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## DEMOCRACY AGAIN

BY DORA MARSDEN

THE EGOIST has published articles on the Nature of Democracy before, and no doubt will again, but the following remarks are intended rather to suggest a change in the fashion of discussing Democracy than to add to what has already been said. Perhaps because the futility of discussing war-news has become evident even to the most optimistic, our popular novelists have begun to debate Democracy in the popular Press and are trying to discover a red spot on the grey ash of Political Theory : with results that are dull to a thankless degree for intentions so well-meaning. It would accordingly be in the spirit of uncavilling philanthropy that one would suggest the dullness is due to the manner in which the debate is carried on : a manner which is after that of the Provincial. Not that there is anything to be decried in the provincial manner of debate : only its excellence is limited to its own times and seasons. It is profitable only when applied to controversy still young and in the green : because Democracy is world-worn and hoary it fails to fit. The provincial manner is the propagandist manner, and Democracy has travelled very far beyond the boundaries of propaganda. It has arrived and is here, doing what it may very well, considering that the heart of man and the nature of things are what they are ; and no further fun is to be had from efforts to supply it with " push and go." Once initiated, there is as much push as things will warrant in what Democracy itself stands for. On the other hand, there is a very considerable amount of diversion to be had by accepting Democracy as *un fait accompli* and noting how entertaining the human animal is in the way it senses its capacities and possibilities. Having passed the stage when the question whether it should fail or succeed seemed really important, Democracy has now most to give, from an intellectual point of view, in unfolding what it means. In the propaganda stage of a fetish it is futile to pause to debate what it means

and implies. Neither foe nor friend, then, can tolerate reflection ; what is necessary is that it should win its way through belief to a sure and swift establishment or be suppressed. Those are its youthful days of aggression and strenuousness, for which the provinces just provide the correct temperature. When, becoming established, it no longer has its way to fight, what the same fetish has to give it gives only to the spirit of mellowed and tolerant reflection. Democracy has proved disappointing in the hands of the weavers of romance, because they have endeavoured to submit it to the disciplining of March when it is itself offering them the ripe fruits of September. They are still trying to write it over with programmes for a tub-thumping campaign, while it is patiently holding out to them a wisdom-packed manual on the nature of Human Kind. In short, their manner of debate has taken no account of the age of their subject. Vituperating and storming against those who choose to decry and deny Democracy is comparable to the adoption of a like attitude towards some harsh-featured lady who scorned cosmetics. Things so well-tried are known for as much as they are worth, too nicely for either supporters or decriers to be other than out-of-date : things which, like the " right to marry one's grandmother," are fit only to be left to personal taste.

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Having then as a " Cause " ceased to be the criterion by which the world is divided into sheep and goats, and no longer being involved in a hot propaganda through which the world must be won or be damned, the purposes which Democracy can serve, and what it is competent to accomplish and what not, can now be acknowledged dispassionately and without heat. Democracy is not capable of making a common appeal to an entire community. The purpose which it chiefly serves practically concerns only the Few. On quite other grounds has it



an appeal for the Many. Democracy aims at making the path of the governors smooth by preoccupying and entertaining the governed. It is an effort on the part of the governing interests to make their rôles more acceptable by the indirect method of making the people pleased with themselves, and while it is a first necessity for the governors that they shall be enabled to govern, it is a secondary matter to the governed that they shall be well entertained. Therefore as an effort of entertainment, good or bad, it remains the governors' "Show," as the affairs of a theatre remain the affairs of the management, no matter what the audience's verdict on the performance may be. So that the ways and means of democratic government do not present a question which can be addressed to all alike, with a claim for equal attention, and its readjustments can be left to the audience's majority vote with no more propriety than the affairs of a theatrical company can be left to theirs. Therefore, the efficiency of Democracy is the concern of the governors only: the governed are interested to the slender extent to which one may allow oneself to become interested in other people's businesses. The question for the people is not whether Democracy is conducted in the manner most advantageous for "good" government, but whether it entertains them sufficiently to permit of them allowing their attention to be preoccupied by it, and to allow themselves to be put in a good humour with things which otherwise would be made the grounds of disaffection and dissent. Matters of internal readjustment, such as Proportional Representation and the wrongs and rights of the Party System, which are being agitated rather sadly in the Press, are not popular concerns, notwithstanding the fact that the people can be roused to get excitement and enthusiasm concerning them. The arranging of the programme is still a question for the management, no matter how excited and enthusiastic an audience may become. It will no doubt clap many things which it would not "pay" them to put on, and turn sulkily from items which are the necessities of the programme from the management's point of view.

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Democracy—to reiterate—is a method of governing the people, and in that it is identical with all other methods: it aims at bringing the will of the people into submission. Its distinction is that it accomplishes its purpose in the main by entertainment and flattery of the people, while other methods rely on the power to inspire them with a due sense of fear. All forms of Government have to face the task of bending, breaking, or seducing the Will of their recalcitrant subjects. Democracy plumps for seduction: which it achieves by inflating the value of those things by the inflation of which the people are likely to be the most pleasurably affected: by means of Flattery, that is. The instrument which Flattery employs is words, and it is natural, therefore, that Democracy should take its stand on a Phrase: government—but government *by the people*, and should make its crowning achievement a sort of Temple of Words: Parliament. Every form of Government will allow that it governs the people: Democracy hastens to clear its sheet by adding that its Government is "by the people," and the phrase has the support of vigorous and elegant assertion. The mass of the people, however, no more govern the governing-interests of a community than they govern, for instance, the workings of the popular Press. They form more or less interested audiences in an order of things which goes its way heedless of them save in that it refrains from creating friction and temper needlessly. In propagandist Democracy the distinction which exists between Governors and People is slurred over, but established Democracy need not shrink from acknowledging the clear cleavage.

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The regulations which contribute to the orderly conduct of a community's prominent and most powerful interests constitute that community's Government, and the owners of such interests are—whether in name or

not—its governors. The strength of interest owned is the consideration upon which participation in government is grounded. The secondary—the less powerful—interests insinuate themselves, and make a common interest with the most powerful, and to that extent take part in government. The People are the owners of feeble interests and have no direct share in government. But because such are always in the vast majority they form a "Mass" of relatively preponderating proportions, and in virtue of this "Mass" they are often able to form a moderately strong interest on a basis of their common ineffectualness, and their consequent common exclusion from all share in government. This common interest of the Masses only very rarely gives a positive expression to itself: it shows little positive governing activity. It rather takes on the form of defence against and resistance to positive forms of government, and concerns itself with embargo rather than initiative: with agitation and dissent. It constitutes itself into a gadfly activity which is distracting, and upon occasions actually hurtful to those whom it opposes. It is therefore to accommodate this common resentment of the Masses towards Government—any Government—that democratic forms of government have been encouraged. Democracy seeks to transmute the cause of annoyance—the ruffled temper of the People—by creating a sham government in which they can be allowed and even encouraged to participate in a preponderating degree. Whereas the numerical preponderance of the Masses in other forms of government gives rise to a sense of disquiet and danger among the governing interests, Democracy boldly seizes on this very feature and makes it the foundation of its system. Accordingly—"man as a unit," the numerical aspect of a community, is pushed into the foreground. A man's value lies in that he *is* a man and "counts one" like everybody else. The sham government audaciously bases itself on a postulated "Equality of Man," and proceeds to allot an "Equal Voice" to each and all for the selecting of the units who shall take an actual part in its proceedings. By which simple means each man becomes—hey presto!—a governor: a man of power: a Freeman. Thus the distinction: whereas the qualification for a share in the work of Parliament is the possession of a "Voice"—a vote—the qualification for a share in the work of government is—a Powerful Interest. There is no essential correspondence between governing-interests and the pseudo-governing representatives. Inasmuch as the latter are likely to be useful to the former, it is possible to manipulate them after they have arrived. Every man has his measure, if not, as Walpole out of his experience said, his price: it is not necessary always even to buy a man. Occasionally, however, an Interest may seek to be "represented" directly by a "Voice," by consideration of convenience, or acclaim, special profit or some other motive: but it is not necessary.

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Whereas the work of Government goes on quietly and unobtrusively wherever money interests, business interests, powerful personal interests, territorial interests interplay, the work of Parliament is done as loquaciously as possible and with the maximum of publicity. The genuinely governmental office of Parliament is the minor one of registration-office for the more obvious regulations of governmental life. The more subtle and important decisions of the governing interests are not registered, however, and are not discussed by Parliament. They are too important and necessary to be given away in talk. Should Parliament, by means of its "Voices," attempt to register decisions antagonistic to the governing-interests, it would promptly find itself paralysed. This loquacity and publicity of Parliament are intentional. They are part of the means by which Democracy achieves its purposes of covering the track of the really important, by making a stir and commotion about the non-essential. They are of a piece with the focusing of attention upon the individual person. Under the cover of "The importance of the individual as such"—an importance duly paid tribute to by making the individual



the Parliamentary unit—Democracy screens the fact that the unit of effective government is a Paramount interest and, back of that, the Will which creates it. It pushes deeper into the background the unpleasant features of the Universe of Purposes: that the players play to win, and that the power to govern the losers is the major part of the reward of the winners; and that the "principle" of equality has as little to do with the power to govern as it has with the unequal positions, say, of teams in a football organization. It is precisely the *inequality* which gives zest to the game. Democracy, with its stir about the non-essential, discreetly veils all that. Its "principles" take on with time an even surer note: all men are Free and Equal, and the rest. Which same principles the governing-interests can very well afford to allow and encourage so long as the nature of things holds, and one strongly vitalized purpose is able to carry more momentum than a million that are less so, and can with ease make servants of their owners. The "principles of democracy" affect the nature of government no more than straws a storm: nor are they intended to. But they are capable of mollifying the governed people, which is what they were designed to do.

