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VIEWS AND COMMENTS

IT is said that doctors are not seldom at a loss in lunacy cases to detect signs of lunacy when a patient is on his guard and seemingly showing his whole mind, until suddenly an unexpected word crops up which at once gives him his start and sets him riding away on his mania. If so, it seems that a single method of detection serves equally well with maniacs and those of us saner ones who are able to wear our minor manias in the guise of foibles merely. For it is observable how the use of a single word or phrase will indicate the weight of a character and serve as an index of what measure of resistance may be expected from it. As a more vivid impression of a scene may often be obtained through a small opening which frames off distracting details than by a full uninterrupted sweep over a wide horizon, so the tell-tale pass-word will often lay bare the hidden depths and the shallows and blind-spots of a man's mind with greater clearness than a studied and continued conversation. There is a two-worded phrase whose use appears to me to possess particularly this all-indicative function—our "higher nature."

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There seems to be no reason for objecting to a description of human character in terms of relative altitudes, high, middle, and low. The only material consideration is to which altitude one prefers to attach the chief values. It is the apparently unquestioned assumption of a very considerable proportion of society that these belong to the "higher nature." No doubt just because it has become part of the cult of the higher-nature school to bring the phrase of "pleasing ourselves" into low repute, an emergency situation such as this created by the war comes as a godsend to that vast number of people who choose to screen their manner of taking their pleasures under the veil of "doing good to others." The war gives them the opportunity of selecting the very pick of the methods which give them pleasure, and opens the way for the creation of societies through which they can organise such pleasure more effectively. Such, at least, was my conclusion after reading the prospectus of one of the innumerable war societies which chanced to come my way. This society (which has taken to itself the name of the "Fight for the Right" Society—no less) here explains the purpose of its being:

"As fresh spirit is generated and as unity is strengthened by the assembling of ourselves together in pursuance of a common object, it is proposed that meetings should be held. . . . And it will be an essential characteristic of these meetings that the appeal should be made not by oratory alone, but, in particular, by music also and by recitation, and any other available and suitable art. . . . And to clinch the impression and to produce a sense of unity and common effort, a call might be made at the conclusion to all who are in favour of the resolution (which must be regarded as a solemn vow and determination):

"To Fight for Right till Right is won";

"to rise and, with uplifted hand, cry 'Aye.' And if this action could be immediately followed by the singing of some inspiring words in which the whole meeting could join, members would be sent away with their spirit refreshened and refined. Their higher natures would have been touched and they would have caught a vision of the good that is in them and their fellows. They would, therefore, feel a renewed determination to be faithful to themselves, to be true to the good within them, and to do all that in them lies to make that good prevail."

The framer of this paragraph is under no shadow of doubt that the higher natures of the prospective audiences will be touched, nor, upon reflection, am I. The means which he—approaching the task as an expert—considers best suited to meet the purpose are noteworthy. And he is not eccentric in this. That the pamphlet quoted from happened to be written in explanation of the objects and desires of a society formed for the purpose of aiding military recruiting in no wise diminishes its ability to stand as a type of the devices intended to awaken the "higher nature." The interest of the thing lies in its naïve—one might say cold-blooded—exposure of the means deemed likely to ensure success.

Obviously the object of it all is to create that hot-house atmosphere in which apparently the "higher nature" most quickly sprouts. Right atmosphere is the all-important concern. Arguments are of quite secondary value. In the paragraph quoted there is no mention of a reliance on fact or argument, the sole requisites being an orator with his fervent and soul-stirring appeal, seconded by music and other suitable arts. The method of the business is to concentrate upon the most easily accessible (*i.e.* those at the surface) and the most widely distributed pleasure-exciting emotions, and by assaulting all simultaneously and swiftly to carry the personality by storm. And the method is usually successful—with the mob. Note the details: the action done in unison, which establishes a reassuring emotional basis; the standing erect, the upraised hand, the common shout "Aye," the singing; and then the ramming home of the Resolution: no matter what. It will arrive (with the mob, that is), for the higher nature—the most superficial of the emotional complex—will have been effectually "touched," the critical sense put off its guard, and self-abandonment installed. The object of the exploiters of the higher nature is so to work upon the pleasurable and swiftly intoxicated emotions of the higher nature as to induce the whole personality to pledge itself to the furtherance of the purposes which the stage-managers choose to make the subject of their appeal. This abandonment they know would not be forthcoming in the quieter moments when the altitudes, high, middle, and low, are merged into one another, forming, so to speak, a homogeneous whole.

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The "higher nature," then, is rather the outer layer of character: the light froth which rises to the top, and which, in terms of character, is the frivolous and easily excited, playable upon by any skilful performer. The substance of sentiment runs thin into sentimentality in these high strata. Here the "high tone" finds its counterpart in the high flight: very high and very thin. But, on the contrary, such "high tone" shrivels and crumbles before the scrutinising, analysing, and judging temper. In fact, these re-act as opposites and cancel each other's existence according to their relative strengths. The "higher nature" requires vague and abstract terms, a puffy nourishment to match its lofty and remote ideals; its hope is to be accounted worthy to suffer or to do glorious deeds in honour of—whatever has happened to be connected with the thinly exalted mood. The "higher nature" is too light and volatile for discrimination; it does not think, or sift evidence, or compare facts: it gushes, adores, and worships. It also hates. It knows no betweens.

Once having accepted the suggestion of current speech that personality comprises a higher and lower, we must necessarily assume the existence of the "middle nature," which presumably has escaped a label because it is just "ordinary." All the fuss and fury naturally attach themselves to the surfaces. Likening human nature to a stream, it might be said that at the top we are frothy, at the bottom muddy, while in the middle flows the mass of clear water wherein lies the full power of the unified personality: the self at its strongest and most firmly poised, the critical and discriminating Ego: a power to be reckoned with who cannot be easily moved hither and thither at the will of another. It has frequently been noted how readily of these three "natures" the highest and lowest will interchange and dovetail into one another. Naturally, indeed, since both stand for abandonment and lack of self-control. "Love the Right—and fight for it" has as corollary: "Hate the Wrong—and put it down"—emotional abandonment in both cases, if opposite. Asceticism and cruelty go together. Some little time ago it was pointed out in these pages how passionately cruel good and even kind women become, faced by a breaking-down of a custom. The most earnest persons have usually been the most ruthless to "sinners." Absorbed in the abandonment to their theory of right conduct, they lose the power to observe calmly, and give themselves up to a rage which strikes out blindly at the supposed overthrowers of their high ideals and shakers of their faith.

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It seems that the characteristic common to the "higher" and "lower," and creating the close connection between their exhibitions, is vagueness. Both have to do with the Unnameable. Although in the one case the emotions are held to be too ineffably high to admit of description and definement, while in the other they are too unspeakably low, this merely glozes the fact that it is a shortage of understanding which gives both species of emotion their transcendental and particularly their uncontrollable characteristics. Control, after all, is merely guidance and limitation of the lengths to which an emotion is allowed to run when we know precisely what the emotion means and what its consequences will be; and the first step towards understanding an emotion is to describe, define, and name it. In the vague terms of oratory, the declamatory attitudes, histrionic gestures, "heady" music and the rest, the aim is to divorce the terms from any strict connotation they may ever have had. By this means terms which have come to mean little or nothing, which are mere froth meant to infect the unstable sort who are stirred by "any wind of doctrine," are made to imply everything in general by virtue of ceasing to denote anything in particular. The attempt is to exploit a name without a meaning by giving prestige to the cult of the Unnameable. In the lower nature, on the other hand, the thing—the decisive and definite emotion—is already there, awaiting its name. The kind of sombre majesty with which the Unknown is invested spreads a protecting veil of mysteriousness and importance over the region of "Vices," and actually constitutes their main fascination. It affords the fugitive furtive desires a prestige which does not belong to them on their own intrinsic account. Arrest them, scrutinise them, and size them up, and vices are commonly quite pitifully small things. Understanding, which is said to forgive all things, actually does more for vices. It controls them and redeems them from the negative control—the mystery and fascination—of the Unknown and Nameless.

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It must be confessed that, while writing these commonplaces of observation, it was quite as much the tricks which magnify the attractiveness of the low as those tricks of the trade which exploit the puffy vagueness of mind of the "high-natured" which occupied my mind. Or rather it was the meeting with first-hand instances of the zeal with which the two forces make common cause and pull together, in the sphere whose territory they are attempting to pool between them—popular literature. To give utterance to ultra-lofty sentiments working up details saturated with the most heated sensual suggestion meanwhile is the accepted recipe for the creation of the "best-seller." But to penetrate with cool analysis and innocent of suggestiveness into the same or similar regions is regarded as an enormity of a peculiarly brazen and heartless nature. Such cool assault upon the sacred preserves of Mystery at once raises a hullabaloo which brings police and pale swarms of terrified protectors of orthodox Morality rushing to the spot. It is certain, for instance, that were Shakespeare not protected by that popular neglect of his works which comes of

his having something to say, of his saying it with the completest art, and of his being wrapped in the funeral-sheet of "Classic," his work would horrify printers and turn publishers faint: not to mention magistrates, censors, and the like. Had *Measure for Measure*, for instance, been a production of the twentieth century, could one name a printer and publisher who would willingly print and publish it to-day? If anyone believes that such could be found, we would refer them to the case of Mr. James Joyce's novel, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, which ran as a serial through THE EGOIST, and which (not because we desire to saddle ourselves with fresh responsibilities in this difficult time, but in order to save a work of exceedingly high merit from oblivion) we propose to publish ourselves. During its appearance in our pages the notice of publishers was drawn to its value quite voluntarily by a very well-known (and very successful!) writer, and had Mr. Joyce consented to bow to the taste of the publishers' "readers," and alter or delete certain words and phrases and re-write certain sections in order to bring his work a little nearer the popular level, it would have been published "through the trade." But Mr. Joyce refused to comply with these requirements, with the result that no publisher would touch the book. Accordingly we decided to publish it ourselves. Even so the same difficulties cropped up again, and the printer declined to print except subject to certain excisions. Happily, a printer has now been found* who is willing to print without deletions, and it is to be hoped that Mr. Joyce's work will at last, and without meeting with further difficulties, see the light of publication in the shape which he conceived it to take. If so, he will have to be congratulated not only upon his tenacity and courage in holding to what he knows his own work should be, but also on having won for the critical understanding intellect standing-room on a portion of the territory now held specially sacred to exhibitions of a vapid sentimentality trapped out with a furtive salaciousness. H. S. W.

