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De Gourmont: A Distinction
Ezra Pound

M. De Gourmont and the Problem of Beauty
Frederic Manning

"Le Latin Mystique"
T. T. Clayton

De Gourmont — Yank
John Rodker

De Gourmont after the Interim
Richard Aldington

Décor Banal
Richard Aldington

Advice to a Hornèd Toad
Maxwell Bodenheim

Three Professional Studies
William Carlos Williams

On Joyce's "Exiles"
A. C. B. and jh.

The Death of Vorticism
E. P.

Mary Olivier: A Life
May Sinclair

Ulysses, Episode VIII
James Joyce

That International Episode
Edgar Jepson and jh.

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DE GOURMONT: A DISTINCTION
(followed by notes)
Ezra Pound

THE MIND of Rémy de Gourmont was less like the mind of Henry James than any contemporary mind I can think of. James’ drawing of moeurs contemporaines was so circumstantial, so concerned with the setting, with detail, nuance, social aroma, that his transcripts were “out of date” almost before his books had gone into a second edition; out of date, that is, in the sense that his interpretations of society could never serve as a guide to such supposititious utilitarian members of the next generation as might so desire to use them.

He has left his scene and his characters unalterable as the little paper flowers permanently visible inside the lumpy glass paperweights. He was a great man of letters, a great artist in portrayal, he was concerned with mental temperatures, circumvolvulous social pressures, the clash of contending conventions, as Hogarth with the cut of contemporary coats.

On no occasion would any man of my generation have broached an intimate idea to H. J., or to Thomas Hardy, O. M., or, years since, to Swinburne, or even to Mr. Yeats with any feeling that the said idea was likely to be received, grasped, comprehended. However much one may have admired Yeats’ poetry; however much one may have been admonished by Henry James’ prose works, one has never thought of agreeing with either.

You could, on the other hand, have said to De Gourmont anything that came into your head; you could have sent him anything you had written with a reasonable assurance that he would have known what you were driving at. If this distinction is purely my own, and subjective, and even if it be wholly untrue, one will be very hard pressed to find any other man born in the “fifties” of whom it is even suggestible.
De Gourmont prepared our era; behind him there stretches a limitless darkness; there was the counter-reformation, still extant in the English printer; there was the restoration of the inquisition by the Catholic Roman Church, holy and apostolic, in the year of grace 1824; there was the Mephistopheles period, morals of the opera left over from the Spanish XVIIth. century plays of "capa y espada"; Don Juan for subject matter, etc.; there was the period of English Christian bigotry, Saml. Smiles exhibition of '51 ("centennial of '76"), machine-made building "ornament" etc., enduring in the people who did not read Saml. Butler; there was the Emerson-Tennysonian plus optimism period; there was the "aesthetic" era during which people "wrought" as the impeccable Beerbohm has noted; there was the period of funny symboliste trappings, "sin", satanism, rosy cross, heavy lilies, Jersey Lilies, etc.,

"Ch'hanno perduto il ben del intelletto"
— all these periods had mislaid the light of the XVIIIth. century; though in the symbolistes Gourmont had his beginning.

II.

In contradiction to, in wholly antipodal distinction from Henry James, De Gourmont was an artist of the nude. He was an intelligence almost more than an artist; when he portrays, he is concerned with hardly more than the permanent human elements. His people are only by accident of any particular era. He is poet, more by possessing a certain quality of mind than by virtue of having written fine poems; you could scarcely contend that he was a novelist.

He was intensely aware of the differences of emotional timbre; and as a man's message is precisely his façon de voir, his modality of apperception, this particular awareness was his "message".

Where James is concerned with the social tone of his subjects, with their entourage, with their superstes of dogmatized "form", ethic, etc., De Gourmont is concerned with their modality and resonance in emotion.

"Mauve" "Fanette", "Neobelle", "La Vierge aux Platres," are all studies in different permanent kinds of people; they are not the results of environments or of "social causes", their circumstance is an accident and is on the whole scarcely alluded to. Gourmont differentiates his characters by the modes of their sensibility, not by sub-degrees of their state of civilization.
He recognizes the right of individuals to feel differently. Confucian, Epicurean, a considerer and entertainer of ideas, this complicated sensuous wisdom is almost the one ubiquitous element, the "self" which keeps his superficially heterogeneous work vaguely "unified".

The study of emotion does not follow a set chronological arc; it extends from the "Physique de l'Amour" to "Le Latin Mystique"; from the condensation of Fabre's knowledge of insects to "Amas ut facias pulchram" in the Sequaire of Goddeschalk (in "Le Latin Mystique").

He had passed the point where people take abstract statement of dogma for "enlightenment". An "idea" has little value apart from the modality of the mind which receives it. It is a railway from one state to another, and as dull as steel rails in a desert.

The emotions are equal before the aesthetic judgment. He does not grant the duality of body and soul, or at least suggests that this mediaeval duality is unsatisfactory; there is an interpenetration, an osmosis of body and soul, at least for hypothesis. "My words are the unspoken words of my body".

And in all his exquisite treatment of all emotion he will satisfy many whom August Strindberg, for egregious example, will not. From the studies of insects to Christine evoked from the thoughts of Diomède, sex is not a monstrosity or an exclusively German study.* And the entire race is not bound to the habits of the mantis or of other insects equally melodramatic. Sex, in so far as it is not a purely physiological reproductive mechanism lies in the domain of aesthetics, the junction of tactile and magnetic senses; as some people have accurate ears both for rhythm and for pitch, and as some are tone deaf, some impervious to rhythmic subtlety and variety, so in this other field of the senses some desire the trivial, some the processional, the stately, the master-work.

As some people are good judges of music, and insensible to painting and sculpture, so the fineness of one sense entails no corresponding fineness in another, or at least no corresponding critical perception of differences.

*Foot-note: "A German study, Hobson, a German study." —"Tarr".
Emotions to Henry James were more or less things that other people had and that one didn’t go into; at any rate not in drawing rooms. The gods had not visited James, and the Muse whom he so frequently mentions appeared doubtless in corsage, the narrow waist, the sleeves puffed at the shoulders, à la mode 1890-2.

De Gourmont is interested in hardly anything save emotions, and the ideas that will go into them, or take life in emotional application. (Apperceptive rather than active.)

One reads “LES CHEVAUX DE DIOMEDE” (1897) as one would have listened to incense in the old Imperial court. There are many spirits incapable. De Gourmont calls it a “romance of possible adventures”; it might be called equally an aroma, the fragrance of roses and poplars, the savour of wisdoms, not part of the canon of literature, a book like “Daphnis and Chloe” or like Marcel Schwob’s “Livre de Monelle”; not a solidarity like Flaubert; but an osmosis, a pervasion.

“My true life is in the unspoken words of my body.”

In “UNE NUIT AU LUXEMBOURG”, the characters talk at more length, and the movement is less convincing. “Diomède” was De Gourmont’s own favourite and we may take it as the best of his art, as the most complete expression of his particular “facon d’apercevoir”; if, even in it, the characters do little but talk philosophy, or rather drift into philosophic expression out of a haze of images, they are for all that very real. It is the climax of his method of presenting characters differentiated by emotional timbre, a process which had begun in “HISTOIRES MAGIQUES” (1895); and in “D’UN PAYS LOINTAIN” (published 1898, in reprint from periodicals of 1892-4).

“SONGE D’UNE FEMME” (1899) is a novel of modern life, De Gourmont’s sexual intelligence, as contrasted to Strindberg’s sexual stupidity, well in evidence. The work is untranslatable into English, but should be used before thirty by young men who have been during their undergraduate days too deeply inebriated with the Vita Nuova.

“Tout ce qui se passe dans la vie, c’est de la mauvaise littérature.”

“La vraie terre natale est celle où on a eu sa première émotion forte.”
"La virginité n’est pas une vertu, c’est un état; c’est une sous-division des couleurs."

Livres de chevet for those whom the Strindbergian school will always leave aloof.

"Les imbéciles ont choisi le beau comme les oiseaux choisissent ce qui est gras. La bêtise leur sert de cornes."

"COEUR VIRGINAL" (1907) is a light novel, amusing, and accurate in its psychology.

I do not think it possible to overemphasize Gourmont’s sense of beauty. The mist clings to the lacquer. His spirit was the spirit of Omakitsu; his pays natal was near to the peach-blossom-fountain of the untranslatable poem. If the life of Diomède is overdone and done badly in modern Paris, the wisdom of the book is not thereby invalidated. It may be that Paris has need of some more Spartan corrective, but for the descendants of witch-burners Diomède is a needful communication.

IV.

As Voltaire had been a needed light in the 18th. century, so in our time Fabre and Fraser have been essentials in the mental furnishings of any contemporary mind qualified to write of ethics or philosophy or that mixed molasses religion. "The Golden Bough" has supplied the data which Voltaire’s incisions had shown to be lacking. It has been a positive succeeding his negative. It is not necessary perhaps to read Fabre and Fraser entire, but one must be aware of them; people unaware of them invalidate all their own writing by simple ignorance, and their work goes ultimately to the scrap heap.

"PHYSIQUE DE L’AMOUR" (1903) should be used as a text book of biology. Between this biological basis in instinct, and the "Sequaire of Goddeschalk" in "Le Latin Mystique" (1892) stretch Gourmont’s studies of amour and aesthetics. If in Diomède we find an Epicurean receptivity, a certain aloofness, an observation of contacts and auditions, in contrast to the Propertian attitude:

Ingenium nobis ipsa puella facit,

this is perhaps balanced by
"Sans vous, je crois bien que je n'aimerais plus beau-
coup et que je n'aurais plus une extrême confiance ni dans
la vie ni dans moi-même." (in "Lettres à l'Amazone").

But there is nothing more unsatisfactory than saying that De
Gourmont "had such and such ideas" or held "such and such views",
the thing is that he held ideas, intuitions, perceptions in a certain
personal exquisite manner. In a criticism of him, "criticism" be-
ing an over violent word, in, let us say, an indication of him, one
wants merely to show that one has oneself made certain dissocia-
tions; as here, between the aesthetic receptivity of tactile and mag-
netic values, of the perception of beauty in these relationships, and
the conception of love, passion, emotion as an intellectual instiga-
tion; such as Propertius claims it; such as we find it declared in
the King of Navarre's

"De fine amor vient science et beauté";

and constantly in the troubadours.

(I cannot repeat too often that there was a profound psycholo-
gical knowledge in mediaeval Provence, however gothic its expres-
sion; that men, concentrated on certain validities, attaining an exact
and diversified terminology, have there displayed considerable pene-
tration; that this was carried into early Italian poetry; and faded
from it when metaphors became decorative instead of interpretative;
and that the age of Aquinas would not have tolerated sloppy ex-
pression of psychology concurrent with the exact expression of "mys-
ticism". There is also great wisdom in Ovid. Passons!)

De Gourmont's wisdom is not wholly unlike the wisdom which
those ignorant of Latin may, if the gods favour their understanding,
derive from Golding's "Metamorphoses".

v.

Barbarian ethics proceed by general taboos. Gourmont's es-
says collected into various volumes, "Promenades", "Epilogues",
etc., are perhaps the best introduction to the ideas of our time
that any unfortunate, suddenly emerging from Peru, Peoria, Osh-
kosh, Iceland, Kochin or other out of the way lost continent could
desire. A set of Landor's collected works will go further towards
civilizing a man than any university education now on the market.
Montaigne condensed renaissance awareness. Even so small a
collection as Lionel Johnson's "Post Liminium" might save a man from utter barbarity.

But if, for example, a raw graduate were contemplating a burst into intellectual company, he would be less likely to utter unutterable bêtises, gaffes, etc., after reading Gourmont than before. One cannot of course create intelligence in a numbskull.

Needless to say, Gourmont's essays are of uneven value as the necessary subject matter is of uneven value. Taken together, proportionately placed in his work, they are a portrait of the civilized mind. I incline to think them the best portrait available, the best record that is of the civilized mind from 1885-1915.

There are plenty of people who do not know what the civilized mind is like, just as there are plenty of mules in England who did not read Landor contemporaneously, or who did not in his day read Montaigne. Civilisation is individual.

Gourmont arouses the senses of the imagination, preparing the mind for receptivities. His wisdom, if not of the senses, is at any rate via the senses. We base our "science" on perceptions, but our ethics have not yet attained this palpable basis.

In 1898, "PAYS LOINTAIN", reprinted from magazine publication of 1892-4). De Gourmont was beginning his method:

"Douze crimes pour l'honneur de l'infini".

He treats the special case, cases as special as any of James', but segregated on different demarcative lines. His style had attained the vividness of

"Sa vocation était de paraître malheureuse, de passer dans la vie comme une ombre gémissant, d'inspirer de la pitié, du doute et de l'inquiétude. Elle avait toujours l'air de porter des fleurs vers une tombe abandonnée." — "La Femme en Noir".

In "HISTOIRES MAGIQUES" (1894): "La Robe Blanche", "Yeux d'eau" "Marguerite Rouge", "Soeur de Sylvie", "Danaette" are all of them special cases, already showing his preception of neurosis, of hyperaesthesia. His mind is still running on tonal variations in "Les Litanies de la Rose".

"Pourtant il y a des yeux au bout des doigts".

"Femmes, conservatrices des traditions millésiennes".
"EPILOGUES" 1895—98. Pleasant rereading, a book to leave lying about, to look back into at odd half hours. A book of accumulations. Full of meat as a good walnut.