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How great is the difference between actual government and the sham is made clear by their differing attitudes towards "tyrannies." Parliament—the Temple of Words—demands the death of all tyrants, while the Government is just the coalition of a cluster of the major tyrannies. The purpose of all governments is to make some particular tyranny successful: but such also is the purpose of all interests, "private" or "public," and inasmuch as they succeed as interests, they succeed as tyrannies. Even Pity or Pacifism—in so far as they establish themselves as interests—is as tyrannically minded as others. The early Christians were as tyrannical in temper as Nero. All they lacked was the power to gratify it. When later the doctrines of peace had attained to power, souls were saved by practices as tyrannical as before they had been by temper only. Where tyrannies differ is in the amount of sensitiveness: tact: intelligence: with which they are furthered. This sensitiveness in the cause of tyrannies shows itself in the subtle apprehension of the delicate poise of social relationships which, while maintaining a man's own personal taste as the absolute criterion of what is "good" for him, yet in the interests of the same criterion cautions him that he must act delicately when he seeks to force his taste at the expense of others. Civilization is the composite result of the practising of social subtleties, by which the personal preferences of the powerful can be pushed to the extremes where they are called tyrannies without risking any too great dangers of a recoil. Not the suppression of tyrannies, therefore, but their easier advancement is the aim of civilization, and Democracy is civilization in its special relation to Government. It is government by a delicate ruse played off in words. Hence Democracy's respect for words, and in particular for those pious Phrases which are called "Principles." Hence, too, its inevitable respect for the "spiritual" side of things: which, being said, means the "Verbal." Hence the "high tone" of Parliamentary eloquence: that of a Girls' School on Prize-Day: the model of propriety. Parliamentary language is immaculate, and by contrast with it the "spotty" work of government—the play of interests—is very spotty indeed. Hence the permanence of the tradition regarding the "Corruption of Government." Government is as corrupt as any other forms of business, because, like them, it is just an interplay of personal interests. It would be strange, therefore, if the language of Parliament—the institution whose function it is verbally to deprecate the play of interests—were not at variance with the practices of Government. In "Government after the Democratic Method" such variance is quite inevitable. The "noble" (*i.e.* disinterested) phrases of Democracy would not exist—being deprived of function—were not the nature of government "ignoble" (*i.e.* interested).

They are created to the sole end of sounding pleasant in the ears of the people, to whom the ways of governments, taken neat, must always necessarily seem quite too unpleasant. The expectations—"parliamentarily" encouraged—that under Democracy all interests will have an equal claim upon the paramount State-power to be carried to success are vain, though charming. All Government—any Government—represents the anti-thesis of "levelling" the claims of all interests and treating all alike. The "Good of All" is an affable fiction and exists nowhere save in "parliamentary" eloquence. No government knows anything of it. Governments are all personalized, partial, and particular: they know nothing of "Universals." Words are familiar with them: Wills and Purposes are not. So the use of "good words" is to counterbalance "bad ways": it is the attempted effecting of an exchange, and on the whole it succeeds. Accordingly, the "noble" phrases of parliamentary language may or may not pass away as they serve, well or ill, "ignoble interests": that is, democratic government may pass away, but government will never pass away.

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Hence anyone who elects to debate Democracy can do so without fear of hurting anything more important than "negligible" people's feelings: it is as harmless as a discussion on Politeness and about as serious. For Democracy is not less firmly established, but more, because it is founded, not upon its verbal principles, but upon the two strongest interests of human nature: that those who can govern will use strange means to that end: and that those who cannot will put up with a good deal of governing as long as it is made fairly interesting and is not too insolent and irritating. Friends of Democracy, therefore, who are anxious for any reason to make democratic readjustments, need only make quite clear to their own minds which party in the community they are addressing—Governors or Governed—since the same arguments cannot with effect and propriety be addressed to both. It is the attempting to do both together which renders the debaters so cross and heated: they are conscious of the confusion in themselves. If they are addressing Governors it has to be borne in mind that as far as the latter are concerned the proof of the pudding is in the eating: and the comestible is theirs. The whole question for them is whether Democracy is making government more easy and the people more submissive. They are not concerned with the harmonious growth of a logical system. It is not an affair of principle, but of practical effects. Because experience has proved to them that the entertaining of the people, the fixing of their attention upon engrossing but non-essential details, is a general pre-condition of the peaceful and orderly march of government, Democracy is "good"; but because flattery of the people is irksome at most times, and almost intolerably so when its "victims" appear too impressed by it and begin taking it seriously, Democracy is distasteful. So the "distaste" balances the "goodness," but usually gives way before it. However, not merely is Democracy distasteful and so calculated to incline the governors to pause on the hither side of satiating their audience, but, like an infectious disease, it offers a dangerous medium to work in. Its means are speech, and speech is persuasive. It is almost as likely to infect the preachers as the hearers: so that the governors themselves are often wholly in doubt as to whether the People have been encouraged too little or too much. This quite generally so where governors do not understand their own business, and in the main and nowadays they do not: notwithstanding that it is safer both for them and the people they govern that they should. As governed, fools may even be useful: as governors, they are always dangerous. It leads to such grossly wrong calculations. So the test of Efficiency—from the governors' point of view—of the democratic method is that the people should be docile, good-tempered, happy, and preoccupied. The test of Inefficiency in the second degree—from the governors'



point of view—is when the people come to believe in it “too well to be wise,” and seek to interfere in the work of governing: thus making the work of government more rather than less difficult; while the test of Inefficiency in the first degree is passed when the governors

themselves also believe in it, and mistake the flattering politeness which Democracy is designed to offer for the actual power to control interests which it is the function of Democracy to ascribe to the people, but which it is neither capable of bestowing nor intended to bestow.

## VIEWS AND COMMENTS

THE handbook of the British Association which holds its annual meeting in Manchester next week, has an article on “Manchester of To-day,” which suggests that an extremely interesting article on that subject might be written by someone who possessed the necessary details. Among the observations on its temper and tradition, Manchester is given distinction particularly as being the breeding-ground of Causes and Movements: a distinction for which the two crusades in favour of Low Diets cited—the Temperance and the Vegetarian Movements—seem only a meagre basis. The writer, doubtless, has his reasons for this economy of illustration, but it is an economy which must strike anyone who has even a slender acquaintance with that city. Perhaps the war makes it inopportune to emphasize Pacifism, and the rising Cult of the Masculine, which is the immediate consequence upon it, makes mention of the Insurrectionary Feminine seem dowdy and antiquated, if not actually undignified; but it is difficult to see what prevents Manchester’s cradling of the Labour Movement, and the lead it has taken in the nineteenth century Democracy at least obtaining adequate mention.

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It is just possible that the differences hinted at between the mental atmosphere of Manchester and that—say—of London could have been indicated with more point in a comparison drawn between the “Intellectual” as he appears in Manchester and the “Intellectual” as he appears in London—if by “Intellectual” one may mean the articulate persons who can and like to talk about the things to which their souls move them. The Manchester Intellectual is above all things the “Earnest” Young Man and still more “Earnest” Young Woman, whereas with the London Intellectual it is as the breath of his aspiration to be Tolerant rather than Earnest. And he is accordingly far less exciting. The Earnest One anxiously debates the Universe as one who seeks that sole “True Light,” of which found, he is to be the devotee and servitor. That “lights” are true or false not merely according to one’s fleeting view of them but eternally and absolutely he has no doubt. The “true blue” Manchester Vegetarian, for instance, has no doubt whatever that the archangels in heaven will on occasion discuss the problem with the seriousness of any earthly convert, whether having forsworn the enjoyment of all dead meats it remains “right” to wear leather shoes: their only difference, and, of course, advantage being that they are able not only to put the question even as frail mortals, but can supply in full that answer which mortals as yet know only in part.

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It is this absolute point of view which makes the Earnest One so splendid in Movements. He sees his Cause as the pivot on which the Universe turns and from thence derives that momentum which is to carry him past whatever distractions rise up between him and the one thing worthy. Which explains why where the Earnest are, there the Movements are also: and why he is found particularly in the provinces. An “absolute” point of view requires additional room and scope, and this the provincial city is best able to supply. Interests there not being so varied and close packed as in the capital cities, the “absolute” standpoint is not so liable to get nastily jolted. And in return for this elbow-room as it were, the Earnest Ones invest the provincial

cities with what appears to be a greater degree of vigour: actually the effect of an emphasis in assertion which their “Absolute” authority permits them: an emphasis reiterated and ever yet again, in relation to the one thing worthy. In the capital city where an effort has to be made to make a greater number and a wider variety of powerful interests fall in and work amicably together, such aggressive emphasis is far less possible, and the wider spirit of tolerance, which is just this diminution of an aggressive emphasis, is the consequence. Here, not only is the force of emphasis lessened, but the total value set upon the power of Discussion also is less. Where powerful interests are negotiated alongside and in amongst competing strong interests, it is understood that these cut deeper than any argument can, and an air of folly appears to hang over the squandering of temper and energy upon verbal niceties. It is noteworthy that the Tolerant kind not merely tolerate the Earnest, but often appear genuinely to admire them: perhaps in the manner that grown-up people admire the serious play of children as an enjoyment more abandoned and whole-hearted than their own. In neither case do they admire to the point of imitation, however: whether because they are not able to catch the “Absolute” point of view, or because they feel that they cannot afford the luxury, or because they know that Time metes out retribution to players who abandon themselves too utterly to the game, and never fails to make clear sooner or later that the World does not really split in twain over the ethics of Eating Meat or the Numerical Constitution of the Trinity, or the right of Women to Vote or the “Absolute” view of anything. With the Earnest the value of full “free” Discussion is placed at its highest, and everything is arguable. It is the first article of faith that all differences of interests—being arguable—are therefore convertible, and that God is always to be found—through Talk.

