horse hanging his head is such a little thing.

Beyond my sight I am conscious of a press, a swarm, a jungle of houses, a wilderness of faces, a monstrous number of thoughts and dreams.

They are everywhere but within the peculiar solitude which I inhabit.

If there were but distance to the city. A horizon to solace the thought. To lend leisure and the placidity of illusion to my dreams. But the solitude of the city is a solitude without horizon. Space without distance. Everything is upon me. I look straight ahead and the broken twisted vista of the city rushes upon me.

A vista lacking infinitude and lacking finalities.

A hundred feet away life is lost in the simple and yet insufferable unknown.

An unknown to which architecture has given angles and dimensions. And yet within them transpire murders and the births of Gods. Dimensions which do not enclose but conceal further that which is naturally hidden.

Such are houses. And streets.

Within them the great multiple of life is forever active. My solitude is a little basket with which I rush from corner to corner.

Each wall, each stone, each face is a guillotine for my eyes.

As blue water lifted into the hand becomes white, the chaos which falls into my little basket of solitude becomes solitude.

That which I seek is forever a part of me. And yet I rush, rush.
The monotonous lust with which the blood pumps in and pumps
out of my heart has its brother lust in my brain which pumps and
pumps its thoughts into the greater and more multiple mechanism
of this unknown.
And the neighborhoods that are always strange like strange countries
with strange peoples when I enter them.
Here is a glistening polished stretch of a street. A street carved
out of stone.
People with the finish of marble.
There a street made out of rags. And the inevitable pretense of
trees, or are they lamp posts?
The lettered windows with some more names I have never seen.
Houses in regimental masonry.
Houses embracing like drunkards. A new man. A new woman. A
new horse.
Again the immobile and perpetual multitude. Again the fragments
of the monstrous multiple.
There is something about them that has never been said.
What is the eternal unknown with its bogymen compared to this
vaster and more perfect physical oblivion?
The monstrous detachment of each tiny thing about me from myself
is greater than the spaces of the stars.
And night. The embrace of unknowns.
I look at lights and down vanishing streets. At shadows which
mock the illusion of emptiness.
The man and the horse and the color of day have disappeared.
They have left behind a pregnancy.
Night. The Madonna of the spaces. The great adjective of dark.
Night. The unknown barbarian.
With the same indefinable and helpless monotony that the waves
hurl themselves onward my thoughts beat from moment to moment
against the night.
Washing tirelessly toward the little lights, the big lights, the smear
and zig zag of lights that men kindle.
Lights in the windows. Lights on the streets. Round bald staring
twinkling lights that are neither signals nor beacons nor the lamps
of Aladdin.
Lights like the light that burns over my head in my room.

These lights are the unknown seen through the black windowed night.

What are the mystic fires that dance and flicker on the hill of dreams to these lights?

Those I can see with my eyes lure me and challenge more than the mystery of sun rising or stars shining.

But those others. Of which I do not even think. Lights behind walls. Behind houses. Around corners.

Who can think of a system of philosophy looking at a light shining from a strange window in the night?

Philosophy—the manners of the soul. The profound and perspiring elimination of adjectives from life.

It yet remains that the little bourgeois family is an infinitesimal through the lighted window.

Ah the monotonous pantomime of figures seen through lighted windows.

The multiple and monstrous pantomime of figures forever unseen.

It yet remains that the little bourgeois family is an infinitesimal fragment of the unknown. The everlasting unknown.

Thought and beauty. These are things which have been done. Things of outline and soul.

There is no room in the unknown for things which have outline or soul.

The unknown contains only that which has never been said or thought.

I seek this in the city. It is forever rushing upon and by me.

I am forever questing the indefinable and unimagined illumination which will make all life a part of my solitude.

Thus in the city there are those without curiosity and who therefore known everything.

The solitude in which they move has horizons.

The unknown exists only for seekers.

He whose imagination like a rat nibbles day after day upon his brain shall know nothing that he wishes to know. Shall see nothing that he would see. He shall know only the hunger and unrest. The hunger and unrest of forgotten music.

