

THE EGOIST

AN INDIVIDUALIST REVIEW

Formerly the NEW FREEWOMAN

No. 8.—VOL. III.

AUGUST 1916.

SIXPENCE.

Editor: HARRIET SHAW WEAVER.

Assistant Editors: { RICHARD ALDINGTON.
H. D.

Contributing Editor:
DORA MARSDEN, B.A.

CONTENTS

	PAGE		PAGE
THE SCIENCE OF SIGNS. By D. Marsden	113	PASSING PARIS. By Madame Ciolkowska	120
THE FRENCH WORD IN MODERN PROSE.—V. By Madame Ciolkowska	117	“SHAW —.” By M. Montagu-Nathan	121
MARIANNE MOORE. By H. D.	118	SERIAL STORY—TARR. By Wyndham Lewis	122
FRENCH POEMS. By Viviane Herard	119	NOTES ON MODERN GERMAN POETRY.—VII. By Alec W. G. Randall	126
DIALOGUES OF FONTENELLE—IV. Translated by Ezra Pound	119	AMERICAN POEMS	126
OVER DEVON HILLS. By John Cournos	120	BRIDAL IN PHILISTIA By Honor M. Pulley	127

THE SCIENCE OF SIGNS

BY D. MARSDEN

CHAPTER II

THE conclusions arrived at in our previous article were that philosophy can only overcome its sterility by abandoning its existent subject-matter which is intractable to the analytic method for one which is amenable to it, and that the difference involved in such a change was that which lies between inquiring into the defined and inquiring into the indefinable; otherwise stated, between the successful attempt to concentrate upon what has proved that it admits of being concentrated upon and the futile attempt to concentrate upon what negates concentration. While the first yields an orderly progress in subtlety and complexity, the second affects a dead halt whose monotony invites the enlivenment of haphazard and extraneous preoccupations. This is the present condition of philosophy. Its preoccupations are with certain verbal symbols in face of which the defining analytic activity has broken down and which it has, in accordance, denominated its “Ultimates,” for which “First Principles” is a general covering term. Any primer of philosophy will start off heartily with the assertion that philosophy is an inquiry into “First Principles,” but with the admirable sensitiveness commoner in first chapters than in last, it will at once correct itself to say that philosophy *would* be such inquiry if philosophers knew what these principles were. Such knowledge being in default, philosophy has to make shift and account itself rather the *search* for “First Principles.” Which being interpreted means, as we have pointed out, preoccupation with indefinables. If then, as we shall hope to prove, the function of philosophy is definition, these ultimates and indefinable first principles lie altogether outside the pale of

philosophy proper. That they seem at present to lie across its path of progress demanding a settlement, is due to the fact that philosophy has left its own proper course, for only by so doing could it have come up with them. It is necessary, therefore, for the framers of any new philosophic conception to be on their guard against a temptation—natural and strong because of immediate controversial interest—to conceive their task in relation to these same ultimates. What rather is now required of philosophy is that it shall turn its back upon these irrelevancies and be content to await such explanation of their insolubility as the prosecution of philosophy’s proper task will inevitably yield.

* * * *

The Greeks were the first genuine philosophers. Before them there had been thinkers interested to learn and to teach what manner of behaviour in life, granted certain fundamentals of taste and social necessity, was most to be commended, but it was the Greeks who first concerned themselves with the kind of question whose legacy of difficulties consumes philosophic energies down to to-day, and their two greatest philosophers both agree in their citation of its animating motive. “Wonder,” says Plato in the *Theætetus*, “is the feeling of a philosopher, and philosophy begins in wonder.” And Aristotle in the *Rhetoric* says, “From wonder, men both now and at the first began to philosophize, having felt astonishment originally at the things which were more obvious . . . then by degrees . . . about more important subjects.” Which is illuminating just so far as it goes. Because wonder is a very universal frame of mind not in any special way characteristic of philosophy. Allowing that the early philosophers were piqued by wonder, the really crucial question

for philosophy remains: about what precisely were they wondering? It is the answer to that question which decided the conception of philosophy and of its function. *Our* answer to it would be that they were wondering what certain signs stood for. Philosophy found itself born into a very grown-up world. Those early Greeks found themselves and their fellow-men in a world impregnated with signs of all descriptions: a medley of indication-marks of indescribable complexity yet all wearing the aspect of being intended to *make some communication*. They found them drawn up in every kind of medium: in gesture, colour, line, form, movement, sound, in all the arts, but above all in the two media of number and language. Some seemed plainly intelligible, some only half, and others the most determined and fascinating enigmas. What increased their mysteriousness was that men found themselves acting as from some deep impulse in response to certain of these signs as *though* they understood them, while they felt it hopelessly beyond them to say *what* they understood, if they understood at all. It was as though there were abroad in the world some omniscient intelligence scattering everywhere its hieroglyphics, with a malicious hand sowing everywhere its half hints and cryptic mysteries. Plainly they were intended to be taken as signs and marked somehow, somewhen, with meaning, but failing to carry with them the full tale of what they meant. The cumulative effect of their presence began slowly to create an intolerable irritation like that produced by cobwebs which in summer-time stretch across country lanes, which we cannot see or deliberately touch, but whose faint yet incessant impact finally becomes beyond bearing. The particular kind of wonder then which was the beginning of philosophy was curiosity to learn what certain doubtful signs stood for. That was the beginning of philosophy as *knowledge* of what signs stand for is its end. Beginning and end are linked together by a line of progress which represents an ever-increasing ability to say what such and such signs mean. So: the appearance of philosophy is the adumbration of the articulate stage in the development of self-consciousness. Philosophy itself is the Science of Signs; its sole function is definition. In defining philosophy as the science of signs it is a piece of particular good fortune that the dry word "sign"—matter-of-fact and straightforward without any aura of poetic or even controversial association—should be available. Competing terms might have been "Symbols" or "Meanings," but the advantage plainly lies with "signs." The exposition of philosophy's ascribed function will demand a constant insistence upon what is meant by "meaning," and whenever argument appears likely to be submerged in the deluge of the latter's irrelevant associations, the word "sign" will take on all the character of a life-line.

That its business was with signs philosophy has been at least dimly aware from the very outset. The fact that the Greek philosophers felt the necessity to appraise the relative values of the different sign-systems, and to debate which of them was the most comprehensive and fundamental makes clear it was so. And they arrived at definite conclusions. By comparison with the rest they found that the sign-systems of language and numbers stood easily first, though the superiority of language over number was by no means for them self-evident. The Pythagoreans, for instance, held the view that the superiority lay with numbers, and believed that in them was to be found the all-comprehensive system of signs in terms of which the import of every other kind of sign could be explained: a belief which in less assertive form indeed has received steady support from philosophers and scientists down to the present day, as the dictum of Lord Kelvin quoted in a previous chapter shows. In spite of such contrary

currents, however, philosophers found themselves implicitly accepting the view that numbers were a highly definitized shorthand corresponding to more cumbersome lingual signs: resorted to for the sake of ease in manipulation and guaranteeing a high degree of exactness of a certain kind, but always capable of transmutation into the longhand signs of language. Philosophic effort in the main began to settle itself to the elucidation of dubious signs in current speech. Like any modern psychologist—Professor Stout shall we say—Protagoras was early plying at the word "Truth" for a definition, and "Error," into the scrutiny of which Plato followed to chastise him. The whole purport of the Socratic method was indeed to force definitions. But the greatest testimony to the fact that the Greeks were aware by instinct that their wonder was about signs, and above all about lingual signs, was the creation of a logic by Aristotle. The summarizing of all the kinds of assertions which speech makes into ten great categories in order to bring all statements under the mastering discipline of the syllogism is the great outstanding landmark in the history of philosophy.

* * * *

If, then, philosophy is the Science of Signs it will have to do with phenomena only as related to communication, and it is as the most comprehensive system of communication that philosophy is particularly concerned with language. Now lingual forms, unlike the individual forms of other sign-systems, did not set out primarily and deliberately as a set of signs; they were not primarily means of communication. Unlike the earliest mathematical or chemical symbols, for instance, they were not primarily conventionalized and invested with a communicatory character. They made their initial appearance as involuntary expressions of the mind, and the convention was imposed on them well after the event. The cries which accompany pain, the sighs and groans, the screams, and laughter with the ejaculatory accompaniments of emotion of all kinds which in course of time were commandeered as the vehicle most suited to become a system of communication, primarily "meant" nothing in the sense in which we recognize the meaning of meaning inside the limits of convention. Such sounds and gestures were as involuntary as tears: all of a piece with the emotion they accompanied. They were expressions but not communications. For them to become such and take on the character of signs, mutual agreement and understanding were necessary. Their conventionalizing: the imposing on them of fixed meanings in order to make them instruments of communication, was secondary. First they merely *were*. That they should have come *to be understood* and not merely *to be*, represents a development in the direction of communicativeness which had to swim against the stronger and more primary current by which lingual forms are expressions and forms of emotional fulfilment and relief rather than vehicles rigged as signs. Accordingly when philosophic curiosity dawned: when minds first consciously looked for precise meanings in the significant forms with which they were inundated, they found themselves confronted with a vast growth which had come into being primarily as the outcome of impulses quite other from that which animates the philosophic purpose, and that impulse had invested each term with a stubbornness capable of resisting the impress of the new purpose seeking to dominate them. Moreover, this secondary character which sought to superimpose itself on the primary forms was not at the outset either deliberate or consciously articulate; that is, it was not itself primarily philosophic, and as a result it has worked itself out in a manner apparently haphazard and anyhow. It is the wholly conscious and articulate part of the process only which is philosophic,

and for countless ages before the advent of the genuinely philosophic habit concerned not only to mean but to be able to give a forthright statement of what it means, lingual forms were being engrafted with meaning, and assuming the character of a language. Philosophy itself made only a very late appearance as a characteristic form of life. Even so, it only appears in a race which has reached its maturity. For the rest, men are content to continue to mean, *i.e.* to communicate, without any anxiety about their ability to give a precise account of the process. And as in the race, so in the individual. Long before the individual philosopher becomes introspective with a curiosity about his meaning his mind has already been saturated with meaning-impregnated forms, and has already fallen into a glib familiarity with them which exercises an influence hypnotizing almost to the point of insensibility.