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Everything, therefore, seems to be put on the easy side of discussion, but they promptly set about recovering stability by placing their own special view under direct patronage of the absolute. This relation to the Absolute is as essential to a “true believer” as faith in the efficient power of discussion. The two supplement each other like the two blades of a pair of shears. Robbed of either a belief can cut no way. That is why Movements which seem quite alive and robust in Manchester grow sickly or die in London. They find readiness to discuss in plenty: what fails them is the “absolute” point of view, which thrives really well only in those favoured spots of the provinces where there is in addition to the animation and leisure required for the discussion, the space which is necessary to accommodate its somewhat unwieldy bulk. Hence the diversion of Movements remains the specially distinctive sport of the intellectual grown-ups of the provinces. The designation “Starting of a Movement” is a rather interesting piece of mal-nomenclature. Rather that to “Start a Movement,” to “Engineer a mental Standstill,” and draw out the pleasure of the “static” would be a fairer description. For Movements have to do not so much with definite activities as with states of mind: with “Beliefs”: that is with some arbitrary stage in an unfinished and arrested thinking process. A Belief is essentially a Doubt: an Uncertainty. The aim of the people who start Movements in connection with any particular Doubt is to get their particular one for various reasons acclaimed as a Cer-



tainty. Though definite knowledge about it is not available, there will be found some few ready to say "Yea" and others to say "Nay." The Movement is to convert those who deny into those who affirm. To "win people to the Cause" is to persuade them to adopt the affirmative attitude towards the particular belief. One may examine to the end that one believes, but examine to the end that one denies and you make yourself an enemy of the Cause. This "giving beliefs a run," which is what is meant by "pushing" a Movement, is comparable to the booming of a specific for some hitherto incurable disease, while experiments with it are yet only in their early stage: and before those working on it can come to any decision. The workers actually interested in the experiments are usually far more anxious to get on with the inquiry and arrive if possible at some definite certainty concerning it—favourable or otherwise—than to force a doubtful cure on a credulous public. But with the hawkers it is quite different, and just as they desire first and foremost that the public shall buy: the leaders of a Movement desire above all things that the people shall believe: what they desire is Credence; definite knowledge or activity is asked for only at a considerable way behind that. The idiosyncrasies of the "movemental" mind are responsible likewise for a strain in the meaning of "Loyalty." A Movement forces loyalty—which is steadfastness of attention—into a curious dilemma. Steadfastness of attention directed towards a definite End, and steadfastness of attention fixed upon a Belief is calculated to produce very different effects. It will succeed in the ordinary course of affairs in successfully accomplishing the End, but the belief it will almost inevitably destroy. In the pursuit of an End the movement and change, which close attention always produces, take place within the line of effort, which brings the End nearer attainment; but in a Movement which is concerned mainly with Belief the action takes the form of making an ever increasing number of people affirm the one idea. The idea thus lives constantly under attention, and given attention an idea—any idea—must develop. Thus, it is not the people, but the idea itself which is most in danger of being converted: a state of affairs due to the attempt to bring together two incompatible conditions. Keen mental energy and beliefs are mutually destructive: the one diminishes in direct proportion as the influence of the other increases, and the thinker who subjects beliefs to energetic thinking develops them rapidly to the point where they disintegrate. So followers of Movements find themselves sworn to devotion to a fixed idea, whereas no idea can remain fixed, if one devotes one's mind to it. Unless one's mind is inordinately dull.

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It is therefore because, being inclined to Causes and yet having more mental energy than the prosecution of a Cause warrants, a provincial city like Manchester or a vast province like America becomes a seething mass of Movements and Beliefs. Loyalty to a thought in the sense of refusing to allow attention to develop it, makes prompt diversion of thinking energy an urgent necessity, and the energy which is in excess of the amount which is "good" for the Cause thins itself out by spreading over a vast number of similar half-developed arrested Thoughts. The penetrative lengths to which loyalty forbids it to go are made up for by a comprehensive sweep over the surfaces of a number of such. So the crank—the believer—usually is streaked by a whole bunch of beliefs. To make the stationariness demanded by the Cause feasible the believer takes out in variety for what he may not incline after in penetration, and is forced by the nature of things to appear as the intellectual frivoller.

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The Causes which have achieved renown, however—and their number is more than considerable—are those which have managed to attach themselves to people of first-rate temper if of slightly second-rate intellect: the Martyrs and Leaders. They are men who, while

having energy above the ordinary yet fail to strike oil on their own account, and fall just short of the intellectual clearness which would enable them to direct their energies upon purposes of their own. Their capacity being far too great for them comfortably to "sit up" with it, they are impelled by the necessity of finding something upon which to expend it, and end by harnessing it to some "Belief," which is lacking a champion: to a Cause. Thus, whereas men of first-rate temper with intellect and experience to match have an attitude toward Opinions and Beliefs which sees in them possibly useful instruments to be shaped so as to assist their own main ends, a man with a high temper but less intellect will adopt an Opinion in order to provide himself with a purpose: and in the remaining part of his activities he will become a servant to that. An Opinion for him has become a Cause, and he, the Cause's adornment; and where necessary also its slave, courting all attendant martyrdoms. It is not a question of temper or of tenacity or of character which divides the two, but mental virility. In the sequel it resolves itself into the question: who is to remain master—the Thinker or the Thought? With the Worldly it is always the Thinker: but for the Earnest—the Follower after the Absolute, it is the Thought.

D. M.

## GAUDIER-BRZESKA'S ART \*

BY JOHN COURNOS

GAUDIER-BRZESKA'S career is interesting not only because it illustrates the difficulties which beset the path of the modern artist, groping to extricate his personality from the existing confusion of influences and movements, but also because, in Gaudier-Brzeska's case, this groping had been a natural evolutionary process bridging him over from old ideas to new.

His starting point was Rodin. That is to say, he began by making careful studies of life, which he sought primarily to endow with the quality of expression, without special regard to integral design. At the same time he exercised the Rodinesque power of anecdote with distinction.

Though character persisted in his next development, the individuality of the person remained photographic in rendering; the method itself, evolved from Brzeska's comparatively simplified forms of Rodin, was now chiefly concerned with the constructive power of masses and planes.

It was inevitable that he should break completely with Rodin. As he tended towards a greater and still a greater abstraction of form, the conviction grew upon him that Rodin, despite his undeniable genius, represented a force and a development within the academy; that he, in fact, was a giant who had carried the academical to its utmost limits.

Coincidentally, there came the realization that to produce great works of stone one must think in terms of stone, that between an artist's ideas and an artist's materials there should be an intense sympathy, that for a sculptor there is integral beauty to start with in mere hardness and in simple masses, and that the hewing out of a thing carries with it greater suggestion of fundamental power than one ever can hope to obtain from modelling in a softish material like clay. And so henceforth Brzeska began to work directly in stone. Among the first products of this direct method were several small alabaster figures in which the masses were fuller and more significant than in his earlier work. These were somewhat influenced by Maillol and the Egyptians.

Gradually Gaudier-Brzeska arrived at the conclusion

\* Three reproductions of M. Brzeska's work, with an essay on the subject by Mr. Ezra Pound, were printed in THE EGOIST for February 15, 1914. M. Brzeska wrote a long review of "The Allied Artists" for June 15, 1914, and a letter on sculpture in March 16, 1914.—ED.



that round forms, no less than cubic forms, have the tendency to become insipid by repetition, and the recognition of this truth led him inevitably to evolve his later method. More his own than any of his previous methods, its chief aim was to achieve larger solidity of construction; it combined all forms in order to bring greater stress on integral design, beautiful in itself.

Fundamentally, this method was completely opposed to that from which Gaudier-Brzeska started, because his forms were concerned no longer with imitation of life, but embodied all the qualities that have been

the Futurists, despite its fascination, as something superficial, reflecting outward appearances and not the soul of things. And Gaudier-Brzeska offered an illustration to explain his meaning. Consider, he said, a motor-car. It is in itself an organized body with an expression of its own regardless of the speed at which it goes. Similarly, action as represented in the work of the Futurists is not the source of life, but its result. Sculpture should be an expression of the inner being. Thus, any object monumental and architectural in itself can only suggest movement. It should always be an interpretation, never a representation. At best Futurism is Impressionism carried to the most absurd limit, whereas art should be creation, having only an inner, subtle relation to life. Outwardly art and life are two distinct things.

It is the spirit of life, not life itself in all its petty detail, that Gaudier-Brzeska sought to embody in his sculpture. Thus, in the "Dancer," which is of his latest period, he tried to realize the idea of the dance, and not the individual. In this statue he simplified and intensified the design for its own sake and not for the sake of expression; just as the early sculptors, tribal and primitive, did the same for the sake of their religion, and had symbols to express dancing and superstitions and all the rest of their customs and rites.

This integrity of design, which Brzeska thought so essential to a work of art, is not against the spirit of our age. Indeed, said the sculptor, strength being a dominant factor of such an art, it is much more reasonable to account for its existence nowadays than that of an art imitating Greek grace and prettiness. These are contrary to our age, an age marked for its cruelty, its machinery, its indifference, its pitiless attitude, its absence of sentimentality. The Greek craftsman in stone did his work well, but in his search for perfection, in his desire for finer finish, in his pursuit of naturalistic detail and charm, his craft got the better of him, and he sacrificed one great truth for many small ones. Few will deny Gaudier-Brzeska's contention that his "Dancer" would make a fitter decoration for a modern machinery hall than would a graceful Greek statue; it is more difficult, however, to be sanguine about his idea that modern sculpture is the presaging of a new architecture, equally ruthless, integral, and stern. Because, after all, if commercialism and utility are at the root of our pitilessness, they are

also the cause of the stifling of art. Not only would no owner of factories employ an architect with original ideas merely to please the age, but the arts of architecture and sculpture have unfortunately become divorced, partly through the intense individualism and specialization of our time. An art half utilitarian, like architecture, attains universality and unity through disciples; and the prevailing theory of individualism precludes disciples. Many "masters" of to-day are really disciples in soul. They imitate weakly the real masters, and deny them at the same time. It is, therefore, inexpressibly sad when a man like Brzeska is lost to us; for Brzeska had in him the makings of a master.



H. GAUDIER-BRZESKA

BY ROALO KRISTIAN

labelled, in terms purely relative, as "caricature," and "grotesque," and "ugly," qualities not to be repudiated or despised, inasmuch as they are inherently human, present in the art of all primitive peoples, and dependent upon intensity of vision.

This intense vision differs fundamentally from the vision of the Futurists—who represent the counter-current of modern art—in that it does not desire to harness the present moment merely, but aims rather to disentangle from the complex modern psychology and to capture that quality which is eternal, which concerns itself with the very meaning of life, which in essence is always the same, without regard to culture or machinery. This need not imply, argued Gaudier-Brzeska, that one need discard mechanics or modern science, but it merely proved that these belong to a distinct field and have nothing directly to do with art. Art, however, can restore to people the instinct which they have lost, and modern culture may assume the task of reinforcing this instinct with reason.

This intense vision again differs from the vision of the Futurists in that it aims at a certain serenity rather than at restlessness. This must not be taken to mean that it is concerned with merely presenting things and shapes at rest. Its problem is the expression of latent movement, and it considers the violent movement of

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## THE POEMS OF ANYTE OF TEGEA

TRANSLATED BY RICHARD ALDINGTON

Anyte of Tegea is one of the great women-poets of Greece. Twenty-five poems—four of them of doubtful authorship—are under her name in the "Anthology." There are more of her poems in existence than of any other Greek poetess. All that is certainly known of her is that she lived at Tegea in Arcadia in the beginning of the third century B.C. Antipater of Thessalonika, in his epigram on the nine women-poets of Greece, speaks of "the words of Anyte, the woman-Homer"; and Meleager of Gardara wove into his Garland "many lilies of Anyte." She is also mentioned by Pausanias and Tatianus.