THE LAST GIFT

By H. D.

INSTEAD of pearls—a wrought clasp—
a bracelet—will you accept this?

You know the script—
you will start, wonder:
what is left, what phrase,
after last night? This:

The world is yet unspoiled for you,
you wait, expectant:
you are like the children
who haunt your own steps
for chance bits—a comb
that may have slipped,
a gold tassel, unravelled,
picked from your scarf,
twirled by your slight fingers
into the street,—
a flower dropped.

Do not think me unaware,
I who have snatched at you
as the street-child clutched
at the seed-pearls you spilt
that hot day
when your necklace snapped.

Do not dream that I speak
as one defrauded of delight,
sick, shaken by each heart-beat,
or paralysed, stretched at length,
who gasps:
"These ripe pears
are bitter to the taste,
this spiced wine, poison, corrupt;
I can not walk;
Who would walk?
Life is a scavenger's pit—I escape—
I only, rejecting it,
lying here on this couch."

Your garden sloped to the beach—
myrtle overran the paths:
honey and amber flecked each leaf:
the citron-lily head—
one among many—
weighed there, over-sweet.

The myrrh-hyacinth
spread across low slopes:
violets streaked black ridges
through the grass.

The house, too, was like this,
over-painted, over-lovely:
the world is like this.

Sleepless nights—
I remember the initiates,
their gesture, their calm glance.
I have heard how in rapt thought,
in vision, they speak
with another race,
more beautiful, more intense than this.
I could laugh—
more beautiful, more intense?

Perhaps that other life
is contrast always to this.
I reason:
I have lived as they—
in their inmost rites
they endure the taut nerves
through the moment of ritual.
I endure from moment to moment—
days pass, all alike,
tortured, intense.

This I forgot last night:
you must not be blamed,
it is not your fault:
as a child, a flower, any flower
tore my breast—
meadow-chickory, a common grass tip,
a leaf-shadow, a flower tint,
unexpected, on a winter-branch.

I reason:
another life holds what this lacks,
a sea, unmoving, quiet—
not forcing our strength
to rise to it, beat on beat—
a stretch of sand,
no garden beyond, strangling
with its myrrh-lilies—
a hill, not set with black violets,
but stones, stones, bare rocks,
dwarf-trees, twisted, no beauty
to distract—to crowd
madness upon madness.

Only a still place,
and perhaps some outer horror,
some hideousness to stamp beauty,
a mark—no changing it now—
on our hearts.

I send no string of pearls,
no bracelet—accept this.

* Since the above was written we are informed that, on reflection and on the same grounds as other printers, the printer here referred to declines to print. We shall not, however, relax our efforts in the matter.—ED.

PASSING PARIS

THE announcements of publications as they appear respectively in France and in England are significant of the difference in intellectual stamina between the two nationalities. The literature of the one country is equally in vogue with the other, but, whereas the English make timorous and tardy retrospective adventures, their neighbours prefer to explore among the most modern British authors. Of these Mr. G. K. Chesterton seems to answer to a demand. M. Charles Grolleau is about to follow up Mme. Isabelle Rivière's competent translation of *The Barbarity of Berlin* with *The Crimes of England*, and Dr. Sarolea's *The French Renascence* has had the advantage of appearing under the auspices of the same expert, who is also taking part in a rendering of *What Europe owes to Russia*, equally by Dr. Sarolea. Both books will be published by Crès, whose forthcoming war literature also comprises a prose-study by Verhaeren: *Parmi les Cendres* (Collection Bellum); *La Maison Anxieuse*, by Lucien Descaves; and *Impressions de Guerre*, by Henri Massis (with a frontispiece by M. Maurice Denis). The last-named author has written a life of Ernest Psichari (great-nephew of Ernest Renan), one of the war's earliest literary victims, for *L'Art Catholique*, where M. Charles Grolleau is about to add to his most eminent feats with a version, accompanied by a biographical notice, of Francis Thompson's *The Hound of Heaven* and other selections. This poet has only once before been attempted by a French translator, who openly capitulated before certain passages, leaving blanks in their place—a more honest expedient, certainly, than lame or deceptive renderings.

* * * *

M. Anatole France has prefaced M. Paul Fort's lyric bulletins, *Poèmes de France*, which, after having appeared periodically, have been issued in volume by Payot (3fr.50).

In the *Mercure* for February 1 M. Albert Mockel revealed a prose-poem by the late Stuart Merrill inspired by the funeral procession of an English private passing through the streets of Versailles, which is the most lovable evocation and most moving hymn sung since the war began. By its side other war-poems seem made up for the occasion and served cold. The same issue contained a set of triolets by M. Fritz R. Vanderpyl coinciding with his little composition for THE EGOIST.

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In the revived *Double Bouquet* (whose æsthetic fragrance is as incongruously as it is forbiddingly coated with Swiss chocolate—this periodical appears at Lausanne) M. Edmond Pilon studies and quotes a new poet—M. Pierre Camo—at length and with enthusiasm. As they acted upon Paul Gauguin in another sphere, so tropical suns have contributed to the full flowering of M. Camo's gifts without blunting the edge of the classical finish of France which, as M. Pilon remarks, he holds in common with the most notable pillars of the French tradition: Ronsard, du Bellay, and Racine, as also with, in his pictorial way, Nicolas Poussin, to whose rythms he remains true on the furthest and most unsophisticated Oceanic shores whose link to the world of classical antiquity has emphasised his natural bent.

* * * *

The poet P. J. Jouve, who has occasionally been mentioned in these pages, is convalescent after illness contracted during the care of sick and wounded soldiers, a task he had undertaken voluntarily, being exempted from military service.

M. Alexandre Mercereau is also recovering from typhoid fever contracted at the Front, where he has been acting as stretcher-bearer during many long months.

And it is with great regret that I learn of the painful disablement of M. Pierre Tournier, a young poet whose chronicle of English letters in *Pan* I always read with much interest. He suffered his terrible accident, entailing the loss of one hand and damage to the other, heroically, saying he was glad to have done his duty.

* * * *

Among several new reviews announced is one entitled *Demain*, founded by M. Henri Guilbeaux and published at Geneva, a locality chosen, as it were, to emphasise an apparently intended neutral attitude to everything except "humanity and truth," the ideals for which it claims to stand.

A feminist review, *Les Rayons*, is re-appearing at Bordeaux.

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The epithets "German," "Germanic," "Teutonic," not to speak of "Boche," having come to serve as a qualification of derision, a number of persons and groups have occasion to resent its too frequent application from their opponents in thought and action. Whatever does not happen to please or to be understood is glibly ticked off as "made in Germany." The term is used with the supposition that it will strike a death-blow. It cannot be surpassed. It is the climax in anathema. Each one throws it back to the other, and, like fly-paper, it sticks to everything: remove it, and it plasters itself elsewhere. An anonymous body of painters has just protested against its application to "cubism," "the art of reasoned sensibility, but in no way German," as they plead. I do not know exactly who considers *himself* cubist, but when running over the names of those generally so classed in the pigeon-holes of the public's and critics' brains, I do not recall a preponderance of Germans. Those that occur to me are French or borne by French citizens (with the exception of the Spaniard Picasso and a South American disciple or so, true or false). There is no doubt that, though it may have attracted many adepts in Germany, Poland, and Russia—and, without question, a numerous buying public in these countries, as the late picture-dealer Druet might have shown—the movement, like the word, originated in France among, generally speaking, French artists. There has always been, notwithstanding, a temptation among its opponents to shift the responsibility of its paternity on to Germany. Do I not find in a review of the Salon d'Automne by the erudite M. Péladan, so far back as 1910, the following phrase: "A consolation, if it is one, remains to us: this Salon is composed in two-thirds of foreigners, and Germans teem here. We may say to the different nationalities, as did Victor Hugo's Lucrèce Borgia, 'Gentlemen, you are all poisoned'"? For what revolts M. Péladan is the cubists' obstinate plea of direct descent from the old, and especially French and Italian, masters. And the fact, not generally known to the cubists, proved by certain drawings in one of the German museums, that Albert Dürer once did try to analyse a head into so many geometrical angles, should only serve to illustrate a coincidence and not to support a theory, particularly if valid. Here we have an unquestionable example of cubist precedence, and the attribution of its source to masters chosen at haphazard like Michael Angelo, Leonardo, and Ingres, or, more rationally (though I have not seen the statement made), to the Greco, is neither more nor less defensible than the plea that we all descend from Adam. Moreover, such an argument suggests an unnatural ellipsis in the evolution of art—and there are no voids in nature—an ellipsis which is, precisely, filled up by Cézanne, a French-

man he, and supplying an ancestry near enough to be soundly tested if there were any doubt in its connection.

* * * *

Continuing our little anthology of prominent young French poets, we have again this month had recourse to a foreigner by birth. Mr. O. W. Milosz is, like Mr. Joseph Conrad, a Pole. He is that in body, but in spirit he is much besides — an eighteenth - century French gentleman and a mediæval mystic among, perhaps, other less evident derivations. He appears, also, as a mystic cannot fail to do, a symbolist—a symbolist in its exact and not in its loose, coterie-descriptive application.

And, among his contemporaries on the lyric plane, he stands out an aristocrat. There is nothing democratic, humanitarian, or even familiar in his accents, and humility has not been admitted to his sanctuary. But it is not only the substance of his work which is aristocratic. The elegance of its form merits this definition, marked both in his poetry and in his prose, of which his only published example is *L'Amoureuse Initiation*, a work distinguished by a vocabular exuberance amounting almost to a fault but kept in sufficient control to guard the firmness of outline. In this book Milosz somewhat recalls Henri de Régnier, a Régnier with more ampleness but less limpidity; more enigmatic and, consequently, less readable.