Heterogeneous as the following paragraphs:

"Ni la croyance en un seul Dieu, ni la morale ne sont les fondements vrais de la religion. Une religion, même le Christianisme, n'eut jamais sur les moeurs qu'une influence dilatoire, l'influence d'un bras levé; elle doit recommencer son prêche, non pas seulement avec chaque génération humaine, mais avec chaque phase d'une vie individuelle. N'apportant pas des vérités évidentes en soi, son enseignement oublié, elle ne laisse rien dans les âmes que l'effroi du peut-être et la honte d'être asservi à une peur ou à une espérance dont les chaînes fantômales entravent non pas nos actes mais nos désirs."

"L'essence d'une religion, c'est sa littérature. Or la littérature religieuse est morte." — Religions.

"Je veux bien que l'on me protège contre des ennemis inconnus, l'escarpe ou le cambrioleur, — mais contre moi-même, vices ou passions, non." — Madame Boulton.

"Si le cosmopolitisme littéraire gagnait encore et qu'il réussit à éteindre ce que les différences de race ont allumé de haine de sang parmi les hommes, j'y verrais un gain pour la civilisation et pour l'humanité tout entière." — Cosmopolitisme.

"Augier! Tous les lucratifs rêves de la bourgeoise économe; tous les soupirs des vierges confortables; toutes les réticences des consciences soignées; toutes les joies permises aux ventres prudents; toutes les veuleries des bourses craintives; tous les siphons conjugal; toutes les envies de la robe montante contre les épaules nues; toutes les haines du waterproof contre la grâce et contre la beauté! Augier, crinoline, parapluiue, bec-de-corbin, bonnet grec... — Augier.

"Dieu aime la mélodie grégorienne, mais avec modéréaton. Il a soin de varier le programme quotidien des concerts célestes, dont le fond reste le plain-chant lithurgique, par des auditions de Bach, Mozart, Haendel, Hayden, "et même Gounod". Dieu ignore Wagner, mais il aime la variété." — Le Dieu des Belges.
"La propriété n’est pas sacrée; elle n’est qu’un fait acceptable comme nécessaire au développement de la liberté individuelle".

"L’abominable loi des cinquante ans — contre laquelle Proudhon lutta en vain si courageusement — commence à faire sentir sa tyrannie. La veuve de M. Dumas a fait interdire la reprise d’Anthony. Motif: son bon plaisir. Des caprices d’héritiers peuvent d’un jour à l’autre nous priver pendant cinquante ans de toute une oeuvre."

"Demain les œuvres de Renan, de Taine, de Verlaine, de Villiers peuvent appartenir à un curé fanatique ou à une dévote stupide." — La Propriété Littéraire.

"M. Desjardins, plus modeste, inaugure la morale artistique et murale, secondé par l’excellent M. Puvis de Chavannes qui n’y comprend rien, mais s’avoue tout de même bien content de figurer sur les murs." — U. P. A. M.


"Le citoyen est une variété de l’Homme; variété dégénérée ou primitive il est à l’homme ce que le chat de goutière est au chat sauvage."

"Comme toutes les créations vraiment belles et noblement utiles, la sociologie fut l’oeuvre d’un homme de génie, M. Herbert Spencer, et le prince de sa gloire."

"La saine Sociologie traite de l’évolution à travers les âges d’un groupe de métaphores, Famille, Patrie, Etat, Société, etc. Ces mots sont de ceux que l’on dit collectifs et qui n’ont en soi aucune signification l’histoire les a employés de tous temps, mais la Sociologie, par d’astucieuses définitions, précise leur néant tout en propagant leur culte.

"Car tout mot collectif, et d’abord ceux du vocabulaire sociologique sont l’objet d’un culte. A la Famille, à la Patrie, à l’Etat, à la Société, on sacrifie des citoyens mâles et des citoyens femelles;
les mâles en plus grand nombre; ce n'est que par intermède, en temps de grève ou d'émeute, pour essayer un nouveau fusil que l'on per­fore des femelles; elles offrent au coup une cible moins défiante et plus plaisante; ce sont là d'inévitables incidents de la vie po­litique. Le mâle est l'hostie ordinaire."

"Le caractère fondamental du citoyen est donc le dévouement, la résignation et la stupidité; il exerce principalement ces qualités selon trois fonctions physiologiques, comme animal reproducteur, comme animal électoral, comme animal contribuable."

"Devenu animal électoral, le citoyen n'est pas dépourvu de subtilité. Ayant flairé, il distingue hardiment entre un opportuniste et un radical. Son ingéniosité va jusqu'à la méfiance: le mot Li­berté le fait aboyer, tel un chien perdu. A l'idée qu'on va le laisser seul dans les ténèbres de sa volonté, il pleure, il appelle sa mère, la République, son père, l'État."

"Du fond de sa grange ou de son atelier, il entrotient volontiers ceux qui le protègent contre lui-même."

"Et puis songe: si tu te révoltais, il n'y aurait plus de lois, et quand tu voudrais mourir, comment ferais-tu, si le registre n'était plus là pour accueillir ton nom?" — Paradoxes sur le Citoyen.

"Si l'on est porté à souhaiter un déraillement, il faut parler, il faut écrire, il faut sourire, il faut s'abstenir — c'est le grand point de toute vie civique. Les actuelles organisations sociales ont cette tare fondamentale que l'abstention légale et silencieuse les rend in­ermes et ridicules. Il faut empoisonner l'Autorité, lentement, en jouant. C'est si charmant de jouer et si utile au bon fonctionne­ment humain! Il faut se moquer. Il faut passer, l'ironie dans les yeux, à travers les mailles des lois anti-libérales, et quand on pro­mène à travers nos vignes, gens de France, l'idole gouvernementale, gardez-vous d'aucun acte vilain, des gros mots, des violences, — rentrez chez vous, et mettez les volets. Sans avoir rien fait que de très simple et de très innocent vous vous reveillerez plus libres le lendemain." — Les Faiseurs de Statues.

"Charmant Tzar, tu la verras chez toi, la Révolution, stupide comme le peuple et féroce comme la bourgeoisie; tu la verras, dépas­sant en animalité et en rapacité sanglante tout ce qu'on t'a permis
de lire dans les tomes expurgés qui firent ton éducation." — *Le Délire Russe.*

"Or un écrivain, un poète, un philosophe, un homme des régions intellectuelles n'a qu'une patrie: sa langue." — *Querelles de Belgique.*

"Il faut encore, pour en revenir aux assassins, noter que le crime, sauf en des rares cas passionnels, est le moyen et non le but." — *Crimes.*

"Le vers traditionnel est patriotique et national; le vers nouveau est anarchiste et sans patrie. Il semble que la rime riche fasse partie vraiment de la richesse nationale: on vole quelquechose à l'État en adoucissant la sonorité des ronrons: "La France, Messieurs, manque de consonnes d'appui!" D'autre part, l'emploi de l'assonance a quelquechose de rétrograde qui froisse les vrais démocrates."

"Il est amusant de voir des gens qui ne doivent leur état "d'hommes modernes" qu'à la fauchaison brutale de toutes les traditions Françaises, protester aussi sottement contre des innovations non seulement logiques, mais inévitables. Ce qui donne quelque valeur à leur acrimonie, c'est qu'ils ignorent tout de cette question si complexe; de là leur liberté critique, n'ayant lu ni Gaston Paris, ni Darmesteter, ni aucun des écrivains récents qui étudièrent avec prudence tant de points obscurs de la phonétique et de la rythmique, ils tirent une autorité évidente de leur incompétence même." — *Le Vers Libre et les Prochaines Elections.*

PELERIN DU SILENCE, 1896, contains Fleurs de Jadis, 1893, Château Singulier, 1894, Livre des Litanies, Litanie de la Rose, *1892, Théâtre Muet, Le Fantôme, 1893. LIVRE DES MASQUES, 1896, not particularly important, though the preface contains a good reformulation; as for example:

"Le crime capital pour un écrivain, c'est le conformisme, l'imitativité, la soumission aux règles et aux enseignements. L'œuvre d'un écrivain doit être non seulement le reflet, mais le reflet grossi de sa personnalité. La seule excuse qu'un homme ait d'écrire c'est de s'écrire lui-même, de dévoiler aux autres la sorte de monde qui se mire en son miroir individuel. Sa seule excuse est d'être original; — *Quoted in the Little Review, February, 1918.*
il doit dire des choses non encore dites, et les dire en une forme non encore formulée. Il doit se créer sa propre esthétique, — et nous devrons admettre autant d'esthétiques qu'il y a d'esprits originaux et les juger d'après ce qu'elles sont, et non d'après ce qu'elles ne sont pas."

"L'esthétique est devenue elle aussi, un talent personnel." * — Préface.

"Comme tous les écrivains qui sont parvenus à comprendre la vie, c'est-à-dire son inutilité immédiate, M. Francis Poictevin, bien que né romancier, a promptement renoncé au roman."

"Il est très difficile de persuader à de certains vieillards — vieux ou jeunes — qu'il n'y a pas de sujets; il n'y a en littérature qu'un sujet, celui qui écrit, et toute la littérature, c'est-à-dire toute la philosophie, peut surgir aussi bien à l'appel d'un chien écrasé qu'aux acclamations de Faust interpellant la Nature: "Où te saisir, ô Nature infinie? Et vous, mamelles?" — Francis Poictevin.

This book is of the '90s., of temporary interest, judgment in mid-career, less interesting now that the complete works of the subjects are available, or have faded from interest. This sort of criticism is a duty imposed on a man by his intelligence. The doing it a duty, a price exacted for his possession of intelligence.

In places the careless phrase, phrases careless of sense, in places the thing bien dit as in Verlaine. Here and there a sharp sentence as

"M. Moréas ne comprendra jamais combien il est ridicule d'appeler Racine le Sophocle de la Ferté Milion."

or:

"Parti de la chanson de Saint Léger, il en est, dit-on, arrivé au XVIIème, siècle, et cela en moins de dix années; ce n'est pas si décourageant qu'on l'a cru. Et maintenant que les textes se font plus familiers, la route s'abrège; d'ici peu de haltes, M. Moréas campera sous le vieux Chêne Hugo et, s'il persévère, nous le verrons atteindre le but de son voyage, qui est sans doute de se rejoindre lui-même."
— Jean Moréas.

*Each of the senses has its own particular eunuchs.
This first "Livre des Masques" is of historical interest, as a list of men interesting at their time. It is work done in establishing good work, a necessary scaffolding; the debt to De Gourmont, because of it, is ethical rather than artistic. It is a worthy thing to have done. One should not reproach flaws, even if it appears that the author wastes time in this criticism, although this particular sort of half energy probably wouldn't have been any use for more creative or even more formulative writing. It is not a carving of statues, but only holding a torch for the public; ancillary writing. Local and temporal, introducing some men now better known and some, thank heaven, unknown or forgotten.

DEUXIEME LIVRE DES MASQUES, 1898, rather more important, longer essays, subjects apparently chosen more freely, leaves one perhaps more eager to read Alfred Valette's "Le Vierge" than any other book mentioned.

"Etre nul arrêté dans son développement vers une nullité équilibrée".

We find typical Gourmont in the essay on Rictus:

"Ici c'est l'idée de la résignation qui trouble le Pauvre; comme tant d'autres, il la confond avec l'idée bouddhiste de non-activité. Cela n'a pas d'autre importance en un temps où l'on confond tout, et où un cerveau capable d'associer et de dissocier logiquement les idées doit être considéré comme une production miraculeuse de la Nature."

"Or l'art ne-joue pas; il est grave, même quand il rit, même quand il danse. Il faut encore comprendre qu'en art tout ce qui n'est pas nécessaire est inutile; et tout ce qui est inutile est mauvais." — Jehan Rictus.

He almost convinces one of Ephraim Mikhail's poetry, by his skilful leading up to quotation of:

"Mais le ciel gris est plein de tristesse caline
Inéffablement douce aux cœurs chargés d'ennuis"

The essay on the Goncourt is important, and we find in it typical dissociation.
“Avec de la patience, on atteint quelquefois l'exactitude, et avec de la conscience, la vérité; ce sont les qualités fondamentales de l'histoire.”

“Quand on a gouté à ce vin on ne veut plus boire l'ordinaire vinasse des bas littérateurs. Si les Goncourt étaient devenues populaires, si la notion du style pouvait pénétrer dans les cerveaux moyens! On dit que le peuple d'Athène avait cette notion.”

“Et surtout quel mémorable désintéressement! En tout autre temps nul n'aurait songé à louer Edmond de Goncourt pour ce dédain de l'argent et de la basse popularité, car l'amour est exclusif et celui qui aime l'art n'aime que l'art: mais après les exemples de toutes les avidités qui nous ont été données depuis vingt ans par les boursiers des lettres, par la coulisse de la littérature, il est juste et nécessaire de glorifier, en face de ceux qui vivent pour l'argent, ceux qui vécurent pour l'idée et pour l'art.”

“La place des Goncourt dans l'histoire littéraire de ce siècle sera peut-être même aussi grande que celle de Flaubert, et ils la devront à leur souci si nouveau, si scandaleux, en une littérature alors encore toute rhétoricienne, de la “non-imitation”; cela a révolutionné le monde de l'écriture. Flaubert devait beaucoup à Chateaubriand: il serait difficile de nommer le maître des Goncourt. Ils conquièrent pour eux, ensuite pour tous les talents, le droit à la personnalité stricte, le droit pour un écrivain de s'avouer tel quel, et rien qu'ainsi, sans s'inquiéter des modèles, des règles, de tout le pédantisme universitaire et cénaculaire, le droit de se mettre face à face avec la vie, avec la sensation, avec le rêve, avec l'idée, de créer sa phrase — et même, dans les limites du génie de la langue, sa syntaxe.” — Les Goncourt.

One is rather glad M. Hello is dead. Chill is mentionable, and the introductory note on Felix Fénéon is of interest. Small reviews are praised in the notes on Dujardins and Alfred Vallette.