### TO ATHENE

LIE there, man-slaying cornel spear; no longer shall the blood of enemies drip from your sinister bronze blade.

Lie within the steep marble house of Athene and proclaim the manhood of Echekratos the Kretan.

### TO ATHENE

An ox-great cauldron; Kleubotos, son of Epiaspis, dedicates it; wide Tegea was his home; the gift is to Athene;

Aristoteles Kleitorios made it, who had this name from his father.

### TO PAN AND THE NYMPH

To shaggy-haired Pan and to the Nymphs of the cotes, Theudotos the shepherd lays this gift beneath the rock.

They gave him rest when he was wearied with the burning heat, proffering him honey-sweet water in their hands.

### A LOCUST

O shrill locust, Helios no longer beholds you, the singer, in the rich house of Haides;

For now you fly to the meadows of Klymene and to the wet flowers of golden Persephone.

### A LOCUST AND A CICADA

Myro, a girl, letting fall a child's tears, raised this little tomb for the locust that sang in the seed-land,

And for the oak-dwelling cicada; implacable Haides holds their double song.

### A BIRD

You will never rise up again with a flutter of thick wings and rouse me from my bed in the morning;

For a thief came silently upon you in your sleep and killed you, pressing his finger into your throat.

### A HORSE

Damis placed this stone to his horse after blood-red Ares struck his breast.

And the dark blood seethed through his tough hide and soaked the heavy turf.

### A DOG

You died, Maira, near your many-rooted home at Locri, swiftest of noise-loving hounds;

A spotted-throated viper darted his cruel venom into your light-moving limbs.

### A DOLPHIN

No more, exulting in the calm sea, shall I rise from the depths and thrust through the waves;

No more shall I rush past the beautiful lips of a fair-rowlocked ship, delighting in the figure-head.

The dark waters of the sea dashed me to land and I lie here upon this narrow shore.

### A SOLDIER

The earth of Lydia holds Amyntor, Philip's son; he gained many things in iron battle.

No sickness led him to the house of night; he died, holding his round shield before his friend.

## THEMISTOKLES

This is not the tomb of Themistokles Magnesios: I was set up as a monument of the envious bad-judgment of the Hellenes.

## PHILAINIS

Mourning by the grave of her young daughter, Kleina calls upon her child;

She calls again and again upon the shade of Philainis, who, unwedded, droops by the pale flood of Acheron.

## ANTIBIA

I mourn the maiden Antibia, through the fame of whose beauty and wisdom

Many eager young men came to her father's house. Fate, the destroyer, rolls hope far away from all.

## THREE GIRLS

We lived together, O dear land of Miletos, spurning the sin of the lawless Galatians,

We, three girls, fellow-citizens, slain by the violent Ares of the Kelts.

We did not stay for dishonourable embraces, but found a bridegroom in Haides.

## A PERSIAN SLAVE

This man alive was a Persian slave; dead he is as great as great Darios.

## ERATO

Erato, clasping her father with her hand and shedding tears, spoke these last words:

"O my father, I am yours no longer, for now black death lays the dusk of the grave upon my eyes."

## THERSIS

In place of the happy bride-bed and sacred marriage songs, her mother laid her daughter in this marble tomb—

A girl who had your beauty and your stature, Thersis. And while we yet speak of her you also fade away.

## PROARCHUS

Your courage alone, Proarchus, slew you in battle; your death has sent black sorrow upon the house of your father, Pheidias.

Yet this stone above you shall speak the fair word that you died fighting for your dear country.

## ENGRAVED ON A STATUE OF APHRODITE

This is the land of Kypris, since it pleases her to gaze for ever from land over the glittering sea,

So that she may bear the sailors safe to land; and the sea quivers, looking upon her shining image.

## TO A GIRL

Sit beneath the beautiful leaves of this laurel, and draw the sweet water from the fresh spring;

You are breathless from the heat; rest your dear limbs and let the breath of Zephyros touch them.

## HERMES OF THE WAYS

I, Hermes, stand here at the cross-roads by the wind-beaten orchard, near the hoary-grey coast;

And I keep a resting-place for weary men. And the cool stainless spring gushes out.

## THE HE-GOAT

Watch the horned he-goat of Bromios, how proud are the fierce eyes in his shaggy head!

He is proud because as they go together over the hills Nais holds in her hand a lock of hair on his cheek.

## THE HE-GOAT

The children give you reins, O goat, and set a purple bridle around your shaggy mouth; they imitate the horse-contests around the God's temple and you carry them along gently and happily.



## PAN OF THE FIELDS

"O Pan of the Fields, why do you sit by this lonely shaded wood, playing on your shrill-sounding pipe?"

"So that my young flocks may feed on these dewy hills, nibbling the fair-haired plants."

## FOR A FOUNTAIN

O wanderer, rest your tired limbs under this elm; the breeze murmurs in the light-green branches.

Drink a cool draught from the spring. This resting place is dear to wayfarers in the hot summer.

## PASSING PARIS

IN these immediate days a man of letters calls for attention both as such and as a citizen. It is in this double capacity that a French poet new to THE EGOIST is presented this month: Louis Thomas, promoted to the rank of lieutenant in the army since the beginning of the war and recently noted and rewarded for distinguished service.

M. Louis Thomas has published several volumes of verse, *Les Flûtes Vaines*, *Les Cris du Solitaire*, *Les Douze Livres pour Lily*, &c., two novels, numerous compilations, some translations, while his name has figured in most of the leading reviews: *Vers et Prose*, the *Mercur*, the *Revue Critique des Idées et des Livres*, &c.

The readers of the poems quoted will observe that their originality consists in their outlines rather than in their content. As a prose-writer Louis Thomas is esteemed for his fluent, irreproachable style, and is criticized for defects of judgment and shallowness of inspiration. As a poet he shows qualities of fluidity, but the faults of excessive facility and hollowness. His array of words, if superficially pleasing, is loosely strung together, insufficiently hammered, *repoussé*. And there is none of that attack in them which gives such character and purpose to the work of Lucie Delarue-Mardrus, for instance, for, though he does not fear words, his somewhat naïve audacity is audacity for the sheer sake of audacity, daring the reader without further consequence. It is virility of sound rather than of implication. But he often succeeds in producing genuine emotion, and while satisfying the best traditions remains entirely innocent of plagiarism, and is sufficiently creative to hold a good place among the pioneers.

\* \* \* \*

Little being published now, retrospective reading must be indulged in. And it yields fruits. In *Servitude et Grandeur Militaires*, wherein Alfred de Vigny pleads the cause of the soldier—as he appealed for the protection of the poet in his magnificently eloquent preface to *Chatterton*—he wrote, and it was in 1835, the following lines which might have been written to-day, when they find their complete application:

"... some foreigners have thought us fallen to a condition resembling that of the Ottoman Empire and serious men have asked themselves whether the nation's character had not been lost for ever. But those who have taken a more careful view of us have recognized the male purpose surviving in us over and above what has been so deplorably worn by sophism. Virile deeds have lost nothing in France of their ancient vigour. Resolution as prompt governs sacrifices as significant and complete as ever. Though elaborated with more coolness, battles are fought with scientific violence. The smallest mental activity will give rise to deeds as great as were in former days incited by the most fervent faith. With us belief is weak but man is strong. . . . Be it from duty or whim, our contemporary youth is constantly defying death with a Spartan smile, which smile is the more impressive since all do not believe in the gods."

\* \* \* \*

The selfishness of old people in their attitude towards the war is a noticeable fact. Many rub their hands, as it were, thankful that they have been spared to attend so interesting an event. They are, even, moved in their pride rather than in their sorrow when called upon to give their sons for the country—it is an ultimate sacrifice throwing lustre on their last days. Those who have been through 1870 proclaim (or think) that it is this generation's turn to do what they did before. They expect it to avenge them.

For the old have little to lose by it. The young, whose aspirations are cut short, whose careers and very

lives are in the balance, whose patience is tried beyond the powers of their impetuous years, bear the whole weight of the war alone. The old are but the onlookers; the young are the participators who have to meet the cost as well as the labour of the spectacle. When we hear the young express their determination to keep the match up to a conclusive end we must admire; from the old the same sentiment has its origin in grim blood-thirstiness. The former want justice; the latter vengeance.

This last month the capital has been full of men who have been allowed four days' leave from the front. The stations are packed with dense groups of them, really pathetic in their faded, dusty, tattered, once light-blue overcoats they call *capotes*, leaning on heavy sticks, laden with clumsy haversacks, and truly like men who have been through a hard and long campaign. By their side spotless Tommy looks like an amateur dressed rather for the stage than for a flesh and blood fight. In the streets you meet them with their wives leaning on their arms, their children choking with questions, and generally seeming happy enough. But some of these sudden returns to the domestic hearth are dramatic, and many an Enoch Arden—so it is said—has gone back to his trench by the next train. It is, indeed, a question whether this measure was well-inspired, for a snack of the home and relatives, of Paris and the normal life, makes the return to service very much more difficult to bear than the prolonged and uninterrupted sojourn among the "comrades" in circumstances which all share and to which custom has hardened them. Fortunately scenes of revelry and drunkenness have been prevented by the wholesale prohibition of the sale of intoxicants to soldiers.

Another event has been the request of the State to the population to bring privately hoarded gold to the national bank. The appeal has met with a response which is a new credit to the country's patriotism, considering the attachment of the French to their concrete savings. Some peasants have certainly not been able to induce themselves to part entirely with their stores, and I know an anecdote about an old lady whom her relatives could not succeed in influencing to exchange her suspected treasure, and who was therefore pleadingly addressed in this fashion: "But, Grandmamma, you should give *some* of your gold at least, for you must have quite twenty thousand francs of it hidden somewhere." "Not twenty," answered she, "twenty-nine thousand," complacently and determinedly folding her hands in her lap as much as to indicate that no persuasion could unclasp them.

\* \* \* \*

Readers of THE EGOIST should procure *The Polish Question and the Slavs of Central Europe*, by Joseph de Lipkowski (offices of "Polonia," 10 Rue Notre Dame de Lorette, Paris; price 3 fr. 50), if they have a desire, as they should, to be once and for all adequately instructed in the trials past and present of the martyr-country of Europe, about which the world is remarkably ignorant in general.