* * * *

The effect of these disadvantages at which language philosophically considered stands, may be brought out by comparing language with a specialized sign-system such as that of mathematics, whose symbolism has from the outset been designed solely with a view to the construction of an adequate indication-system of precise meanings. Granted what might be considered its kicking-off ground, for an adequate consideration of which we should have to refer back to the deepest mysteries of speech, mathematical symbolism has been developed deliberately with a high degree of self-awareness and recognized purpose. It is a product of intelligence, after the latter has already become philosophical, *i.e.* awake to the nature of the operation of deliberately meaningful communication and its methods. In contrast with speech it is very much the latter-day product of a matured and self-conscious age, in which men have become far more conscious of the underlying obligations as well as of the existence of conventions: of the dependence of communication and understanding upon mutual respect for the convention which fixes the signification of particular signs. Mathematical procedure is as deliberate and convention-impregnated as mathematicians have known how to make it. The structure of its formulæ they recognize as their own creation: its signs indicating just what they agreed should be indicated by them: that and no more. Individual mathematicians set about calling into existence an adequate body of shorthand symbols relative to certain limited aspects of the phenomena in which each sign should find rigorous definition and be limited to its one meaning so that there should be room neither for redundancy nor deficiency, and in which all procedure should be invested with a scrupulously respected significance. If in actual practice the fact that mathematicians have worked singly and apart from each other has been responsible for many redundancies, and indirectly, no doubt, for many deficiencies, these are only of a nature to make the ultimate work of sifting, co-ordinating and completing such as that attempted, for example, in Professor Peano's *Formulaire*, a comparatively easy task. In short, the mathematician's task of keeping mathematical signs to their deliberately created significations, and of keeping in view their purely conventional nature is a simple and straightforward business, and it provides extraordinarily convincing evidence of men's proneness to forget the origin of their own symbolic compacts and to become hypnotized by them, that confusion should have been possible even within the particular "universe of discourse" they themselves have called into being, and of whose individual symbols they know the formulators by name and can place in point of time. That there should be mystery about those "ultimates" of mathematics which, as we said, consti-

tuted mathematics' kicking-off ground is inevitable so long as the mystery about the "ultimates" of language exists, because mathematics is a superstructure of language and took language's seemingly simple elements as self-explanatory. Inevitably these trailed with them their inheritance of mystery and rendered the nature of mathematics whenever effort is made to pierce deeper than its surface intricacies as mysterious as that of Reality and Truth. But that highly trained minds should lose their bearings even among its own particular superstructure of conventions is nothing short of surprising. What, for instance, save the fact that he had grown oblivious of the deliberately conceded compact underlying their definition, could have led an acute mind like Mill's gravely to discuss the conceivability of "round squares" and of $2 + 2 = 5$ being not outside the "nature of things"? Plainly it is not anything in the "nature of things" which makes $2 + 2 = 4$. It is merely the advisability of keeping compacts and respecting one's own definitions once having agreed upon them. As a rule, however, mathematicians are not under any delusion as to the character of the import of their specialized symbols. Progress with them has indeed been so far-reaching that the inquiry has swung round full circle, bringing mathematicians back again to a consideration of their own "ultimates." Since, as we have said, these are basically one with the "ultimates" of language, it is not unlikely that unless the philosophers quicken their pace of their own accord, the mathematicians will step in and filch their task from them.

* * * *

If, then, philosophy seeks to dominate forms in order to perfect them as signs, the philosophical impulse will have given expression to itself in relation to lingual forms by endowing individual words with a precise meaning and by investing the changes involved in their various juxtapositions with one another with a strict order and discipline. The work of the lexicographers, the grammarians and the logicians represents, therefore, the first stage of philosophy: its most direct and positive achievement: and if we desired to find for the new philosophic conception its right point of connexion in time, it would be with the scholasticism of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries when the "study of words" was at its height. Incidentally the new conception would rehabilitate this same "study of words" which at a later day when scholasticism had fallen victim to its own subtleties, the great apostle of modern science, Bacon, roundly declared to be the "first distemper of learning." For if objective science makes especially its own the business of discovering new images and new features in old images, philosophy's business is to maintain in adequate condition the body of symbols which keeps custody over all images; to which end this rejected stone of objective science—the "study of words"—has to be recognized as the headstone of the corner. The reason why we have to regard these already achieved efforts in regard to lingual signs rather as the preliminaries of philosophy becomes clear from a summary of what they have aspired to achieve. They have been directed mainly towards keeping terms faithful to their existent meanings, preventing them from sliding from them and correcting as far as possible such slidings as have taken place. They have been content to take stock of lingual values up to date: to consolidate and establish such surface-values as they already possess and to make the most of these within the limits of obviousness. Any subtler psychology than the transparently obvious they have not attempted. No dictionary, for instance, makes any attempt to be subtle. It is made for the million and is content to retail normal acceptations.

If philosophy demands more than the common acceptation philosophers will require to make the necessary provision; the lexicographers will not furnish it.

It may be helpful in this connexion to consider the augmentation of language. The English language, for example, has for nearly a couple of thousand years enriched itself with the spoils of languages fallen as rich mantles from races among whom genius rose to heights still representing the high-water mark of human attainment. The accretions from the tongues of the Greeks and Latins are now an integral part of our daily speech, and we have inherited the thoughts which were theirs because we have accepted and are nurtured in their speech. Their ideas have become our ideas; their problems our problems: particularly philosophic problems which are purely verbal ones. The blunted terms they used—and which their philosophic difficulties plainly show, mystified them—we have imported to our own mystification. The imported terms were full-grown when we inherited them, or rather, they were highly complex and far removed from their base, viewed from the standpoint of a radical convention of signs; which very fact it was which constituted their mysteriousness and rendered an epoch-making treatise a preliminary to a philosophically adequate definition of any one of them. So: while augmentation has filled up many yawning gaps in our sign-system, it has not effected a subtilization of it. On the contrary, the blunting effect upon expression of the new-comers had become so appreciable that it was necessary to stem the influx by a species of bullying similar to that which to-day deters us from the use of, say, the split infinitive, and it can be found that the antagonisms which keep alive the variant schools of thought in all spheres—religious, social, and political—not traceable to direct conflict of material interests can be analysed down to the differences of taste revealed in the varying degrees of fastidiousness with which individuals exercise restraint and caution in the use of these confusion-breeding importations.

* * * *

This failure to import subtlety into the acceptation of terms, native or foreign, means that the philosophic influence has not been competent to establish a scrupulousness in any degree strikingly above the ordinary. In this respect the subtlety it has given evidence of in relation to grammar and logic—to the arrangement of term with term and to the co-ordination of sentence with sentence—is in the most marked contrast. The grammatical and logical creations are both highly philosophic to the extent to which the material on which they worked permitted them to be, and although, once made, both enter into ordinary use, their actual creation represents the exercise of a subtlety far above the ordinary. Both grammar and logic are, however, concerned only with the inter-relations and juxtapositions of such terms as exist, and their subtlety, however great, is directed only towards efficient arrangement. They have nothing to do with the importing of subtlety into the terms themselves. It is due to the overlooking of this fact that grammar and logic—particularly logic—have been ridiculously misprized. The failure to apprehend precisely what it is logic proposes to achieve and what it does not in any way pretend to achieve has obscured the fact that logic is the greatest positive achievement of philosophy, representing a task of enormous dimensions, fine yet comprehensive, carried through completely and pre-eminently well. Aristotle's *Logic* is the most impressive monument in the world. In it one great mind faces a subject practically untouched, immensely vast, and in one unflagging and unbroken effort apprehends how chaos may be dominated and dominates it. In his

categories, at one throw Aristotle puts a leash round all the wild elements of assertions, and out of the syllogistic structure which he raises upon them he calls into being an effective guardianship of the compacts whose fair keeping is a first condition of any value appertaining to assertion. As created by Aristotle, and the schoolmen who worked after him, the syllogism rounds up every loophole by which the evader of compacts (of which the major premise is the general statement and the minor the detailed instance) seeks to escape, and drives him to the point where he is plainly chargeable with both and with all the implications which go with them.

The syllogism is the relentless vindicator of the underlying linguistic compact. It insists that what a man states shall be made chargeable to him to its remotest consequences. It is a fetter which keeps us bound to the things we say without allowing to them more or less: a testing-machine into which the most complex combination of statements can be put to come out with each part disentangled from, yet related to, every other, each with its exact quantity of affirmation written plain upon it. It raises an effective barrier against the tricks of dodgery and of half-knowledge. As a machine for regulating progressive assertions it is perfect, and to the schoolmen who perfected it, in the words of Sir William Hamilton which Mill prefaces to his *Logic*, "the vulgar languages are principally indebted for what precision and analytical subtlety they possess."

What makes the syllogism of the utmost importance and value, not only in itself but in relation to future philosophy, is that its workings are unaffected by the degree of subtlety of the terms of the propositions over whose developments it rules. It is concerned with the *quantities* of propositions rather than their quality. It does nothing whatever to import subtlety into the terms predicated; but once that subtlety has been introduced the logical *method* will work upon the subtler terms with as great a degree of efficiency, constructing for them the same watertight contrivance admitting of no leakage of inference which hitherto it has contrived for terms taken at their normal level of discrimination.

* * * *

There has been much speculation concerning the character of the directing notion which led Aristotle to fix upon his *ten* categories rather than on any other number, and he himself gave no explanation why he fixed on this particular classification. As a classification the categories are by no means unimpeachable, though the logicians managed to get on with them as a basis quite well, and they remained unchanged until Kant augmented, without in any striking way improving on them. It has been maintained that it was the grammatical forms which furnished Aristotle with his guiding principle: a speculation interesting because its fundamental bearing makes it seem particularly probable. We are not, however, in any direct way here concerned with such speculations; what we are concerned with, and what lends our theory support, and seems to permit us to see in the early schoolmen the immediate precursors of the new philosophic conception, is the fact that Aristotle and his followers were more or less articulately aware that the track leading to the open vista of the mind lay through the intricacies of speech. The task which necessarily took first toll of *their* labours was, accepting words at the level of discrimination at which they found them, to reduce them as regarded their juxtapositions from a rampantly disorderly chaos to an orderly easily dominated simplicity. The creation of their *Logic* was a task necessarily anterior to any subtler psychology of terms; but what the character of the next progressive move in philosophy must be, the effects achieved by applying the perfected logical instrument to the questions posed by philosophy

makes sufficiently clear. These have been barren; a fact which a reluctance to acknowledge the sterility of their material has inclined philosophers to interpret as evidencing the sterility of logic. What actually this admirable logic-chopping has proved is that while the barren results of the inquiry indicates the existence of contradictions embedded somewhere, these can no longer be suspected of lurking in the manner of juxtaposition of word with word. They must accordingly be sought in the character of the individual words themselves. Supported, then, by the logical method as already forged, philosophy, returning practically to the point of departure from which Aristotle set out, has now to initiate a closer scrutiny of terms, and particularly of those whose import has been assumed to be self-evident. In the scrutiny and ultimate redefinition of the primary elements of speech—the verb, the auxiliaries above all, the pronoun, the noun, the adverb and the remaining elemental forms—lie the new hopes and prospects of philosophy.