“Il n'y a rien de plus utile que ces revues spéciales dont le public élu parmi les vrais fidèles admet les discussions minutieuses, les admirations franches. — on Edouard Dujardins.

“Il arrive dans l'ordre littéraire qu'une revue fondée avec
quinze louis a plus d'influence sur la marche des idées et par con­séquent, sur la marche du monde (et peut-être sur la rotation des planètes) que les orgueilleux recueils de capitaux académiques et de dissertations commerciales.” — on Alfred Vallette.

1905—8 PROMENADES PHILOSOPHIQUES. One cannot brief such work as the Promenades. The sole result is a series of aphorisms, excellent perhaps but without cohesion, a dozen or so will show an intelligence but convey neither style nor personality of the author:

“Sans doute la religion n’est pas vraie, mais l’anti-religion n’est pas vraie non plus: la vérité réside dans un état parfait d’indif­férence.”

“Peu importe qu’on me sollicite par des écrits ou par des paroles; le mal ne commence qu’au moment où on m’y plie par la force.” — Autre Point de Vue.

“L’argent est le signe de la liberté. Maudire l’argent, c’est maudire la liberté, c’est maudire la vie qui est nulle si elle n’est libre.” — L’Argent.

“Quand on voudra définir la philosophie du XIXème siècle, on s’apercevra qu’il n’a fait que de la théologie.”

“Apprendre pour apprendre est peut-être aussi grossier que manger pour manger.”

“C’est singulier en littérature, quand la forme n’est pas nouvelle, le fond ne l’est pas non plus.”

“Le nu de l’art contemporain est un nu d’hydrothérapie.”

“L’art doit être à la mode ou créer la mode.”

“Les pacifistes, de braves gens à genoux, près d’une balance et priant le ciel qu’elle s’incine, non pas selon les lois de la pesanteur, mais selon leurs voeux.”

“La propriété est nécessaire, mais il ne l’est pas qu’elle reste toujous dans les mêmes mains.”

“Il y a une simulation de l’intelligence comme il y a une simu­lation de la vertu.”
"Le roman historique. Il y a aussi la peinture historique, l’archi-
ctecture historique, et, à la mi-carême, le costume historique."

"Etre impersonnel c’est être personnel selon un mode particu-
lier: Voyez Flaubert. On dirait en jargon: l’objectif est une des
formes du subjectif."

"La maternité, c’est beau, tant qu’on n’y fait pas attention. C’est vulgaire dès qu’on admire."

"L’excuse du christianisme, ça a été son impuissance sur la
réalité. Il a corrompu l’esprit bien plus que la vie."

"Je ne garantis pas qu’aucune de ces notes ne se trouve déjà
dans un de mes écrits, ou qu’elle ne figurera pas dans un écrit futur. On les retrouvera peut-être même dans des écrits qui ne seront pas les miens." — Des Pas sur le Sable.

Those interested in the subject will take LE PROBLÈME DU
STYLE 1902, entire; the general position may perhaps be indicated
very vaguely by the following quotations.

"Quant à la peur de se gâter le style, c’est bon pour un Bembo,
qui use d’une langue factice. Le style peut se fatiguer comme
l’homme même; il vieillira de même que l’intelligence et la sensibilité
dont il est le signe; mais pas plus que l’individu, il ne changera de
personnalité, à moins d’un cataclysme psychologique. Le régime ali-
mentaire, le séjour à la campagne ou à Paris, les occupations sen-
timentales et leurs suites, les maladies ont bien plus d’influence sur
un style vrai que les mauvaises lectures. Le style est un produit
physiologique, et l’un des plus constants; quoique dans la dépendance
des diverses fonctions vitales."

"Les Etats-Unis tomberaient en langueur, sans les voyages en
Europe de leur aristocratie, ans la diversité extrême des climats, des
sols et par conséquent des races en évolution dans ce vaste empire.
Les échanges entre peuples sont aussi nécessaires à la revigoration
de chaque peuple que le commerce social à l’exaltation de l’énergie
individuelle. On n’a pas pris grade à cette nécessité quand on parle
avec regret de l’influence des littératures étrangères sur notre lit-
térature."
"Aujourd'hui l'influence d'Eurypide pourrait encore déterminer en un esprit original d'intéressantes œuvres; l'imitateur de Racine ne dépasserait à peine le comique involontaire. L'étude de Racine ne deviendra profitable que dans plusieurs siècles et seulement à condition que, complètement oublié, il semble entièrement nouveau, entièrement étranger, tel que le sont devenus pour le public d'aujourd'hui Adenès li Rois ou Jean de Meung. Euripide était nouveau au XVIIème siècle. Théocrite l'était alors que Chénier le transposait. 'Quand je fais des vers, insinuait Racine, je songe toujours à dire ce qui ne s'est point encore dit dans notre langue.' André Chénier a voulu exprimer cela aussi dans une phrase maladroite; et s'il ne l'a dit il l'a fait. Horace a bafoué les serviles imitateurs; il n'imitait pas les Grecs, il les étudiait."

"'Le style est l'homme même' est un propos de naturaliste, qui sait que le chant des oiseaux est déterminé par la forme de leur bec, l'attache de leur langue, le diamètre de leur gorge, la capacité de leurs poumons."

"Le style, c'est de sentir, de voir, de penser, et rien plus."

"Le style est une spécialisation de la sensibilité."

"Une idée n'est qu'une sensation défraîchie, une image effacée."

"La vie est un dépouillement. Le but de l'activité propre d'un homme est de nettoyer sa personnalité, de la laver de toutes les souillures qu'y déposa l'éducation, de la dégager de toutes les empreintes qu'y laissèrent nos admirations adolescentes."

"Depuis un siècle et demi, les connaissances scientifiques ont augmenté énormément; l'esprit scientifique a rétrogardé; il n'y a plus de contact immédiat entre ceux qui créent la science, et (je cite pour la seconde fois la réflexion capitale de Buffon): 'On n'acquiert aucune connaissance transmissible qu'en voyant par soi-même: Les ouvrages de seconde main amusent l'intelligence et ne stimulent pas son activité.'"

"Rien ne pousse à la concision comme l'abondance des idées'.—Le Problème du Style, 1902.

Christianity lends itself to fantaticism. Barbarian ethics pro-
ceed by general taboos. The relation of two individuals in relation is so complex that no third person can pass judgment upon it. Civiliza-

tion is individual. The truth is the individual. The light of the Renaissance shines in Varchi when he declines to pass judgment on Lorenzaccio.

One might make an index of, but one cannot write an essay upon, the dozen volumes of De Gourmont's collected discussions. There was weariness towards the end of his life. It shows in even the leisurely charm of "Lettres à l'Amazone". There was a final flash in his drawing of M. Croquant.

The list of his chief works published by the Mercure de France, 26 rue de Condé, Paris, is as follows:

Sixtine.
Le Pélerin du Silence.
Les Cheveaux de Diomède.
D'un Pays Lointain.
Le songe d'une Femme.
Lilith suivi de Théodat.
Une Nuit au Luxembourg.
Un Coeur Virginal.
Couleurs, suivi de Choses Anciennes.
Histoires Magiques.
Lettres d'un Satyre.
Le Chat de Misère.
Simone.

Critique

Le Latin Mystique.
Le Livre des Masques (Ier et IIème)
La Culture des Idées.
Le Chemin de Velours.
Le Problème du Style.
Physique de l'Amour.
Epilogues.
Esthétique de la Langue Française.
Promenades Littéraires.
Promenades Philosophiques.
STYLE IS a subject of peculiar interest in connection with M. de Gourmont; not only because he has dealt with it from a variety of aspects, and always in a fertile and suggestive way; but also because he is himself a master of style, and of a style singularly personal and characteristic, singularly distinct from that of his contemporaries, and even from what we imagine to be the secular genius of French prose. It is a style that is fluid rather than fine, pervasive rather than penetrating, and richer in the qualities of atmosphere, that is to say of landscape-painting, than in those of outline and hard form. If, as M. de Gourmont holds, the aesthetic sense arises from the interaction of sensibility and intellect, then in his own prose perhaps the element of sensibility preponderates. It is a feminine prose: we have only to compare it to the male and splendidly objective writing of Mérimée to discern the fact at once. Of course, it is impossible to separate entirely the form from the context, a refinement of thought leads to a corresponding refinement of style; but, while an image or idea exists in the mind as a complete whole, of which the characteristics and qualities may be seized upon instantaneously, these characteristics and qualities can only be presented in language successively. The work of the artist is thus an analysis between two syntheses and it is during this process when the idea is being decomposed, and descends as it were through the senses, that it comes under the influences of those imponderabilia which give it the qualities of style. Style, in short, is character, and it is proportionately to the rapidity and ease with which the idea traverses and burns up the material through which it is expressed that a style approaches perfection. It may be grave and
weighty, involved and ornate, simple, fugitive, delicate: the rapidity and ease are in relation to the mass and complexity of the material which the idea informs. The processes of thought must be correspondingly rapid. In the interval between the conception of the idea or image and its birth in language, it is subject to many vicissitudes. Traditions, preoccupations, habits, preudiees, the pressure of immediate circumstances, all go to shape or distort it. In proportion to the rapidity of its escape from these imponderable influences the idea is presented to us whole, and the right value is given to each of its qualities. Rapidity may tell against ease: the violence of passion forces a new construction on language, lends it an irresistible emphasis, gives it for a moment an actually mimetic power until speech seems to verge upon gesture; but even under these conditions, where an explosive violence takes the place of ease, style maintains itself as the impress of character.

When we describe M. de Gourmont's style as feminine, we imply that it is passive. It is not passionate, it is not mimetic, it does not approach to the conditions of action. It is smooth, clear, limpid like an unruffled sheet of water, in some formal garden, reflecting the sky, clouds, trees, a marble mythology, and the yellow bricks of some decorous château with the late sunlight falling on it in the background. Now and again its polished surface reflects the figures of men and women, men leisurely and indifferent, women in clear colours: they come and go rather indolently, and the mirror keeps its serene and equal calm. Under the shadowy reflections we can even fathom its cool green depths. It is feminine because it is so completely reflective. We feel that each of these vague and frail personifications has studied the 'idealist' philosophers from Berkeley to Nietzsche; and that their action is simply the appreciation of those theories to reality. The peril of sin and the luxury of repentance are alike denied to those who are beyond good and evil. There are no divine and irrational elements in their lives. M. de Gourmont, it goes without saying, is also an idealist, but after a manner of his own. We do not remember that he mentions Protagoras, a philosopher who had sufficient wit to leave no system behind him, but only some arresting fragments. One saying of Protagoras, however, that man is the measure of all things, is perhaps the root of M. de Gourmont's idealism; and another, that we cannot know whether the gods exist or not, supplies the irreligion. What is so curious in a disciple of Schopenhauer and of Nietzsche (who merely
inverted Schopenhauer) is that M. de Gourmont practically ignores
the will to live. It only subsists in an extremely attenuated mode
in his thought, which is concerned mainly with the world as representa-
tion. This is surely a feminine trait. Wherever man has invented
a theory of fatalism, and idealism is one, he has been driven
to provide a counterpoise to it. Buddhism, which so strongly af-

tected Schopenhauer, assumes a power of denying life, and of ultimate
release from the tyranny of the senses; Christian theology, for which
M. de Gourmont has perhaps too facile and instinctive a contempt,
opposes to predestination the doctrine of free-will; and to Nietzsche,
Schopenhauer’s dithyrambic disciple, will is the sole thing necessary.
But M. de Gourmont treats of it by implication, and as an example
we may take his note on aesthetic: “L'idée de beauté a une origine
emotionnelle, elle se ramène à l'idée de procréation ... La beauté
est si bien sexuelle que les seules œuvres d'art incontestées sont
celles qui montrent tout bonnement le corps humain dans sa nudité.
Par sa persévérance à demeurer purement sexuelle, la statuaire
grecque s'est mise pour l'éternité au-dessus de toutes les discussions”.

There is something unexpectedly naïve and charming in the
statement, coming from one who denies an absolute beauty, as he
denies an absolute truth. Au-dessus de toutes les discussions: it
has almost the force of a dogma. One tries to imagine M. de Gour-
mont explaining to an intelligent Chinese that the beauty of, say,
the Victory in the Louvre, “est purement sexuelle”. With the excep-
tion of Aphrodite, Greek sculptures of women and goddesses are in-
variably veiled, and one of the chief excellences of Greek artists
consists precisely in their treatment of windy and flowing peploi.
It is the male form which the Greeks represented usually, in its
nakedness; but we can see no reason why its beauty should be con-
sidered as bound up with the notion of procreation. The preoccupa-
tion with sex is less, probably, in men than in women; and even
though the instinct in the male be fiercer and more imperious, it is
a momentary, even a casual instinct, which concerns itself little
with the future. Etymologically the Greek word *tekyn* and the
German *Kunst*, both of which carry with them a sense of “begetting”,
seem to support M. de Gourmont; and so, too, might the root “ar”;
but etymology is a reed. If we return to the most primitive forms
of human culture, we do not find that the idea of beauty is insepar-
ably bound up with the idea of procreation. The Arunta, a tribe of
Australian blacks, have a rudimentary notion of aesthetics, since they perform certain sacred dances, a fact implying a sense of rhythm; but with this tribe the idea of sex is entirely separated from the idea of reproduction: they are unable to connect the cause and effect, but to them every birth is the result of some spiritual or demonic agency. It is obviously an erroneous notion; but the Arunta are also idealists, after their own manner. To a savage tribe existing under precarious conditions the fertility of the earth is of more pressing importance than the reproduction of their own kind; and, except for religious restrictions and taboos, sex involves no problems for them, it is a simple, a casual, almost a fortuitous matter. Complex and elaborate civilisations create artificial conditions, in which sex is thwarted, or over-developed, owing to social, economic or hygienic conditions; and from these conditions, a derangement of the nervous system, an acute sensibility to colours, to odours, to every form of sensation, may arise. It is a form of decadence. To a certain extent M. de Gourmont admits a norm of beauty: "Il faut que la femelle qui sera la mere soit conforme au type de la race, c'est a dire il faut qu'elle soit belle"; and he quotes Père Buffier, who would find beauty, that is conformity to the racial type, in a composite photograph, with approval; but if such a norm exist, then the aberrations of a decadent sensibility are irrelevant. We do not deny a sexual element in the aesthetic idea. We deny only that sex is the unique source from which our aesthetic sense derives its being; and we consider it unsound, physiologically, to isolate a particular group of nerve centres from the rest of the motor-sensory system, and to claim for this group powers and functions which it does not and cannot exercise independently of the whole system. M. de Gourmont has some doubt himself, and later in the same essay he enlarges the question. "Deux sortes d'émotions concourent à la formation du sens esthétique; les émotions génésique et toutes les autres émotions".