\* \* \* \*

Those who would wish to be familiarized with the most eminent of the poets mowed down by the war, *i.e.* Charles Péguy, before hazarding a random purchase of his works should begin by examining the selection published by Ollendorff (at 6 fr.), which comprises *La Tapisserie de Sainte Geneviève et de Jeanne d'Arc*, *Châteaux de Loire*, *La Tapisserie de Notre Dame*, *Eve*, and sonnets. There is no doubt that to remain ignorant of Charles Péguy is to remain ignorant of French poetic achievement in our generation. If we conceive the agglomerated efforts of a period in one particular branch of art, say poetry, as forming a monument like, for instance, a cathedral, which represents individual and united contributions of a variety of capacities, Charles Péguy is one of the most essential elements to the completion of that monument.

M. André Gide, who is an incomparable critic, has likened Charles Péguy's extraordinary manner:



Les armes de Jésus c'est la race future,  
C'est le riche missel, c'est la miniature,  
Et le ciel et l'enfer et la terre en peinture ;

Les armes de Satan c'est la més-aventure,  
Le traître couronné, la mauvaise lecture,  
Les armes de Satan c'est la littérature ;

Les armes de Jésus c'est noblesse et roture  
Egales vers sa face et la belle sculpture  
Au portrait de l'église et la fine moulure . . .

to pebbles on the beach, tightly pressed together, each similar to the rest and all different from one another. It also recalls embroidery, each word a stitch, and the title "tapestry" to some of the poems is applicable in a double sense. They read, too, like litanies or scales, receding to advance, as do these, and acquiring or losing a semitone as they proceed.

\* \* \* \*

Writing in the *Mercure* for August 1, "Georges Pierredon" sets right the gush the daily papers keep pouring forth with respect to the French soldier. He refutes therein the absurdity of treating the French army of these days as though it were a homogeneous entity, admitting, however, that, like a great machine, "it takes amorphous beings, kneads them, shapes them, and here they are, transformed into heroes, wild maniacs, bronze-statues, navvies, carpenters, dray-horses. . . . But the material remains mere material ; the organizing capacities of the commanders give it its value and necessary form."

This transformation is particularly rapid with the Frenchman owing to his natural pliability. In an article in the same review entitled "The Errors of Might" Mme. Aurel endorses this assertion :

"Assuredly, all impeccable organization contains its folly since it forgets that it puts living beings into play, *i.e.* such whose spirit is non-immobilizable. Is it not precisely from what needs *mending*, from our lack of foresight, that was born the stimulant, the craving for glory and its possibility ? The Frenchman finds his muscle only before the impossible.

"Had he been told, as it was told the German: 'We are the strongest, for our system is invincible,' he would have been deprived of those resources of defiance wherein he puts his whole soul ; *on l'aurait ennuyé d'avance.*"

MURIEL CIOLKOWSKA.

P.S.—On the roll of honour: Jean Marc Bernard, poet and critic ; the caricaturist Daniel de Losques. Wounded: the painter Boussaingault.

## FRENCH POEMS

[The first poem is taken by permission of the author from *Les Flûtes Vaines*, and the second from *Les Cris du Solitaire*, by Louis Thomas (Editions de Psyché).]

JE suis  
Dans la forêt profonde une source enchantée  
Par ton regard.

Je coulais trouble à l'ombre des cieux gris,  
Et l'on ne voyait pas que dessous mon murmure  
Dormait une pierre verdie,  
Mais le flot bouillonnant de mon onde troublée  
Couvrait la terre noire.

Ton clair regard a resplendi  
Sur ma face d'or rouge,  
Et mon eau s'est calmée.

Je suis  
Dans la forêt profonde une source au flot clair,  
Et la feuille qui bouge dans le marronnier vert  
Et chante dans le vent  
Se mire aussi le soir dans ma face d'argent.

Viendras-tu, souriante, à ma coupe fleurie :  
La violette et l'iris  
Et le pâle hortensia  
Regardent dans le bois

Que monte au ciel d'azur la chanson des glycines.  
Viendras-tu deviner sous les nénuphars blancs,  
Des mousses que je baigne  
L'éternel tremblement.

Viendras-tu, pour te voir  
Plus touchante en cette ombre,  
Inscrite en ce miroir fidèle ;  
Et triste de savoir  
Comme s'effacent l'onde  
Et les jours de bonheur.

Car si tu viens à ma fraîcheur  
Tu te verras fluide ainsi qu'une chanson,  
Et près de tes longs doigts qui glisseront leurs ailes  
Sur ma douceur,  
Dormira le reflet tendre et calme comme elle  
De tes beaux yeux profonds.

## CHANSON À BOIRE

C'était un matin lourd sur une route sombre  
Près des fortifs,  
Et nous étions lassés de marcher dans cette ombre  
Et ce froid vif.

Nos mains étaient rouges de givre,  
Et tous les deux, mon frère et moi,  
Nous avions bu jusqu'en être ivres,  
Nous avions bu comme des rois.

Nous avons pénétré dans une vieille auberge  
Au bord de l'eau,  
Toute basse accroupie au revers de la berge  
Comme un crapaud ;

Ses murs étaient rouges et sales  
Et tout y sentait le moisi ;  
Nous avions le visage pâle  
Et notre dos était transi.

Nous avons demandé du pain et de quoi boire  
Pour nous chauffer,  
On a mis devant nous du vin blanc de la Loire  
Tout aigrelet.

Oh ! que ce vin était acide,  
Oh ! que ce vin était mauvais,  
Mais le verre était bientôt vide  
Et la bouteille renversée.

Il eut fallu pour apaiser ma soif, la tienne,  
O mon ami,  
Que ma belle aux grands yeux ouvre la porte et vienne,  
La tienne aussi.

Les belles sont restées dans leurs châteaux de songe.  
Allons, fais comme moi : brise ton verre et pars.  
Tu sais bien que toujours l'amour est un mensonge,  
Un rêve trop fragile, un sourire et du fard.

Ne crains pas d'être aimé, vois-tu, sur les sentiers  
Qui montent vers les cimes,  
On ne trouve jamais que son cœur solitaire  
Et la peur de l'abîme ;

Jamais ma belle n'est venue  
Me retrouver sur les chemins  
Où je m'en vais sanglant et nu  
Avec l'horreur des lendemains ;

Toujours je m'en irai, orgueilleux et farouche,  
Dans les maisons de nuit pour y chercher du vin,  
Ce vieux vin de l'oubli qui vous brûle la bouche  
Et qui fermente en vous comme un mauvais levain.

Viens avec moi, nous serons ivres,  
Et tous les deux nous chanterons  
L'aubade à la lune de cuivre,  
Puisqu'on méprise nos chansons.

LOUIS THOMAS



## TRANSLATIONS OF RUSSIAN FICTION

BY M. MONTAGU-NATHAN

### I

RUSSIAN literature is the latest craze. During the past decade we have discovered that a man may discard his hat with impunity, that a man, or even a woman, may walk upwards of twenty miles a day without risk to physical well-being. We are now by way of learning that the Russian script is not an impregnable fortress, but that it can easily be reduced by that machine-gun of the intellect—perseverance.

From the first two discoveries we, as a nation, have not benefited in any appreciable degree. The net result of the "no-hat" revival is that society as a whole has resumed its cady, as have indeed some of the original bare-headed pioneers, in order to avoid being classed with the hatless mob that once threatened Luton with starvation. The well-conducted person, conscious of the "correctness" of his headgear, feels that by wearing it he will procure himself immunity from social misapprehensions. He may be "placed" by his hat.

Of the orgy of high-speed pedestrianism hardly a footprint remains. The traveller towards Brighton no longer invests his funds in boot-leather in the hope of realizing a "yield" of health; he puts his money into either Pullman or petrol, obtaining therefrom a fleeting comfort and a chronic "liver."

Two years ago the student of Russian was regarded as infinitely more daring than the pilgrim to Petrograd. Nowadays almost every grade of society is becoming nice about transliteration. But even though the translators may multiply beyond belief, they will flourish notwithstanding.

It is by no means an open secret that long before we entered into our fighting alliance with Russia, before the appearance in London of Shalyapin, or even of Nijinsky, a very considerable portion of the Russian standard literature was obtainable in an English translation. One supposes that Mr. Heinemann's venture had met with no small encouragement, and that many a seeker after the Russian soul had found in the work of Mrs. Constance Garnett a revelation of the psychological quality that had eluded him in his perusal of some earlier English versions of Tolstoi, Turgenyef, and Dostoyevsky. One occasionally ran across a Western Slavophile who owed his acquaintance with Gogol to the Walter Scott issues of "Taras Boulba" and "The Inspector-General," or to the unsigned translation of "Dead Souls," published in the 'eighties by Vizetelly, and those who knew how to search were able to add Bowring's version of Pushkin's precursors and the Fables of Krilof (according to the indefatigable Ralston) to their libraries and their lore.

But to enumerate the forgotten volumes of translated Russian literature would be to give this paper the appearance of a second-hand bookseller's catalogue—the comprehensive catalogue that ought to have been, but never was, issued. The range was extraordinarily wide. A host of Russian authors, some living, some dead, were accessible to the English reader, and were ignored. The English reader was so absorbed in such studies of the Slav as "Michael Strogof" that he had no eye for Griboyedof, Pushkin, Lermontof, Ostrovsky, Chernishevsky, Saltikof, Potapenko, Korolenko, Garshin, Chekhof. The pessimism of Andreyef, the degeneracy of Kuprin, the salaciousness of Artzibashef attracted those who cared rather for a contemplation of these questionable qualities than for an inquiry as to the virtues with which they were alloyed.

This neglect of a great opportunity, when properly considered, is recognizable as another item in the scheme of our national unpreparedness. To-day, when publishers who have never made the smallest attempt to stimulate an interest in Russian literature are behaving

like publicans at Budget-time (the threatened copyright understanding is the publishers' spirit-tax), one cannot help wondering at the courage of the old-time pioneer firms who issued translations foredoomed to a speedy remaindering. These timely but unheeded harbingers of Slav culture are now lying dust-covered and soot-begrimed in the cellars of Charing Cross Road.