IMAGINARY LETTERS

(William Bland Burn to his Wife)

Wyndham Lewis

Petrograd, 28th April 1917.

My dear old Grecian cockshy,

All right, the certain acerbity of tone that has marked our correspondence lately shall cease. But I am much too rough a person ever to settle quite down again. You have really done something unpardonable. You have taken no notice of my most particular protégé. Had you spat on him it would have been less wounding than the exact reception you gave him. In fact, I am not sure that that would not have been the treatment that would have pleased me best.

The motives of your present letter I do not pretend to understand. You say "were quite aware how offensive I could be, just as you were not oblivious to the fact that I was no beauty." Are you trying to get some of your own back? You continue, "It is also quite unnecessary to underline your good points — I am aware of them, too; that is why I married you." When you say, "I rather like your eyes" am I to take that as an insolent thrust, or do you really mean it? I think they are most God-forsaken orbs, but there is no accounting for taste. Perhaps you see points in my horrible "items"? You refer to yourself, my clever spouse, as "the reproducer of Yorke" and assert that as you are not my wife, then there is nothing to be readjusted. You say that Peele is really my wife. Now what may you mean by that? Greek Peele, (a Greek like you) the immaculate nut, the very high-well-born nickel nib of perfection, is the only object I should die for in this world. His blue eyes are violent mirthful fountains that splash out their delicate exaltation. When his eyes are turned into mine, and I look into his, I am nearly suffocated as though water were dashed into my mouth. His red lips make words so beautiful that if I could use the words made by them I could smash the sonnets in an instant: leave gentle Shakes-

peare far behind. His nostrils are little cups from which he sips the air, over delicate crystal. His body is a shining flexible wand, with a million magic properties. But my dear girl, I am not even his friend! If you suggest anything gross, even in fancy, it is a non-sense. Grossness only occurs where — it must. All my grossness is for you, believe me. *All* for you! You are *truly* my wife, my dear.

You, as you say, are the Reproductrice of Yorke—an extremely intelligent Reproductrice; you give one some rude slaps, like a good punching ball.

Now, it is very interesting; I can hardly conceive how we can live together after the horrible quarrel that has suddenly sprung up in the post. If you do not say things, you are not able, properly, to think them. You have said several unacceptable things and although you may never say them again, you will now be able to think them. Up till this time we have both displayed such exceptional delicacy that our relationship has really been very pampered. So I doubt if it can stand the resounding whacks that we have both dealt it. It is at present tottering and squinting at me very like Charlie Chaplin when his opponent gets him on the forehead with a brick. Still, there may be a Chaplinesque recovery!

You're a clever old witch! You sit there calmly with the talkative Yorke and receive my epistles like a volcanic diplomat. The most you do is to dribble a little lava down the otherwise self-possessed pages of your letters. Meantime, I have had no explanation of the genesis of this correspondence. You have always displayed wholesome respect for what I had to say and never certainly have taken the trouble to meddle with the affairs of my mind until I came here. I know that you had the strongest objection to my making this trip. But you never gave me any reason. As soon as I got here you wrote me a careful letter in a different spirit to anything that you had previously shown. Other careful letters followed, all of them aggressive. I just jawed ahead to you in answer to them. Our traditional shyness prevented me from asking you too plainly what had happened. I suggested *villerand* tentatively.

But when I forced your hand and smashed our shyness for good, you answered with a tongue I had had no previous indication that you were ripe to use.

So we'd better have a little more light on the subject before

again building up the necessary wall of reserve.

The Revolution here is on a par with all other contemporary events. I am afraid it will make the War more interminable than ever. All the Jews are mobilized. They march about in huge tribes with banners. They have formed themselves into a sort of Parliament, getting elected all over the place or electing themselves. Someone has published all their real names — a horrible list, calculated to make a pious Ally cross himself. Then a Jew called Lenin has arrived, whose real name is Rosenbauer. He prances all over the place and causes a great deal of confusion. Meantime the Russians come out with their families and watch in astonishment the proceedings of the Jews.