We approached the question of sexual influence upon the aesthetic idea in its relation to the will to live, and reproduction is only one of the many forms of expression in which the will manifests itself. Man, besides being a lover, is a hunter and a warrior; he is a creature of action, avid of experience. Physiologically, man is characterised by the power of motion, and the ability to walk erect; and thus his fore-limbs have been freed from pedestrian uses,
and his hands have found delightful things to do. It is through the hand that the sense of touch is most commonly conveyed, and touch itself is a sure and delicate sense. We have recognised this by the significance which we have given to the word "tact" and by such phrases as "a light touch" or "firm handling". To the blind, though it cannot apprehend colour, it reveals all the subtleties of form; and the amateur handling some carven piece of jade, or ivory, or coral, a porcelain jar or an antique gem, experiences a new pleasure which is unknown to sight. In the hands is our sense of possession; and old sagas speak of any heroic fighter as "a tall man of his hands". They have their own language, an eloquence of gesture; they can be filled with cherishing caresses and grip mightily in murder. So curiously personal and intimate they are, that some pretend to read a man's life in his palms, and finger prints furnish us with a scientific means of identification. Every religion has invested them with supernatural powers, and through them are transmitted the gifts of the spirit, and by them the sick are healed. The hands of man have taught many things to his mind. Poetry, alone in fine art, is not their work; but with that exception every form of art has come from the hands of man. Our actual vision of a painting is of colours upon a plane surface; but by unconsciously referring this particular sense-impression to past experience of touch, we infer qualities of form and texture in the representation. There is no need to multiply examples. Whatever comes from the hands of man is to be judged, technically, by reference to his hands.

Will is manifested in action, through which it seeks to permeate and inform the material of nature; and one of the earliest expressions of will in this connection, is the practice, among primitive peoples, of magical rites and ceremonies. Magic is mainly sympathetic, and seeks to produce its effects by imitation. Tragedy can be traced back to its origin, in the sacred dances of savage and primitive tribes; and the term tragedy covers the elements of which it was composed, not only dramatic and lyric poetry, but the orchestric attitudes and gestures of the mimes, and naturally music. From the same origin are derived the Odes of Pindar, definitely religious in character, and closer to their source since they celebrate victories in games, which were originally sacred observances to ensure fertility, not only in the soil, but in the cattle and the people. So far we may agree with M. de Gourmont that beauty is bound up with the idea of reproduc-
tion; for it is the beauty and nobility of race, "the genius of alternate generations", which Pindar celebrates, and the games originally took place at the tomb of some eponymous hero. Every great national epic, the Epic of Gilgamesh, the Iliad, Genesis, in spite of its unwieldy form, even the Αeneid which is late, artificial and based on archaeology, is definitely religious. The ritual invariably precedes the legend; which explains it, and all ritual is magic. Sculpture, again, originates as a feature of magical rites and ceremonies; we have only to consider the brand that was Meleager, to understand the process by which it was evolved; and we may remark that it is the single art which M. de Gourmont relates to the dance. Our earliest drawings, the rude scratchings on bone and ivory and horn, such as those discovered in the cave-dwellings of the drift-men in France, do not seem to have any religious or magical significance; but our evidence for this period is slight, and on the other hand we have the representations of totems, the flat, carven and incised tikis of the Maoris, the use of pigments on carving, and many indications that the savage and primitive mind attributes to these objects, and even to their implements and weapons, an almost personal character of their own. In any case, the art of painting was profoundly influenced by the action and gesture of sacred dances and ritual games.

The will has two objectives: the extension as in the notion of immortality, and the intensification of its experience and action; the will to live and the will to power. Magic was an attempt to attain these objectives. The egotism of the individual is not compensated for its extinction in death, by any consideration of the continuous life of the race; but, in the celebration of orgiastic tribal rites, man gained the illusion of an extended personality or will, and with it an emotional intensity approaching delirium. Emotions capable of affecting a crowd are simple; rage, panic, joy; under the influence of these emotions an individual identity merges in the collective; and with the sense of identity the sense of responsibility vanishes, and the individual achieves the illusion of freedom. Magic was, at least in the opinion of those who practised it, an useful art since it had a definite object, protection or malice, or fertility: it expressed the will and sought to liberate man from the narrow limits of his nature; or, when it developed into a cult, such as the worship of Dionysus, it extended his personality. The god was Eleutherios; the deliverer. Sex, even considered as an element in
orgiastic rites, or as an object, has not the same effect. "L'amour ôté," says M. de Gourmont, "il n'y a plus d'art; et l'art ôté l'amour n'est plus guère qu'un besoin physiologique". We should substitute "magie" for "amour". The real question is, however, whether the idea of beauty originates through the deflection or thwarting of "un besoin physiologique" as distinct from "amour". It is a physiological necessity that an amoeba should propagate itself by simple division from the parent body, and reproduction in this case is independent of both "art" and "sex".

But magic, curiously enough, is also "un besoin physiologique". In a note on "Le Jugement Esthetique" M. de Gourmont writes: "La superiorité d'une race, d'un group d'êtres vivants, est en raison directe de sa puissance de mensonge, c'est à dire de réaction contre la réalité. Le mensonge n'est que la forme psychologique de la réaction du Vertébré contre le milieu. Nietzsche, devançant la science, dit: 'Le mensonge comme condition de vie'". Then "le mensonge", the great illusion, is the will, action, sex itself, beauty considered as sex instinct deflected from its object, art, science, handicraft, politics, ethics, which are all derived from primitive magic, from the first conscious "réaction contre la réalité" of vertebrate man, walking erect and laying hands upon the visible and tangible earth. All are "mensonge". And reality? Perhaps a minute fragment of protoplasm, not even a cell, without nucleus or nucleolus, a mere potentiality of life, that is to say of "mensonge".

To us, personally, "Le Chemin de Velours" and "Pomenades Philosophiques" are the most fascinating of M. de Gourmont's books. They reveal his erudition, his amused curiosity, his slight irony, and that intellectual perversity which, for example, finds the essential features of Bacon's philosophy preserved in Joseph de Maistre's "Examen", as Juricu's democratic propositions were preserved in Bossuet's famous reply. And perhaps, though it may be a purely personal preference, "La Femme et le Langage" is the most fascinating of all his critical studies. In it he deals with the "mensonge" as the expression of an imaginary sensation: "il s'agit de psychologie et non de morale". One might question many of M. de Gourmont's affirmations, and thus prove the stimulus of his thought, that essentially feminine thought, unscrupulous, contradictory, full of those provocations and slight perversities, even the childish malice that a woman will use toward men. Just as Nietzsche,
a neurasthenic, worshipped the idea of force and power, so M. de Gourmont with a passive and reflective nature, with a woman's critical faculty and instinct for detail, her unconscious immorality, practises the cult of the male.

Beauty, even as mensonge, is action: it is born of the mimesis of magic attempting to influence the blind and irrational forces of nature. Even in sculpture and painting beauty is still movement, not arrested, not incomplete; but limited to a swift instant of time, and within that limit single and continuous. One might almost say that all beauty is composed of the hypnotic rhythm of music, and the gesture of the dance. This conception of beauty as a function, moreover, frees us from the artificial distinction between form and content. Liberated from the conditions of tribal uses and motives it retained their magic and entrancement, extending and intensifying the action and experience of the will; and it comes to us recreated always, as a flower from dews, a thing of magical evocation — mensonge.

Foot-note. I need scarcely say that I disagree with Mr. Manning's point of view. The article seems to me a typical expression of one holding ideas and affected by ideas in exactly the manner De Gourmont never held, and never was by them affected.

The doctrine that the hand predisposes the mind to certain aptitudes is combatted, I think convincingly, by Gourmont in "Physiologie de l'Amour." I trust however that the inclusion of this article will save us from such utterly trivial comment as "En somme, on le loue!"

On writing to Mr. Manning that one of his phrases was likely to be misunderstood by a public to which the term decadent (dee-kay-d'nt) conveys the impression of young man doped with opium in the act of dyeing his finger nails with green ink, I received the following note which I shall leave as conclusion. — E. P.

"Of course there is a great deal of truth in Gourmont's notion. Beauty would always excite the sexual instinct. His fault is that he juggles with physiological, psychological and metaphysical terms. I have looked at the notion of beauty historically: and thus find its origin in magic — that is in so far as we are concerned with the beauty of art. Magic might originate from dreams, as when the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair: and the
great majority of dreams are erotic in tendency. But art has separated itself from its parent, and intellectualized itself; as religion and metaphysic did in different directions also.

Damn the American, or any other, public anyway.

Yours, etc.,

F. M."

"LE LATIN MYSTIQUE"

T. T. Clayton

LE LATIN MYSTIQUE is the language of symbol and allusion wherein the Church both hides and reveals certain aspects of her dogmas, which under the influence of religious meditation have brought forth the substance of Catholic Mysticism.

Rémy de Gourmont considered the latin as it took shape in Antiphon, Lectio, Hymn, Prayer and Litany from his point of view as artist and discovered in these liturgical forms certain qualities of expression only possible in a language free to follow the ways the inspiration of its soul suggested to it.

His book "Le Latin Mystique" is full of examples of the art enshrined in the service books of the Catholic Church. Let the reader judge for himself of their beauty. Here is the Oratio for Saint Catherine:

"Deus, qui dediste legem Moysi in summitate montis Sinai, et in eodem loco per sanctos Angelos tuos corpus beatae Catharinæ virginis et martyris tuae mirabiliter collocasti, praesta quæsumus; ut ejus meritis et intercessione, ad montem, qui Christus est pervenire valeamus."

To which perhaps we may be allowed to add a Buen Viaje in place of the Amen. This collect (Oratio) is among the shortest of prayers and yet in its brevity there is nothing wanting to the cause and effect of a perfect symbolism.

From the hymns let us cite first of all two strophes from one by Saint Ambrose to be sung at cock-crow, and now forming part of the office of the Winter Lauds on Sunday.

Jesu labentes respice,
Et nos videndo corrigite;
Si respicis; lapsi stabunt,
Fletuque culpa solvitur,

Tu lux refulge sensibus
Mentisque somnum discute,
Te nostra vox primum sonet
Et vota solvamus tibi.

"Et nos videndo corrige", as though to say "Correct us with a look", an exquisite reminder of "The Lord turned and looked upon Peter". Speaking of Saint Ambrose, Rémy de Gourmont says:

"Ses odes sont demeurées parmi les plus exquises fleurs de symbolique jardin de la liturgie."

The Epiphany Hymn as it was written by Sedulius opens with a verse which in its last two lines reminds the kings of the earth that as far as Heaven is concerned they may keep their baubles in peace.

Hostis Herodis impie,
Christum venire quid times?
Non eripit mortalia
Qui regna dat coelestia.

Sometimes deep and curious problems found their way into the Hymns, as in the following stanza taken from the Pange lingua gloriosi of Venantius Fortunatus, where the question of Satan being able to cast out Satan seems to be answered in the affirmative.

Hos opus nostrae salutis
Ordo depoposcerat
Multiformis prodictoris
Ars ut artem falleret,
Et medelam ferret inde
Hostis unde laeserat.

Writing of the Pange Lingua, Rémy de Gourmont considers it "un chef-d'oeuvre de poésie théologique".

The following verse in Litanic form and sung in festo omnium Sanctorum figures the translation of the hermits from the burning sands to the cool spaces of the stars and asks that we too may have seats amongst the heavenly.
Chorea casta virginum
Et quos eremus incolas
Transmisit astris, coelitum
Locate nos in sedibus.

It should be added that we owe this stanza in place of one less old and less beautiful to the Revisers of the sixteenth century who had too little respect for the principles of Medieval Hymnody: perhaps also too little understanding.

The Author of "Le Latin Mystique" was not too pleased with the corrections of the Reformers: "Il ne faut pas s'attendre à trouver dans les missels actuellement liturgiques les textes authentiques des hymnes, des proses, des antiphones dues aux poètes latins mystiques du moyenâge; ils ont été a différentes reprises mutilés."

Nevertheless, even in its modern form the Roman Breviary was to Rémy de Gourmont a favorite book. "Encore qu'en son ensemble il demeure l'un des plus enviablles livres de lecture et de relecture qui soient au monde." With these small four volumes (each one answering to a season of the year) the reader will come to know how well the mystical life of the Church keeps its continuity in word as well as in spirit.

Creation was the work of a God whose being abode in concealment. The Incarnation was the revelation of a God who hid himself in the flesh. The union of revelation and concealment has been the art of the "Latin Mystique".