Again, what a strange and preposterous circumstance that a nation should choose to link its destinies with another's *before*, and not *after*, having examined its literature! Our First War-Lord was seen one evening last summer watching the Russians at Drury Lane. Can this have been a piece of foresight unparalleled in our history? Is it possible that at the fateful Cabinet meetings immediately preceding the declaration of war it was decided that the most superficial acquaintance with Pushkin's gallant Polkan would make for a better understanding with the Grand Duke than an exhaustive study of Schopenhauer? And if this surmise be correct, was the honour bestowed on Sir Joseph Beecham not awarded merely for past services to the musical art, but for having performed prodigies in the department of Public Instruction? If so, why a beggarly baronetcy? To have conferred a dukedom, and in response to inquiries to have replied, "Wait and see"—what a triumph of statesmanship!

So much for conjecture. We are actually aware that the Cabinet numbered among its members a complete German scholar, and that in the country, at the moment of war's outbreak, there were many apologists for, nay, advocates of, Teuton culture.

But how much effort had there been towards the ordering of our national knowledge, or rather the dissipation of our national ignorance, on the subject of Russia and its people? The *Russian Review* addressed itself mainly to Russian scholars and, moreover, was unknown to the general. The occasional *Times Russian Supplement* dealt generously with Commerce, but skimpily with Art and Literature. Here and there, at odd moments and in odd places, appeared sporadic translations of Chekhof; but beyond these unorganized efforts nothing was done to promote and to foster a knowledge of the nation with which we now find ourselves allied.

Some months of war had elapsed when the present writer visited the Foreign Department of one of the largest London Libraries. In reply to inquiries concerning translations of Russian literature he was informed that the said library had not yet considered the question of devoting a page of its catalogue to Russian fiction. (That the manager of the Foreign Department was a German, and that the British assistants had not even a hazy knowledge of Russian literary names, are circumstances obviously worth noting.)

The booksellers as a whole have displayed neither intelligence nor enterprise, and the publishers appear, even now, to be interested solely in the work brought to them and to be entirely ignorant of the rest.

Until the issue of Mr. Baring's splendid little study as a volume of the Home University Library there was no convenient means of obtaining a clue to the psychological content of Russian literature; one does not except Waliszewsky's compilation, since, in the first place, its price is hardly "popular," and, in the second, its author has nothing but faint damns to bestow on the entire Russian literary school from Pushkin to Potapenko.

Mr. Baring's volume contains no bibliography. One wonders how many of his readers are aware that translations of such as Derjavin, Krilof, and Saltikof are obtainable, that there exists an English version of Chernishevsky's truly epoch-making "Shto dyelat?" (What is to be done?), the novel in which a solution of the problem facing the then newly freed peasantry was sought; and that any Briton, though no polyglot, can easily familiarize himself with Khlestakof, whose character is held by Mr. Baring to represent one of the most important ingredients in the constitution of the collective Russian mentality.

To all appearances unaware of it, the large publishing concerns, the booksellers, and the reading public have



missed a splendid opportunity of being in time. The prophetic translators, let us hope, are consoled by a celestial environment. If any survive, 'twill be but to learn that the sower is not to reap.

A neat Russian epigrammatist of the early 'thirties opined that Russia possessed no literature, but merely a book-trade. We may now record that since our 'eighties there has been no lack of English translations, but that no one has bought them.

(To be continued.)

## THE GHOSTS OF AN OLD HOUSE

BY JOHN GOULD FLETCHER

### PROLOGUE

THE house that I write of faces the north :  
No sun ever seeks  
Its six white columns,  
The nine great windows of its face.

It fronts foursquare the winds.

Under the penthouse of the veranda roof,  
The upper northern rooms  
Gloom outwards mournfully.

Staring Ionic capitals  
Peer in them :  
Owl-like faces.

On winter nights  
The wind sidling round the corner,  
Shoots upwards  
With laughter.

The windows rattle as if someone were wishing to get out  
And ride upon the wind.

Doors lead to nowhere :  
Squirrels burrow between the walls.  
Closets in every room hang open.  
Windows are stared into by uncivil ancient trees.

In the middle of the upper hallway  
There is a great circular hole  
Going up to the attic.  
A wooden lid covers it.

All over the house there is a sense of futility ;  
Of minutes dragging slowly  
And repeating  
Some worn-out story of broken effort and desire.

### BEDROOM

The clump of jessamine  
Softly beneath the rain  
Rocks its golden flowers.

In this room my father died :  
His bed is in the corner.  
No one has slept in it,  
Since that morning when he wakened  
To meet death's hands at his heart.  
I cannot go to this room,  
Without feeling something big and angry  
Waiting for me  
To throw me on the bed,  
And press its thumbs in my throat.

The clump of jessamine  
Without, beneath the rain,  
Rocks its golden flowers.

### LIBRARY

Stuffy smell of mouldering leather,  
Tattered arm-chairs, creaking doors,

Books that slovenly elbow each other,  
Sown with children's scrawls and long  
Worn out by contact with generations :  
Slovenly tramps displaying yourselves—  
"We, though you broke our backs, did not complain."  
If I had my way,  
I would take you out and bury you quickly,  
Or give you to the clean fire.

### INDIAN SKULL

Someone dug this up and brought it  
To our house.  
In the dark upper hall, I see it dimly,  
Looking at me through the glass.

Where dancers have danced, and weary people  
Have crept to their bedrooms in the morning,  
Where sick people have tossed all night,  
Where children have been born,  
Where feet have gone up and down,  
Where anger has blazed forth, and strange looks passed,  
It has rested, watching meanwhile  
The opening and shutting of doors,  
The coming and going of people,  
The carrying out of coffins.

Earth still clings to its eye-sockets,  
It will wait, till its vengeance is accomplished.

(To be continued)

## GOTTFRIED KELLER

"A Village Romeo and Juliet." By Gottfried Keller.  
With an introduction by Edith Wharton. Con-  
stable & Co. 3s. 6d. net.

IT is to Switzerland that we owe the "Dorfnovelle"—the village short story—and, though he was in no sense the originator of the type, it is to Gottfried Keller that the chief credit is due for its popularization and perfection. There were, of course, "Dorfnovellen" before Keller; in French there was George Sand's "Mare au Diable"; in German there was the rather *tendenziös* but undeniably original and vigorous Albert Bitzius, better known as Jeremias Gotthelf, under which name John Ruskin made him famous in this country. But Keller is the greatest writer of the "Dorfnovelle" in German, and in the short story generally he is, as far as Germany is concerned, only surpassed by Paul Heyse and Conrad Ferdinand Meyer. Had he combined the latter's masterly technique with his own poetry, humour, and gift for characterization, he would have been possibly one of the greatest short-story writers in Europe.

Keller's technical handling of his subject is at its best in the story under review. That is why "Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe" is one of the most perfect short stories ever written. It has the fineness of construction of, say, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," with a good deal of the poetry of the tragedy Keller professed to follow.

The story of "A Village Romeo and Juliet" is simple enough. It deals with the feud between two peasant farmers; the love between the daughter of the one and the son of the other—Vrony and Sali; and, finally, the fate which overtook them. It is all told so artlessly, so quietly—except in realistic passages concerning the feud—that the end of the tragedy comes, inexorably but almost unobserved. It rises to clear beauty and then sinks back into even narrative almost before we are aware that the consummation has been reached. This is where the lovers listen to the river on which, finally, they were to be carried to their death:

"Come!" said Sali with sudden decision. He caught her hand and drew her forward; but after a few steps they paused again and clung to each other with more kisses. The silence of the night made music in their souls, and below them they heard



the murmur of the river flowing softly through the fields.

"How beautiful it is! Do you hear that sound that's like a song and a tolling?"

"It's the water rushing. There's no other sound."

"No, it's different. I hear it all around us."

"I believe it's our own blood in our ears. . . ."

Keller is a very difficult writer to translate adequately. Though he always writes pure standard German—except Nietzsche, I know of no better German prose-writer than Keller—yet there are peculiarities due to the fact that he was a Swiss, and, above all, there is the fact that it needs a poet to translate a poet. This translation is very well done, and anyone unable to read German will, in reading this English version, go very far towards capturing the beauty and poetry of the original. There could be no higher praise than that.

A. W. G. RANDALL.

## A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN

BY JAMES JOYCE

### CHAPTER V (continued)

THEY turned to the left and walked on as before. When they had gone on so for some time Stephen said:

—Cranly, I had an unpleasant quarrel this evening.—

—With your people?—Cranly asked.

—With my mother.—

—About religion?—

—Yes—Stephen answered.

After a pause Cranly asked:

—What age is your mother?—

—Not old—Stephen said.—She wishes me to make my Easter duty.—

—And will you?—

—I will not—Stephen said.

—Why not?—Cranly said.

—I will not serve—answered Stephen.

—That remark was made before—Cranly said calmly.

—It is made behind now—said Stephen hotly.

Cranly pressed Stephen's arm, saying:

—Go easy, my dear man. You're an excitable bloody man, do you know.—

He laughed nervously as he spoke and, looking up into Stephen's face with moved and friendly eyes, said:

—Do you know that you are an excitable man?—

—I daresay I am—said Stephen, laughing also.

Their minds, lately estranged, seemed suddenly to have been drawn closer, one to the other.

—Do you believe in the Eucharist?—Cranly asked.

—I do not—Stephen said.

—Do you disbelieve then?—

—I neither believe in it nor disbelieve in it—Stephen answered.

—Many persons have doubts, even religious persons. Yet they overcome them or put them aside—Cranly said.—Are your doubts on that point too strong?—

—I do not wish to overcome them—Stephen answered.

Cranly, embarrassed for a moment, took another fig from his pocket and was about to eat it when Stephen said:

—Don't, please. You cannot discuss this question with your mouth full of chewed fig.—

Cranly examined the fig by the light of a lamp under which he halted. Then he smelt it with both nostrils, bit a tiny piece, spat it out, and threw the fig rudely into the gutter. Addressing it as it lay, he said:

—Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire!—

Taking Stephen's arm, he went on again and said:

—Do you not fear that those words may be spoken to you on the day of judgment?—

—What is offered me on the other hand?—Stephen asked.—An eternity of bliss in the company of the dean of studies?—

—Remember—Cranly said—that he would be glorified.—

—Ay—Stephen said somewhat bitterly—bright, agile, impassible, and, above all, subtle.—

—It is a curious thing, do you know—Cranly said dispassionately—how your mind is supersaturated with the religion in which you say you disbelieve. Did you believe in it when you were at school? I bet you did.—

—I did—Stephen answered.