As a matter of fact, there are a good many Russians spouting and flinging themselves about too. But the Jews have easily most of the place in the sun. Now, Jews are a most attractive race. But they are consumed with such an antipathy for this country and show such a strange predilection for Germany in all things and in all places that their spirited intervention is, at this particular moment, unfortunate. Will Russia make a separate peace? — the great question, no doubt, everywhere at present!

I, on the spot, can give no sort of answer. If there were nothing but Russians in Russia, Russia would not.

Things really are in rather a fine state here at present. It is a sort of sociable wilderness. But the bourgeois is bustling. Hard, significant American money is pouring in, rapidly filling up every empty but respectable little pocket. The Jews would never let things stop like *this*, anyway. What will be the upshot of it all here and in other countries? A change for the worse, naturally. Only *more* hypocrisy, confusion and vulgarity. After this war, and the "democratisation" of all countries, no man will ever say what he means, yes, seldomer even than at present. *The thing that is not* will reign in the lands.

So my opinion of this precious revolution is that it will give the War a year or two more life and accelerate, after the war, the cheapening and decay of the earth.

I therefore sally forth daily and watch the manoeuvres of my long-nosed friends with displeasure. A band of big clear-faced child-like soldiers, led by an active little bourgeois officer, counter-

demonstrating, pleases me in a cheerless sort of way. Those brave, handsome, ignorant children are the cream of the world now and when they grow older and thoughtful. Why cannot the *right* words be spoken to them, the *true* words, that would make them see clear to the heart of the huge fudge? They would sweep all this canaille away with one swing of their arm, in every country and possess the earth for a time at least.

But that dream must be abandoned. It is too absurd.

These horrible, imbecile transparent English "labour" men that come over here! I heard one speaking yesterday. He had BOUGHT branded all over him till it was actually fascinating like Pears Soap rings. A Russian when he is bought does not leave the ticket on his new livery! You almost see, with these men, how much they have been paid.

Yours,

BLAND BURN.

20th May, 1917

My dear Lydia,

I have just received your letter telling me that you have sailed for America and intend getting a divorce there. You seem to be putting yourself to a great deal of inconvenience. Are not these things generally arranged without such a pronounced displacements. But I am sure you know best in all matters of that sort.

You tell me that you were made for me, as a wife: especially made, at great expense, I presume. You say that I could have been as outrageous as I pleased if I had left you a sort of little Robinson Crusoe Island above the raging flood. You say that you loved me, but that you have removed all you love, with great *care*, to other climes, where you will in due time decide what is to be done with it. Meanwhile, as a paradoxical set-off to these statements, you inform me that Yorke is not my child. Adulteress! Abominable adulteress! Now what am I to believe? I suspect all your stuff about your love to be a crafty and vindictive setting for this shaking and shameless news.

You have taken Yorke with you. I am not going helter-skelter in pursuit.

To mix me more, to weaken the testimony of my boasted hall

mark, and make a Slingsby baby of the genuine Yorke, you conclude your letter: "Cannot you think of *anyone else* with a large bottom?" — I cannot — that you would commit adultery with. So I presume you are fooling. I believe you are still in London.

Yours,

BLAND BURN.

(to be concluded)

WOMEN AND MEN

Ford Madox Hueffer

III

DR. WEININGER in his long book against women tilts not against any recorded woman, not against and woman that he ever met or against any individual who is chronicled in history. No, he sets up a simulacrum, a being that never was either upon the land or in the sea. He sets up the Eternal Feminine — an indefinable, incomprehensible entity whom he proclaims, after having set it up, to be incapable of any human function save that of motherhood. For motherhood he entertains a profound contempt *

It is rather touching to consider in this connection that the last writing of Schopenhauer was a short poem in praise of the Virgin Mary as the symbol of maternity. But no doubt Dr. Wein-

* "There is an unbreakable link between the mother and child, physical, like the cord that united the two before childbirth. This is the real nature of the maternal relation; and for my part, I protest against the fashion in which it is praised, its very indiscriminate character being made a merit. I believe myself that many great artists have recognised this, but have chosen to be silent about it. The extraordinary over-praising of Raphael is losing ground and the singers of maternal love are no higher than Fishchart or Richepin."

inger did not read Schopenhauer as attentively as all that comes to.