DE GOURMONT — YANK

by John Rodker

ASSUMING Poe American — rashly I admit — De Gourmont through most of his work shows himself so much the child of Poe as to bring with him that veritably American savour which Laforgue detected in Baudelaire when he called him "Chat—Hindou — Yank." Resemblance not necessarily derived from Baudelaire's translation of the "Tales of Mystery and Imagination." That was an "atmospheric analogy", but the relation between De Gourmont and Poe is one undoubtedly of direct influence — hatchment
with no bar sinister. A specimen paragraph from the "Histoires Magiques":

"Edith, Elphega, he married Edith the elder and she whom I saw pale and blonde, was paler at the imminent sacrifice than the offering herself — Choephope more anguished than the offering, acolyte more tremulous than the victim. She whom I saw and whose profile recalled the immature concupiscences of infantile lovers was Elphega, indubitably Elphega, the pale the blonde Elphega."

Is not this the exact tone of Morella, Berenice, Ligeia, word for word, cadence for cadence. It is true the women of De Gourmont are not such prodigies of learning as are the phantasms of Poe, nor have they an equal concentration of ideal forms of passion, but their zest for life (experience) is equally intense, their sophistication of equal value with Ligeitás, because complementary. They are worldly, physical more and yet less than Poe's women. Morella and Berenice belong to a period when vapours were the correct thing. Cyrane belongs to a modern Paris with apotheosis of vitality. Poe's preoccupation with dissolution and the grave has to our minds distinctly its absurd side, but this is due to a change in poetic subject matter — amenable to periods as all else — witness the Elizabethans. De Gourmont never does this. Death for him is part of life — a continuation — to Poe it was an end, an end so stable, so metallic and final that it could not be said to belong to a world in flux.

It is in the business of psychological writing they most differ. To conceive of Poe writing "Le Songe d'une Femme" or "Visages de femmes" is impossible, for he always came up against a wall with the problem of a physical life which was not in process of decomposition. He appeared to have no knowledge of what I would call normal subconsciousness — the motives underneath most of every day life. For processes of abnormal subconsciousness he is of course without peer. De Gourmont hardly ever touches this region. Those who have read "Pehor" will understand what I mean, but in this story — the first of the "Histoires Magiques,"—there appear to be all the physical and psychological detail so unaccountably omitted from the stories of Berenice and Morella. Certainly Pehor is complementary to them.

I suspect that part of De Gourmont's "mission" was to fill in the holes left by Poe. Certainly they illuminate each other, are
commentary and exegesis, and one cannot be said to know either without knowing his complement.

De Gourmont has been said to be most different from Poe in the "Promenades Litteraires" and the Impressions. I do not think this is true. Certainly they show a mind capable of the most original research in science and philosophy as apart from purely literary achievement. If you like, the flight is more sustained but never loftier; for throughout the seventeen volumes of miscellaneous writings attributed to Poe are to be found most profound observations in the psychology, philosophy and science of his time. The result is an impression of a mind, one of the most stupendous known to us. How well read both men were in the obscure and magical, I have only the glimmerings; but it was sufficiently formidable, and if Poe does no interpolate Hebrew into his writings it is because he wrote as a journalist and not like De Gourmont, as a potential member of the Academy.

The problem of an aesthetic exercised each. "Le Pèlerin du Silence" I would put against the "Domain of Arnheim" and "The Thousand and Second Night" and leave the reader to draw comparisons. Nor has De Gourmont ever surpassed the description of the interior of the young man's palace in "The Assignation", (the Rimbaud-like purity of the so-well-known soliloquy, "To muse for long unwearied hours"); and how much more remarkable Poe's preoccupation seems when it is remembered that it took place in a barbarous country, — one to which Whitman was infinitely more suited.

De Gourmont worked in direct sunlight — "collected the leaves and flowers with the branches to which they were attached," while Poe in his most complete works has a livid atrabilious moonlight, bright enough to illustrate any text. His work has therefore so much more intensity. Extraordinary likeness too between them in the cloying sweetness of the Litanies; surely a lapse on the part of an author, so well aware of weight and tone in his prose, so critical as to prosody in others. He is never sentimental elsewhere, rather I should say ferociously matter of fact; poems like "Annabel Lee" and "The Raven" suffer from the same faults and are only saved from the pit of minor verse — if not of doggeral — by the greatness of the man who wrote them.

"Helen thy beauty is to me" has the same queer lapses!
Nevertheless I do not see De Gourmont writing "The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym," nor Poe writing "Songe d'une femme", or "Chevaux de Diomèdes."

REMY DE GOURMONT, AFTER THE INTERIM

Richard Aldington

IT IS like going back very far to talk of Remy de Gourmont. Back in those days before the deluge, what was it he meant to us? Why was the name "Remy de Gourmont" so potent, so sure of our respect?

Remy de Gourmont, I think, meant to us the type of the artist—the man who lives purely to create the work of art and to whom nothing else is of essential importance. He says, obviously of himself, in one of his early works: "He thinks about nothing but literature and cares only for style". He wronged himself, yet there is just this much truth in the mot; that he cared for art passionately and as an artist. He wanted to write good prose; other things seemed not particularly to matter.

But he meant something more than artistry and disinterested devotion; he meant very much more. He meant freedom and the use of the intelligence in the bravest freest way. He meant wit and irony and profundity of thought, true learning and the understanding of human nature; he meant, to use his own words, "the tradition of untrammelled minds". And he was a kind of pattern to us. What Remy had endured for the sake of freedom of speech, to keep clean his artist's conscience, we could endure; having his approval we felt confident in the future. To lose him by death was to lose one of the few among our elders whose approval was worth having.

His work I divide roughly and mentally into four periods. The obscure beginnings, the period of erudition and "word-mosaics", the period of Flaubertian cynicism (the resolution to be a great demoraliser) and the last period when he sought what the Greek meant by the word "sophrosyne".

The first period does not really concern us except to note that de Gourmont learned the art of writing slowly. He wanted his early books forgotten. It is not for us to rake from oblivion such works
as "Chez les Lapons". Somewhere he speaks of the day when his dissatisfaction with his own work and with the work of the time received direction from his reading a periodical just brought out by some young men who called themselves by the fantastic title of "les Symbolistes." He read "A Rebours" ("fantoché faméux" he called des Esseintes in later years), then the authors praised in that work and more of the young contemporaries. This would be about the middle of the eighties.

At that time he began "Le Latin Mystique," which took him several years to bring to completion. Remy relates, not without malice, that he carried his manuscript to Huysmans whose remarks on church Latin had suggested the book. He found Huysmans "un fonctionnaire parfait", startled to find that anyone had actually read, translated and criticised these poets — Huysmans got his information out of Elbert's manual! One might trace a certain ironic bitterness in de Gourmont to this discovery of artistic humbug in a man he had hitherto respected and championed. The two never actually quarrelled but when Huysmans became a Catholic he was spirited away from Remy by pious friends who feared the effects of the young man's brilliant scepticism.

About this time too he produced "Sixtine", a novel of the imagination—which gave him the entry to the Mercure de France—and played with words delicately and skillfully, giving us the "Litanies" and the pieces in "Le Pèlerin du Silence."

But beautiful and curious as these works were they did not move a Hugo-soaked public. All the notice he received from official sources was dismissal from the Bibliothèque Nationale for a so-called unpatriotic article — perhaps the greatest service the state could render him as it made him for ever an "independent", but undoubtedly the reason why his books were never really popular.

Here comes in the third period, the Flaubertian maxim being worked at first with enthusiasm, then gradually abandoned. We get "Les Chevauz de Diomède" (exquisite book for those who will ponder its wisdom), "Le Songe d'une Femme", the beginnings of his cynical work, largely journalistic. The "Flaubertian maxim"? Simply that the man of intelligence revenges himself upon a dull world by "corrupting" it. Flaubert put his hatred into "Bouvard et Pécuchet" — Gourmont spread his over several works, but it grows always more attenuated. He realised that there was more in literature than mere disgust however brilliant. During this period he pro-
duced the "Livres des Masques", the first of the Promenades Littéraires, the Epilogues and began a series of scientific studies whose result was the "Physique de l'Amour" and kindred cynicisms.

He ceased to desire the perversion of the world, retaining from his earlier disappointment only the fine salt of irony, the uncompromising hatred of art cant, of all cant. He came to care chiefly for truth, sought always to express precisely what things, events, experience, imaginations meant to him. And so we get the books on style and aesthetics — the later "Promenades Littéraires", the "Nuit au Luxembourg", the "Lettres a l'Amazon", "Le Chemin de Velours," "L'Esthétique de la Langue Française" and half a dozen more. He achieves tranquillity and perfects an already exquisite style.

Then the war came. He was ill and saddened by this bitter irruption into everything he held dear. He tried gallantly to "carry on", writing for English and American periodicals as well as for Parisian newspapers. Then during the battle of Loos he died, about the same time that Gaudier-Brzeska was killed.* It was a great misfortune to lose two such friends in a week.

It is hard to think of him as gone; he seemed so much more of our generation than many contemporaries. He seemed the young man and they the past. It is hard to pick up the "Mercure" and not to find those sentences, pure in rhythm and form, sharp and clear of thought. It is hard to know that when a new thing happens, a new thought, a new book, a new form of government, we lose that unsuspected aspect De Gourmont always revealed. It is hard to feel we have lost almost the last of the true critics.

We get new prose but no more prose like his; new thoughts but never his clear thought again.†

* Gaudier was killed some weeks before this. My last word from De Gourmont was a postcard asking for data from which to compose an obituary notice of the sculptor. — E. P.

† Aldington was the authorized translator of several of De Gourmont’s works.
Décor Banal
Richard Aldington

Cinq boutons électriques
Reluisent au-dessus des têtes
De trois militaires belges;
Un révolutionnaire irlandais
S'en fiche de mes habits guerriers;
Mademoiselle m'apporte du vin,
De la soupe, de la viande,
Mais moi je reste contemplatif,
Hébété par la blancheur de la nappe
En attendant quelqu'une qui ne vient pas.

Advice to a Hornèd Toad
Maxwell Bodenheim

Hornèd toad of cloven brown,
Rock-souls have dwindled to your eyes
And thrown a splintered end upon your blood.
Night and day have vanished
To you who squat and watch
Years loosen one sand-grain until
Its fall becomes your moment.
Tall things plunge over you,
Slashing their dreams with motion
That holds the death of all they seek.
But you, to whom fierce winds are ripples,
Do not move lest you lose the taste of stillness.

O hornèd toad of cloven brown,
Never hop from your grey rock crevice
Mute with interwoven beginnings and ends.
The fluid lies of motion
Leave no remembrance behind.
THREE PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

William Carlos Williams

1. The Doctor

IT IS idle to talk to me of cowardice. I remember sharply my sensations of the football field when a freshman in high school, a slightly built boy of sixteen. I felt eager to get on the team. I was too light but I knew something of the game from playing on back lots and I wanted to play. I am not brave. I knew then that I was not brave. I wanted to play and I played.

They put me in at end on the scrub. Almost at once the varsity came around my end and I was knocked aside and discarded. I was satisfied to be put out. I was convinced by the feel of the knees and feet that struck me that I was too light; it seemed stupid to me to attempt to continue. Life off the football field was a thing I did not wish to break so cheaply. Perhaps I exaggerated the danger, a braver man might have done better; but in any case I acted according to the situation as I saw it, painfully consciously.

Once later I was hit in the stomach going through the line. I thought I should never breathe again. Nothing but repeated spasmodic grunts escaped my mouth and no air in them. I could hear this loud exhaust as a thing completely outside myself; I couldn't stop it. My brother stood over me, disturbed by family pride, and told me to shut up. I couldn't. I didn't care. It meant nothing to me. I didn't mind whether they thought me brave or a coward. There was a distinct satisfaction in the involuntary nature of the sound that came from my mouth. I was relieved of the necessity of pretending to be brave. My brother thought I was putting it on.

I remember too in college a fellow in my class who out of an excess of college spirit played on the scrub four years without the slightest hope of advancement to the first team. He was not a good player and he was too light. He went about during the playing season almost always bruised about the eyes and with a severe limp. I wanted to play on the varsity. I often compared my bare body
with those of the other fellows standing about the pool in the gymnasium. I would have given my soul to play but I knew I couldn’t. In my estimation the fellow of whom I am speaking was not a hero but a plain jackass. He became the symbol of a type to me. I never saw him but I thought of the one thing.

Once I came near drowning. I dived from a row-boat during a storm to recover my oars which I had lost, having “caught a crab”. I had light clothes on. I am not a very strong swimmer. I recovered one of the oars but the wind carried my boat away faster than I could follow. The waves were high. I swam as hard as I could until out of breath. My clothes began to drag. I tried to remove my shoes. I couldn’t. I swallowed some water. I thought I was done for when there crossed my mind these sentences: So this is the end? What a waste of life to die so stupidly.

The thought was singularly emotionless, simply a clear vision of the situation. So much was this so that I was instantly sobered. My action taking on at once the quality of the thought, tucking the one oar under my left arm I swam quietly along hoping someone would see the empty boat and come out for me, which a man did. My courage, if you will, turned upon the color of my thought.

I ask no more than the surface of a leaf for my feet and you can take the rest. I have nothing for my feet. There is nothing to stand on. I receive nothing for my work. There is always nothing, nothing — everywhere. I am I: that is all I know and that is nothing.

My intelligence will not permit itself to be insulted. All or nothing and since I cannot accept all, — except by proxy, — nothing. I stand still. I practice medicine in a small town. I reserve myself for myself. I indulge my intelligence, preferring that whisky to another. I read Dora Marsden’s practical philosophy and smile; it calls to my mind an image of J. P. Morgan.

I am a young man, I am in perfect health, I am agile, good looking. I do not smoke since it drugs the intelligence; I want all my reactions. I do not drink except for the taste; I despise the lurid vapors of alcohol. I do not care much for illicit relations with women. I am married and have two children.