It is of interest to record, in passing, that the momentary emergence of the nominalist controversy (and this even though its day was but just sufficiently long to enable it to be said that it died) seems to show that the thirteenth and fourteenth century Aristotelians were hot on the scent of the same philosophic conception.

[Note.—“The Science of Signs” is the second chapter of the “Lingual Psychology” series. Chapter I, “Analysis as the Philosophic Method,” appeared in the July issue of THE EGOIST.]

THE FRENCH WORD IN MODERN PROSE

V. RICCIOTTO CANUDO

La Ville sans Chef

AS a rule, he who is sceptical of ideals is impotent to imagine them, while those who can are blind to the fallacies they afford. Exceptionally, M. Canudo can fancy a chimera without allowing himself to be deluded by it. He realizes that the materialization of an ideal means, sooner or later, its corruption. It has been said: “Nothing is created; all is destroyed.” There is no complete concrete realization possible of the abstract concept on the precise basis of abstract relations. The transposal of the one condition to the other necessitates a transposal of values. Where this transposal is not made the ideal partakes of a utopian character; where it is, it becomes practical. The adaptation of Christianity by the Roman Church is practical; the exact evangelical reading is utopian. Life is decadence. An idea carried out is an idea betrayed. Everything degenerates with practice—degenerates by merely living.

M. Canudo imagines an island overcome by a great cataclysm: earthquake and water-spout and all their consequences through which the majority of the inhabitants are lost and which, by the destruction of means of communication, cut it off from the outer world. On the return of normal climatic conditions a section of the surviving population attempts a social revival without government, church, legislators, plutocrats, or heads of any kind; the realization of theories propagated by certain citizens prior to the catastrophe which has destroyed the different representatives, offices and symbols inherent to State. The use of money and the practice of religion are equally discouraged. The population does its own work without employing auxiliaries, exchanging, instead of buying and selling, the produce of that work.

The town is without a “chief” but not without an influence, for Vincent Lariot, a purely heroic character, is the instigator of this opposition to all instigation. One of his former disciples, in the days of government the most ardent enemy of all hierarchy, puts himself at the head of the faction which builds the rival, the “stone” town.

“Often Vincent Lariot had smiled on discovering in his revolutionary follower the stigma of humanitarian tradition which in its exultation made furious leaps of anarchical and destructive determination. Louis Piart was a serf by birth and had climbed the rungs leading to power in the deep-rooted conviction that he was acting for the general welfare.”

“The fact was that life had recommenced at Bayan [the town of stone] on its former lines, with all liberty compressed within the narrow limits of each one’s welfare subservient to the welfare of all and the general welfare subservient to whosoever could climb on the docile heap of the population to plant into it the banner of his will like an explorer who, after long struggles and suffering, plants his home-country’s flag into the soil of the new-discovered land. The home of the domineering is their will. And the will of the domineering is often but an heroic glorification of their cupidity.”

Vincent Lariot’s theory as to the uselessness of “heads” in a newborn society was as follows:

“I soon learnt that all the uneasiness around me had its origin in my countrymen’s despair at not being chiefs, and in their chronic discontent at their condition. There was no active, male primevalness. Each one struggled to be something different from the environment into which he was born, to be “better” than his father. It occurred to no one that the happiest man, the best balanced, was, precisely, he who spent all his powers without wasting any and without overlooking any, he who knew not to wish to be other than he was. It was necessary to cure humanity of the incredible tendency to a head, of the incredible mania of climbing to chiefdom.

“Nature has marvellously helped me to realize this dream. I have seen one portion of humanity cured of this head-growth. It is not my work which fills me with joy, but nature’s. By a miraculous chance, though I had crammed myself with more reading than even my most studious companions, I had not caught the head-disease. On the contrary, for I saw all evil was there. And I understood that when some portion of humanity attains a degree of refinement such that its culture becomes the most remarkable symptom of its sickly condition it is ready to fall, and to throw itself into all the precipices of sentiment, precipices dug by itself to throw itself into. At that moment such a humanity must assemble its whole and most vital strength, must throw itself resolutely into the turning-point of its history and re-become simple and primeval. It may stay there for years or centuries, I know not. Then, gradually, refinement will make itself manifest in certain new centres, some intellects will create a new culture, all will be given instruction, each will be obliged to undergo a similar process of refinement, since the power to plane down grouped beings is stronger than all hierarchy and acts in spite of all opposition. And this humanity will reach a higher state of culture, each one will feed on thoughts, will be convinced that he can forge them himself, but none will give himself the trouble to forge any. There will be so many thoughts astray in the world that each one will repeat them to the other, like those Chinese books whose ideas are contained and expressed in the sacred books. . . . Words will stuff the mind and will be called politics. At that moment, in my opinion, decrepitude will have arrived and the existing generation must disappear and be replaced by a barbarous humanity, whose barbarity, however, will differ from the earlier stages on account of the experience the centuries bring.”

There is much naïveté and credulity in these theories, they are, in a word, somewhat juvenile, but they are not absurd. Not only governments but religions, too, are, in Lariot’s opinion, superfluous.

“For religion would teach a thousand things; it would convey instruction; it would explain all nature through sermons and books. While a humanity re-beginning life wants to explain

nothing; it wishes to create without caring for anything but its purely creative instinct. And when it starts explaining things it is again beginning to seriously suffer from swollen head."

This must be granted to be very good sense.

The life of the "free" society is described with sufficient verisimilitude to convey a picture to the reader's mind. All pomp, all ceremonies were avoided. The labour of hands was the total labour of the city, and all would have gone well for a longer time than it did but for three accidents, accidents of the kind which cripple all man's attempts at perfection. The first thing to remind Vincent Lariot of realities was the necessity to call the only surviving doctor on the island from the enemy city when a member of the population, which had declared war on all institutions, fell ill. The second dilemma presented itself when the inhabitants attempted to take upon themselves the punishment of a crime; while the betrayal by his Dalila-like sweetheart, who, acting as his rival under cover, worked to destroy his plans by bringing a mystical influence to bear upon the city, sends Lariot away from the island and makes an end of his Utopia and of the book. Magda Ramp defended her conduct thus:

"He [Lariot] does not know that his aim is absurd and that a chiefless town cannot exist, for, with the celestial hierarchies, God has given the sense of terrestrial hierarchies to mankind and in Saint Peter's presence Jesus Christ touched the first stone whence the apostle was to ascend to his spiritual government. He is already obscurely wading in the terror which grew up under each of his footsteps for his childish dream of a town without any kind of chief or hierarchy already engenders death and we are nearer rebellion than he imagines. . . . It is necessary that on the day of the debacle a real and imposing power be at hand to withhold all within its firm grasp. A law must be ready. That is why I must be there. The new church will withhold unruliness and provide them with a law. And to ensure absolute authority to the church he [Lariot] must be by my side ready to exercise his power, wisdom, and charm over the population of a town which he wanted to form and which is in part his work."

Thus the sense of realities is found in Magda Ramp the mystic, while the enemy of traditions and religion proves to be the most unpractical of idealists.

This book is not well written, but it is a logically constructed honest piece of work, with, as has been seen, a novel theme and idealism of purpose combined to shrewdness of judgment. M. Canudo is not intoxicated with theories and only rarely does he allow himself indulgencies of this description:

"The figure-head," said Vincent, "what shall it represent? It is the image of our soul. . . ."

"Of the soul of a humanity which is being re-born," added Delta, moved.

Were one told the author of this book was, for instance, a Scandinavian, one would be less surprised than to learn that he is of Mediterranean stock. Sense of form is lacking; the emphasis is sustained to the point of monotony; a cold-blooded enthusiasm, where the words are in contradiction with the feeling, pervades the narration, which partakes of the character of a sermon from a Protestant preacher. The style lacks beauty, indeed style is absent, a lacuna one does not expect from a Latin. But the book is a worthy book stirring interesting ideas philosophically exposed.

MURIEL CIOLKOWSKA

Peasant Pottery Shop

41 Devonshire Street, Theobald's Road, W.C.
(Close to Southampton Row)

Interesting British and Continental
: Peasant Pottery on sale :
Brightly coloured plaited felt Rugs.

MARIANNE MOORE

I HAVE before me a collection of poems. They have appeared for the most part in various American periodicals. And readers of THE EGOIST are familiar with certain of these curiously wrought patterns, these quaint turns of thought and concealed, half-playful ironies. They have puzzled over such poems as "To a Steam Roller" or "Diligence is to Magic as Progress is to Flight" and asked—what is this all about—"scarecrows of æsthetic procedure"—"weight-hardened creatures"—"prosaic necessities," etc. etc. They have read Miss Marianne Moore's poems again and again, and questioned, half in despair—is this a mere word-puzzle, or does it mean something?

Does it mean something?

"FEED ME, ALSO, RIVER GOD

"Lest by diminished vitality and abated
Vigilance, I become food for crocodiles—for that
quicksand
Of gluttony which is legion. It is there—close
at hand—
On either side
Of me. You remember the Israelites who said
in pride

"And stoutness of heart: 'The bricks are fallen down,
we will
Build with hewn stone, the sycamores are cut down,
we will change to
Cedars?' I am not ambitious to dress stones,
to renew
Forts, nor to match
My value in action, against their ability to catch

"Up with arrested prosperity. I am not like
Them, indefatigable, but if you are a god you will
Not discriminate against me. Yet—if you may fulfil
None but prayers dressed
As gifts in return for your own gifts—disregard
the request."

I think that it does mean something. And if Miss Moore is laughing at us, it is laughter that catches us, that holds, fascinates and half-paralyzes us, as light flashed from a very fine steel blade, wielded playfully, ironically, with all the fine shades of thrust and counter-thrust, with absolute surety and with absolute disdain. Yet with all the assurance of the perfect swordsman, the perfect technician, I like to imagine that there is as well something of the despair of the perfect artist—"see, you cannot know what I mean—exactly what I mean," she seems to say, half-pitying that the adversary is so dull—that we are so dull—"and I do not intend that you shall know—my sword is very much keener than your sword, my hand surer than your hand—but you shall not know that I know you are beaten."

Yet we are not always baffled. Miss Moore turns her perfect craft as the perfect craftsman must inevitably do, to some direct presentation of beauty, clear, cut in flowing lines, but so delicately that the very screen she carves seems meant to stand only in that serene palace of her own world of inspiration—frail, yet as all beautiful things are, absolutely hard—and destined to endure longer, far longer than the toppling sky-scrapers, and the world of shrapnel and machine-guns in which we live.

The clear, flawless tones of Miss Moore's poetry come like bell-notes, like notes from some palace-bell carved beneath the sea. Indeed I seem to place this very screen in some mermaid's palace.

"HE MADE THIS SCREEN

"Not of silver nor of coral,
But of weatherbeaten laurel.