—And were you happier then?—Cranly asked softly—happier than you are now, for instance?—

—Often happy—Stephen said—and often unhappy. I was someone else then.—

—How someone else? What do you mean by that statement?—

—I mean—said Stephen—that I was not myself as I am now, as I had to become.—

—Not as you are now, not as you had to become—Cranly repeated.—Let me ask you a question. Do you love your mother?—

Stephen shook his head slowly.

—I don't know what your words mean—he said simply.

—Have you never loved anyone?—Cranly asked.

—Do you mean women?—

—I am not speaking of that—Cranly said in a colder tone.—I ask you if you ever felt love towards anyone or anything.—

Stephen walked on beside his friend, staring gloomily at the footpath.

—I tried to love God—he said at length.—It seems now I failed. It is very difficult. I tried to unite my will with the will of God instant by instant. In that I did not always fail. I could perhaps do that still . . .—

Cranly cut him short by asking:

—Has your mother had a happy life?—

—How do I know?—Stephen said.

—How many children had she?—

—Nine or ten—Stephen answered.—Some died.—

—Was your father . . .—Cranly interrupted himself for an instant: and then said:—I don't want to pry into your family affairs. But was your father what is called well-to-do? I mean when you were growing up?—

—Yes—Stephen said.

—What was he?—Cranly asked after a pause.

Stephen began to enumerate glibly his father's attributes.

—A medical student, an oarsman, a tenor, an amateur actor, a shouting politician, a small landlord, a small investor, a drinker, a good fellow, a storyteller, somebody's secretary, something in a distillery, a tax-gatherer, a bankrupt, and at present a praiser of his own past.—

Cranly laughed, tightening his grip on Stephen's arm, and said:

—The distillery is damn good.—

—Is there anything else you want to know?—Stephen asked.

—Are you in good circumstances, at present?—

—Do I look it?—Stephen asked bluntly.

—So then—Cranly went on musingly—you were born in the lap of luxury.—

He used the phrase broadly and loudly as he often used technical expressions, as if he wished his hearer to understand that they were used by him without conviction.

—Your mother must have gone through a good deal of suffering—he said then.—Would you not try to save her from suffering more even if . . . or would you?—

—If I could—Stephen said—that would cost me very little.—

—Then do so—Cranly said.—Do as she wishes you to do. What is it for you? You disbelieve in it. It is a form: nothing else. And you will set her mind at rest.—



He ceased and, as Stephen did not reply, remained silent. Then, as if giving utterance to the process of his own thought, he said :

—Whatever else is unsure in this stinking dunghill of a world a mother's love is not. Your mother brings you into the world, carries you first in her body. What do we know about what she feels? But whatever she feels, it, at least, must be real. It must be. What are our ideas or ambitions? Play. Ideas! Why, that bloody bleating goat Temple has ideas. McCann has ideas too. Every jackass going the roads thinks he has ideas.—

Stephen, who had been listening to the unspoken speech behind the words, said with assumed carelessness :

—Pascal, if I remember rightly, would not suffer his mother to kiss him as he feared the contact of her sex.—

—Pascal was a pig—said Cranly.

—Aloysius Gonzaga, I think, was of the same mind—Stephen said.

—And he was another pig then—said Cranly.

—The Church calls him a saint—Stephen objected.

—I don't care a flaming damn what anyone calls him—Cranly said rudely and flatly.—I call him a pig.—

Stephen, preparing the words neatly in his mind, continued :

—Jesus, too, seems to have treated his mother with scant courtesy in public, but Suarez, a Jesuit theologian and Spanish gentleman, has apologized for him.—

—Did the idea ever occur to you—Cranly asked—that Jesus was not what he pretended to be?—

—The first person to whom that idea occurred—Stephen answered—was Jesus himself.—

—I mean—Cranly said, hardening in his speech—did the idea ever occur to you that he was himself a conscious hypocrite, what he called the Jews of his time, a whited sepulchre? Or, to put it more plainly, that he was a blackguard?—

—That idea never occurred to me—Stephen answered.—But I am curious to know are you trying to make a convert of me or a pervert of yourself?—

He turned towards his friend's face and saw there a raw smile which some force of will strove to make finely significant.—

Cranly asked suddenly in a plain sensible tone :—Tell me the truth. Were you at all shocked by what I said?—

—Somewhat—Stephen said.

—And why were you shocked—Cranly pressed on in the same tone—if you feel sure that our religion is false and that Jesus was not the son of God?—

—I am not at all sure of it—Stephen said.—He is more like a son of God than a son of Mary.—

—And is that why you will not communicate—Cranly asked—because you are not sure of that too, because you feel that the host, too, may be the body and blood of the son of God and not a wafer of bread? And because you fear that it may be?—

—Yes—Stephen said quietly—I feel that and I also fear it.—

—I see.—Cranly said.

Stephen, struck by his tone of closure, reopened the discussion at once by saying :

—I fear many things. Dogs, horses, firearms, the sea, thunderstorms, machinery, the country roads at night.—

—But why do you fear a bit of bread?—

—I imagine—Stephen said—that there is a malevolent reality behind those things I say I fear.—

—Do you fear then—Cranly asked—that the God of the Roman Catholics would strike you dead and damn you if you made a sacrilegious communion?—

—The God of the Roman Catholics could do that now—Stephen said.—I fear more than that the chemical action which would be set up in my soul by a false homage to a symbol behind which are massed twenty centuries of authority and veneration.—

—Would you—Cranly asked—in extreme danger

commit that particular sacrilege? For instance, if you lived in the penal days?—

—I cannot answer for the past—Stephen replied.—Possibly not.—

—Then—said Cranly—you do not intend to become a Protestant?—

—I said that I had lost the faith—Stephen answered—but not that I had lost self-respect. What kind of liberation would that be to forsake an absurdity which is logical and coherent and to embrace one which is illogical and incoherent?—

They had walked on towards the township of Pembroke, and now as they went on slowly along the avenues the trees and the scattered lights in the villas soothed their minds. The air of wealth and repose diffused about them seemed to comfort their neediness. Behind a hedge of laurel a light glimmered in the window of a kitchen and the voice of a servant was heard singing as she sharpened knives. She sang, in short broken bars, "Rosie O'Grady."

Cranly stopped to listen, saying :

—*Mulier cantat.*—

The soft beauty of the Latin word touched with an enchanting touch the dark of the evening, with a touch fainter and more persuading than the touch of music or of a woman's hand. The strife of their minds was quelled. The figure of woman as she appears in the liturgy of the Church passed silently through the darkness : a white-robed figure, small and slender as a boy, and with a falling girdle. Her voice, frail and high as a boy's, was heard intoning from a distant choir the first words of a woman which pierce the gloom and clamour of the first chanting of the passion :

—*Et tu cum Jesu Galilæo eras.*—

And all hearts were touched and turned to her voice, shining like a young star, shining clearer as the voice intoned the proparoxyton, and more faintly as the cadence died.

The singing ceased. They went on together, Cranly repeating in strongly stressed rhythm the end of the refrain :

*And when we are married,  
O, how happy we'll be,  
For I love sweet Rosie O'Grady  
And Rosie O'Grady loves me.*

—There's real poetry for you—he said.—There's real love.—

He glanced sideways at Stephen with a strange smile and said :

—Do you consider that poetry? Or do you know what the words mean?—

—I want to see Rosie first—said Stephen.

—She's easy to find—Cranly said.

His hat had come down on his forehead. He shoved it back : and in the shadow of the trees Stephen saw his pale face, framed by the dark, and his large dark eyes. Yes. His face was handsome : and his body was strong and hard. He had spoken of a mother's love. He felt then the sufferings of women, the weaknesses of their bodies and souls : and would shield them with a strong and resolute arm and bow his mind to them.

Away then : it is time to go. A voice spoke softly to Stephen's lonely heart, bidding him go and telling him that his friendship was coming to an end. Yes ; he would go. He could not strive against another. He knew his part.

—Probably I shall go away—he said.

—Where?—Cranly asked.

—Where I can—Stephen said.

—Yes—Cranly said.—It might be difficult for you to live here now. But is it that makes you go?—

—I have to go—Stephen answered.

—Because—Cranly continued—you need not look upon yourself as driven away if you do not wish to go, or as a heretic or an outlaw. There are many good believers who think as you do. Would that surprise you? The Church is not the stone building nor even the clergy and their dogmas. It is the whole mass of those born



into it. I don't know what you wish to do in life. Is it what you told me the night we were standing outside Harcourt Street Station?—

—Yes—Stephen said, smiling in spite of himself at Cranly's way of remembering thoughts in connexion with places.—The night you spent half an hour wrangling with Doherty about the shortest way from Sallygap to Larras.—

—Pothead!—Cranly said with calm contempt.—What does he know about the way from Sallygap to Larras? Or what does he know about anything for that matter? And the big slobbering washing-pot head of him!—

He broke out into a loud long laugh.

—Well?—Stephen said.—Do you remember the rest?—

—What you said, is it?—Cranly asked.—Yes, I remember it. To discover the mode of life or of art whereby your spirit could express it in unfettered freedom.—

Stephen raised his hat in acknowledgment.

—Freedom!—Cranly repeated.—But you are not free enough yet to commit a sacrilege. Tell me would you rob?—

—I would beg first—Stephen said.

—And if you got nothing, would you rob?—

—You wish me to say—Stephen answered—that the rights of property are provisional and that in certain circumstances it is not unlawful to rob. Everyone would act in that belief. So I will not make you that answer. Apply to the Jesuit theologian Juan Mariana di Talavera, who will also explain to you in what circumstances you may lawfully kill your King and whether you had better hand him his poison in a goblet or smear it for him upon his robe or his saddlebow. Ask me rather would I suffer others to rob me, or, if they did, would I call down upon them what I believe is called the chastisement of the secular arm?—

—And would you?—

—I think—Stephen said—it would pain me as much to do so as to be robbed.—

—I see—Cranly said.

He produced his match and began to clean the crevice between two teeth. Then he said carelessly:

—Tell me, for example, would you deflower a virgin?—

—Excuse me—Stephen said politely—is that not the ambition of most young gentlemen?—

—What then is your point of view?—Cranly asked.

His last phrase, sour-smelling as the smoke of charcoal and disheartening, excited Stephen's brain, over which its fumes seemed to brood.