When my father died last week I saw that the funeral was decently done. I was affected by the burial service. I felt warm toward my mother. I felt grateful to my wife and others for their
solicitous behavior. I was touched by the letters of sympathy. There was not a cruel or bitter thought in my body. I felt soft, gently inclined to all for their kind words and attentions. I shook hands with the pall bearers. I saw all details carried out and what—? Joyce’s talk of the funeral ride was in my head as I journeyed to the graveyard behind my poor father’s dead body. Joyce’s technique seemed to me childish — Victrola.

It seems incredible but my father is gone. I cannot believe it no matter how I try. But my intelligence tells me that and nothing else.

I am now wearing my father’s black coat which is warmer than my grey one. My mother’s mental and financial status is much simpler and more satisfactory now than it was a fortnight ago and beyond that — nothing.

I will write a poem. I will call it Tetelestai. It shall be a setting up of the meanest against the great. It shall be the most ironic, the bitterest mockery of the human heart I can think of. It shall pretend to raise a distinction where none exists for there is — nothing. No. I will not. I will not draw such a picture. I will not so demean myself. I will be myself in my poem. I will pretend distinction for neither great nor mean. King or the meanest of us all: I am a third. I neither guard my heart nor do I bang it on difficulties whose solutions have been proven time and time again to be simply — nothing. I write peoms but they have nothing to do with courage or the lack of it or with the attendant qualities.

King, yes, but it is not lack of courage that keeps me from the attack. The meanest of us all, yes, but not from an excess of courage like a martyr. It is not lack of gifts that keeps me from the attack. In my freshman year of college although I was youngest in the class of one hundred and twenty six I was rated sixth at the finish of the year. Next year I would be first! My interest vanished at that instant.

It is not that I do not dare, it is that it is meaningless to be either one man or another: this or that: it means always and forever — nothing. "Winds have roared and kissed me" = nothing = tobacco. All things have sensual qualities. Qui est spectateur de la lumiere? chanted Rodin. I smell, I taste, I mix colors. I will soon die.
Why then do I write? Why then do I serve my neighbors? Why not be an inversion of the martyrs and instead of dying for ALL — let me die for NOTHING.

But why die at all? Why not live and write? Why not do what I want to? I want to write. It does not drug my senses, it sharpens them. It is the holy ghost of that trinity: The Senses, Action, Composition. I am damned only when I cannot write. I have proved it under all sorts of conditions. It is so.

I go in one house and out of another practicing my illicit trade of smelling, seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, weighing. I use my intelligence for the mutual benefit of my patients and myself. I have no other profession. I do not always get on well in this town. I am more than likely to turn out a bankrupt any day. I will move away then. I see no other reason for moving. I especially cannot compete with other doctors. I refuse to join church, Elks, Royal Arcanum, club, Masons. — It amused me to learn from the reading of the masonic ritual over my father's body that the "lamb skin" apron stands for purity! — I do not see the sense of operating on people myself when they can get a better man to do it cheaper in New York. I know I cannot safely lance every bulging ear-drum and that it costs my patients twenty-five dollars every time I call Dr. Demerest. Yet I figure it to be worth my while and worth the expense to call him.

I find a doctor in this community to have a special function. He is primarily an outpost. He should be keen at diagnosis, of the patient's ills as of his own limitations. He should be flexible in judgment and ready always to act quickly in every emergency not often by the lucrative performances of his own hands but most often by directing the patient elsewhere, his own hands idle.

People pay for the edged caress of the knife, the most obviously intimate of personal attentions. There is money in surgery. I am interested in babies because their processes are not yet affected by calcification and because diagnosis rests almost wholly upon a perception of the objective signs. Courage seems singularly out of place in my life.

Mrs. M —

Mrs. M, whom I have never seen or heard of, summons me to her house: Come tomorrow morning at ten.
Viney Johnson opens the door for me. I attended her old-time nigger mother in childbirth when I began practice here. Vinie in neat black dress, high, white housemaid’s apron.

Over Vinie’s left shoulder a life size plaster head on imitation bronze and onyx pedestal: Ethiopian princess. Vinie. The same race.

A little clean boy with upstanding, orange-red hair moves out from behind the maid to see me. Rather pale. I’ve seen him in school. Has a bad heart I think. Ornate furnishings. Nothing special. About 2500 a year.

Mrs. M says to go right up.

Mrs. M is in her room on the bed. Young, heavy flesh, orange-red hair. Pink silk morning wrapper, boudeoir cap, quilt over her body, arms resting out straight at her sides. Face flushed, eyes clear, slight hyper-animation. Doesn’t look very sick. Nice girl. She smiles and introduces herself: Mrs. N recommended you. I sit side-saddle at foot of bed at her feet and look. We talk. I study her face and listen intently to what she is saying, trying to guess why I have been called.

She talks. A simple expansive manner. Nothing out of the way. By the position in bed I had expected some necessity for an internal examination. We talk. I am stimulated.

She got out of bed this morning and could hardly stand she was so dizzy. Fell against the door jam of bath room. Weak in the knees, had to go back to bed.

Hm. Another case of grippe. — Temperature slightly subnormal. No headache, no backache, no pains anywhere. Hm.

One month ago awoke with a terrific pain in lower abdomen. Thought she would have to scream out. Woke husband. Was nauseated. Went to bathroom and fainted. If it hadn’t been for that and her husband’s urging she would not have called me this time.

Pulse regualr, soft — a little too soft. I wish I had brought my sphygmomanometer. Rate a trifle rapid.

She has been doing canteen work in New York.

Has had three children. Was in bed 5 to 7 months after each. Appendicitis after first, puerperal fever next then abscess of the breast. Has never nursed a baby. The second one is dead.

Matured early — at nine. Due to that and frequent intermis-
The Little Review

sion of menses combined with heat flashes a "specialist" thought she might be having change of life. Not likely at 33.

The unmentionable details. Sign of weakened blood tissue, natural effort of the body to conserve blood. I used to think I was in a delicate condition every month or two.

Try pulse again. Wave-like accelerations of the beat. Skin of arms cold, mottled bluish. Always has cold feet. Often cold clear to the hips. No pain anywhere. Just dizzy and weak. You said that before; probably blood does not get to brain. Especially likely to happen in early morning.

Best time of day is evening but has to get up before six a. m. to see that husband gets off with a good breakfast. Lips full but palish. Transparent skin. Cheeks high colored but blotchy. Clear, grey eyes. Habitual smile. Straightforward manner full of engaging sweetness. Good forehead. — I am never quiet, never sick with little things. When I get anything I try to stay on my feet for I know that if ever I get down it will be long before I get up again. Two meals a day. Not much appetite. Has lost 15 pounds since moving to this town. War times. Young husband. The draft.

I want to examine your heart. She opens the silk wrapper. Can't listen through ironed corset cover. Untie the tape. Thin chemise. Better pull that down too. Cheeks flush a little. After all I am a strange man.


Hm. Recapitulate.

What sort of an attack was it you had a month ago. Tell me in detail. — I lay in bed. I awoke with a pain low down in my stomach. Very low down. Over the womb it seemed. I waited and waited for it to pass but it became worse. I gripped the side of the bed and held on as long as I could so as not to wake my husband. When I saw I couldn't stand it much longer I tried to get up. In doing so I woke him. He helped me to the bathroom. He said my face got the most peculiar color he ever saw. Green. I
thought I was going to die. I have been very ill but I never thought
I was going to die. But that time I did. Sweat broke out all over
me. I fainted. But after a while I woke up, ate a good breakfast,
went to the city, stayed in all day shopping and felt fine. It wasn't
wise I know. That's what worried me this time.

I had a cold about that time too. Oh! Tell me about that.
Did you have any other pains then? Yes, in the legs and back.
Headache? Yes. I was working at the canteen. One of the naval
surgeons came in and noticed how hoarse I was. Oh! He said I
was sick. Oh! But it was such a bad night he said I should not
go home. He said to keep quiet and to keep my circulation up. It
was cold and rainy. I worked all night, emptied sixty trays, that
was my job. By morning I felt fine. My voice came back and I
really felt splendid. Good. Yes, the work acted like whisky —
only it was better.

Oh, and night before last, new year's eve, I danced till 4 A. M.
Have you any relatives in the war? No, but my husband was
called just as the armistice was signed.

You realize, Mrs. M, that you are suffering from an acute heart
strain due to dancing too long last Tuesday night, a strain super­
imposed on a heart just recovering from the grippe and overwork,
a heart muscle already weakened by infections following childbirth
and always perhaps rather flabby by inheritance. If you had
rested —

Yes but my husband is one of those men who can't stay home.
He says the traffic on this corner kills him. Ha, ha! He no more
than gets into the house on Saturday than he wants to go some­
where always. Holidays the same.

He is a few years younger than you is he not? Well, the diz­
ziness and weakness you understand are due to faulty circulation.
The blood does not get to your brain quickly enough or in sufficient
quantity to supply the needs.

Yes, I feel as if something is shutting up in there sometimes.
Remain in bed today. Rest for an hour after lunch every day
when you are able. Medicine — well, we'll see. You will with
care largely overcome this setback. My advice is simply — you
understand — DO NOTHING.

Tingling with hidden rapture I descend and enter the street
Something

Stuiso. Morse Avenue. Right away. Something in her throat — come quick. I go. It’s the woman herself. She has been ill a week. Damn these people. One look. Peritonsilar abcess, right side.

Do something for her doctor. She can’t eat, she can’t drink, she can’t sleep — nothing. Do something to help her. I’ll pay you. Put some water on to boil. Bring that chair here. Turn it around — here by the window. Come here, Mrs. Sit down. Get a basin for her to spit in. We’ll have to wait for the water to boil.

Kitchen. Table. Dirty white oil-cloth, three soup plates on it full of yellow cornmeal mush, paler yellow scrapings of cheese over it. Large dish full of stuff in center of table. A pail of it half full on the range. Three children, faces reflecting cornmeal mush, take large silverplated spoons and begin to eat, standing up. An old woman sits in the corner with premature baby of the dead mother. Baby doing well. What are you feeding it? Condens’ milk. Alright. The mother of feeding children dashes back and forth, in and out of front room, after basin, children, dinner, water, towel, a glass, everything. Face wearing mild expression of torture. She is watched half fearfully, half defiantly by children who want to eat mush at once and not wait. Father of children wearing sheepish smile gets chair and takes charge of the sick woman. She stolid, willing but apprehensive, trying not to swallow spittle. Allows self to be pushed about and turned at will. Her husband — seems so at any rate — almost impossible to tell relationships in these families — walks up and down, hands in pockets, smiles disdainfully, says: Go on, doc, cut her throat. Smiles supercilious smile. Talks in Italian patois. Derogatory look at me. Probably expressing his opinion. I am defended by the younger man.

The children dig into the mush and chew it off the spoons. The largest boy age 8 glances sidewise, sees mother is not looking, shovels out a spoonful from brother’s dish. My God do they like it? Haven’t they enough? Screams. Mother rushes at him, slaps his face. The children do not even know I am in the room.

Water is boiling. Drop in the gag. So. Wait for it to cool.
Alright now. She sits in the chair. I insert the gag, pinch the handles together, the ratchet works. Her mouth is pried open. Oh. Agh. Ah — Hold this. Hold her head. She subsides into bovine passivity. Trembles a little like a cow about to be slaughtered. Gurgles of indifferent nature from uninterested children.


Torrent of words from man with the cap on. Disgust. The smiling fellow interprets. He says: Not enough. Should fill the bowl full!

You damned fool what do you want me to do, cut her whole neck open?
Mon dieu, mon dieu, que la chirurgie soi beni!
They used to say in the French Hospital that I was a natural surgeon. I had a wonderfully steady and gentle hand. Had good luck with cases. I had observed that the men who handled the cut tissues gently were usually repaid by no infection and good healing.

Three dollars. Multiplied. The way to get rich. Rich surgeons. My God how many bad surgeons there are. Who knows better than I?

I walk out of the back door. I lift my nose. I smell the wind. Oh well, if you cannot succeed in this town go to some city. Initiative, courage. Newburg-on-the-Hudson.

I want to write, to write, to write. My meat is hard to find. What if I have not the courage?

On Joyce's "Exiles"

A. C. Barnes, Philadelphia:

Dear jh: — I like your psychology better than the — evident — professional psychoanalyst's. But I think you all miss what is an obvious situation: — Richard, an old philanderer, wants Bertha to fall into his fault because thereby Richard would attain the feeling of satisfaction that comes from his hurt self-regarding sentiment being re-established on a party with his esteem for Bertha. The poignancy is due to frustration long continued. I mean he feels

(continued on page 49)
THE DEATH OF VORTICISM

T HE Kaiser has gone, or at least we hope he will have gone before this article reaches the press room; the Papacy is on its way to commendable dessuetude, with lamentable slowness; Vorticism has been reported dead by numerous half-caste reporters of Kieff, by numerous old ladies, by numberous parasites who having done their best to prevent the emergence of inventions later find it profitable to make copy out of the same, etc., etc. Mr. George Moore has fled to the scriptures for inspiration and come back without it, but with serious damage to his style,—a style once so pallid in its description of bed-room furniture and of his whilom friends' dirty linen.