"Here, he introduced a sea
Uniform like tapestry ;

"Here, a fig-tree ; there, a face ;
There, a dragon circling space—

"Designating here, a bower ;
There, a pointed passion-flower."

As I say the rhythm and the tones of her words come as through some "sea-change"—and surely there is "something rich and strange" in this "Talisman"—

"Under a splintered mast,
Torn from the ship and cast
Near her hull,

"A stumbling shepherd found
Embedded in the ground,
A sea-gull

"Of lapis lazuli,
A scarab of the sea,
With wings spread—

"Curling its coral feet,
Parting its beak to greet
Men long dead."

Miss Marianne Moore is an American. And I think in reading Miss Moore's poems we in England should be strengthened. We are torn in our ambitions, our desires are crushed, we hear from all sides that art is destined to a long period of abeyance, and that the reconstruction of Europe must take all the genius of the race. I do not believe that. There are others here in England who do not for one moment believe that beauty will be one whit bruised by all this turmoil and distress.

Miss Moore helps us. She is fighting in her country a battle against squalor and commercialism. We are all fighting the same battle. And we must strengthen each other in this one absolute bond—our devotion to the beautiful English language.

H. D.

FRENCH POEMS

A MES VERS INTUITIFS

(From *Le Double Bouquet* for July 1916)

Précisez-vous ce soir, beaux vers latents en moi,
Et puisque l'air actif ne semble s'exalter
Que pour mieux s'opposer à mon corps triste et froid
Que vos rythmes déniaient mon immobilité !

La plupart franchissant le temple des Printemps,
Ont voulu, par des mots larges, libres et souples,
Dérober ses trésors parfumés et tentants,
Et les ranger, ainsi que des ailes, par couples ;

Mais pour moi, dont la vie sensible se limite
A des jardins étroits, l'année forte et multiple
Ne me révèle rien, car par moi-même instruite,
Je reste de mes voix l'attentive disciple.

Et lorsque, suscités de mon inconscient,
Vous renouez en moi votre pensive ronde,
Transfigurant alors mon cœur d'officiant,
C'est vous, beaux vers soudains, qui m'apprenez le monde !

VIVIANE HERARD

DIALOGUES OF FONTENELLE

TRANSLATED BY EZRA POUND

IV

HOMER AND ÆSOP

HOMER. These fables which you have just told me cannot be too greatly admired. You must have needed great art to disguise the most important moral instruction in little stories like these, and to hide your thoughts in metaphor so precise and familiar.

Æsop. It is very pleasant to be praised for such art by you who understood it so deeply.

Homer. Me ? I never attempted it.

Æsop. What, did you not intend to conceal profound arcana in your great poems ?

Homer. Unfortunately, never at all.

Æsop. But in my time all the connoisseurs said so ; there was nothing in the *Iliad* or in the *Odyssey* to which they did not give the prettiest allegorical meanings. They claimed that all the secrets of theology and of physics, of ethics, and even of mathematics were wound into what you had written. Assuredly there was difficulty in getting them unwrapped : where one found a moral sense, another hit on a physical, but in the end they agreed that you had known everything and that you had said everything, if only one could well understand it.

Homer. Lying aside, I suspected that people would be found to understand subtleties where I had intended none. There is nothing like prophesying far distant matters and waiting the event, or like telling fables and awaiting the allegory.

Æsop. You must have been very daring to leave your readers to put the allegories into your poems ! Where would you have been had they taken them in a flat literal sense ?

Homer. If they had ! It would have incommoded me little.

Æsop. What ! The gods mangling each other, thundering Zeus in an assembly of divinities threatens Hera, the august, with a pummelling ; Mars, wounded by Diomed, howls, as you say, like nine or ten thousand men, and acts like none (for instead of tearing the Greeks asunder, he amuses himself complaining to Zeus of his wound), would all this have been good without allegory ?

Homer. Why not ? You think the human mind seeks only the truth : undeceive yourself. Human intelligence has great sympathy with the false. If you intend telling the truth, you do excellently well to veil it in fables, you render it far more pleasing. If you wish to tell fables they will please well enough without containing any truth whatsoever. Truth must borrow the face of falsehood to win good reception in the mind, but the false goes in quite well with its own face, for it so enters its birthplace and its habitual dwelling, the truth comes there as a stranger. I will tell you much more : if I had killed myself imagining allegorical fables, it might well have happened that most folk would have found the fables too probable, and so dispensed with the allegory ; as a matter of fact, and one which you ought to know, my gods, such as they are, without mysteries, have not been considered ridiculous.

Æsop. You shake me, I am terribly afraid that people will believe that beasts really talked as they do in my fables.

Homer. A not disagreeable fear !

Æsop. What ! if people believe that the gods held such conversations as you have ascribed to them, why shouldn't they believe that animals talked as I make them ?

Homer. That is different. Men would like to think the gods as foolish as themselves, but never the beasts as wise.

OVER DEVON HILLS

By JOHN COURNOS

I TRUDGE on and on,
 I drag myself upward.
 Here in the valley it is warm,
 The earth breathes heavily.
 I feel her breath and sweat,
 Her supine languor.
 Under my feet stones, mud.
 My pace is slow.
 Higher up, on the hills,
 A gale blows,
 The storm god is astride.
 I can hear his shout—
 Spirited and exhilarating,
 His beast's stamp and snort.
 Above my head the flying sea-mist,
 The hovering sea-gull—
 No larger than a butterfly
 Lower, its cry falls on my ear
 Like a stray note—shrill like an oboe's—
 From among horns and kettle-drums
 Also, a stray gust beats spray into my face,
 And refreshes me.
 To the right and left the moors,
 Black—desolate.
 The road threads upward—between,
 Like a washed-out, red-stained ribbon
 Across a woman's hair,
 Short, hard, curly, bedraggled hair,
 Washed and unkempt,
 All entangled.
 I trudge on and on,
 I drag myself upward,
 Step by step—panting,
 Retarded by stones, mud,
 And my own clothes—shackles.
 Straining toward the wind, the mist, the gulls.
 I bend my hot body forward,
 My feet press against the earth—
 Fulcrum-wise
 Only my head, reaching out upwards,
 Pulling away from the shoulders,
 Feels free—bathed in coolness.
 How heavy my feet are,
 Would that my feet had wings!
 The earth—a woman,
 Who sees herself forsaken,
 Has thrown her arms around my feet.
 What is earth's love to me
 When the heights call?
 I know it is useless,
 The storm god laughs,
 And the birds taunt me.
 I am a thing only half god, half bird.
 I know it is useless—
 Yet I press forward.
 My head is now in the mist,
 Wet with the mist,
 I cry with an unearthly, bird-like joy.
 How light and free my head feels,
 How heavy still my body!
 I sit down on a stone
 And think of the irony of the gods who made me,
 The gods who have given me the head—
 The aspiration of a god,
 The body and feet of a beast.
 Who knows the heart of the yearning centaur
 As he leaps up and down hills
 He can never forsake?

April 1916

PASSING PARIS

TÊTES COURONNÉES, by the Comte Robert de Montesquiou (Sansot, 3 fr. 50), is a collection of subtle and extremely close criticisms of some laurel-crowned celebrities and their works. Familiarity with Paris enthusiasms is necessary to thoroughly appreciate these essays where wit and irony are not the only ingredients. Their chief object is more far-reaching, and seeks to reveal the causes of the excessive popularity which seems to be the compensation offered by the present, thereby generously anticipating upon it, for the future's neglect. Elsewhere they divulge qualities in those to whom their contemporaries were unjust in an opposite sense in favour of an over-estimation of less significant or meritorious features.

The component elements of these studies were formed before the war, nevertheless their publication is not untimely. To-day, more than ever, the pressure of patriotic sentiment is untowardly brought to bear on public opinion. The confusion in our debts, and our manner of acquitting them, happens to be elucidated in a passage in the essay on the "national" Edmond Rostand:

"I would not have these qualifications imply that I am lacking in patriotism. . . . In how far is the national heritage of a magnificent artistic past and a rich literary present affected because M. Rostand's last masterpiece is less one, since M. Rostand's own production is not belittled thereby?"

And M. de Montesquiou enumerates some names which certainly no less contribute to the country's artistic estate, and to whom the nation owes gratitude for as excellent if not better reasons. But, since the war, certain writers have established, or are establishing, reputations for themselves based on all kinds of motives besides, or other than, purely artistic merit. Politics and passions—the former entail the latter—put an intruding thumb on the scale of popularity as they did during the Dreyfus case. France would do well to beware of falling into the trap again.

Comte Robert de Montesquiou is one of the most sure-footed critics in French literature at the present moment. A criticism such as he formulates is not a sentence glibly passed, it is an inquiry, an analysis where all aspects of a subject are kept in searching view and brought fairly into relief. An essay of exquisite tact and magnanimity is the one entitled "Saints d'Israël," which recalls a "patrician of fortune" in the person of the late Baron Adolphe de Rothschild, whose will embraced a summary of all this world's ills and which concluded with the wish, "I desire to be buried early so as to put no one out."

In the chapter entitled "l'Archange d'Or," while superbly doing him justice, he discovers imperfections in one so perfect as Signor Gabriele d'Annunzio, and in the one entitled "l'Ami du Voleur de Soleil" he credits with a heart and all the virtues which it may engender one who had only been credited with wealth, the "vulgar" miller, Groult, whose love of Turner and consequent blindness to all betrayal in his connexion had animated the derision of the would-be astute. M. de Montesquiou is the first to reveal the beauty of his passion regardless of the errors which enforce rather than enfeeble it. A passion such as this suffices to raise a man to the superior summits. M. Groult was so enamoured of his Turner, in whose falsest expressions he could be deceived, as a lover is deceived by the, to others, most obvious falsehoods, that he built himself a residence on a spot above the valley of the Seine whence the first of the Impressionists had taken some views. Credulity may be excused in so pure a worship.

* * * *

While I was writing my last notes a regrettable

loss occurred in the ranks of that journalism which is of the past, and of which the organ to which he chiefly contributed is one of the last survivals, in the person of M. Augustin Filon, a scholar especially versed in English literature, a sympathetic observer of English life, in which he participated as London correspondent in the days when such posts were worthily held, as also, previously, in his capacity as tutor to the Prince Imperial. I always read his admirable "*Rez de chaussée*" in the *Journal des Débats* with an interest such that I should feel guilty of ingratitude if I omitted to recall those pleasant moments here.