The volume, from which a poem is quoted in this issue of THE EGOIST, is a revised edition of poems extracted from various sets, now in part refuted by their author, published between the years 1900 and 1913, with some new additions.

MURIEL CIOLKOWSKA.

POEMS

By AMY LOWELL

AUGUST: LATE AFTERNOON

SMOKE-COLOUR, rose, saffron,
With a hard edge chipping the blue sky,
A great cloud hung over the village,
And the white-painted meeting house,
And the steeple with the gilded weathercock
Heading and flashing in the wind.

DOG-DAYS

A LADDER sticking up at the open window,
The top of an old ladder;
And all of summer is there.

Great waves and tufts of wisteria surge across the window
And a thin, belated blossom
Jerks up and down in the sunlight,
Purple translucence across the blue sky.
"Tie back this branch," I say,
But my hands are sticky with leaves,
And my nostrils widen to the smell of crushed green.
The ladder moves uneasily at the open window
And I call to the man beneath,
"Tie back this branch."

There is a ladder leaning against the window-sill,
And a mutter of thunder in the air.

THE POND

COLD, wet leaves
Floating on moss-coloured water,
And the croaking of frogs—
Cracked bell-notes in the twilight.

MEDITATIO

I

THOUGHTS, rages, phenomena. I have seen in the course of the morning new ecclesiastical buildings, and I know from the events of the last few months that it is very difficult to get the two most remarkable novels, written in English by our generation, published "through the ordinary channels."

Yet it is more desirable that a nation should have a firm literature than that paste-board nonentities should pour forth rehashed Victoriana on Sundays. Waste! Waste, and again, multiplicitly, waste!

O Christian and benevolent reader, I am not attacking your religion. I am even willing to confess a very considerable respect for its founder, and for Confucius and Mohammed, or any other individual who has striven to implant a germ of intelligence in the soil of the circumjacent stupidity. And I respect him whatever his means and his medium, that is, say, whether he has worked by violent speech, or by suave and persuasive paragraphs, or by pretending to have received his instructions, and gazed unabashed upon the hind side of the intemperate and sensuous J'h'v, on the escarps of Mount Sinai.

Because we, that is to say, you and I and the hypothetical rest of our readers, in normal mood, have no concern with churches, we generally presume that all this pother has been settled long since, and that nobody bothers about it. It is indeed a rare thought that there are thousands of prim, soaped little Tertullians opposing enlightenment, entrenched in their bigotry, mildly, placidly, contentedly entrenched in small livings and in fat livings, and in miserable, degrading curacies, and that they are all sterile, save perhaps in the production of human offspring, whereof there is already a superabundance.

Perhaps 10 per cent. of the activities of the Christian churches are not wholly venal, *mais passons!* And the arts, and good letters, serious writing?

"Oh, you go on too much about art and letters!"

"Bleat about the importance of art!!!" Yes, I have heard these phrases. And very annoying people will "go on about" art.

"In no country in the world do the authorities take such good care of their authors." There are various points of view. There are various tyrannies.

"We are going to have an outbreak of rampant puritanism after the war."

"We shall have a Saturnalia!"

There are various points of view. The monster of intolerance sniffs like a ghoul about the battle-fields even. Flammarion or someone said that the sun was about to explode on, I think it was, February the fifth of this year. The end of the world is approaching. Perhaps.

At any rate I am not the first author to remark that the future is unknowable, or at least indefinite and uncertain. Concerning the past we know a little. Concerning "progress," how much?

It is about thirty-nine years since Edmond de Goncourt wrote the preface I quote.

> Thirteen years ago my brother and I wrote in an introduction to "Germinie Lacerteux":
>
> "Now that the novel is wider and deeper, now that it begins to be the serious, passionate, living great-form of literary study and of social research, now that it has become, by analysis and psychological inquiry, the history of contemporary ethics-in-action (how shall one render accurately the phrase 'l'histoire morale contemporaine'?), now that the novel has imposed upon itself the studies and duties of science, one may again make a stand for its liberties and its privileges.'

There ends his quotation of what they had set down in "the forties."

Now in one's normal mood, in one's normal exist-

ence, one takes it for granted that De Goncourt's statement is simple, concise, and accurate. One does not meet people who hold any other view, and one goes on placidly supposing that the question is settled, that it is settled along with Galileo's quondam heresy.

If a man has not in the year of grace 1915 or 1916 arrived at the point of enlightenment carefully marked by the brothers De Goncourt in A.D. 1863, one is not admitted to the acquaintance of anyone worth knowing. I do not say that a person holding a different view would be physically kicked downstairs if he produced a different opinion in an intelligent company; our manners are softened; he would be excreted in some more spiritual manner.

In December 1876, Edmond de Goncourt added, among others, these following sentences:

> In 1877 I come alone and perhaps for the last time to demand these privileges for this new book, written with the same feeling of intellectual curiosity and of commiseration for human sufferings.
>
> It has been impossible, at times, not to speak *as a physician, as a savant, as a historian.* It would be insulting (*injurieux*) to us, the young and serious school of modern novelists, to forbid us to think, to analyse, to describe all that is permitted to others to put into a volume which has on its cover "Study," or any other grave title. You cannot ask us at this time of day to amuse the young lady in the rail-road carriage. I think we have acquired, since the beginning of the century, the right to write for formed men, without the depressing necessity of fleeing to foreign presses, or to have, under a full republican regime, our publishers in Holland, as we did in the time of Louis XIV and Louis XV.

Well, there you have it. We were most of us unborn, or at least mewling and puking, when those perfectly plain, simple, and one would have supposed obvious sentences were put together.

And yet we are still faced with the problem: Is literature possible in England and America? Is it possible that the great book and the firm book can appear "in normal conditions"? That is to say, under the same conditions that make musical comedy, Edna What's-her-name, Victoria Cross, Clement Shorter, etc. etc., so infernally possible among us!

It seems most unlikely. Of course, five hundred people can do any mortal thing they like, provided it does not imply the coercion of a large body of different people. I mean, for instance, five hundred people can have any sort of drama or novel or literature that they like.

It is possible that the *Mercure de France* has done much to make serious literature possible in France "under present conditions." The Yale University Press in America claims that it selects its books solely on their merit and regardless of public opinion (or perhaps I am wrong, "regardless of their vendibility" may be the meaning of their phrase as I remember it).

And England?

"Oh, Blink is afraid to face the Libraries, I thought so." "The Censor," etc. etc. "We don't think it necessary to superintend the morals of our subscribers." "You can have it by taking a double subscription."

Let me say at once that I make no plea for smuttiness, for an unnecessary erotic glamour, etc. etc. I have what I have been recently informed is a typically "French" disgust at the coarseness of Milton's mind. I have more than once been ridiculed for my prudery.

But if one can't, *parfois*, write "as a physician, as a savant, as a historian," if we can't write plays, novels, poems or any other conceivable form of literature with the scientist's freedom and privilege, with at least the chance of at least the scientist's verity, then where in the world have we got to, and what is the use of anything, *anything?*

EZRA POUND.

FRENCH POEMS

INSOMNIE

JE dis: ma Mère. Et c'est à vous que je pense, ô Maison!
Maison des beaux étés obscurs de mon enfance, à vous
Qui n'avez jamais grondé ma mélancolie, à vous
Qui saviez si bien me cacher aux regards cruels, ô
Complice, douce complice! Que n'ai-je rencontré
Jadis, en ma jeune saison murmurante, une fille
A l'âme étrange, ombragée et fraîche comme la vôtre,
Aux yeux transparents, amoureux de lointains de cristal,
Beaux, consolants à voir dans le demi-jour de l'été!
Ah! j'ai respiré bien des âmes, mais nulle n'avait
Cette bonne odeur de nappe froide et de pain doré
Et de vieille fenêtre ouverte aux abeilles de juin!
Ni cette sainte voix de midi sonnant dans les fleurs!
Ah ces visages follement baisés! Ils n'étaient pas
Comme le vôtre, ô femme de jadis sur la colline!
Leurs yeux n'étaient pas la belle rosée ardente et sombre
Qui rêve en vos jardins et me regarde jusqu'au cœur
Là-bas, au paradis perdu de la pleureuse allée
Où d'une voix voilée l'oiseau de l'enfance m'appelle,
Où l'obscurcissement du matin d'été sent la neige.
Mère, pourquoi m'avez vous mis dans l'âme ce terrible,
Cet insatiable amour de l'homme, oh dites, pourquoi
Ne m'avez-vous pas enveloppé de poussière tendre
Comme ces très vieux livres bruissants qui sentent le vent
Et le soleil des souvenirs, et pourquoi n'ai-je pas
Vécu solitaire et sans désirs sous vos plafonds bas
Les yeux vers la fenêtre irisée où le taon, l'ami
Des jours d'enfance, sonne dans l'azur de la vieillesse?
Beaux jours! limpides jours! quand la colline était en fleur,
Quand dans l'océan d'or de la chaleur les grandes orgues
Des ruches en travail chantaient pour les dieux du sommeil,
Quand le nuage au beau visage ténébreux versait
La fraîche pitié de son cœur sur les blés haletants
Et la pierre altérée et ma sœur la rose des ruines!
Où êtes-vous, beaux jours? Où êtes-vous, belle pleureuse,
Tranquille allée? Aujourd'hui vos troncs creux me feraient peur
Car le jeune Amour qui savait de si belles histoires
S'est caché là et Souvenir a attendu trente ans
Et personne n'a appelé: Amour s'est endormi.
O Maison, Maison! pourquoi m'avez-vous laissé partir,
Pourquoi n'avez-vous pas voulu me garder, pourquoi, Mère,
Avez-vous permis, jadis, au vent menteur de l'automne,
Au feu de la longue veillée, à ces magiciens,
O vous qui connaissiez mon cœur, de me tenter ainsi
Avec leurs contes fous, pleins d'une odeur de vieilles îles
Et de voiliers perdus dans le grand bleu silencieux
Du temps, et de rives du Sud où des Vierges attendent?
Si sage vous saviez pourtant que les vrais voyageurs,
Ceux qui cherchent la Baie du Sincère et l'Ile des Harpes
Et le Château dormant ne reviennent jamais, jamais!
Mon cœur est tout seul dans la froide auberge et l'insomnie
Debout dans le vieux rayon contemple mon vieux visage,

Et nul, nul avant moi n'avait compris de quelles morts
Sourdes, irrémédiables sont faits ces jours de la vie!