Gaudier-Brzeska's life work was, we admit, stopped by a German bullet. It may be remembered as significant of the way in which the English press welcomes the work of genius that Mr. James Douglas of the Star commented on the death notice of Gaudier by writing that the perpetrators of Blast carried a joke too far in printing pretended death notices of these invented madmen. It is also significant of what the American "aesthetic public," as engineered by the relicts of "the nineties," will swallow that the celebrated aesthetic publisher and book-pirate Mr. Tom. B. Mosher of Portland, Me., has published Mr. James Douglas as the fine flower of British aestheticism.
This and the following woodcuts are by Edward Wadsworth.
When one mentions simple facts of this sort, idiots say that you are "embittered"; and when you call a block-head a block-head he can not believe you, he usually says that you are clever but insincere. Indeed I find it harder to convince a man that you really think him an ass, no matter how obvious his inanity, than to convince him of any other proposition whatsoever. Et pourtant there are people whom one does quite quietly and sincerely and placidly believe to be thoroughly stupid, inane and insipid.

And Vorticism has not yet had its funeral. Gaudier was killed at Neuville St. Vaast in 1915. The memorial exhibition of his work in London last summer received from all quarters the appreciation due in his lifetime.

It may be said that after trying all kinds of naval camouflage without satisfaction the government has at last put a vorticist lieutenant in charge of the biggest port in England; that the French aesthetic camouflageists working on theory and at a distance from the sea-bord, are unsatisfactory and that their work has to be corrected.

I shall not go into the detail of the vorticist improvement of the earlier impressionist systems; suffice it that in dealing with actual modernity the new art has proved its contentions, and that where actual knowledge of how the human eye is affected by colours and patterns in relation, where there is some standard of judgment other than that of half educated dilettanti, vorticist hard-headedness has made good.

After trying all kinds of war painters, with, for the most part, lamentable or at any rate negligible results, the government has taken on Mr. Wyndham Lewis; and after irritating delays, such as may be expected of an artist who waits to know his own mind before rushing into expression, the government is now getting its finest war pictures. The elderly are content to compare them to Lucca Signorelli, but those who really knew Mr. Lewis' mastery of his medium, before 1914, are perfectly content to see in them nothing more than the continuation of Lewis.

Mr. Roberts, the youngest member of the Blast group, is also doing work for the government, and "giving satisfaction".

Obituary notices from New Zealand, Oregon, Bloomsbury and other suburbs will be read with interest by i vorticisti, communications via Amsterdam and the Wolff bureau will also be read with interest and with reserve.
mean that he hasn't been true to Bertha (and incidentally to Robert), so if she falls from his respect for conventional standards he squares himself with himself. You'll see what I'm trying to say stated clearly in McDougall's "Social Psychology" in his analyses of the self-regarding sentiment, and of the sentiments of reproach — it's a sort of subjective, inverted, vicarious reproach. Dostoevsky plays this whole gamut beautifully in "The Eternal Husband." Of course I'm taking only an element in the analysis; — with the rest I agree with you in the main.

[I should like to go into this with you at length, if there were any time or lull in the running of a magazine. And I think where you miss is to take a second premise for a first and call it an obvious thing. You call Richard an old philanderer, but I am letting that go by and trying to show why he is a philanderer, though the common usage of this word can have no concern with Richard.

In his effort to make some so-called normal connection with life he may have been conventionally untrue to Bertha and Robert, but it is his unfaithfulness to himself in these episodes that makes his suffering so great. Normal sex, any sex is not for him: a law of nature which he did not vote, as he said. He repudiates the truth of his participation in any of this philandering. Nothing that Bertha or Robert could ever think of him, no matter how deeply they could fall into his fault, — nothing could affect his self-regarding sentiment. His self-regarding sentiment is as absolute as his sex position, and is affected only seemingly. He comes home late in the night after a debauch and kneels beside Bertha's bed and confesses all his wanderings. She has, through her love, become Richard — as I pointed out in my previous article. She lives apart from all sex life; she is to him a pure manifestation of himself. By these confessions he puts away the loathsome experiences, — puts them on this physically pure self and can again be free and reestablished in his true psychic position.

If I were Remy de Gourmont I might be able to tell you all I think about the problem of this Love that seeks a completion in scarcely definable psychic contacts never intimated nor sought by that blind reproductive force called love. — jh.]
MARY OLIVIER: A LIFE *
May Sinclair
Infancy
II

I.
White patterns on the window, sharp spikes, feathers, sprigs with furred edges, stuck flat on to the glass; white webs, crinkled like the skin of boiled milk, stretched across the corner of the pane; crisp, sticky stuff that bit your fingers.

Out of doors, black twigs thickened with a white fur; white powder sprinkled over the garden walk. The white, ruffled grass stood out stiffly and gave under your feet with a pleasant crunching. The air smelt good; you opened your mouth and drank it in gulps. It went down like cold, tingling water.

Frost.
You saw the sun for the first time, a red ball that hung by itself on the yellowish-white sky. Mamma said, Yes, of course it would fall if God wasn't there to hold it up in his hands.

Supposing God dropped the sun . . . .

II.
The yellowish-white sky had come close up to the house, a dirty blanket let down outside the window. The tree made a black pattern on it. Clear glass beads hung in a row from the black branch; each black twig was tipped with a glass bead. When Jenny opened the window there was a queer cold smell like the smell of the black water in the butt.

Thin white powder fluttered out of the blanket and fell. A thick powdr. A white fluff that piled itself in a ridge on the window-sill and curved softly in the corner of the sash. It was cold and melted on your tongue with a taste of window-pane.

In the garden Mark and Dank and Roddy were making the snow-man.

* Copyright, 1919, by the Macmillan Company.
Mamma stood at the nursery window with her back to the room. She called to Mary to come and look at the snow-man.

Mary was tired of the snow-man. She was making a tower with Roddy's bricks while Roddy wasn't there. She had to build it quick before he could come back and take his bricks away, and the quicker you built it the sooner it fell down. Mamma was not to look until it was finished.

"Look—Look, Mamma! M-m-mary's m-m-made a tar. And it's not falled down!"

The tower reached above Jenny's knee. "Come and look, Mamma..." But Mamma wouldn't even turn her head.

"I'm looking at the snow-man," she said.

Something swelled up, hot and tight, in Mary's body and in her face. She had a big bursting face and a big bursting body. She struck the tower and it fell down. Her violence made her feel light and small again and happy.

"Where's the tower, Mary?" said Mamma. "There isn't any tar. I've knocked it down. It was a nashty tar."

III.

Aunt Charlotte —

Aunt Charlotte had sent the Isle of Skye terrier to Dank. There was a picture of Aunt Charlotte in Mamma's album. She stood on a strip of carpet, supported by the hoops of her crinoline; her black lace shawl made a pattern on the light gown. She wore a little hat with a white sweeping feather, and under the hat two long black curls hung down straight on each shoulder.

The other people in the album were sulky and wouldn't look at you. The gentlemen made cross faces at somebody who wasn't there; the ladies hung their heads and looked down at their crinolines. Aunt Charlotte hung her head too, but her eyes, tilted up straight under her forehead, pointed at you. And between her stiff black curls she was smiling — smiling. When Mamma came to Aunt Charlotte's picture she tried to turn over the page of the album quick.

Aunt Charlotte sent things. She sent the fat valentine with the lace paper-border and black letters printed on sweet-smelling
The Skye terrier brought a message tied under his chin: "Tib. For my dear little nephew Dan, with Aunt Charlotte's fond love." He had high-peaked, tufted ears and a blackish-grey coat that trailed on the floor like a shawl that was too big for him. When you tried to stroke him the shawl swept and trailed away under the table. You saw nothing but shawl and ears until Papa began to tease Tib. Papa snapped his fingers and thumb at him; and Tib showed little angry eyes and white teeth set in a black snarl.

Mamma said, "Please don't do that again, Emilius."
And Papa did it again.

"What are you looking at, Master Daniel?" said Jenny.
"Nothing."
"Then what are you looking like that for? You didn't ought to."

Papa had sent Mark and Dank to the nursery in disgrace. Mark leaned over the back of Jenny's chair and rocked her. His face was red but tight; and as he rocked he smiled because of his punishment.

Dank lay on the floor on his stomach, his shoulders hunched, raised on his elbows, his chin supported by his clenched fists. He was a dark and white boy with dusty eyelashes and rough, doggy hair. He had puckered up his mouth and made it small; under the scowl of his twisted eyebrows he was looking at nothing.

"It's no worse for you than it is for Master Mark," said Jenny.
"Isn't it? Tib was my dog. If he hadn't been my dog Papa wouldn't have teased him, and Mamma wouldn't have sent him back to Aunt Charlotte, and Aunt Charlotte wouldn't have let him be run over."

"Yes. But what did you say to your Papa?"
"I said I wish Tib had bitten him. So I do. And Mark said it would have served him jolly well right."
"So it would," said Mark.

Roddy had turned his back on them. Nobody was taking any notice of him; so he sang aloud to himself the song he was forbidden to sing:
"John Brown's body lies a-rotting in his grave,
John Brown's body lies a-rotting in his grave"

The song seemed to burst out of Roddy's beautiful white face; his pink lips twirled and tilted; his golden curls bobbed and nodded to the tune.

"' John Brown's body lies a-rotting in his grave,
As we go marching on!'"

"When I grow up," said Dank, "I'll kill Papa for killing Tibby. I'll bore holes in his face with Mark's gimlet. I'll cut pieces out of him. I'll get the matches and set fire to his beard. I'll — I'll hurt him.'"

"I don't think I shall," said Mark. "But if I do I shan't kick up a silly row about it first."

"It's all very well for you. You'd kick up a row if Tibby was your dog."

Mary had forgotten Tibby. Now she remembered.
"Where's Tibby? I want him."
"Tibby's dead," said Jenny.
"What's 'dead'?"
"Never you mind."

Roddy was singing:

"'And from his nose and to his chin
The worms crawled out and the worms crawled in."

"That's dead," said Roddy.

v.

You never knew when Aunt Charlotte mightn't send something. She forgot your birthday and sometimes Christmas; but, to make up for that, she remembered in between. Every time she was going to be married she remembered.

Sarah the cat came too long after Mark's twelfth birthday to be his birthday present. There was no message with her, except that Aunt Charlotte was going to be married and didn't want her any more. Whenever Aunt Charlotte was going to be married she sent you something that she didn't want.

Sarah was a white cat with a pink nose and pink lips and pink pads under her paws. Her tabby hood came down in a peak between
her green eyes. Her tabby cape went on along the back of her tail, tapering to the tip. Sarah crouched against the fireguard, her haunches raised, her head sunk back on her shoulders, and her paws tucked in under her white, pouting breast.

Mark stooped over her; his mouth smiled its small, firm smile; his eyes shone as he stroked her. Sarah raised her haunches under the caressing hand.

Mary's body was still. Something stirred and tightened in it when she looked at Sarah.

"I want Sarah," she said.

"You can't have her," said Jenny. "She's Master Mark's cat."

She wanted her more than Roddy's bricks and Dank's animal-book or Mark's soldiers. She trembled when she held her in her arms and kissed her and smelt the warm, sweet, sleepy smell that came from the top of her head.

"Little girls can't have everything they want," said Jenny.

"I wanted her before you did," said Dank. "You're too little to have a cat at all."

He sat on the table, swinging his legs. His dark, mournful eyes watched Mark under their doggy scowl. He looked like Tibby, the terrier that Mamma sent away because Papa teased him.

"Sarah isn't your cat either, Master Daniel. Your Aunt Charlotte gave her to your Mamma, and your Mamma gave her to Master Mark."

"She ought to have given her to me. She took my dog away."

"I gave her to you," said Mark.

"And I gave her you back again."

"Well then, she's half our cat."

"I want her," said Mary. She said it again and again.

Mamma came and took her into the room with the big bed.

The gas blazed in the white globes. Lovely white lights washed like water over the polished yellow furniture: the bed, the great high wardrobe, the chest of drawers, the twisted poles of the looking glass. There were soft rounds and edges of blond light on the white marble chimney-piece and the white marble washstand. The drawn curtains were covered with shining silver patterns on a sleek green ground that shone. All these things showed again in the long, flashing mirrors.

Mary looked round the room and wondered why the squat grey men had gone out of the curtains.
“Don’t look about you,” said Mamma. “Look at me. Why do you want Sarah?”

She had forgotten Sarah.

“Because,” she said, “Sarah is so sweet.”

“Mamma gave Sarah to Mark. Mary mustn’t want what isn’t given her. Mark doesn’t say, ‘I want Mary’s dollies.’ Papa doesn’t say, ‘I want Mamma’s workbox.’ ”

“But I want Sarah.”

“And that’s selfish and self-willed.”

Mamma sat down on the low chair at the foot of the bed.

“God,” she said, “hates selfishness and self-will. God is grieved every time Mary is self-willed and selfish. He wants her to give up her will.”

When Mamma talked about God she took you on her lap and you played with the gold tassel on her watch-chain. Her face was solemn and tender. She spoke softly. She was afraid that God might hear her talking about him and wouldn’t like it.

Mary knelt in Mamma’s lap and said, “Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,” and “Our Father,” and played with the gold tassel. Every day began and ended with “Our Father” and “Gentle Jesus, meek and mild.”

“What’s ‘hallowed’?”


Mary twisted the gold tassel and made it dance and run through the loop of the chain. Mamma took it out of her hands and pressed them together and stooped her head to them and kissed them. She could feel the kiss tingling through her body from her finger-tips, and she was suddenly docile and appeased.

When she lay in her cot behind the curtain she prayed: “Please God, keep me from wanting Sarah.”

In the morning she remembered. When she looked at Sarah she thought: “Sarah is Mark’s cat and Dank’s cat.”

She touched her with the tips of her fingers. Sarah’s eyes were reproachful and unhappy. She ray away and crept under the chest of drawers.

“Mamma gave Sarah to Mark.”

Mamma was sacred and holy. Mark was sacred and holy. Sarah was sacred and holy, crouching under the chest of drawers, with her eyes gleaming in the darkness.