What then does this subtle and intangible simulacrum of Femininity amount to? No one has seen her; no one has given her a name; no one has touched her. She is as elusive as the Holy Grail as to which even the knights who sought it through the ages were uncertain whether it was the divine blood or the vessel which contained it. She is, the stype of the Eternal Feminine, as vanished as the lost continent of Atlantes or the islands of the Hesperides. Of this Unknown Woman we have no clear conception. Weininger wrote her down as *W x*, and we all of us have a strong conception of her negatives. We all of us know what she isn't. Thus she isn't truthful, isn't steadfast; isn't strong — can't in fact be trusted not to read our postcards.

But when it comes to defining what she *is* we have none of us the vaguest settled idea. We have ideas that are constantly or that are very infrequently being unsettled. It is a matter of one sex passion or another. The men who talk about women are men rendered sensitive to some individual by the passion of love or by the passion of jealousy. The women who talk about women are women rendered sensitive by the passion of jealousy or the passion of greed. Otherwise we all live together without troubling very much about the complementary sex. If we are men, we might, supposing us to be roused to it — we might venture some vague generalities as to women. Supposing us to be women in a similar way we might utter some vague generalities as to men. We might say that you can never trust a man when he is out of your sight, although every woman is constantly — and with perfect rightness trusting some man or other who may be leagues away.

In a small way Dr. Weininger analyses the entity of one woman; persistently Schopenhauer analysed the characters of his mother and of his housekeeper. Heine on the other hand projected for us quite a number of entirely different individuals who happened to attract him. So did Shakespeare; so did George Meredith who is said to be the greatest portrayer of women that the world has ever seen.

But there cannot be any doubt that the great bulk of humanity is entirely indifferent to the subject. It thinks it isn't but it is. It is indifferent to this extent:

Every man or every woman of the modern world has a certain

number — usually a very limited number — of passionate experiences. During those moments of passion the man or the woman will be alive to the member of the opposite sex who for the time being attracts him. He or she may or may not be alive to any members of either sex who stand in the way or who help him or her to attain to the satisfaction of his or her desires. But, once those desires are satisfied the curiosity dies down. It is dead until a new passion is awakened. Thus, the normal human being, being reasonably constant, the amount of curiosity as to the opposite sex — the amount of time during which this curiosity prevails — is by comparison very short indeed.

The period, of course, varies in different nations and it is difficult to arrive at any data other than those afforded by public statistics, which, in the nature of things, ignore psychology. But roughly speaking in England the average marrying age is 24 and the number of divorce cases is about three per cent of the marriages that take place. Supposing then the average age of puberty to be fourteen, we may take it that the duration of curiosity as to the opposite sex is about ten years of a man or a woman's life, and, putting the average duration of life throughout the western world at sixty years we find that the actual duration of personal curiosity as to either opposing sex is about $\frac{1}{6}$ — 16.6% of the total duration of life*.

In the remaining 83.3% of our lives we are as a rule not prompted to any special curiosity as to members of the opposite sex.

* I am of course aware that these figures, though they are statistically correct, are not really to be relied upon as a statement of fact. But they are really nearer the mark than some observers might hastily conclude. For instance in almost every civilised country there is a more or less great outcry to the effect that divorce is greatly on the increase and this is held to be evidence of the fact that all civilised nations are indulging in what is generally called a pandemonium of vice, or of what, for the purposes of this argument, it is more scientific to term sexual curiosity. But if the reader will consider the immense industrial population of England, the equally immense agricultural populations of Germany, France, and Russia, not to mention the United States — to these almost un-numbered millions of men and women who are much too hard worked to indulge in any kind of pandemonium, or indeed in any kind of mental curiosity at all — the reader will perceive how unconsidered any such verdict must

And during our periods of quiescence, of normality, we have whether of Women or of Men our indefinite vision of the Eternal Feminine or of the Egregious Male only our indefinite image. Of course there are men who are perpetually interested in the chase after new women just as there are women who only become alive when a man is in the room. And indeed I have generally heard it observed that English women are vastly more interested in men than are their German sisters, just as French women are said to be more interested in men than are the English. And indeed, as far as my personal observation has gone I am inclined to agree with this general impression. Nevertheless in each case the approximate result is the same. The view that the English woman has of "a Man" may differ from those of the French, the Germans or the Russians, but it is nevertheless largely a view of an object that never existed — a view of an abstraction.