—Look here, Cranly—he said.—You have asked me what I would do and what I would not do. I will tell you what I will do and what I will not do. I will not serve that in which I no longer believe, whether it call itself my home, my fatherland, or my church: and I will try to express myself in some mode of life or art as freely as I can and as wholly as I can, using for my defence the only arms I allow myself to use, silence, exile, and cunning.—

Cranly seized his arm and steered him round so as to lead back towards Lesson Park. He laughed almost slyly and pressed Stephen's arm with an elder's affection.

—Cunning indeed!—he said.—Is it you? You poor poet, you!—

—And you made me confess to you—Stephen said, thrilled by his touch—as I have confessed to you so many other things, have I not?—

—Yes, my child—Cranly said, still gaily.

—You made me confess the fears that I have. But I will tell you also what I do not fear. I do not fear to be alone or to be spurned for another or to leave whatever I have to leave. And I am not afraid to make a mistake, even a great mistake, a lifelong mistake and perhaps as long as eternity too.—

Cranly, now grave again, slowed his pace and said:

—Alone, quite alone. You have no fear of that. And you know what that word means? Not only to

be separate from all others, but to have not even one friend.—

—I will take the risk—said Stephen.

—And not to have any one person—Cranly said—who would be more than a friend, more even than the noblest and truest friend a man ever had.—

His words seemed to have struck some deep chord in his own nature. Had he spoken of himself, of himself as he was or wished to be? Stephen watched his face for some moments in silence. A cold sadness was there. He had spoken of himself, of his own loneliness which he feared.

—Of whom are you speaking?—Stephen asked at length.—

Cranly did not answer.

\* \* \* \* \*

*March 20.* Long talk with Cranly on the subject of my revolt.

He had his grand manner on. I supple and suave. Attacked me on the score of love for one's mother. Tried to imagine his mother: cannot. Told me once, in a moment of thoughtlessness, his father was sixty-one when he was born. Can see him. Strong farmer type. Pepper and salt suit. Square feet. Unkempt grizzled beard. Probably attends coursing matches. Pays his dues regularly but not plentifully to Father Dwyer of Larras. Sometimes talks to girls after nightfall. But his mother? Very young or very old? Hardly the first. If so, Cranly would not have spoken as he did. Old then. Probably, and neglected. Hence Cranly's despair of soul: the child of exhausted loins.

*March 21, morning.* Thought this in bed last night, but was too lazy and free to add it. Free, yes. The exhausted loins are those of Elizabeth and Zachary. Then he is the precursor. Item: he eats chiefly belly bacon and dried figs. Read locusts and wild honey. Also, when thinking of him, saw always a stern severed head of death-mask: as if outlined on a grey curtain or veronica. Decollation they call it in the fold. Puzzled for the moment by Saint John at the Latin gate. What do I see? A decollated precursor trying to pick the lock.

*March 21, night.* Free. Soul free and fancy free. Let the dead bury the dead. Ay. And let the dead marry the dead.

*March 22.* In company with Lynch followed a sizable hospital nurse. Lynch's idea. Dislike it. Two lean hungry greyhounds walking after a heifer.

*March 23.* Have not seen her since that night. Unwell? Sits at the fire perhaps with mamma's shawl on her shoulders. But not peevish. A nice bowl of gruel? Won't you now?

*March 24.* Began with a discussion with my mother. Subject: B.V.M. Handicapped by my sex and youth. To escape held up relations between Jesus and Papa against those between Mary and her son. Said religion was not a lying-in hospital. Mother indulgent. Said I have a queer mind and have read too much. Not true. Have read little and understood less. Then she said I would come back to faith because I had a restless mind. This means to leave church by backdoor of sin and re-enter through the skylight of repentance. Cannot repent. Told her so and asked for sixpence. Got threepence.

Then went to college. Other wrangle with little round head rogue's eye Ghezzi. This time about Bruno the Nolan. Began in Italian and ended in pidgin English. He said Bruno was a terrible heretic. I said he was terribly burned. He agreed to this with some sorrow. Then gave me recipe for what he calls *risotto alla bergamasca*. When he pronounces a soft *o* he protrudes his full carnal lips as if he kissed the vowel. Has he? And could he repent? Yes, he could: and cry two round rogue's tears, one from each eye.

Crossing Stephen's, that is, my Green, remembered that his countrymen and not mine had invented what Cranly the other night called our religion. A quartette of them, soldiers of the ninety-seventh infantry regiment,



sat at the foot of the cross and tossed up dice for the overcoat of the crucified.

Went to library. Tried to read three reviews. Useless. She is not out yet. Am I alarmed? About what? That she will never be out again.

Blake wrote :

*I wonder if William Bond will die. For assuredly he is very ill.*

Alas, poor William !

I was once at a diorama in Rotunda. At the end were pictures of big nobles. Among them William Ewart Gladstone, just then dead. Orchestra played "Oh, Willie, we have missed you."

A race of clodhoppers !

*March 25, morning.* A troubled night of dreams. What to get them off my chest.

A long curving gallery. From the floor ascend pillars of dark vapours. It is peopled by the images of fabulous kings, set in stone. Their hands are folded upon their knees in token of weariness, and their eyes are darkened, for the errors of men go up before them for ever as dark vapours.

Strange figures advance as from a cave. They are not as tall as men. One does not seem to stand quite apart from another. Their faces are phosphorescent, with darker streaks. They peer at me and their eyes seem to ask me something. They do not speak.

*March 30.* This evening Cranly was in the porch of the library, proposing a problem to Dixon and her brother. A mother let her child fall into the Nile. Still harping on the mother. A crocodile seized the child. Mother asked it back. Crocodile said all right if she told him what he was going to do with the child, eat it or not eat it.

This mentality, Lepidus would say, is indeed bred out of your mud by the operation of your sun.

And mine? Is it not too? Then into Nile mud with it!

*April 1.* Disapprove of this last phrase.

*April 2.* Saw her drinking tea and eating cakes in Johnston, Mooney and O'Brien's. Rather, lynx-eyed Lynch saw her as we passed. He tells me Cranly was invited there by brother. Did he bring his crocodile? Is he the shining light now? Well, I discovered him. I protest I did. Shining quietly behind a bushel of Wicklow bran.

*April 3.* Met Davin at the cigar shop opposite Findlater's Church. He was in a black sweater and had a hurley-stick. Asked me was it true I was going away and why. Told him the shortest way to Tara was *via* Holyhead. Just then my father came up. Introduction. Father, polite and observant. Asked Davin if he might offer him some refreshment. Davin could not, was going to a meeting. When we came away father told me he had a good honest eye. Asked me why I did not join a rowing-club. I pretended to think it over. Told me then how he broke Pennyfeather's heart. Wants me to read law. Says I was cut out for that. More mud, more crocodiles.

*April 5.* Wild spring. Scudding clouds. O life! Dark stream of swirling bogwater on which apple-trees have cast down their delicate flowers. Eyes of girls among the leaves. Girls demure and romping. All fair or auburn: no dark ones. They blush better. Houp-la!

*April 6.* Certainly she remembers the past. Lynch says all women do. Then she remembers the time of her childhood—and mine if I was ever a child. The past is consumed in the present, and the present is living only because it brings forth the future. Statues of women, if Lynch be right, should always be fully draped, one hand of the woman feeling regretfully her own hinder parts.

*April 6, later.* Michael Robartes remembers forgotten beauty, and when his arms wrap her round, he presses in his arms the loveliness which has long faded from the world. Not this. Not at all. I desire to press in my arms the loveliness which has not yet come into the world.

*April 10.* Faintly, under the heavy night, through the silence of the city which has turned from dreams to dreamless sleep as a weary lover whom no caresses move, the sound of hoofs upon the road. Not so faintly now as they come near the bridge: and in a moment as they pass the darkened windows the silence is cloven by alarm as by an arrow. They are heard now far away, hoofs that shine amid the heavy night as gems, hurrying beyond the sleeping fields to what journey's end—what heart?—bearing what tidings?

*April 11.* Read what I wrote last night. Vague words for a vague emotion. Would she like it? I think so. Then I should have to like it also.

*April 13.* That tundish has been on my mind for a long time. I looked it up and find it English and good old blunt English too. Damn the dean of studies and his funnel! What did he come here for to teach us his own language or to learn it from us. Damn him one way or the other!

*April 14.* John Alphonsus Mulrennan has just returned from the West of Ireland. European and Asiatic papers please copy. He told us he met an old man there in a mountain cabin. Old man had red eyes and short pipe. Old man spoke Irish. Mulrennan spoke Irish. Then old man and Mulrennan spoke English. Mulrennan spoke to him about universe and stars. Old man sat, listened, smoked, spat. Then said:

—Ah, there must be terrible queer creatures at the latter end of the world.—

I fear him. I fear his red-rimmed horny eyes. It is with him I must struggle all through this night till day come, till he or I lie dead, gripping him by the sinewy throat till . . . Till what? Till he yield to me? No. I mean him no harm.

*April 15.* Met her to-day point-blank in Grafton Street. The crowd brought us together. We both stopped. She asked me why I never came, said she had heard all sorts of stories about me. This was only to gain time. Asked me, was I writing poems? About whom? I asked her. This confused her more and I felt sorry and mean. Turned off that valve at once and opened the spiritual-heroic refrigerating apparatus, invented and patented in all countries by Dante Alighieri. Talked rapidly of myself and my plans. In the midst of it unluckily I made a sudden gesture of a revolutionary nature. I must have looked like a fellow throwing a handful of peas up into the air. People began to look at us. She shook hands a moment after and, in going away, said she hoped I would do what I said.

Now I call that friendly, don't you?

Yes, I liked her to-day. A little or much? Don't know. I liked her and it seems a new feeling to me. Then, in that case, all the rest, all that I thought I thought, and all that I felt I felt, all the rest before now, in fact . . . Oh, give it up, old chap! Sleep it off!

*April 16.* Away! Away!

The spell of arms and voices: the white arms of roads, their promise of close embraces and the black arms of tall ships that stand against the moon, their tale of distant nations. They are held out to say: We are alone—come. And the voices say with them: We are your kinsmen. And the air is thick with their company as they call to me, their kinsmen, making ready to go, shaking the wings of their exultant and terrible youth.

*April 26.* Mother is putting my new secondhand clothes in order. She prays now, she says, that I may learn in my own life and away from home and friends what the heart is and what it feels. Amen. So be it. Welcome, O life! I go to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience and to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race.

*April 27.* Old father, old artificer, stand me now and ever in good stead.

Dublin, 1904.

Trieste, 1914.



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