* * * *

With the death at the age of 79 of the painter and engraver Odilon Redon, the world of art loses one whose tradition ends, as it began, with him. Except among a very limited number the event will pass almost unnoticed for, in the current relations of things, Odilon Redon (of the predestined name!) was in one sense a *petit maître*; while in another he fell out of that comparative table of values which the world needs as compass to guide it when taking stock of merits. Unlike the average his genius had never reached a higher pitch than at the extreme close of his career. Gradually, logically, he had completely emancipated the craft of painting from its material aspects and this he attained by a glorification of design and colour finding its analogy in the work of the great Oriental masters. Another precedent suggests itself in that similarly supreme colourist, Turner, whose most lyrical moods also owe their immaterialistic character partly to, one might say, sleight of hand, and partly to an acute sense of light which is peculiarly the gift of visionaries. It was when rendering nature at its simplest, especially still-life, that the etherealism of Redon's interpretation made itself most eloquently and directly felt. The illustrations for Mallarmé and Poe, which obtained great notoriety some twenty years ago, impress their mysticism less because more obviously supernatural. Towards the end of his life, when his imagination had purged itself of hallucinations, it restricted itself to a narrower and more solidly based domain than at the time when, with several since officially recognized artists, he contributed to the exhibition of the Rose Croix group founded by M. Péladan.

* * * *

In *Le Double Bouquet*, which is publishing some magic pages on Shakespeare by M. André Suarès, M. André Germain calls attention, by some of his illuminating criticism as well as by the publication of her poems, to a new poet, Mlle. Viviane Hérard. Of her he says: "She is unlike her Greek sisters, Marie de Régnier and Renée Vivien. She has not been endowed with the sense of pure contours and the just avarice of language. Rather would she remind us of the marvellous Roumanian" (the Comtesse Mathieu de Noailles). "Her images have not the same violence. . . . Less barbarous and decadent, they do not assail our nerves, yet they torment us with a mysterious nostalgia and most feminine melancholy. . . . She dances indeed, like Madame de Noailles. Her bouncing strophes . . . hurry luminously on . . . and may perhaps reach the eternally-longed-for shores."

* * * *

In *Perdus* (Flammarion, 3 fr. 50), M. J.-H. Rosny ainé composes a fiction about three French aviators, who, having been obliged to land on German territory, escape capture. It is a kind of modern and reduced *Three Musketeers* containing duels and hairbreadth adventures in which the heroes are always successful in the end. It is not absolutely impossible since such entirely incredible feats as the escape of prisoners from German camps have actually occurred, though it is impossible to understand how these deceptions

could be carried out. Where it has been fact the devices have not been fully divulged; it is fiction's duty to complete the deficiency more or less satisfactorily to common sense, but in this case, at any rate, satisfactorily to that craving after excitement which in France finds, as a rule, a very inferior response. M. Rosny, whose principle seems to be that an author should be able to adapt himself to every literary requirement, has succeeded in turning out a book which, while being popular, does not disgrace him or his readers.

MURIEL CIOLKOWSKA

"SHAW —"

(From the Epilogue, *Fanny's First Play*)

By M. MONTAGU-NATHAN

FOR many many years George Bernard Shaw has been preaching Christianity, but—perhaps because until lately the name God has not occurred in his discourse—even his parishioners appear to have been unaware of his theme. Yet, almost from the beginning, the nature of his arguments, his method of working them out and the absolute earnestness that might have been discerned underlying the Shavian banter were plainly foretelling what has now happened. First came "A Little Gospel of Redemption for a Little Theatre." Its hero, a duke's brother, expiates his sin, committed when a master, by serving a parvenu. There was an odd thing about *Fanny's First Play*, namely, that its author neglected to demonstrate what should be the attitude of the Superman towards the slapper of his cheek. When Gilbey chides Juggins for behaving as though his brother were a duke he only beats the air, for that is in fact Juggins's real station in life, and the *dénouement* saves the high-born butler from any necessity of showing how easily one can conquer by gentleness. No one is really aggressive towards him. Even Bobby goes no further than to accuse his father's servant of not having "the manners of a gentleman in my set." It seemed plain, in short, that Shaw had not yet finished with Christianity. And when *Androcles* came, it was proven.

But Shaw had waited too long. The faltering hand that wrote that play might have belonged to a middle-aged man become as the old fool than whom no fool is a greater. For up to that time Shaw had remained young and had retained the mental vigour and the unbiased outlook of the vegetarian. Every attempt to discover who is, what he would term, his "flesher" having failed, one cannot be absolutely positive of the cause, but the effect consists in his having butchered a magnificent theme in portraying a Roman holiday.

In *Androcles* there is none of the destructive satire of France's *Procurator of Judaea*, but its fault lies in that Shaw is not content with his long-pursued constructive scheme of making people laugh at themselves, and thus build up a happiness that none can destroy, but descends with his dancing lion to court the guffaws of the gallery. In his long Preface on *The Prospects of Christianity* his lion dances again.

At times Shaw is deliciously flippant, but with a persiflage that will not offend that "small percentage of persons deeply interested in religion and concerned about their own souls and other people's . . ." the folk, in short, who agree with him that it is not the man (the small "m" is Shaw's) but the doctrine that matters. At others, both in the play and in the preface, he risks the easily incurred displeasure of the snippet-readers who have never inquired what he is talking about but know him only by these detached things he happens to have said. He protests against

giggling and invites his audience to laugh at buffoonery. Only the Philistine will object to his having called Christ an artist, and only the fanatic will feel hurt by the implication that the believer is drunk and the sceptic sober, while the fool alone—accompanied possibly by the conscientious objector—will take exception to the mild Nietzscheism in his exposition of the Divine character. This was inevitable in a man accustomed to examine every question, even those affecting himself, from all points of view.

Therein lies Britain's debt to Shaw. He has attempted to teach the beefy Broadbent to think impersonally. Impersonal argument is not a bad thing (and if done in private isn't bad for trade) so long as one doesn't *act* impersonally; and acting personally, or, in other words, according to one's temperament, is not reprehensible so long as, while doing so, one thinks impersonally. If you are inclined to be yourself, and some people are, it behoves you to know yourself and to refrain from specious excuses for the things your self impels you to do.

Shaw was on the fair way to drive this lesson home when he fell (I am open to correction) before a mutton chop. Consuming dead animals has not made him into a Broadbent, but digestive organs unaccustomed to the proper disposition of meat have won dominion over and deadened that magic brain. Telling us plainly the truths at which he has often previously hinted, he interprets them with horse, or rather, lion-play, and bushels of padding. With a pain in his stomach his wit fails him. For all that misplaced persiflage the reader might have pardoned him had he said, in foretelling future developments of communism, that it might one day be possible for a *Glasgow* (why a Manchester?) man to go up to London for a day without taking any money with him.

Thus he bungles, not all, but many things he touches. In *Androcles* he sets out to show us that Christ never meant us to receive a blow on the second cheek, but to disarm our adversary either by displaying an exquisite sense of humour or, like Dostoevsky's immortal Mwishkin, a baffling ingenuousness. But in the play this, and almost every point, is so prepared, so coquetted with that it is gathered by the audience without the shock that alone can compel the mind to retain its essential truth.

So it is with *Pygmalion*. It has not been given to every one to write, talk and debate convincingly about art and pugilism, drama and medicine, music and sociology, to consort, as he once did, with the artistic aristocracy of the future, to speak in plays both like "the man of the world" and like him "of the world to come," and who else in Britain perceived that the accent of "educated people" has so much in common with Cockney that a flower-girl may, with a little training in manners, represent a duchess, so long as the manners are remembered? All this too, was foretold when, in the Dramatic Essays, he rebuked Irving for his ridiculous vowels.

There is one idea absent from the *Preface to Pygmalion* that would perhaps have brought home the importance of the study of phonetics—it would have given point to, and established a connexion with, the earlier dissertation on Christianity's Prospects. Shaw says that his play "has made people aware that there are such people as phoneticians and that they are among the most important people in England . . ." but he does not say in what the importance of phonetics lies.

And to the present writer it seems to lie in that, once versed and practised, one can tell not where a parson was born, but the particular parish in Heaven he wishes to occupy, by the way he pronounces the name of the Deity. What a tale of Gards, Guds, Gords, Higgins could have made! He would have found one for each of the jarring sects.

TARR

By WYNDHAM LEWIS

PART III

CHAPTER II

BERTHA had soon been called on to dance vigorously without much intermission. In the convolutions of the valse, however, she matured a bold and new plan. She whirled and trotted with a preoccupied air.

Would Tarr hear of all this? She was alarmed, now it was done. Also she was cowed and sorry for her action at the thought of Lipmann and Van Bencke's attitude towards the Kreisler kissing. She undoubtedly must secure herself. The plan she hit on offered a "noble" rôle that she could not, in any circumstances, have resisted.

Her scheme was plain and clever. She would simply "tell the truth."

"She had recognized something distracting in Kreisler's life, the presence of crisis. *On an impulse*, she had offered him her sympathy. He had taken up her offer immediately in an astonishing and brutal manner. (One against him: two for her!) Such direct and lurid sympathy he claimed."

So she jogged out her strategies in exhilaration of the waltzes.

At this point of her story she would hint, by ambiguous hesitation, that she, in truth, had been ready even for this sacrifice: had made it, if her hearers wished! She would imply rather that from modesty—not wanting to appear *too* "noble"—she refrained from telling them.

It is true that for such a confession she had many precedents. Only a week ago Fräulein Van Bencke herself, inflating proudly her stout handsome person, had told them that while in Berlin she had allowed a young painter to kiss her: she believed "that the caresses of a pure woman would be helpful to him at that juncture of his life." But this had not been, it was to be supposed, in the middle of the street. No one had ever seen, or ever would see, the young painter in question, or the kiss.

Busy with these plans, Bertha had not much time to notice Kreisler's further deportment. She came across him occasionally, and keyed her solid face into an intimate flush and such mask as results from any sickly physical straining. "*Poor mensch!*"

Soltyk surprised one Anglo-Saxon partner after another with his wonderful English—unnecessarily, like the real thing. He went about surprising people in a cold, tireless way, exhibiting no signs of pleasure, except as much as was testified to by his action, merely.

Kreisler saw him with Anastasya only twice. On those occasions he could not, on the strength of Soltyk's attitude, pin him down as a rival. Yet he was thirsting for conventional figures. His endless dissatisfaction and depression could only be satisfied by *active* things, *unlike* itself. Soltyk's self-possessed and masterly signs of distinguished camaraderie depressed Kreisler very much. The Russian *had been there once* at the critical moment, and was, more distantly, an attribute of Volker. He did not like him. How it would satisfy him to dig his fingers into that flesh, and tear it like thick cloth! He was "for it"; he was going out. He was being helped off by things. Why did he not *shout*? He longed to *act*: the rusty machine had a thirst for action. His energies were repudiating their master.