And there are of course a great many abstractions. There is no knowing what type of Abstract Man you will not, if you are a woman, select as your normal male being. Supposing that, in the home of your childhood the particular "He" was always being held up to you, by your mother, your nurse and your female servants, as somebody gross, negligent, self indulgent — the person who always left his slippers in the drawing room. In that case the odds are that you will for the rest of your life regard the normal man as something clumsy, stupid and wanting in what you will consider to be female fineness, delicacy and intuition. ,

And this will be your normal vision of Man. From time to time you will be in the quickened condition in which you will really pay some attention to the idiosyncrasies of some few particular men. Roughly speaking, while you are at your boarding or your high school you will find prevailing among your school-fellows an extraordinary, a vivid curiosity not so much regarding the nature of men as regarding the mysteries of sex. This curiosity you may or you may not share, but whether you share it or no you will have

be, so that the figures I have quoted may stand as a convenient image for the comprehension of an almost indisputable fact. Of course the marriage age is much later in Germany, just as the age of puberty arrives earlier in the more Southern Countries of Europe. But, one contention pulling one way and another another, the image remains fairly unaffected.

no means of satisfying it. Your mother will hardly give you any details and certainly not your father. In the nature of things you will be kept more or less rigidly from contact with the male animal. You may or may not know a certain number of the animal called boys. Possibly, if you go to foreign convent school you may have waved your handkerchief to the boys in the gymnasium opposite. You may have or you may not, but you will be aware that some such practice exists among the more "fast" girls of the schools. But, even supposing that a boy, having thrown a note over the convent wall or whatever happens to take the place of the convent wall in surrounding you — and supposing that you actually make the acquaintance of the human boy you will not really begin your investigations of the male. You will gather certain definite facts, such as that a boy will offer you chocolate creams that he takes out of his trouser pockets. In the same pocket he will probably have a large clasp knife, a ball of string, several coppers, a number of horse chestnuts for playing the game called conkers and several pieces of slate pencil. But this will not strike you as necessary evidence of untidyness, for in your own pocket you also will have chocolate creams, a silver pencil case, a handkerchief, a little note book, a fountain pen and no doubt two or three hair pins with which you will have been making surreptitious and premature experiments in what is known as "putting your hair up."

You will hear from your school mates that the creatures called "Boys" are something different from yourself, but actually you will not observe much difference. You will not, I mean, observe it for yourself. Of course there will be the obvious difference of trousers and skirts. But, if you inquire into the differences of life and character — which you will probably not do — you will observe that the human boy is very much like yourself. Nowadays he plays cricket when you play cricket and football when you play hockey. In your classes you will read precisely the same text books as he, you will go in for the same junior examinations; you will bird's nest when he bird's nests, you will collect stamps when he collects stamps, you will probably be a little more advanced in your studies. You will probably be in the lower fourth while he is still in the upper third. You will probably hear with resentment that he regards you with traditional contempt, saying that you are "soft". You will probably on these occasions want to get at a boy

of your own size and weight. But on the rare occasions when you really do have a fight with a boy you will find that you are severely handicapped. He can always pull your long hair.