(to be continued)
Mr. Bloom walked towards Dawson street, his tongue brushing his teeth smooth. Something green it would have to be: spinach say. Then with those Röntgen rays searchlight you could.

At Duke lane a terrier choked up a sick knuckly cud on the cobblestones and lapped it with new zest. Mr. Bloom coasted warily. Ruminants. Wonder if Tom Rochford will do anything with that invention of his. Wasting time explaining it to Flynn’s mouth. Lean people long mouths. Ought to be a hall or a place where inventors could go in and invent free. Course then you’d have all the cranks pestering.

He hummed, prolonging in solemn echo, the closes of the bars:
— *Don Giovanni, a cenar teco*

*M’ invitasti.*


Bare clean closestools, waiting, in the window of William Miller, plumber, turned back his thoughts. They could: and watch it all the way down changing biliary duct spleen squirting liver gastric juice coils of intestines like pipes. But the poor buffer would have to stand all the time with his insides entrails on show. Science.

— *A cenar teco.*

*What does that teco mean? Tonight perhaps.*

— *Don Giovanni, thou hast me invited*

*To come to supper tonight*

*The rum the rundum,*

*Doesn’t go properly.*

Keyes: two months if I get Nannetti to. That’ll be two pounds ten about two pounds eight. Three Hynes owes me. Two eleven. Presscott’s dyeworks van over there. If I get Billy Presscott’s ad. Two fifteen. Five guineas about. On the pig’s back.

Could buy one of those silk petticoats for Molly, colour of her new garters.
Tour the south then. What about English wateringplaces? Brighton, Margate. Piers by moonlight. Her voice floating out. **Those lovely seaside girls.**

He turned at Gray's confectioner's window of unbought tarts and passed the reverend Thomas Connellan's bookstore. **Why I left the church of Rome.** Bird's nest women run him. They say they used to give pauper children soup to change to protestants. **Why we left the church of Rome.**

A blind stripling stood tapping the curbstone with his slender cane. No tram in sight. Wants to cross.

— Do you want to cross? Mr. Bloom asked.

The blind stripling did not answer. His wallface frowned weakly. He moved his head uncertainly.

— You're in Dawson street, Mr. Bloom said. Molesworth street is opposite. Do you want to cross? There's nothing in the way.

The cane moved out trembling to the left. Mr. Bloom's eye followed its line and saw again the dye works' van drawn up before Drago's. Where I saw his brilliantined hair just when I was. Horse drooping. Driver in John Long's. Slaking his draught.

— There's a van there, Mr. Bloom said, but it's not moving. I'll see you across. Do you want to go to Molesworth street?

— Yes, the stripling answered. South Frederick street.

— Come, Mr. Bloom said.

He touched the thin elbow gently; then took the limp seeing hand to guide it forward.

Say something to him. Better not do the condescending. Pass a remark.

— The rain kept off.

No answer.

Stains on his coat. Slobbers his food I suppose. Like a child's hand his hand. Like Milly's was. Sensitive. Sizing me up I daresay from my hand. Van. Keep his cane clear of the horse's legs: tired drudge get his doze. That's right. Clear. Behind a bull: in front of a horse.

— Thanks, sir.

Knows I'm a man. Voice.

— Right now? First turn to the left.
The blind stripling tapped the curbstone and went on his way, drawing his cane back, feeling again.

Mr. Bloom walked behind him. Poor young fellow! How on earth did he know that van was there? Must have felt it. See things in their foreheads perhaps. Kind of sense of volume. Weight or size of it, something blacker than the dark. Wonder would he feel it if something was removed. Feel a gap. Queer idea of Dublin he must have, tapping his way round by the stones. Could he walk in a beeline if he hadn't that cane? Bloodless pious face like a fellow going in to be a priest.

Penrose! That was that chap's name.

Look at all the things they can learn to do. Read with their fingers. Tune pianos. Of course the other senses are more. Embroider. Plait baskets. People ought to help. Work basket I could buy Molly's birthday. Hates sewing. Might take an objection. Dark men they call them.

Sense of smell must be stronger too. Smells on all sides bunched together. Each street different smell. Each person too. Then the spring, the summer: smells. Tastes. They say you can't taste wines with your eyes shut. Also smoke in the dark they say get no pleasure.

And with a woman, for instance. Must be strange not to see her. Kind of a form in his mind's eye. The voice temperature when he touches her with his fingers must almost see the lines, the curves. His hands on her hair, for instance. Say it was black for instance. Good. We call it black. Then passing over her white skin. Different feel perhaps. Feeling of white.


With a gentle finger he felt ever so slowly the hair combed back above his ears. Again. Fibres of fine fine straw. Then gently his finger felt the skin of his right cheek. Dawny hair there too. Not smooth enough. The belly is the smoothest. No-one about. There he goes into Frederick street. Perhaps to Levenston's dancing academy: piano. Might be settling my braces.

Walking by Doran's publhouse he slid his hand between waistcoat and trousers and, pulling aside his shirt gently, felt a slack fold of his belly. But I know it's whitey yellow. Want to try in
The dark to see.
He withdrew his hand and pulled his dress to.
Poor fellow! Quite a boy. Terrible. Really terrible. Where
is the justice being born that way. All those women and children
excursion beanfeast burned and drowned in New York, Holocaust.
Karma they call that transmigration for sins you did in a past life
the reincarnation met him pikehoses. Dear, dear, dear. Pity of
course: but somehow you can’t cotton on to them someway.
Sir Frederick Falkiner going into the freemason’s hall. Solemn
as Troy. After his good lunch in Earlsfort terrace. I suppose he’d
turn up his nose at that wine I drank. Has his own ideas of justice
in the recorder’s court. Wellmeaning old man. Police chargesheets
crammed with cases get their percentage manufacturing crime.
Sends them to the rightabout. The devil on moneylenders. Gave
Reuben J. a great strawcalling. Now he’s really what they call a
dirty jew. Power those judges have. Grumpy old topers in wigs.
And may the Lord have mercy on your soul.
Hello placard. Mirus bazaar. His excellency the lord lieu-
tenant. Sixteenth. Today it is. In aid of funds for Mercer’s
hospital. The Messiah was first given for that. Yes. Handel.
What about going out there. Ballsbridge. Drop in on Keyes. No
use sticking to him like a leech. Sure to know someone on the gate.
Mr Bloom came to Kildare street. First I must. Library.
Straw hat in sunlight. Tan shoes. Turnedup trousers. It is.
It is.
His heart quopped softly. To the right. Museum. Goddess-
es. He swerved to the right.
did I? Yes, it is. The walk. Not see. Not see. Get on.
Making for the museum gate with long windy strides he lifted
his eyes. Handsome building. Sir Thomas Deane designed. Not
following me?
Didn’t see me perhaps. Light in his eyes.
The flutter of his breath came forth in short sighs. Quick.
Cold statues: quiet there. Safe in a minute.
No didn’t see me. After two. Just at the gate.
My heart!
His eyes beating looked steadfastly at cream curves of stone.
Sir homas Deane was the Greek architecture.
Look for something I.
His hasty hand went quick into a pocket, took out, read unfolded Agendath Netaim. Where did I?
Busy looking for.
He thrust back quickly Agendath.
Afternoon she said.
Hurry. Walk quietly. Moment more. My heart.
His hand looking for the where did I put found in his hip pocket soap lotion have to call tepid paper stuck. Ah soap there I yes. Gate.
Safe!

(to be continued)

That International Episode

Edgar Jepson, London:

With regard to the letters of Miss Harriet Monroe, the editress of Poetry, I wrote to her at the end of 1917 to ask her if she would like an appreciation of recent United States poetry. She wrote that she would, sent me twenty-eight numbers of her magazine, ranging over three years, and in those numbers marked the typically United States poems. So much for the "uninvited and undesired" invasion. I read those marked poems and taking three of them to which Poetry had awarded a prize in each of those three years, as typical of the typical, I dealt chiefly with them. I said, as politely as my outraged aesthetic sensibilities would allow, that they were punk; I quoted enough of them to demonstrate that they were punk; and punk they are.

Neither Miss Harriet Monroe nor any of her supporters made any attempt whatever to counter a single one of my criticisms, to demonstrate that the punk I said was punk was not punk. They burst into a storm of irrelevant abuse of me. Miss Harriet Monroe's article in Poetry was just abuse of me. Mr. Austin Harrison told me that the article she sent to the English Review was just abuse of me. A Mr. Burton Roscoe's article in the Chicago Tribune was just abuse of me. That is merely silly.
All they had to do was to demonstrate that such lines as,
Then Uncle Tom to Eva flew,
Lurching bravos from the ditches dank,
His hair was black as a sheep's wool that is black,
She knew you had the madness for Arabel,
are poetry. Why didn't they do it?

In the same article I wrote, quite fairly, that in Mr. T. S. Eliot
the United States has a great poet. I quoted enough of his work,
the whole of "La Figlia Che Piange," to demonstrate that he is the
greatest master of emotion, intensity, and the beautiful music of
words the United States has produced since Poe. Miss Monroe archly
wrote that Mr. Eliot must have winked when he read it. Impayable!

By the way, I did not write that Mr. Edgar Frost's "Snow" was
a "maundering burble"; I wrote that it was "maundering dribble". It is.

With regard to jh's articles, I have no doubt that she is a
very earnest lady, but I wish she would begin to think. It is ob­
vious that where you have verse, you have an exercise of the aesthetic
activity and a legitimate occasion for aesthetic criticism. The fact
that the exercise of that activity is so poor that the verse has no
more to do with poetry than it has with rat-catching merely renders
an aesthetic criticism of it the more expedient.

Of course I never said anything so silly as that "the technical ac­
tivity is the prime activity of Art." I said that Art is in the handling;
and that is wholly true. What is the use from the creative point
of view, of jh's "intuition of beauty" to a man if he cannot give it
form? He may have all the perception of beauty possible to a human
being, but if he cannot handle that perception so as to give it its
right form he is neither a poet, a musician, a sculptor, or a painter.
Again the phrase "the Poet's vision of the world" is not "the thread­
bare terminology of half-baked criticism"; it is an uncommonly actual
fact. The poet's vision of the world is an actual and most important
part of him. Moreover it is a good concrete phrase and very much
safer than jh's "intuition of beauty", which begs a very important
question: Also I propose to go on asserting that the poetry of Mr.
T. S. Eliot is the fine flower of the United States spirit of to-day be­
cause that is exactly what it is.

Again my discussion of voices was wholly pertinent. If you will
go on whining or droning through your noses you will remain deaf
to the music of words and you never will write poetry, or know it when you get it. Without the music of words there is no poetry! You may print the words in any arrangement you like, they remain just prose. I believe that this deafness is the reason why the bulk of the versifiers of the United States sprang so lithely on free verse: it supplied a long-felt want.

Finally why are you Yankees so infernally touchy? You may say any mortal thing you like about any English writer of verse you like and I shall not turn a hair. Does your touchiness come from the consciousness that your airs of aesthetic superiority are not justified by your aesthetic achievement and I called your bluff? If it does you are quite right. In the matter of aesthetic achievement the United States is last on the roll of the civilized nations of all time. It's poets and painters had to be Europeanized before they could attain their aesthetic maturity. The important thing is that you are going to stay where you are, if you will persist in humbugging yourselves that,

His hair was black as a sheep's wool that is black, is poetry because it was written in Keokuk.

[I can't do any more about this Jepson episode. It isn't interesting to any one — not worth the space and paper given to it. But a point or two may be discussed here as well as anywhere else. Almost anyone but Mr. Jepson, it would seem, could have gathered from the various articles of "just abuse" that the "touchiness" didn't have much to do with any attack on our "airs of aesthetic superiority" or "achievement"; and I don't think that the present aesthetic activities of either England or America of enough importance for an international controversy. It wasn't any of this: it was really a protest against Mr. Jepson as a critic. We have enough of this "swinging the bladder", this plain business-suit criticism of poetry right here in America.

We are kindly told that criticism is badly needed "before the U. S. can export works of Art instead of exporting artists". We'll admit all this, but we can't see why we should find ourselves in a street fight for protesting against imports. We'll admit all and anything about our aesthetic achievement, we have some sense of tragedy if we aren't granted any sense of humour, but the thing turns on a superstition held by us that criticism also is an art and we scarcely have
room or patience for any more like Jepson. We don't need to import that kind of criticism.

I thought when I used the expression "intuition of beauty" that I was addressing myself to intelligences somewhat past the schoolboy stage. The making of a work of Art is an act of worship, an acknowledgement to form in the absolute; it is also an outward sign to other men that the artist has had this contact. The artist's perception of beauty concerns only form. Form is what he has seen where other men see only the context of the world. He has been made aware of form, and this he presents, using whatever subject material his personal manifestation dictates. If it isn't form that he has seen, no amount of handling can make any perception of a beautiful context into a work of Art. But I am not writing a treatise on aesthetics; neither am I "earnestly" arguing with Mr. Jepson.

A very facetious and wholly ridiculous demonstration with convincing illustrations on the phonograph could be made of Mr. Jepson's beautiful-voice-beautiful-poetry obsession.

I hope I haven't misquoted any of Mr. Jepson's phrases. For the sake of a little exactness in all controversy let me call attention to a too sensitive leap on Miss Monroe's part in referring to Pound's note on Jepson's first article in the Little Review. Observe that Pound did not mention Poetry at all. — Jh.

An Offer

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ANNOUNCEMENT

The April number will contain certain notes of music and the theatre for which there is no room this month. It will also contain reproductions of drawings by Stanislaw Szukalski; stories by Francis Buzzell, Ben Hecht, Aldous Huxley; studies by William Carlos Williams; poems by Wallace Gould, etc.

Also, if we are by that time far enough removed from the effulgence, we will bring forth another "idolatrous" article on Mary Garden.