O. W. MILOSZ.

The above poem is extracted by the author's permission from *Poèmes*, by O. W. Milosz; Collection de "Vers et Prose," Eugène Figuière et Cie., Paris; 1915; 3 fr. 50.

FANTASIES

By RICHARD ALDINGTON

RELIGIOUS LANDSCAPE

"Panting red pants into the West."
FRANCIS THOMPSON.

How it fluttered on the line in the Convent Garden—how the good sisters' white and red washing danced!

This was in a very windy seaside village of Kent and as I rode to school on my bicycle I could see it leaping and fluttering in the wind.

The Convent had been driven from France by the narrow-minded "Free-thinkers" of the Third Republic, but the Mothers were very gentle and kind, and the serving sisters big, coarse peasants. . . .

How it fluttered on the line in the Convent Garden—how the good sisters' white and red washing danced!

The Curé and my father were bibliophiles; they used to talk about books—about Pascal and "Meelton." One evening we all went to hear Complines, which they chanted in darkness. Neither their Latin nor mine was very good; I heard only two phrases: "Rose of the World" and "Tower of Ivory." . . .

And at once I saw it fluttering in the Convent Garden—the good sisters' washing dancing and leaping in the wind!

BOOK SHELVES

"Liddell and Scott"; "Rhodigini lectionum antiquarum libri XXX."; "Cowley: Works"; "Hooker: Ecclesiastical Polity"; "Ebermeyer: de Gemmis"; "Appuleii Metamorphoseon," &c., &c., &c. Formidable folios, pell-mell quartos, deserts of type; sixteenth-century printing jostling this year's editions—Euripides beside Ford Madox Hueffer—what a mess! what a bore! what a humiliation!

And it is for this I labour? To be an object of derision to some bibliophile looking at his books as cynically and as disgustedly as I look at mine?

SLOANE STREET

I WALK the streets and squares
Of this lampless war-time London,
Beautiful in its dusk.
On the right an orange moon;
On the left a searchlight,
A silver stream among the stars.

London was a rich young man
Burdened with great possessions—
Now, poor in light,
Menaced, and a little frightened,
At length he sees the stars.

THE FRENCH POODLE

By WYNDHAM LEWIS

I WAS reminded of another man's fate when I saw Peter yesterday, in khaki, with his dog. The dog appeared rather confused by Peter's newly resumed uniform. It fell in behind other people in khaki: even when keeping in orderly proximity to its master, it followed a certain indifference or contempt.—Peter's destiny had nothing sultry in its lines: his dog was a suburban appendage. It was the khaki and the dog brought me to the other story.

It appears the following things happened to a man called Rob Cairn, during a long sick-leave. The time was between July and October 1915. I can tell the story with genuine completeness: for James Fraser, the man he saw most of then, told it to me with a great wealth of friendly savagery.

Rob Cairn was drifting about London in mufti, by no means well, and full of anxiety, the result of his ill-health and the shock he had received at finding himself blown into the air and painted yellow by the unavoidable shell. His tenure on earth seemed insecure, and he could not accustom himself to the idea of insecurity. When the shell came he had not bounded gracefully and coldly up, but with a clumsy dismay. His spirit, that spirit that should have been winged for the life of a soldier, and ready fiercely to take flight into the unknown, strong for other lives, was also grubbily attached to the earth. It, like his body, was not graceful in its fearlessness, nor resilient, nor young. All the minutiæ of existence mesmerised it. It could not disport itself genially in independence of surrounding objects and ideas. Even as a boy he had never been able to learn to dive: hardly to swim. Yet he was a big red-headed chap that those who measure men by redness and by size would have considered fairly imposing as a physical specimen. It requires almost a professional colour-matcher, as a matter of fact, to discriminate between the different reds: and then the various constitutional conditions they imply is a separate discovery.

Cairn, then, was arrested in a vague but troublesome maze of discomfort and ill-health: his sick leave, after he had left the hospital, lasted some time. As an officer, therefore more responsible, he had more latitude. He was an architect. He went to his office every day for an hour or two. But he was haunted by the necessity to return once more to the trench-life with which he had been for some weeks mesmerically disconnected, and which he felt was another element, with which he had only become acquainted in a sudden dream. This element of malignant and monotonous missiles, which worried less or more, sleeplessness and misery, now appeared to him in its true colours. They were hard, poisonous and flamboyant. A fatiguing sonority, an empty and pretentious energy: something about it all like the rhetoric of a former age, revolted him. It all seemed incredibly old and superannuated. Should he go back and get killed it would be as though the dead of a century ago were striking him down. Cairn must have been a fairly brave man, considering all things, before his tossing. It was now with him rather sullen neurasthenia at the thought of recommencing, than anything else: renewed monotonous actions and events, and fear not of death but of being played with too much.

James Fraser, his partner, who because of heart-trouble had been unable to join the Army, heard all this from his friend, and cursed "the whole business" of bloodshed in sympathy with the recriminating soldier.

"I'm sure there's something wrong, Rob. How do you feel exactly; physically, I mean? What can happen to a man inside who is blown up in the air? What do the doctors exactly say?"

"They can find nothing. I don't believe there is anything. But I don't feel at all well. It's something in my brain, rather, that's dislocated: cracked, I think, sometimes. I shall never be any good out there again."

He read a great deal, chiefly Natural History. The lives of animals seemed to have a great fascination for his stolid, faithful thoughts. When he got an idea he stuck to it with unconscious devotion. He was a good friend to his ideas.

One of the principal notions to which he became attached at this time was that human beings suffered in every way from the absence of animal life around them. Pigs, horses, buffalos, snakes, birds, goats: the majority of men living in towns were deprived of this rich animal neighbourhood. The sanity of direct animal processes: the example suggested constantly by the equilibrium of these various cousins of ours, with their snouts and their wings: the steady and soothing brotherhood of their bodies; this environment appeared necessary to human beings.

"Few men and many animals!" as he said to Fraser, blinking dogmatically and heavily, light red eyelashes falling with a look of modesty at the base of eyes always seeming a little dazzled by the reds all round them. "That's what I should like; rather than *men* and nothing else. It is bad for men to beat and kill each other. When there are no patient backs of beasts to receive their blows men turn them more towards their fellows. Irruptions of the hunting instinct are common in cities. Irruptions of all instincts are common and inevitable in modern life, among human swarms. Men have taken to the air; they are fighting there almost before they can fly. Man is losing his significance."

Fraser had an objection to make.

"You suggest the absence of animals.—Did not men in every time kill and beat one another?"

Cairn twisted as it were archly in his chair.

"Men loved each other better formerly; and—they at least killed other animals as well. I have never killed any animal; never a bird; not a mouse; not knowingly an insect; but I have killed men."

He said this staring hard at his friend, as though he might be able to discover the meaning of this fact in his face.

"And I did not mind killing men," he proceeded. "I hardly knew what killing meant."

"You do now?" his delighted partner asked him.

Rob looked at him with suspicion.

"No; possibly because I have never killed anyone I could see properly."

"Yes; your gunner's scalps are very abstract. But, again, I do not see what you mean. Do you think that a butcher, because of his familiarity with the shambles, would have more compunction in killing a man?"

"No. But it would do him no harm to kill a man or anything else, of course. Then he's a professional murderer."

"But why did you never kill birds?" Fraser asked him with uninterested persistence.

"I should have if I'd lived among them.—Do you think men would eat each other if there were no succulent animals left?"

"Very likely." Fraser laughed in accordance with the notion. "They might possibly at all events eat all the ugly women!"

Rob Cairn discussed these things with a persistent and often mildly indignant solemnity. The trenches had scarred his mind. Swarms of minute self-preservative and active thoughts moved in the furrows. Little bombs of irritable logic appeared whirling up from these grave clefts and exploded around his uneasy partner. Fraser wondered if Cairn would be able to take up his place in the business again, if nothing happened to him, as usefully as he had occupied it before the war. He seemed queer and was not able at the office to concentrate his mind on anything for more than a few minutes.

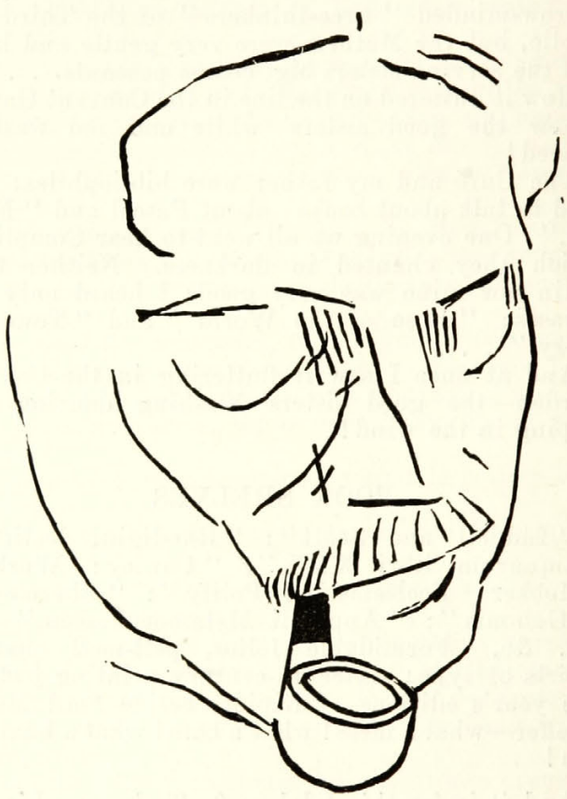
As to the war, his ideas appeared quite confusedly stagnant. He wondered, arguing along the same lines of the incompleteness of modern life, whether the savagery we arrive at were better than the savagery we come from.

"Since we must be savage, is not a real savage better than a sham one?"

"Must we be savage?" Fraser would ask.

"This 'great war' is the beginning of a period, far from being a war-that-will-end-war, take my word for it."