He probably will pull your hair and this is almost the only lasting impression that you will get of the human male until you leave school. You will remain under that impression; it will continue deep down in you for long afterwards — the impression that boys do not fight fair. I do not know whether you are in the right or in the wrong in having this idea. It is, you see, a matter of standards. Civilised nations do not use dum-dum bullets against civilised nations, but they do against savages. And I fancy that the nicest boy in the world would imagine that any girl who could really tackle *him* must be an unnatural sort of animal. He would consider her as a sort of wild cat, who had to be killed somehow. Nothing in the world would persuade this boy to depart from the absolute strictness of the Queensberry rules if he were fighting against another boy, even if the other boy were twice his size. Why I remember fighting an immense boy from another school; he must have been at least sixteen when I was twelve. I stood up and was knocked down. But it never entered my head during the thirty-five minutes that the contest lasted that I had such a thing as feet or nails or that he had such a thing as a "wind" beneath which to strike or hair that one could pull. I couldn't have done it; it would have been unthinkable. Nevertheless I am quite certain that, had one of my female cousins of about the same age dared to stand up to me I should have kicked her.

So that, according to his own lights the boy who pulled your hair probably considered that he was fighting with a most perfect fairness. You see, you were a sort of outlaw; a slave that had ventured to rebel. Nevertheless it is probable that, as a result of your school experiences you carried away, deep seated in you, the idea that the young male creature does not fight fair. Then you went to Girton or to Newnham. Here you made acquaintance, more deeply with History which is the history of men. Rioting through the long tale of this history you perceived every kind of falsehood, every kind of treachery; every kind of murder, every kind of greed. It did not matter whether it was the Biblical Hebrews triumphing, in the name of Jehovah, by every kind of fraud, guile, deceit or treachery. It didn't matter whether it was the Romans triumphing

similarly in the name of the God Quirinus. It didn't matter whether it was the Danes murdering the Anglo-Saxons while they sat at dinner with them: or the Saxons stabbing Danes whilst they sat on horseback drinking their own guest cups before their own door. You perceived Richard III murder his nephews; you perceived Henry of Windsor murder wives, murder protestants, murder Catholics, in the name of God; you perceived the Church of England founded on a king's desire for adultery.

You perceived the massacres of St. Bartholomew: you perceived all the treacheries of Marlborough, of Condé of Turenne, of Wallenstein, of Marshal Saxe, of Frederick the Great, of Napoleon, of Napoleon III of Bismark — and even of Nelson in the Carracioli affair. You will perceive divinely gifted statesmen like Burleigh forging letters, forging whole plots that never existed in order to murder Queens, nobles, priests and commoners who had never plotted. Every unthinkable wrong you will perceive to flourish and to be justified in the pages of History. So you might get some idea of what man is; for all these things will have been done not by your own sex but by men. You will read too of Katharine of Russia, of Katharine de Medici, of Lucrecia Borgia, of Elizabeth of England — and you might reflect that your own sex has produced monsters equalling Richard III, Peter the Great or Nero. But these reflections will not enter you head for at about this time you will be getting ready to sing in whatever language God has given you: with whatever voice God has blessed you — you will be getting ready to sing, to some tune or other:

“Er der herrlichste von allen” . . .

Then for a time you will really begin to observe some of the particularities of some member of the opposite sex. You may not, like the ecstatic German young lady, observe that he is so mild and so good; that he has a pure mind, flashing eyes, a steadfast intelligence and a never failing courage. But you will at least observe that he has likes and dislikes. He may prefer white enamelled walls to Morris wall papers. He may prefer whitebait to lobster. He may prefer mountains to flat scenery, Henry IV. to Queen Elizabeth, Velasquez to Raphael, Browning to Victor Hugo or Strauss who wrote “The Blue Danube” to Strauss who wrote “Also sprach Zarathustra”.

Your actual mental process will be somewhat as follows. You will notice the likes and dislikes of the man in whom you are inter-

ested. And you will put it down as "masculine" to like whitebait, mountains and Velasquez. But that will not make much impression on your underlying mind — the mind that tells you that all men have inherited the characteristics that your mother ascribed to your father.