Soltyk's analogies with Kreisler worked in the dark to some end of mutual destruction. The nuance of possibility Soltyk liked his friendships with

women to have, was a different affair to Kreisler's heady and thorough-going intrigues. But he liked his soul to be marked with little delicate wounds and wistfulnesses. He liked an understanding, a little melancholy, with a woman. They would just divine in each other possibilities of passion, that was yet too *lasse* and sad to rise to the winding of Love's horns that were heard, nevertheless, in a *décor Versaillesque* and Polonais. They were people who looked forward as others look back. They would say farewell to the future as most men gaze at the past. At the most they played the slight dawning and disappearing of passion, cutting, fastidiously, all the rest of the piece. So he was often found with women. Life had no lethargic intervals as with Kreisler. It at all times needed "expression" of such sort.

For Anastasya, Soltyk was one of her many impresarios, who helped her on to and off the scene of life. He bored her usually, but they had something equivalent to pleasant business relations. She appreciated him as an Impresario.

These things arraying themselves in reality after this ordinary unexciting fashion, conventional figures of drama lacked. Kreisler was in the wrong company. But he conformed for the sake of the Invisible Audience haunting life. He emulated the matter-of-factness and aplomb that impressed him in the others *à outrance*. So much was this so that the Audience took some time to notice him, the vein of scandal running through the performance.

In the conservatory he established his headquarters.

From there he issued forth on various errands. All his errands showed the gusto of the logic of his personality, and not despair. He might have been enjoying himself. He invented outrage that was natural to him, and enjoyed slightly the licence and scope of his indifference.

He, for instance, at the first sortie, noticed a rather congested, hot, and spectacled young woman, rather constantly fluttered over her womanhood, but overworked by her conscience, her features set by duty. He succeeded in getting her for a partner, and soon won her confidence by his scrupulous German politeness. He then, while marking time in a crush, disengaged his hand, and appeared to wish to alter the lie of her bosom, very apologetically.

"Excuse me! It's awkward. More to the left—so! Clumsy things and women are so proud of them! (No: I'm sure you're not!) No. Let it hang to the left!" The young lady, very red, and snorting almost in his face, left him brusquely.

Several young women, and notably a flapper, radiant with heavy inexperience and loaded with bristling bronze curls, he lured into the conservatory. They all came out with scarlet faces.

For the first hour he paid no attention to Anastasya, but prosecuted his antics as though he had forgotten all about her. He knew she was there and left her alone, even in thought, in a grim spirit. He hid coquettishly behind his solemn laughter-in-action, the pleasant veil of his hysteria.

He had become generally noticed in the room, although there were a great many people present. Fräulein Lipmann hesitated. She thought at length that he was mad. In speaking to him and getting him removed, she feared a scandalous scene.

As he appeared on the threshold of the conservatory an expectant or anxious tremor invaded several backs. But he just stalked round this time on a tour of inspection, as though to see that all was going along as it should. He stared heavily and significantly at those young ladies who had been his partners, when he came across them. One he stopped in front of and gazed at severely. He then returned to the conservatory.

In his deck chair, his head stretched back, glasses

horizontal and facing the ceiling, he considered the graceless Hamlet that he was.

"Go to a nunnery, Widow!"

He should have been saying that to his Ophelia.

Why did he not go to her? Contact was the essential thing, but so difficult to bring about.

He must make her angry, insult her: that would bare her soul. Then he would spit on it. Then he really could insult her. But Soltyk offered a conventional target for violence. Soltyk was evading him with his contempt. Soltyk! What should be done with him? Why (a prolonged and stormily rising "why"), there was no difficulty about that. He got up from his chair, and walked deliberately and quickly into the central room. But Soltyk was nowhere to be seen.

The dancers were circling rapidly past with athletic elation, talking in the way people talk when they are working. Their intelligences floated and flew above the waves of the valse, but with frequent drenchings, as it were, and cessations. The natural strangeness for him of all these English people together did not arrest his mind or lead him to observation, but yet got a little in the way. Couple followed couple, the noise of their feet, or dress, for a moment queerly distinct and near above the rest, as though a yard or two of quiet surrounded Kreisler. They came into this area for a moment, everything distinct and clear cut, and then went out again. Each new pair of dancers seemed coming straight for him. Their voices were loud for a moment. A hole was cut out of the general noise, as it were opening a passage into it. Each new face was a hallucination of separate energy, seeming very distant, laughs, words, movements. They were like trunkless, living heads rolling and bobbing past, a sea of them. The two or three instruments behind the screen of palms produced the necessary measures to keep this throng of people careering, like a spoon stirring in a saucepan. It stirred and stirred and they jerked and huddled insipidly round and round.

Kreisler was drawn up at the first door for a minute. He was just taking a step forward to work his way round to the next, when he caught sight of Anastasya dancing with (he supposed) some Englishman.

He stopped, paralysed by her appearance. This reality intercepted the course of his imaginary life (of which his pursuit of Soltyk was a portion). He stood like somebody surprised in a questionable act. He had not reckoned on being met by her before his present errand was finished. The next moment he was furious at this interference; at her having the power to draw him up. This imaginary life *should* grow. Hell and Heaven! he was not going to stop there looking at her. She and her partner had drawn up for a moment just in his way, being stopped by other couples marking time. She had not seen him. He took her partner roughly by the arm, pushing him against her, hustling him, fixing him with his eye. He passed beyond them then, through the passage he had made. His blood was flooding him, and making him expand and sink like a Russian dancer. The young man handled in this manner, shy and unprompt, stared after Kreisler with a "What the devil!" People are seldom so rude in England. Preparation for outbursts of potential rudeness form a part of the training of a German. Kreisler also, without apology, but as if waiting for more vigorous expostulation, was also looking back, while he stepped slowly along the wall towards a door beyond, the one leading to the refreshment-room.

Anastasya freed herself at once from her partner, and pale and frowning (but as though waiting) was looking after Kreisler curiously. She would have liked him to stop. He had done something strange and was as suddenly going away. That was unsatisfactory. They looked at each other blankly. He showed no sign of stopping: she just stared. Sud-

denly it was comic. She burst out laughing. But they had clashed, like people in the dance, and were both disappearing from each other again, the shock hardly over. The *contact* had been brought about. He was still as surprised at his action, which had been done "in a moment," as she was. Anastasya felt, too, in what way this had been *contact*. She felt his hand on her arm as though it had been she he had seized. This rough figure disappeared in the doorway, as incapable of explaining anything. She shivered nervously as she grasped her partner's arm again, at this merely physical *contact*. "What's the matter with that chap?" her partner asked, conscious of a lameness, but of something queer going on. This question had been asked a few minutes before elsewhere. "Herr Kreisler is behaving very strangely. Do you think he's been drinking?" Fräulein Lipmann had asked Eckhart.

Eckhart was a little drunk himself. He took a very decided view of Kreisler's case.

"Comme toute la Pologne! As drunk as the whole of Poland!" he affirmed. But he only gave it as an opinion, adding no sign of particular indignation. He was beaming with greedy generosity at his great Amoureuse.

"Ah! here he comes again!" said Fräulein Lipmann at the door. (It was when Kreisler had started up in search of Soltyk).

So Kreisler disappeared in the doorway. He passed through the refreshment-room. In a small room beyond he sat down by an open window.

Anastasya had at last got into line with him. She had been startled, awakened, and had also laughed. This was an exact and complete response to Kreisler at the present. Something difficult to understand and which should have been alarming for a woman, the feel of the first tugs of the maelstrom he was producing and conducting all on his own, and which required her for its heart: and then laughter, necessarily, once one was in that atmosphere, like laughing gas, with its gusty tickling.

But this was not how Kreisler felt about it. He was boiling and raging. That laugh had driven him foaming, fugitive and confused, into the nearest chair. He could not turn round and retaliate at the time. The door being in front of him, he vanished as Mephistopheles might sink with suddenness into the floor, at the receipt of some affront, to some sulphurous regions beneath, in a second; come to a stop alone, upright; stick his fingers in his mouth, nearly biting them in two, his eyes staring: so stand stock still, breathless and haggard for some minutes: then shoot up again, head foremost, in some other direction, like some darting and skulking fish, to the face of the earth. He did not even realize that the famous *contact* was established, so furious was he. He would go and strike her across the mouth, spit in her face, kiss her in the middle of the dance, where the laugh had been! Yet he didn't move, but sat on staring in front of him, quite forgetful where he was and how long he had sat there, in the midst of a hot riot of thoughts.

He suddenly sat up and looked round, like a man who has been asleep and for whom work is waiting; got up with certain hesitation, and again made for the door. Well, life and work (*his* business) must be proceeded with all the same. He glanced reflectively and solemnly about, and perceived the Widow talking to a little reddish Englishman.

"May I take the Widow away for a little?" he asked her companion.

He always addressed her as "Widow": he began all his discourses with a solemn "Widow!" occasionally alternating it with "*Derelict!*" But this, all uttered in a jumbled tongue, lost some of its significance.

The little Englishman on being addressed gave the English equivalent of a jump—a sudden moving of his body and shuffling of his feet, still looking at the

floor, where he had cast his eyes as Kreisler approached.

"What? I——"

"Widow! permit me——" said Kreisler.

Manipulating her with a leisurely gusto, he circled into the dance.

The band was playing the "Merry Widow" valse.

"*Merry Widow!*" he said smilingly to his partner.

"Yes, *Merry Widow!*" shaking his head at her.

The music seemed fumbling in a confused mass of memory, but finding nothing definite. All it managed to bring to light was a small cheap photograph, taken at a Bauern Bal, with a flat German student's cap. The man remained just his photograph. Their hostess also was dancing. Kreisler noted her with a wink of recognition. Dancing very slowly, almost mournfully, he and his partner bumped into her each time as they passed. The Widow felt the impact, but it was only at the third round that she perceived the method and intention inducing these bumps. She realized they were going to collide with the other lady. The collision could not be avoided. But she shrank away, made herself as small and soft as possible, bumped gently and apologized over her shoulder, with a smile and screwing up of the eyes, full of meaning. At the fourth turn of the room, however, Kreisler having increased her speed sensibly, she was on her guard, and in fact already suggesting that she should be taken back to her seat. He pretended to be giving their hostess a wide berth this time, but suddenly and gently swerved, and bore down upon her. The Widow veered frantically, took a false step, tripped on her dress, tearing it, and fell to the ground. They caused a circular undulating commotion throughout the neighbouring dancers, like a stone falling in a pond. Several people bent down to help Mrs. Bevelage—Kreisler's assistance was angrily rejected. His partner scrambled to her feet and went to the nearest chair, followed by one or two people.

"Who is he?"

"He's drunk."

"What happened?"

"He ought to be turned out!" people said who had seen the accident.

Kreisler regained the conservatory with great dignity.

But now Fräulein Lippmann, alone, appeared before him as he lay stretched in his chair, and said in a tight, breaking voice:

"I think, Herr Kreisler, you would do well now, as you have done nothing all the evening but render yourself objectionable, to relieve us of your company. I don't know whether you're drunk. I hope you are, for——"

"You hope I'm drunk, Fräulein?" he asked in an astonished voice.