So Cairn was a tired man, and his fancy set out on a pilgrimage to some patriarchal plain. He had



WYNDHAM LEWIS By ROALD KRISTIAN

done his eight months' sprint, and was exhausted. His bounce into the air had shaken him out of his dream. He was awake and harshly anxious and reflective.

It was at this point that he bought his French poodle.

In answer to an advertisement in two papers for a fairly large dog, a lady at Guildford answered that she had such an animal to sell. The lady brought the dog to his flat in a street off Theobalds Road, and he immediately bought it. He was very shy with it at first. He was conscious of not being its first love, and attempted to bribe it into forgetfulness of its former master by giving it a great deal to eat. It shortly vomited in his sitting-room. It howled a great deal at first.

But the dog soon settled down to novel life. Cairn became excessively fond of it. He abused a man in the street who insulted it. It was a large fat and placid brute that received Rob's caresses with obedient steadiness, occasionally darting friendship back at him. As he held it against his legs Cairn

felt a deep attachment for this warm bag of blood and bone, whose love was undiluted habit and an uncomplicated magnetism. It recognised his friendliness in spasms of servile good nature, as absent-minded as its instincts.

Cairn noted all the modes of its nature with a delighted care. Its hunger enthralled him; its ramping gruff enthusiasm at the prospect of the streets filled him with an almost Slavic lyricism and glee. He was calm in the midst of its hysteria; but there was a contented pathos in his quietness. Its adventures with other dogs he followed with indulgence. The amazing physical catholicism of its taste he felt was a just reproach to his fastidiousness and maturity. It would have approached a rhinoceros with amorous proposals, were it not for elementary prudence.

He called his dog Carp. He loved him like a brother. But it is not at all sure that in the end Carp did not take the place that some lady should have occupied in his heart, as many of the attachments of men for girls seem a sentiment sprung up in the absence of a dog. Cairn had had one sweetheart; but after several years of going about together she had seemed so funny to him—she had seemed settling down like an old barge into some obscure and too personal human groove—that he had jerked himself away. The war had put the finishing touch to their estrangement.

"Dolly's lurch is becoming more pronounced," was his Monday morning's bulletin at the office. She appeared to remain an incredible time on each foot, while her body swung round. In following her out of the restaurant he felt that she was doing a sort of lugubrious cake-walk. He could hardly help getting into step. She became more dogmatic every minute: and rheumatism made her knuckles like so many dull and obstinate little faces.

"You're getting tired of her at last." Fraser advised him to take advantage of his mood and to say good-bye to her.

He had done so and had regretted it ever since. He felt superstitious about this parting: he regarded her in this conjuncture, as a mascot abandoned. He blamed his partner and the war for this. Somehow his partner and the war were closely connected. In many ways he found them identified—a confused target for his resentment. When he found himself cursing the war he found himself disliking his partner so much the *next* minute that it seemed the *same* minute. Fraser did not approve of Carp, either: although Carp appeared to like Fraser better than he did his own master. Cairn noticed this, and his humour did not improve. Towards the end they did not see him so much at the office as formerly. Once or twice a week he put in an appearance, rather primed with criticism of the conduct of the business in his absence. Then he turned up one day in khaki again: he was going back to the Front in a couple of days. Fraser and he got on better than they had done of late. He was much more open and good-humoured, and had seemingly recovered his old personality entirely. This may have been due somewhat to his friend's sentimental spurt of pleasantness under the circumstances.

"What are you going to do with Carp?"

When Fraser asked him this he seemed confused.

"I hadn't thought about that—."

They did not say anything, and there was the illusion of sudden groping out of sight.

"Are you going to take him to the Front?" Fraser suggested, and laughed impatiently.

"No, he might get shot there," Cairn replied, screwing up his nose, and recovering his good humour, apparently. "I must give him away."

Fraser knew how fond he was of the dog, and attributed his awkwardness to his dislike at the notion of parting from it.

"Let me keep it for you," he said, generously.

"No, thanks. I'll get rid of it."

Fraser saw his partner on the following day at their office. The next thing that he heard was that Cairn was ill in bed, and that his return to France would have to be again postponed. On going to his friend's flat he crossed at the door two men carrying out a small box. The charwoman was very mysterious. He asked what the box was.

"It's the dog," she replied.

"Is he sold then?" Fraser asked.

"No. 'E's dead."

He looked at her melodramatically unconcerned and bloated face for a moment.

Rob Cairn was alone in his bedroom. He was very exhausted, and faintly bad-tempered.

"What's up? Have you had a relapse?"

"Yes—something: I'm not well."

"Can I do anything for you?"

Cairn was lying on his back and hardly looked at his visitor.

"No, thanks. Listen." He turned towards Fraser, and his face became long and dulled with excitement. "Listen to this. You know Carp, the dog? I killed it yesterday.—I shot it with a revolver; but I aimed too low. It nearly screamed the place down.—Poor brute!—You know——"

He suddenly lurched round, face downwards, flattened in his arm, and sobbed in a deep howling way, that reminded Fraser of a dog.

When he looked up his face was a scared and bitter mask.

"What a coward I am! Poor beast! Poor——. How could I——"

"Nonsense, Rob! You're not yourself. You know you're not yourself! Have you seen a doctor? Don't worry about this——."

"I'm only glad of one thing. I *know* I shall pay for it. That thought is the only one that quiets me. I know as surely as I am lying here that my hour is fixed! I have killed my best living luck. Not that I wanted the luck! God, no! I care little enough what happens to me! But that poor beast!——"

"Damn you and your mascots! You are the slave of any poodle—!"

Fraser remembered his detestable lady-love, and the perpetual threat of an idiotic marriage.

The doctor came into the room.—He told me that he fancied more had happened between Cairn and Carp, at the dog's death, than his friend had cared to tell him. Cairn was another fortnight in London, then went to France. Two weeks after that he was killed. He understood the mechanism of his destiny better than his partner.

THE FRENCH WORD IN MODERN PROSE

III.—PIERRE JAUDON: *Dieudonné Tête.*

"Given the existing essential national characteristics, among intellectual problems any audacious solution proposed to a people without spring is but a farce—until should come the stroke of might from the real barbarians."—*Dieudonné Tête* (published 1910).

WE live in a whirl of convention. Conditions and conventions are so interlinked that the former must be showing a rift wherein to introduce the wedge before conventions can be attacked. The convention is, as it were, the spirit, the soul of the body: condition. Subsequently the operation becomes so easy that the exchange of one monument of convention for another occurs with as little apparent turmoil as the seasons

change, as the seed grows into a plant, as one's hairs whiten, or as takes place any natural transformation.

We submit so readily to conventions that the passage from a prolonged period of peace, say, into one of war finds us psychologically totally unprepared. Conventionally, too, we call peace conditions normal, war conditions abnormal. Then the war status being sufficiently protracted, we adapt ourselves to these at a peril as serious as was our passivity under the preceding circumstances; there is a risk as great in giving way to one condition as to another. At present the world is dangerously near growing too accustomed to the war. We have almost settled down to it. We have been shaken up like those little marbles in certain Chinese puzzles and gradually dropped back into our little sockets. And this is fatal. For life is found in rebellion; security is not in resigned compliance, in tacit subjection to circumstances coming under human control.

I believe, if I read him aright, that this is a doctrine contained in a book whose form and substance are such an affront to conventions that one's understanding—always too easily allowed, in the literary sphere as in all others, to follow a routine, to fall into those little sockets—that one's understanding acclimatises itself to it with a difficulty similar to that of an inexpert rider on a strange and undocile mount, or as a bad sailor to a first rough sea. One holds on to M. Jaudon as best one can, gratefully gripping at his epigrams and aphorisms.

When it appeared some five years ago, this book was altogether beyond the critics and the public, and it probably ever will remain so. For time does not necessarily illuminate. It may even happen that a man will understand himself while he writes and for five minutes after, or five days or months, then gradually travel further and further away from his own work, while years will not open its secrets to whom they were not disclosed from the first.

What are the greatest books written for? To be read? To be understood? Or are they simply outlets, safety-valves of the intellect ? Or have they a purpose quite other, further-reaching, foreign and unfathomable to us? And if intelligibility were an essential quality, then the greatest books would be those easiest to decipher.

Whatever its future fate, *Dieudonné Tête* is for the time being, and especially at a first reading, a book to be fought with. It is presented as the registration by his secretary of hypothetical events dictated by a millionaire reformer, a "sceptic-positivist" bent on reversing the conventional idea —for we can but substitute "one chaos for another." This is a simplified, "arrangement-for-little-hands" explanation of the general scheme on which the book is built.

The author plays with words to show that philosophies are but games with words:

> Everything superhuman becomes humanised in the mind, and its import is but that of a word. Forget the term, or, rather, let us remember, and in time, the import of the word. For . . . there are only verbal conflicts. Reason, which has its epochs, has also its idioms. Therein lies the deeper signification of the Tower of Babel story; therein is all history.

There is no absolute truth; therefore no absolute reform possible:

> Philosophic systems are also phenomena, in spite of their repeated blason about the absolute; they are the temporary expression of reality in being.