The period of courtship being accompanied by various derangements of the nerves that are due to material and physical conditions, you will observe in your man certain greater or less manifestations of irritability and of unreasonableness. You will also observe, if he is at all worth having as a suitor, a tendency to grandiloquence, to boastfulness that almost amounts to megalomania. He will offer you the stars, a peerage or an illustrious future such as his present circumstances render in no way probable. You will as likely as not deduce from this fact the generalization that all men are boastful or at least are visionary creatures. Or it might be more exact to say that your lover's charming visions, chronic as they are to such a period of human existence — that these visions you will not immediately notice as displeasing. On the contrary you will probably like them. But later in life when the poor man does not bring the stars, the peerage or even the bower of bliss, you will confirm in your own mind the generally accepted dictum of your sex — that all men are outrageously boastful. And, when that normal state has once more reasserted itself, on every occasion in which the poor man fails to carry out any plan, even if it be a half-formed plan, you will add one more instance to the others. Supposing, that upon the Monday he says that it would be nice to go to the theatre on Friday. Supposing that when Friday comes he finds himself detained at the office by a piece of work that will enable him to add the £4,000 to your common stock. Or supposing that in January he says that he will take you to the Riviera in November, whereas in November his uncle dies, leaving him the heir to a large estate so that he has to stop in England to arrange for the funeral and the succession duties. What will be your state of mind? It will be as follows to all intents and purposes. You will not particularly observe that your man has gained the £4,000 or the succession to the estate. In your mind that will be perfectly normal and no more than you had expected of him. But the fact that he didn't take you to that theatre on the Friday or to the Riviera in November — those facts will remain in your mind. They will go to building up one large proposition — that all men

are unreliable. Perhaps your own particular man will not leave his slippers in the drawing room. But that you will regard as an exception. Perhaps even he will make a wonderfully brilliant career. But the most brilliant of careers comes so slowly and seems so natural in its coming that you will hardly observe it. You will be engaged on a long journey through the deserts of life with this solitary companion. You will remember as a rule when he fails to please you and you will put that down to his sex. On the other hand you will ignore the fact that he keeps you throughout your life in a standard of very decent comfort that you do nothing in the world to earn. You will ignore the fact that he is frequently kind, generous, considerate and even delicate in his attentions to you. He may bring you a bunch of violets every evening on his return from work. He may present you with a valuable bracelet on every anniversary of your wedding day. He may deprive himself for life of the pleasure of listening to music because music gives you a headache. But all these things you will say are just his duty: you will pay no attention to them. But supposing that he should ever omit any one of these things. Then immediately you would say:

“He is like all the rest of his sex — utterly unrefined.”

And what you will mean is that he has no sense of discernment or he would have known how bitterly your delicate female soul would be grieved by his omitting to bring you that bunch of violets.

Of course, during all this time he will be doing exactly the same by you and, if you are not exceptionally lucky, you will find that by the time you have been married 15 years there will have grown up between you a sort of dull, uninterested sex bitterness so that whatever your man may do to irritate you, you will say:

“What can you expect? He is a man.” And whatever you may do to irritate him he will say:

“What can you expect? She is a woman.” Whereas actually since God made us all and the world is a trying place we are most of us poor people trying to make the best of a bad job.

Of course, in making the foregoing projection I have had to fix my “You” in some sort of class position and nation. And, as presumably most of my readers will approximate to the English more or less comfortable and moer or less cultured classes, I have spoken of you as if you belonged to those classes. But, with the

necessary changes in sums of money, in the names of educational establishments and of the times of life something very similar could be written of almost every class and of almost every country of western Europe. You may not go to Girton, you may go instead to a college for shorthand or into domestic service: you may become the secretary to a poet or a waitress in a restaurant. And these changes may work very wide alterations in your psychology. But they will only do this if you are altogether an exception. For unless you are such an exception your daily work will dull and obscure your faculties of observation.

Let us suppose that you are a waitress in a city tea-shop. Upon the face of it one might imagine that you would acquire an extraordinary knowledge of masculine idiosyncrasies but you will not. All that you will acquire is the knowledge of the outsides of a number of gentlemen, one of whom you will almost certainly marry before you have been a year at work.*

And as a matter of fact though these waitresses see a perpetual stream of men their generalizations are almost invariably much more rapid than those of the average child in a convent. I have taken the trouble to talk to a number of girls of this class and the most original observation that I gathered upon the subject was!