He remained lolling at full length.

"A lady I was dancing with fell over, owing entirely to her own clumsiness and intractability—but perhaps she was drunk; I didn't think of that."

"So you're not going?"

"Certainly, Fräulein—when you go! We'll go together."

"Schauster!" Hurling hotly this epithet at him—her breath had risen many degrees in temperature at its passage, and her breast heaved in dashing it out (as though, in fact, the word "*schauster*" had been the living thing, and she were emptying her breast of it violently), she left the room. His last exploit had been accomplished in a half disillusioned state. He merely went on farcing because he could think of nothing else to do. Anastasya's laughter had upset and ended everything of his "imaginary life." He told himself now that he *hated* her. "Ich hasse dich! Ich hasse dich!" he hissed over to himself, enjoying the wind of the "*hasse*" in his moustaches. But (there was no doubt about it) the laugh had crushed him. Ridiculous and hateful

had been his goal. But now that he had succeeded he thought chiefly in the latter affair, he was overwhelmed. His vanity was wounded terribly. In laughing at him she had puffed out and transformed in an extraordinary way, also, his infatuation. For the first time since he had first set eyes on her he realized her sex. His sensuality had been directly stirred. He wanted to kiss her now. He must get his mouth on hers—he must revel in the laugh, where it grew! She was *néfaste*. She was in fact evidently *the devil*.

So his *idée fixe* having suddenly taken body and acquired flesh, now allied to his senses, the vibration became more definitely alarming. He began thinking about her with a slow moistening of the lips. "I shall possess her!" he said to himself, seeing himself in the rôle of the old Berserker warrior, ravening and irresistible. The use of the word *shall* in that way was enough.

But this *infernal* dance! With the advent of the *real* feeling all the artificial ones flew or diminished at once. He was no longer romantically "desperate," but bored with his useless position there. All his attention was now concentrated on a practical issue, that of the "possession" of Anastasya.

He was tired as though he had been dancing the whole evening. Getting up, throwing his cigarette away; he even dusted his coat a little with his hand. He then, not being able to get at the white patch on the shoulder, took it off and shook it. A large grey handkerchief was used to flick his boots with.

"So!" he grunted, smartly shooting on his coat.

The central room, when he got into it, appeared a different place. People were standing about and waiting for the next tune. It had been completely changed by his novel and material feeling for Anastasya. Everything, for a second time, was quite ordinary, but *not* electrically ordinary, almost hushed, this time. He had become a practical man, surrounded by facts. But he was much more worried and tired than at the beginning of the evening.

To get away was his immediate thought. But he felt hungry. He went into the refreshment-room. On the same side as the door, a couple of feet to the right, was a couch. The trestle-bar with the refreshments ran the length of the opposite wall. The room was quiet and almost empty. Out of the tail of his eye, as he entered, he became conscious of something. He turned towards the couch. Soltyk and Anastasya were sitting there, and looking at him with the abrupt embarrassment people show when an absentee under discussion suddenly appears. He flushed and was about to turn back to the door. But he flushed still more next moment, at thought of his hesitation. This humiliating full-stop beneath their eyes must be wiped out, anyhow. He walked on steadily to the bar.

A shy consciousness of his physique beset him. He felt again an outcast—of an inferior class, socially. He must not show this. He must be leisurely.

He *was* leisurely. He thought when he stretched his hand out to take his cup of coffee that it would never reach it. Reduced to posing nude for Anastasya and the Russian was the result of the evening! Scores of little sensations, like troublesome imps, herded airily behind him. They tickled him with impalpable fingers.

He munched sandwiches without the faintest sense of their taste. Anastasya's eyes were scourging him. He felt like a martyr. Suddenly conscious of an awkwardness in his legs, he changed his position. His arms were ludicrously disabled. The sensation of standing neck deep in horrid filth beset him. Compelled to remain in soaking wet clothes and unable to change them, his body gradually drying them, would have been a similar discomfort. The noise of the dancing began again, filled the room. This purified things somewhat. He got red in the

face as though with a gigantic effort, but went on staring in front of him.

His anger kept rising. He stood there deliberately longer; in fact on and on, almost in the same position. She should wait his pleasure till he liked to turn round, and—then. He allowed her laughter to accumulate on his back, like a coat of mud. In his illogical vision he felt her there behind him laughing and laughing interminably. Had he gone straight up to her, in a moment of passion, both disembodied as it were, anything in the shape of objective observation disappearing, he could have avoided this scrutiny. He had preferred to plank himself there in front of her, inevitably ridiculous, a mark for that laugh of hers. Soltyk was sharing it. More and more *his* laughter became intolerable. The traditional solution again suggested itself. Laugh! Laugh! He would stand there letting the debt grow, letting them gorge themselves on his back. The attendant behind the bar began observing him with severe curiosity. He had stood in almost the same position for five minutes and kept staring darkly past her, very red in the face. Then suddenly a laugh burst out behind him—a blow, full of insult, in his ears—and he nearly jumped off the ground. After his long immobility the jump was of the last drollery. His fists clenched, his face emptied of every drop of colour, in the mere action he had almost knocked a man, standing beside him, over. The laugh, for him, had risen with tropic suddenness, a simoom of intolerable offence. It had carried him off his legs, or whirled him round rather, in a second. A young English girl, already terrified at Kreisler's appearance, and a man, almost as much so, stood open-mouthed in front of him. As to Anastasya and Soltyk, they had very completely disappeared, long before, in all probability.

To find that he had been struggling and perspiring in the grasp of a shadow was a fresh offence, merely for the count of the absentees. Obviously, shadow or not, there or not there, it was they. He felt this a little; but they had disappeared into the *Ewigkeit* for the moment. He had been again beating the air. This should have been a climax, of blows, words, definite things. But things remained vague. The turmoil of the evening remained his, the solid part of it, unshared by anybody else. He smiled, rather hideously and menacingly, at the two English people near him, and walked away. He was not going in search of Anastasya. They would be met somewhere or other, no doubt. All he wanted now was to get away from the English club as soon as possible.

While he was making towards the vestibule he was confronted again with Fräulein Lipmann. "Herr Kreisler, I wish to speak to you," he heard her say.

"Go to the devil!" he answered without hesitation or softness.

"Besotted fool! if you don't go at once, I'll get—"

Turning on her like lightning, with exasperation perfectly meeting hers, his right hand threatening, quickly raised towards his left shoulder, he shouted:

"Lasse mich doch—gemeines altes sau!"

The hissing, thunderous explosion was the last thing in vocal virulence. The muscles all seemed gathered up at his ears like reins, and the flesh tightened and white round his mouth.

Fräulein Lipmann took several steps back. Kreisler with equal quickness turned away, rapped on the counter, while the attendant looked for his hat, and left the Club. Fräulein Lippmann was left with the heavy, unforgettable word "sow" deposited in her boiling spirit, that, boil as it might, would hardly reduce this word to tenderness or digestibility.

(To be continued)

NOTES ON MODERN GERMAN POETRY

By ALEC W. G. RANDALL

VII. MAX DAUTHENDEY AND OTHERS

MAX DAUTHENDEY is a poet whose artistic evolution is particularly well worth studying. In my last note I mentioned him as a member of the "Mystiker" school of modern German poets, together with Mombert and one or two less important people. That was a mere convenience of classification, which took no account of subsequent developments in the art of both poets. Mombert and Dauthendey, so to speak, began together in one school, the school of mysticism; but as each moved in the world, important divergences gradually showed themselves. Mombert's first poems were frequently Imagist, at least they were that in intention. Then philosophical or non-poetical considerations intruded themselves until Mombert became—not to put it too unkindly—a rather chaotic rhetorician. Dauthendey, on the other hand, began with a good deal of mannerism and obscurity, but soon worked his way to clearness. That, very roughly put, is the difference between the two poets.

Dauthendey has been such a prolific writer that it is impossible to give any complete characterization of him within the limits of this note. He has written dramas—e.g. *Glück* (Happiness)—epics—e.g. *Die Schwarze Sonne* (The Black Sun), one or two novels, innumerable short stories and a very large number of lyrics. Just before the outbreak of war, and later, he seems to have given himself up to short stories. But of his poetical work this one generalization may be made: that he was not a "cosmic" impressionist such as Mombert was. Outwardly he may seem to be—one of his best-known books is entitled *Die geflügelte Erde* (The Winged Earth), which is an attempt to embrace the world in a series of poems—but in all essentials he is far more precise, clearer cut, more definite than Mombert. Here is one of his poems:

Our eyes are so empty,
Our kisses so weary,
We weep and are silent,
Our hearts beat no more . . .
Down there, by the sea, the swallows are gathering,
The swallows depart,
And later return—
But we nevermore.

And here is another from the volume entitled *Reliquien*, which was published in 1899:

Past the sweet lilac clover-field,
Past to the twin pines with the bench in between,
There you may hear the music of the fjord,
Gentle, like the sound of a flute,
And cut out blue there, reedy-green . . .
Give me your hand;
The twin pines stand so still;
I will tell you
What the stillness wishes to conceal . . .
Give me your hand—
And in your hand your heart.

Of the other poets mentioned together with Mombert and Dauthendey, Franz Evers is a rather untelligible Theosophist poet who may be neglected; Scheerhart is a fantastic, grotesque, satirical writer who has been highly praised but without sufficient reason. There remains Christian Morgenstern, well known as the standard German translator of Ibsen and Strindberg, and later as a satirist and ironical poet. Morgenstern has written serious verse—e.g. *Sommer* (1899) but since the publication of *Galgenlieder* (1905) he has had a great reputation as a grotesque poet and parodist. Occasionally he reminds one of Otto

Julius Bierbaum, at other times of Edward Lear; more often he is simply himself. The hero of his two best-known satirical books is a certain Herr Palmström, in whom pomposity, conceit, submission to convention and all the tedious virtues of the ordinary brainless but correct member of good society are cleverly exposed and ridiculed. I find it impossible to give any satisfactory English version of Morgenstern's work, so I add a representative poem in the original German:

DAS BÖHMISCHE DORF

Palmström reist mit einem Herrn von Korf
in ein sogenanntes Böhmisches Dorf.

Unverständlich bleibt ihm alles dort,
von dem ersten bis zum letzten Wort.

Auch von Korf (der nur des Reimes wegen
ihn begleitet) ist um Rat verlegen.

Doch just dieses macht ihn blass vor Glück;
Tiefentzückt kehrt unser Freund zurück.

Und er schreibt in seine Wochenkronik,
Wieder ein Erlebnis, voll von Honig.