And he has read them all, from the classics (whom he quotes too often in their original text) to Stirner, who seems to have impressed him particularly; and they divert him greatly, most of them, as his playful and unpedantic, though numerous, quotations show. He takes their humour seriously and their seriousness humorously. They are all part and parcel of this life-business of ours. He finds as much slang in their philosophy as of philosophy in slang. I give a series of quotations:

> All men say the same things. All are right. Wisdom is this conciliation.
>
> A philosophy is but the expression of a social status; each must be taken in time; if so, they are all equal. As they are formed by the actual circumstances they express, the day's theories may be blindly accepted. . . . Let each citizen sail with the wind and along with the current. It is an order of things it would be vain to attempt to resist in the name of obsolete principles. Thus, helping each other, blind Force and paralytic Idea progress.
>
> Reform, rationalism, Kantism, French Revolution, laicising, etc., it is always the morality of Christianity which it is endeavoured to restore.
>
> And thus the sheep, one moment disturbed, return, somewhat weary, to their old, barely freshened-up evolutions.
>
> Rehabilitated, apparent disorder, tumult of life, against harmony: mortal vision. Order can be but an end: *the end*! What reserves such a word must inspire to the living.
>
> It is the decline! The individual who is haunted by supreme perfection, by final harmony, thus betrays his obscure prescience of an early end: the harmony to which he aspires is his end. As a rule, do not let us forget it, as one advances in age one advances in morality. And if the decline is accompanied by a revolt, you may be sure: it is the struggle of the moribund one who does not wish to die.
>
> Agnosticism, anarchism, pragmatism, etc., cannot strain the bow of spontaneity to the utmost; they are obstructed by traditions and civilities, a quantity of cumbrous inheritances. Yet they are *dans le mouvement*.
>
> Morality is but the tactics adopted by an individual according to the more or less obscure suggestions of his nature.
>
> Given a rule of action, passing from the written law to the prejudices sanctioned by the sword, opinion, or imagination, this one adopts it because he hopes by its application to reduce to his service—or at least more easily and economically to neutralise—the mob than by paying with his own person; another, because he divines that it will allow him to vegetate more lazily, more securely. . . . For the current morality, all frank new affirmations on the part of an individual are *crimes*. The art of the master consists in imposing his crime as an excellent thing: it is the art of accommodating crime.

Taking our modern architecture as the symbol or temple of modern convention, Dr. Dieudonné Tête, the philanthropist millionaire who knows no obstacles to his plans, begins his revolutionary campaign by destroying, by some Wells-like means, one of the most official of the official Paris monuments (the Grand Palais, as it happens), in order to have occasion to build another on opposite æsthetic, as ethic, principles. In the second imaginary instance he buys up a rich residential quarter—the Champs Elysées, to wit—turns the existing occupants out of it, and invites the slums thereto in their stead. In the third instance he rehabilitates love: gives it the freedom of the city, so to speak:

> . . . dear Priapus and excellent Aphrodite are hounded, muzzled, avilated [in our modern civilisation]; the charming and fruitful manifestations of the sexual instinct are the objects of official reprobation; physical nudity and amorous spontaneity are the two scandals which most shock society and one may say, without exaggeration, that it is chiefly against them that the gigantic war-machines of morality have been elaborated. Yet, when the daylight falls, better still when night appears, when the shadows serve to cloak respectability, each one runs to the brothel. The infamy of this institution, and, consequently, the value of noon-day respectability are not lessened by these licenses; they are, on the contrary, consolidated by them; who sins with shame and remorse emphasises his regard for current social values.

The consequence of these abrupt attempts at a reversion of prejudices under the name of reform is worse chaos, for chaos and the moral drawn may be read in the quotation heading this article, and in the following:

> And, consequence of the manure which best suits hardy plants—it is under these conditions that you formed, in spite of yourselves, through your cacophonic associations, an activity such as mine. . . . To have given rise to me! Yes, that is your last most absurd and most consequential misdeed! Intolerable provocation of your flatulence; inevitable reaction of an exceptional microcosm in a compromising midst. You

respect the formula of decadence to the point of breeding a sermonising destructive agent.

Not since Carlyle, perhaps, has ideology been given such force of expression or been dressed in quainter, more original humour. Of this latter trait it has not, unfortunately, been possible to give adequate examples here, for, between the wit and the wisdom which sparkle bright against what is often obscurity to an insufficiently discerning eye—for night is only night because we know no better—I have given the preference to the more essential of the constituent elements of a book written at the highest pressure, all in one breath, taxing the attention of the reader to the uttermost, passing in review every degree from egoism to socialism, individualism to collectivism, archaism to anarchism, punctuated with capers, buffoonery and harlequinades, the last in the last sentence:

[Et toi, mon vieux Tête, si l'effet est produit, va-t-en,] to which a footnote: "Principe du dandysme."

an hypothetical curtain-call being responded to by a quotation from Laforgue: "All's well that has no end."

If there were any doubt whether this book is a remarkable feat or not, such a question is answered by the consideration that it keeps more than it promises: that it holds a fund of interest in reserve long after its resources have been abundantly drawn upon. MURIEL CIOLKOWSKA.

TWO-NINE-ONE

By HUNTLY CARTER

WHAT is "291"? After experimenting for nine years in his "little garret—variously termed Photo-Secession, Little Gallery, '291'—at 291 Fifth Avenue, New York," it suddenly occurred to Mr. Alfred Stieglitz to find out. His question brought over sixty-five answers, which he published in a special number of "Camera Work." Some of the answers are pages too long for the subject, others get considerably out of hand. Only an occasional flash shows that "291" has the germ of vital matters in it. So in the following: "'291,' a human vortex." This is sufficient to suggest a significant centre of movement, force, and change in human expression. "291" is also the title of the gallery's ten-cent monthly publication. Recent issues of this publication, and some special numbers of "Camera Work," the two-dollar photographic monthly, call attention to the excellence of the work promoted throughout by Mr. Stieglitz, and the war-time phase of extremism. For instance, numbers 7-8 of "291" contain "The Steerage," a very fine example of Mr. Stieglitz's photographic work, and an admission or two by Mr. Paul B. Haviland and M. de Zayas. Here is Mr. Haviland:

"We are living in the age of the machine. Man made the machine in his own image. . . . After making the machine in his own image he has made his human ideal machinomorphic. . . . Through their (man and machine) mating they complete one another. She brings forth according to his conception. Photography is one of the fine fruits of this union." But, to come to M. de Zayas: "I speak of that photography in which the genius of man leaves to the machine its full power of expression. For it is only thus that we can reach a comprehension of pure objectivity. Objective truth takes precedence over Stieglitz in his work. By means of a machine he shows us the outer life." This means there is no real basis of unity between man and machine. And it must not be forgotten that if man made the machine in his own image, the machine has retaliated by re-making man in its own image. Which looks as though man has been repaid in his own coin.

In "The Steerage," M. de Zayas' statement that "Stieglitz comprises the history of photography in the United States," and Mr. Haviland's hyperbolical strain of the machine, resides the story of present-day art-expression. It was photographic vision that led painting increasingly downward, and it is photography that is leading it upward again. In the days of the Pre-Raphaelites the fashion was for painters to neglect Art and to regard themselves as little black boxes peculiarly adapted to imitate objective nature. But with the rapid improvement of the little black box itself arose a new conception of the matter and manner of art-expression. So from the time of Cézanne painters have been endeavouring to go one better than the L.B.B. by placing a subjective tracing paper over objective nature, so to speak, in an attempt to disown and admit characteristics that do not belong to photography. This kind of description of abstract nature has now attained a pitch of refinement which threatens to cast out human nature altogether, and to retain nothing except symbols of obscure intellectual processes. To realise this extreme one has only to turn to the illustrative matter in the Stieglitz publications. There one finds Cézanne reducing objective nature to the simplest geometrical forms, and Picasso, his direct descendant, reducing such forms to the merest signatures. Put tracing paper on the fruit and jar in Cézanne's "Still Life" ("Camera Work," June 1913), abstract the curves, and the result is simply Picasso. Then compare the Cézanne "Portrait" with the Picasso "Gertrude Stein" for similar characteristics. One can imagine a Cézanne abstractionist putting tracing paper on "The Steerage" and abstracting the woman seated in a deeply reflective attitude as representing the sum of the human interest of the scene, or a Picassonian abstracting the gangway and the steerage ladder, with their fine composition of straights and curves, as providing the essential signature of the scene. Of course the latter is an arbitrary symbol entirely destitute of eternal significance. And one notes a peculiarity in the photograph which enables us to understand that photography has still an advantage or two over painting. This peculiarity is exemplified in the masses of soft luminous sunlight saturating the gangway, women and children, and a straw hat or two. This brilliant feat of the sunlight, in passing through the camera unimpeded, proves that in one respect the camera is abundantly alive to the touch of the universal soul, and inasmuch as it so expresses the full effect of the touch, its results surpass the work of the painter, whether a Cézanne, Picasso, or anyone else.

Abstractionists must also bare themselves to the Infinite, and they will appear less like "A Mountain in Labour." It seems, according to the Stieglitz reproductions, that M. Picabia is swallowing excessive doses of machinomorphia. In a future article it will be an interesting task to distinguish between the true and Picabian abstraction.

LIBERATIONS

STUDIES OF INDIVIDUALITY IN CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

No. IX. THE FANTAISISTE SPIRIT IN MODERN FRENCH MUSIC

II.—THE WORKS OF MAURICE RAVEL

FIRST and foremost among those embodying the French Fantaisiste spirit in music, the composer to whom, perhaps, the development owes its inception, is Maurice Ravel (born March 7, 1875). To him must be ascribed the establishment of a new phase of decorative thought in music; a phase purely Fantaisiste, which, while transcending the sentimentalism of the romantic school and the obscurities of symbolism, has no retrograde tendency