"Gentlemen are so impatient!" And this was from a handsome young lady who had sat on the marble table, looking over her shoulder at me and telling me how much or how little she liked the various musical comedies that were running in London at that time. This agreeable conversation had lasted six minutes by the clock when a tired clerk sitting opposite us rang the bell on his table with considerable energy. Then my handsome young friend slipped down from my table and strolled disdainfully in his direction, remarking as she went:

"Gentlemen are so impatient! What does he want to ring his bell like that for?"

Of course it is very possible that this comparatively sexless intercourse between the sexes may lead to more rational views in these matters. In one way and another I have employed a large

* The statistics of one of the great London Tea Companies show that their waitresses—to the extent of 92%—marry customers within twelve months of their engagement.

number of female secretaries and I have had at one time and another a large number of friends who employed such helps in their daily work. And I have found almost invariably that, though the quite untried members of this class — those who came to me or to my friends as a first engagement — although these manifested the usual feminine habit of dividing mankind into “gentlemen” and ladies,” as the years went on or even as the weeks went on these mental divisions faded away in their minds so that the most experienced secretary that I ever employed — one that had served from fifteen to twenty writers of both sexes — had practically forgotten that there was any difference between the sexes. Some writers wrote faster than others; some had given her only notes for the letters she had had to take down: others had dictated them word for word: some had given her good lunches, some bad, some none at all. But she was not prepared in the least to differentiate between the men and the women as regards such things as mental or physical tidyness. Of course some of the men had tried to make love to her, but that was practically the whole difference, as it is to my mind, the whole real difference between the sexes. And, in the few male secretaries I have known who acted both for men and women they have always told me that exactly the same impression remained in their minds.

There was for instance Mr. A who has acted as secretary to four women writers and journalists and to three men, as well as in two political households where both husband and wife used him for their social and political correspondence. Mr. A. was of opinion that in all matters connected with their work the six women were all of them more business-like, more regular in their hours and less erratic than the three solitary men for whom he had worked. These three men were, two of them authors and the third a stock broker. The stock broker was a hopeless case — nervous, irritable, inconsiderate and as childishly vain as a fashionable pianist. In one of the lockers at his office this gentleman kept a complete assortment of toilet superfluities — curling tongs and pomades for his moustache, sets of manicure implements and even a pair of stays, for such occasions as when he was forced to dress at his office for a city dinner. The stock broker, in fact, exactly resembled what is called a spoiled woman. But he was the only person of Mr. A's eleven, whose identity really stuck out in Mr. A's mind. The other ten were

just people. Of course they were moderately distinguished or they would not have needed to employ Mr. A. And being moderately distinguished people they had of course their idiosyncrasies. One of the male politicians suffered very badly from headaches, and one of the woman writers smoked more perpetually than any man Mr. A. had ever met. But, in the whole ruck of them they were just people.

I do not wish to build too much upon these particular instances, or rather, I do not wish to avoid looking in the face certain objections that may be made to them as instances going to confirm the theory that by this time I must have made obvious to my reader. The theory is that instead of this Western world being made up of two opposing bands, distinguished from each other in morals, ethics, points of view, habits of mind and ideas of honour and dishonour — that we are all just people, distinguished from each other by the functions that we perform in society. Let me put the idea in as concrete a form as is practicable. Consider, let us say an English business woman. She will be much more like an English man of business in her habits and her outlook than a German man of business engaged in the same type of work. That is to say that, supposing the pursuits of the individuals to be the same, the differences between national characteristics will be much greater than the difference between the sexes. And if this is the case — I shall of course return to these matters more fully later on — if this be the case, then, the difference between the sexes must be very small in all the aspects of life that are not immediately sexual or connected with sex passions. Roughly speaking, what I mean to say is, that, what we have always been taught to regard as the difference between sexes is very little more actually than the difference between employments. And this is true in the popular point of view — for few men will deny that barbers or waiters are just as effeminate as any woman.

(To be continued)

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