AMERICAN POEMS

OLD AGE

IN me is a little painted square
Bordered by old shops, with gaudy awnings.
And before the shops sit smoking, open-
bloused old men,
Drinking sunlight.
The old men are my thoughts:
And I come to them each evening, in a creaking cart,
And quietly unload supplies.
We fill slim pipes and chat,
And inhale scents from pale flowers in the centre of
the little square. . . .
Strong men, tinkling women, and dripping, squealing
children
Stroll past us, or into the shops.
They greet the shopkeepers, and touch their hats or
foreheads to me. . . .
Some evening I shall not return to my people:
I shall be an old man, older than my grizzly shop-
keepers.
Then let me slay myself and the fragrant village in
me,
With swift hands.

MAXWELL BODENHEIM

THE DAGGER

LIFE is a dagger
With no hilt.
As you tighten your arms about me
You only drive the two ends deeper
Into your heart
And mine.

THE JEST

SOME one put a moon in the sky
To tempt me.
I reach my hands up stealthily for it in the dark;
But there are eyes watching,
And when I draw back in fear,
The eyes twinkle.

FEARS

WHEN any fear went past
We turned for safety to each other's arms;
You laid your lips on mine and held them there
Till all the pulses in our bodies woke
And called and answered, and their clamour covered
Its heavy tread.

MARY CAROLYN DAVIES

APPEAL

FROM worlds unvisited to where I lie,
 Folded in graveyard green,
 Your voice assails me,
 Like the cries of night-hawks
 Ripping the evening—
 Tearing apart the petals
 Of a folded flower.
 Or cruelly sweet and far and fair
 So that I tremble and grow faint with longing
 In the harsh grasses.

Teach me then—
 Since you desire me—
 How I may build a bridge to you.
 How, from these pebbles,
 Such as children play with— ?
 All the boats are taken ;
 I hear the water sucking
 At the rotten wood of the pier.

CLARA SHANAFELT

BRIDAL IN PHILISTIA

THE passing of the recent Liquor Control Act has emphasized an obscured fact, namely, that the State has no concern with Ideals as such. The State adopts reforms suggested by Idealists but not for the reason that prompted the Idealists to devise the reform. Temperance reformers have for decades been extolling the boon of extensive sobriety, and again and again the reproach has been flung at them that "You cannot make men sober by Act of Parliament." But lo, the miracle has happened, for to a certain extent men are in fact made sober by Act of Parliament.

Why is it then that the spectacle of the State taking action does not seem inspiring? The glamour of the Ideal that hovered alluringly in front of us has vanished, and we are left with something excessively drab and sombre. The State and the Idealist approach reforms from quite a different standpoint—the State being concerned only for itself and its own business. Its business is to keep up a rich stream of active human beings, and it is quite indifferent how this end is attained and whether those human beings have a good time or not. If sobriety is a means to that end—well and good, sobriety shall be enforced. Temperance Reformers wanted greater happiness for all men and the State wanted sober soldiers.

Simple and obvious as this seems, the difference in objective is significant. Idealist and Statesman live in two different worlds which exist side by side and only seldom unite, and their mating results in some of the inevitable disillusionment attendant on all mating, and might be called a Bridal in Philistia.

All reformers waste time and energy in fulminating against a State for its want of justice, its tyrannies, its prevarications, not understanding that by its very nature the State has no direct concern at all with abstract ideals, that these are to it an incomprehensible language. Ruskin said that the wealth of a nation consisted in the number of happy and healthy people it could muster. The truth of the matter is that a State finds a large proportion of healthy and happy people useful. That it also finds a certain proportion of unhappy, unhealthy people useful too is a dark secret.

Instinct is paramount and if the Idealist wishes to reduce the number of unhappy people in the world by legislation he must resort to a *ruse*. He must convince the State that it will itself gain by the proposed legislative reforms, that its own activity will become more vigorous thereby. He must pretend to an interest in this although actually he may

not care a rap about more vigorous instinctive life, his sole concern being the happiness of the individual. So long as drunkenness did not appear a national menace the State introduced no extensive Temperance legislation. Directly, however, drunkenness became a menace to its own strength, it interfered at once. For a moment the State and the Idealist desired the same thing, although the fact that they had different ends in view was obscured. The stumbling-block in the way of Socialist Legislation on a large scale is that at present the State sees no benefit to be derived from it. Accumulation of wealth in the hands of the few, though it may cause an enormous amount of suffering—against which the sensitive Idealists recoil in horror—does not impede racial existence, at least not the comparatively crude racial existence we know now. That is what a Conservative means when he tells you that "the time is hardly ripe for this or that reform." Directly it can be shown that a more diffused distribution of wealth will increase the intenseness of instinctive life, the State will tumble hot haste into all manner of Socialist legislation.

The "good" or "evil" intentions of the Capitalist class are not of much count. The Capitalist class is the instrument of instinct rather than designedly predatory. This is no doubt an ignominious position to be in. It would be more dignified to make a stand for their idealistic Ego, letting it goad them on to lead a double life and to create another environment of mental imagings.

It is a common lament that office spoils a man, and it certainly does so in a sense. Once having entered the door of a Government office, he becomes an instrument of the instinctive forces which have no interest in the ideals or the imagings of the Ego except as occasional useful instruments. This Ego which has created ideals is something other than the instincts and is for ever ill at ease, desiring to create a world to its own liking.

The State might be compared to a queen-bee who regards with utter scorn all the thinkers, poets, artists, and religious men as mere drones, leading apparently an intense life of their own but of no use to her. But the hour strikes when she senses that the life of the hive is in danger and her own strength has reached its climax. She must renew it and repeople the hive. She looks round in frantic despair and turns to those she has hitherto despised—to the drones, the makers of ideas, to quicken and fertilize her. The drone is still to her a strange incomprehensible being but he serves her purpose. Only the drone who can fly far enough from the obscurity of *la vie cérébrale* and become attenuated, simple and explicit—offer in fact a realizable ideal, like Temperance for instance—is of any use to her.

The Idealist in rapture rushes to the union with instinctive life, blind to the fact that in the act of union he will perish as a dazzling projection of the mind and become a drab realized ideal, belonging now to a different world. This bridal is strange and sinister, foreboding vast sombre broods that change slowly—very slowly and not according to anticipation.

HONOR M. PULLEY

POÈMES

Par ANDRÉ SPIRE

Author of "Versets," "Vers les Routes Absurdes," etc.

A little book of unpublished poems written just before and during the war. M. Spire has been in Nancy, near the firing-line, since August 1914

PUBLISHED BY THE EGOIST

PRICE 6d NET

POSTAGE 1d

The Little Review

LITERATURE, DRAMA, MUSIC, ART

MARGARET C. ANDERSON, Editor

The new monthly that has been called "the most unique journal in existence."

THE LITTLE REVIEW is a magazine that believes in Life for Art's sake, in the Individual rather than in Incomplete People, in an Age of Imagination rather than of Reasonableness; a magazine interested in Past, Present, and Future, but particularly in the New Hellenism; a magazine written for Intelligent People who can Feel, whose philosophy is Applied Anarchism, whose policy is a Will to Splendour of Life, and whose function is—to express itself.

One Year, U.S.A., \$1.50; Canada, \$1.65; Great Britain, 7/-

THE LITTLE REVIEW

917 Fine Arts Building, Chicago, U.S.A.

Enclosed find Seven Shillings for one year's subscription, beginning.....

Name.....

Address.....

THE DRAMA

FOR MAY OFFERS TWO PLAYS BY
REMY DE GOURMONT

whose dramatic work has never been accessible in English. The translation has been made by the Imagist poet,

RICHARD ALDINGTON

who contributes also a skilful critique of de Gourmont's work. The plays are printed by an authorization given a few weeks before the playwright's death.

Alexander Bakshy, a Russian Art and Dramatic Critic, writes on

"THE CINEMATOGRAPH AS ART"

Mr. Charles Lemmi contributes a brilliant discussion of "THE ITALIAN STAGE OF TO-DAY" an attempt to analyse and explain the forces in the present-day Italian theatre.

The Hull House Players, an organization of more than local fame, is the subject of a brief history by the founder and director, Laura Dainty Pelham.

Many other articles on the current problems of the drama, reviews, and bibliographies complete the number.

THE DRAMA QUARTERLY

736 MARQUETTE BUILDING, CHICAGO

THREE DOLLARS PER YEAR
TWO DOLLARS PER YEAR TO MEMBERS
OF THE DRAMA LEAGUE OF AMERICA
SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS PER COPY

POETRY

A
Magazine
of
Verse

Edited by HARRIET MONROE

One Year (12 Numbers) U.S.A. \$1.50;
Canada, \$1.65; Great Britain, 7/-

"The Best Magazine—by far—in the English language."—PADRAIC COLUM.

Poetry publishes the best verse now being written in English, and its prose section contains brief articles on subjects connected with the art, also reviews of the new verse.

It has introduced more new poets of importance than all the other American magazines combined, besides publishing the work of poets already distinguished.

Subscribe at once—the April number began Vol. VII.

POETRY, 543 CASS STREET, CHICAGO, U.S.A.

Enclosed find Seven Shillings for one year's subscription, beginning.....

Name.....

Address.....

POETS' TRANSLATION SERIES

1. (Ready) The complete poems (25) of Anyte of Tegea, now brought together in English for the first time: translated by Richard Aldington. (8 pages) 2d. net (3d. post free).
2. (Ready) An entirely new version of the poems and new fragments, together with the more important of the old fragments, of Sappho: translated by Edward Storer. (12 pages) 4d. net (5d. post free).
3. (Ready) Choruses from the "Iphigenia in Aulis" of Euripides: translated by H. D. 6d. net (7d. post free).
4. (Ready) A choice of the Latin poetry of the Italian Renaissance, many now translated for the first time, by Richard Aldington. 4d. net (5d. post free).
5. (Ready) The Poems of Leonidas of Tarentum, now collected—and many translated for the first time in English—by James Whitall. 6d. net (7d. post free).
6. (Ready) The "Mosella" of Ausonius, translated by F. S. Flint. 6d. net (7d. post free).

All the pamphlets—except the first—are twelve to twenty-eight pages long and cost 4d. or 6d. net; 5d. or 7d. post free. The series of six 2s. net post free.

To be obtained from: The Egoist, Oakley House, Bloomsbury Street, W.C.

A Second Series will start in September.

EDITORIAL

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

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION.

Yearly, 6/6; U.S.A. \$1.60.
Six months, 3/3; U.S.A. \$.80.
Three months, 1/9; U.S.A. \$.40.
Single copies 7d., post free to all countries.
Cheques, postal and money orders, etc., should be payable to THE NEW FREEWOMAN, LTD., and crossed "Parr's Bank, Bloomsbury Branch."

ADVERTISEMENT RATES.

Per page £4. Quarter page £1 1s. 0d. Per inch single column, 4s. Half rates after first insertion. All advertisements must be prepaid.