in the direction of absolute music, an abstract conception entirely divorced from the highly conscious sensibilities of modern life. Objective in the most conscious sense, his music is also distinguished by the subtle humour and delicate whimsicality of thought which it evinces. But perhaps its most remarkable trait lies in its curious lack of emotionalism in a sensational sense. It must not be supposed from this statement that the music of Ravel is marked by any studied remoteness or austerity, or that it lacks the power to move its hearers emotionally. I simply mean that it is almost invariably more evocative than communicative. If Ravel were a poet in words one would say that he repudiated all superlatives. With his appearance in music Impressionism, such as is apparent in the works of Debussy, became directed into new channels of expression. To a certain extent his work partakes of the characteristics found in the works of the Imagiste poets, in its direct manner of treatment and the fluid manner in which it fills the significant forms selected by the composer to convey his thought. Another point of resemblance is found in the method by which Ravel, harmonically and formally, implies his emotional or intellectual meaning rather than elaborately expressing them. No sensationalism or musical rhetoric; nothing superfluous is to be found in Ravel's work. The evocative imagery created by a combination of indicative titles with a deliberate use of harmonic colour-contrasts or assonances, and equally deliberate rhythmic devices, by means of which he expresses his ideas, is arranged and presented in its most subtle decorative aspects, without any emotional effusion to obscure its direct appeal. This appreciation of decorative elements and values does not tend in any way to restrict the composer's conceptions within the limitations of any artificial or conventional formula of design; nor does he ever permit it to influence him in such a manner as to cause him to include any elaboration beyond that implicated by, and essential to, the adequate treatment of his subject-matter. Even in his most formal work this perceptive element predominates, harmonic colouring and rhythmic device being employed in their most personal acceptance and application, to extend and render more subtle the expressive capacity of the structural form. With Ravel accepted forms are always the germs of possibilities, never immutable finalities. A personal "interior" quality is the dominant note of his work: a quality which gives to his music, even when tangible things form its basis, a place quite distinct from all that has been recognised as realism in music. Ravel, in all his work, evinces a love of things tangible but a love of actuality which goes far deeper than any mere delight in vague sensations. Responsive, to a marked degree, to the influence of visual and physical impressions, his responsiveness is always deeply informed by his intellect. This curious blend of sensitiveness and mental perception shows itself in the title of his first work, "Sites Auriculaires" ("Audible Landscapes"), first performed at a concert of the Société Nationale in February 1898. This work, consisting of two pieces for two pianos, still remains in manuscript, but one of the numbers, "Habanera," has since been orchestrated, and forms part of the "Rapsodie Espagnole" published later. In this piece one already perceives traces of the creative attitude which in the later works of Ravel is so particularly distinct. The general effect is that of broad colour-contrasts, but the work, when examined, proves to be of a more complex character; a delicate network of harmonic and rhythmic material which acutely reflects an extremely conscious sensibility beneath an equally sensitive reserve.

The second work by Ravel, an overture, "Shéhérazade," first performed by the Société Nationale in 1899, still remains unpublished, a fact which there is reason to regret. But a cycle of three songs, for voice and orchestra (1, Asie; 2, La Flûte enchantée; 3, L'Indifférent), collectively grouped under the same title, "Shéhérazade," has been published, and in all probability contains many elements approximating to the overture, since Ravel's attitude is generally very firmly defined. This cycle of songs is among the most definitely emotional works of Ravel, and therefore offers more scope for comparison with conventional music than, perhaps, do his more reserved compositions. All three songs are permeated with a delicate Orientalism, a feature which, owing to its decorative quality, is naturally common to many poetical Fantaisiste works. Nor is this the only point in which they resemble the literary movement. Full of vivid and sensuous Oriental colour, there is, above all, perceptible in the music the presence of a mental delicacy, a "fantaisie" purely Latin, purely French. One is never permitted to glut the senses; the music is most subtly refined. One is acutely aware of the erotic and exotic elements which have gone to produce the music, but this realisation is conveyed, not by the ordinary methods of expression, but by a delicate process which is purely suggestive. Sensual in the most physical degree such music must certainly have been in its origin, but it is entirely spiritual in its ultimate rendering. The lasciviousness of the Orient is refined through the medium of the modern French intellect. Here Ravel is at once markedly personal and markedly Fantaisiste. In this music he has caught and expressed the elusive nuances of moods which hover on the extreme verges of sensitive perception. Yet, notwithstanding the subtlety with which this is achieved, there is nothing abstract or strained in any of the songs. One is always aware of the actuality of emotional experience from which the music has arisen. Perhaps the following verses of M. Tristan Klingsor (Leclère), the author of the hundred poems of Shéhérazade, describe better than anything else, the mental attitude discernible through the music:—

> En rêvant de la princesse Grain-de-Beauté,
> Je mêle Samarcande et le Quartier Latin,
> Et, j'ai toujours peur de voir au coin d'une borne,
> Ou bien au bout d'un vers,
> Un Haroun-al-Rachid coiffé d'un haut-de-forme.

Equally full of emotion is the song "Sainte" (written 1896), to words by Stéphane Mallarmé; but in this case the emotional expression is more intense and concentrated. As in many other compositions by Ravel, one obtains here an impression similar to that made by a speaker whose feelings are so acute as to render his body tense and incapable of movement, and reduce his voice to a low monotone.

The same type of expression is apparent in the "Pavane pour une Infante défunte," for piano (1902). The mood of the piece is purely subjective, and perhaps, with the pianoforte suite, "Miroirs," more intimate, in a reflective sense, than any other of the composer's works. But of sentimentality there is no trace. Here again the pathos of the work lies in its intensity, which is quite distinct from the diffuseness which characterises the majority of emotional works. This intensity is further accentuated by the delicate formalism of the musical structure, a formalism purely expressive, which is never permitted to obscure the emotional import of the music. All the grace, pride, and ceremonial of the quaint old form and its associations serve to emphasise the sensitive and reserved mood of which it is the vehicle, while conveying, by its very constraint, a realisation of the depth of feeling from which that mood arises.

In the pianoforte suite, "Miroirs" (1905), while the general mood of the several numbers which it comprises shows a similar subjectivity, a greater

complexity of expression is evident. The first number, "Noctuelles," is more impressionistic in treatment than the majority of Ravel's work; there is a certain abandonment to the play of emotional moods which is very rare in his other work. The whole of the first section, "Très léger," is permeated by a palpable restlessness, expressed in a network of elusive harmonic progressions, and a continually shifting tonality. The middle section, "Pas trop lent; sombre et expressif," is of a more restrained nature, but throughout the dominant note of restlessness persists, reappearing in a more positive form in the third section, where a return to the thematic material of the opening section is made. But here again the method by which the emotion is conveyed is suggestive, the mood-sequence being implied rather than expressed. The whole work is an emotional incident, a momentary glimpse of a psychological state, the potentialities of which are suggested, but not exhausted, by the final bar, composed of a reiteration of the central rhythmic figure. Technically, the work is interesting in that it contains some of the earliest examples of certain constructional devices which have become characteristics of Ravel's later compositions, such as the persistence and elaboration of a dominant rhythmic figure in the first and final sections, and the play of harmonic changes around a reiteration of one or more pedal notes in the various parts, on which the central section is built up.

The second number, "Oiseaux tristes," comes emotionally within the same category as the "Pavane," and the songs already mentioned, and displays many of the characteristics which distinguish the composer. The poignancy of the music consists not in any emotional effusion, but rather in an almost painful contraction of feeling, expressed in fastidiously selected harmonic material, and here again occur persistent rhythmic figures, undoubtedly intended to convey a dominant idea, around which the successive moods of the music move.

Similar characteristics are evident in the fifth number, "La vallée des cloches," derived largely, I believe, from the earlier piece for two pianos, "Entre cloches," which forms one of the two numbers of the "Sites Auriculaires." Based on directly imitative writing, the effect of bells being conveyed by a repeated succession of chords, built in degrees of a fourth, over a pedal fifth on the dominant of B flat minor, the harmonic development involves a complexity of mood in which the initial material impression is gradually submerged, giving place to a subjective state which obtains to the close of the piece, being only emphasised, and not dispelled, by the recurrence of the imitative motif.

The third number, "Une barque sur l'Océan," is based on a similar actualistic imagery, but the mood is more reflective than emotional. The moods of the music emanate palpably from the associations derived from tangible things, and the oscillating rhythmic figures of the music are plainly descriptive. But the intricacy of the shimmering web of harmonic material through which the music progresses, and the poignancy of certain passages penetrate deeper than any recognised physical impression, and are purely spiritual in character.

The fourth number, "Alborada del Gracioso" (Aubade of the Jester), has a more objective tendency than the other numbers of the suite. But the imagery remains essentially evocative. There is no attempt at reconstructive realism; no endeavour to present a concrete picture of the jester, or even to create the impression of his actual singing. Yet there is characterisation in the delicate, fantastic lacery of harmonic and rhythmic effects and, under all, a certain whimsical wistfulness which is very human. Whether the intention of the piece is to convey a play of moods around a central idea, garbed in the decorative symbol of characteristic mediæval type, or to present a sympathetic study of that strange, complex figure, the fool of the Middle Ages, in whose jests wisdom was whispered into the ears of kings and princes, the presence of the underlying emotional factors remains, together with the rich breadth of mood and colour which the intricate detail of the work presents when viewed as a whole.

This characteristic method of writing evinced itself earlier, in the impressionistic pianoforte study, "Jeux d'eau" (1902), a work which reveals a keen perception of the correspondences existing between material aspects and emotional moods. Mentally based on the associations connected with a definite material image, its emotional appeal is achieved by kaleidoscopic combinations and contrasts of rhythmic devices and harmonic colour-quantities, and here again Ravel evinces his taste for persistently reiterated and elaborated rhythmic figures.

Similar characteristics are evident in the "Rapsodie Espagnole," where broad emotional and chromatic impressions are conveyed by the delicate details and interplay of harmonic effects. The imagery is less intellectual, more vivid and objective, and forms the vehicle for more purely emotional feeling. This is particularly apparent in the beautiful section entitled "Prélude à la nuit."

A mental attitude particularly Fantaisiste shows itself also in another important pianoforte suite, the three pieces collectively entitled "Gaspard de la Nuit," after poems by Aloysius Bertrand (1909). Here the whimsicality and fantasy which give such an individual quality to the "Alborada del Gracioso" attain fuller expression.

The first number, entitled "Ondine," is programatically based on the well-known legend, rendered in a purely emotional manner in the poem which forms the text. From the point of originality it is the weakest number in the set, the composer's personal idiom bordering closely on mannerism. But it is saved from complete artificiality by the delicate emotional values of the harmonic treatment, and perhaps the real reason why it is, to a certain extent, unconvincing lies in the fact that the constantly recurrent figure on which, like so many other examples of Ravel's work, the piece is based, is more orchestral than pianistic in character.

The second number, "Le Gibet," presents the composer's mental attitude and constructional methods very clearly. The poem on which the work is based is preceded by the motto-sentence:—

"Que vois-je remuer autour de ce Gibet?" (Faust) and runs as follows:—

LE GIBET.

Ah! ce que j'entends, serait-ce la bise nocturne qui glapit, ou le pendu qui pousse un soupir sur la fourche patibulaire?

Serait-ce quelque grillon qui chante tapi dans la mousse et le lierre stérile dont par pitié se chausse le bois?

Serait-ce quelque mouche en chasse sonnant du cor autour de ces oreilles sourdes à la fanfare des hallali?

Serait-ce quelque escarbot qui cueille en son vol inégal un cheveu sanglant à son crâne chauve?

Ou bien serait-ce quelque araignée qui brode une demi-aune de mousseline pour cravate à ce col étranglé?

C'est la cloche qui tinte aux murs d'une ville, sous l'horizon, et la carcasse d'un pendu que rougit le soleil couchant.

A. Bertrand, d'après l'édition Mercure de France, 1908.

The musical impression by Ravel is one of his most remarkable works, the whole piece being constructed on a wonderful play of delicately coloured

harmonic material round persistent and curiously expressive pedal-notes.

The basis of the poem to which the music of the third piece, "Scarbo," is written is a sentence from one of Hoffmann's "Night Tales":—

"He looked under the bed, up the chimney, into the cupboard—no one." Scarbo is a fantastic imp, and all his deeds are extravagant. He slides on moonbeams like a gamin in winter on the ice. So he can enter your room through your window, even if it be closed, or high up. Once in, he will grimace from behind the bed-curtains, and indulge in many antics. He has also a weird knack of falling down chimneys, of disappearing and reappearing, elongated like a church spire, with a golden bell tinkling in his pointed cap. He pirouettes on one foot, rolls about, and becomes shapeless as melting wax, and then—suddenly—pouff!—he is extinguished. The music is as whimsical as the text, and brilliant from a constructional point of view. Here Ravel for once discards his reserve, and is frankly and irresistibly humorous, with all the fantasy and sparkling whimsicality of the Latin temperament.

A similar type of humour, though blended with reflective thought, is apparent in the "Histoires Naturelles," for voice and piano, to poems by Jules Renard, written 1907. But throughout the cycle of five poems (Le Paon, Le Grillon, Le Cygne, Le Martin-Pêcheur, La Pintade) the mood is less immediate, more intellectual. Nevertheless, there is much underlying feeling present, which is particularly evident in the exquisite setting of "Le Martin-Pêcheur," the curiously contracted emotion of "Le Cygne," and "Le Grillon," with its delicate ending, so full of subjective emotion.

The ballet, "Daphnis et Chloé," presents the diverse characteristics of the composer in brilliant contrasts. The theme of the text, with the central figures of the two simple lovers, so naive, so unconscious of the nature of their feelings for each other, is one which could not fail to appeal to the delicate taste of one so sensitive as Ravel. The psychological insight evident in the music is also very keen. While preserving the fantaisiste character of the poetic theme, Ravel contrives to convey a most subtle interplay of emotional moods, which range from the exotic feeling of the "Nocturne" or the more decorative beauty of the "Interlude," to the energetic feeling demonstrated in the "Danse guerrière." But never is there present any emotional effusion; a delicate perception of proportions is always preserved.

Even in his more formal works the individual attitude of the composer maintains itself. Freedom of thought, together with experimental tendencies, are evident both in the "Quatuor à cordes" (1904), and the "Sonatine pour piano" (1905). Here, in the intimacy of feeling, intimacy without emotionalism, achieved by a subtle use of harmonic colour, combined with the rhythmic flexibility of the music, one perceives much more than any mere formal dexterity. One realises that here Ravel is already utilising the quality which Paul Fort terms "personal discovery," a definition which perhaps most adequately conveys one of the fundamental directions of the Fantaisiste movement.

The remaining works of Ravel include a "Menuet sur le nom H-A-Y-D-N," a volume of Greek folk-songs, and Seven Folk-songs, arranged for voice and piano, all of which display, in a similar or lesser degree, the characteristics evident in his other work—characteristics which have opened up new expressive capacities in the more decorative types of music, and brought about the introduction of a subtle, complex, and essentially modern quality in the spiritual under-currents of musical composition.

LEIGH HENRY.

Ruhleben, Germany, 1915.

A YOUNG SOLDIER

By WYNDHAM LEWIS

I ASKED Peach how he liked war. He seemed intoxicated with the notion of extinction. He winked at me as though to say "Hurry up and come and have a pinch!" I felt that military death was the latest dope. But he always winked like that, and he may have no very original feeling about his new experience. On the other hand, I saw a young soldier in the Tube yesterday. He was a born warrior, meant to kill other men as much as a woman is meant to bear children. I realised as I looked at him how there is only one thing a woman thoroughly understands in a man, of the things specifically his, and recognises of equal importance to her own functional existence. When he kills she feels that he is about a business as profound and sinister as her own. This young man was strung to a proud discipline. He was a youthful favourite of Death's, something like a sparring partner. He had the equivalent of chewing-gum, too, in the cynical glitter of his face, and his lazy posing. And I have seen many exalted and enthusiastic middle-class masks. The aristocrats have their old indifference, their adamantine Style. There are other styles, too, that come in handy. How young the world is, fortunately. It will certainly maul the Constellation of Hercules if that misguided organisation should come in our direction.

OF GODS

TO GOD,—A CHALLENGE

It must be that Thou art,—else whence am I?
But art Thou God?—Oh justify Thy ways to me!
Else here am I, a greater God than Thou.

I have never sinned.
Always I have done the best I knew.
Where I have made mistakes through ignorance,—
Through want of knowledge of the truth of life,—
'Tis Thou alone, who art responsible.
If to err thus be to sin,
Thou art the sinner.
Why hast Thou made me thus?
Why do I often choose unconsciously
The step toward death—instead of that toward life?
Is it that Thou wouldst have me free to choose?
Of what advantage is such freedom's choice?
Men tell me Thou hast made me in thine image.
How can a God make in His own image
A creature that can err?
How can a God make in His own image
A creature that thus erring must endure
Suffering and suspense,—the two great agonies,—
The two great serpent stings, of space and time?
Why am I not equipped to freely choose
Life rather than death?
Why is there anything but life to choose?

If Thou wouldst be my God
Show me Thy truth,—justify all to me.
Else can I make here in my image
A better God than Thou.

STRANGE GODS

I here give over following after strange Gods.
I make my own God,
In mine own image;
New every day,
Fresh every morning.

Thus only may God make me in His image.
Thus am I to God,
What God is to me.

ALL GODS

All Gods are mine.
Into the alembic of my soul
I toss them one by one,
Both new and old;
And with a wondrous modern alchemy,
I fuse them into my God,—God of all;—
My God,—made in mine own image;—
God whom I charge, and challenge,
God whom I chide and chirrup,
Even as I do myself;—
God who is fain to be
Ever higher and greater,
Ever better and nobler,
Thus to keep pace with me.

ALICE GROFF.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE TRIUMPH OF MARGARET SANGER.

To the Editor, THE EGOIST.

MADAM,—On September 25th, 1915, Margaret Sanger (in whose campaign for diffusing the knowledge of birth-control THE EGOIST has taken a kind interest) sailed for the United States to meet her trial under the Federal Code. Immediately on her arrival in New York she notified the U.S.A. Government of her return, but the *prudent* Government showed a strange reluctance to proceed against the woman who had defied it. The death of Anthony Comstock—of the results of rage at William Sanger's exposure of his methods—had removed a permanent source of malignant stultification; and the expression of opinion on the merits of the Sanger case, from English intellectuals and working men alike, had been so vigorous and unmistakable as to lead to a complete *volte-face*. Mrs. Sanger was informed that *if she would plead guilty* she would receive only *a nominal sentence*. She, of course, refused; the Government continued to postpone the date fixed for trial: at last January 18th was fixed, and Mrs. Sanger appeared in the New York Federal Court, without Counsel, having determined to conduct her own defence, but escorted by some of the most independent and distinguished leaders of thought in the States: Mrs. Mary Ware Dennett, Leonard Abbott, Theodore Schroeder, Dr. Elsie Clews Parsons, Dr. A. Jacobi (former President of the American Academy of Medicine), Dr. W. Y. Robinson, Miss Elizabeth Gurley Flynn (of the I.W.W.), and many others gave her their public support. The Judge declared the case postponed, and now comes the news that it is *finally dismissed; no trial!*

One woman's courage and brain, pitted against bigotry, ignorance, exploitation, have made the law against birth-control propaganda a dead letter and its supporters eternally ridiculous. Will the U.S.A. Government *dare to rescind the law they do not dare to put into execution*? It is for the Americans to see to this.

Mrs. Sanger has suffered personally during these anxious months since September; her husband's health was seriously injured during his month's imprisonment, and her little daughter died suddenly of pneumonia.

February 23rd, 1916. F. W. STELLA BROWNE.

EDITORIAL

Letters, &c., intended for the Editor of THE EGOIST should be addressed to Oakley House, Bloomsbury Street, London, W.C.

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NOTICE

THE attention of readers is drawn to the APRIL NUMBER of THE EGOIST, which will contain among other items a first long instalment of our new serial story

"TARR,"
By MR. WYNDHAM LEWIS.

In the MAY NUMBER ***MISS DORA MARSDEN*** will resume her Editorial Articles.

In this number ***MR. EZRA POUND*** will start a series of translations of the **"DIALOGUES OF FONTENELLE,"**

and the first of a series of **LETTERS** of a 20th Century English Woman will also appear. These Letters bear particularly upon the interests and education of modern women.

Madame Ciolkowska will continue the **"Paris Chronicle,"** and her new series of articles on **"The French Word in Modern Prose."**

Further prose contributors will include: **H. S. Weaver, Richard Aldington** (also poetry), **A. W. G. Randall** (studies in modern German poetry), **John Cournos, F. S. Flint, Leigh Henry** (studies in contemporary music), **M. Montagu-Nathan, Huntly Carter, Margaret Storm Jameson** and others.

THE EGOIST will also continue to publish regularly the work of **young English and American poets,** and poems (in French) by **modern French poets.**

Back numbers (a few copies of which are still obtainable, price 1/- each, U.S.A. 25 cents) contain the serial novels: "The Horses of Diomedes," by Remy de Gourmont, and "A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man," by James Joyce, the latter of which is shortly to be published in book form by THE EGOIST.

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The publication of the second series is postponed to September.

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