IN MEMORY OF HENRY JAMES

By T. S. Eliot

HENRY JAMES has been dead for some time. The current of English literature was not appreciably altered by his work during his lifetime; and James will probably continue to be regarded as the extraordinarily clever but negligible curiosity. The current hardly matters; it hardly matters that very few people will read James. The "influence" of James hardly matters: to be influenced by a writer is to have a chance inspiration from him; or to take what one wants; or to see things one has overlooked; there will always be a few intelligent people to understand James, and to be understood by a few intelligent people is all the influence a man requires. What matters least of all is his place in such a Lord Mayor's show as Mr. Chesterton's procession of Victorian Literature. The point to be made is that James has an importance which has nothing to do with what came before him or what may happen after him; an importance which has been overlooked on both sides of the Atlantic.

I do not suppose that any one who is not an American can properly appreciate James. James's best American figures in the novels, in spite of their trim definite outlines, the economy of strokes, have a fullness of existence and an external ramification of relationship which a European reader might not easily suspect. The Bellegarde family, for instance, are merely good outline sketches by an intelligent foreigner; when more is expected of them, in the latter part of the story, they jerk themselves into only melodramatic violence. In all appearance Tom Tristram is an even slighter sketch. Europeans can recognize him; they have seen him, known him, have even penetrated the Occidental Club; but no European has the Tom Tristram element in his composition, has anything of Tristram from his first visit to the Louvre to his final remark that Paris is the only place where a white man can live. It is the final perfection, the consummation of an American to become, not an Englishman, but a European—something which no born European, no person of any European nationality, can become. Tom is one of the failures, one of nature's misfortunes, in this process. Even General Packard, C. P. Hatch, and Miss Kitty Upjohn have a reality which Claire de Cintré misses. Noémie, of course, is perfect, but Noémie is a result of the intelligent eye; her existence is a triumph of the intelligence, and it does not extend beyond the frame of the picture.

For the English reader, much of James's criticism of America must merely be something taken for granted. English readers can appreciate it for what it has in common with criticism everywhere, with Flaubert in France and Turgenev in Russia. Still, it should have for the English an importance beyond the work of these writers. There is no English equivalent for James, and at least he writes in this language. As a critic, no novelist in our language can approach James; there is not even any, large part of the reading public which knows what the word "critic" means. (The usual definition of a critic is a writer who cannot "create"—perhaps a reviewer of books). James was emphatically not a successful literary critic. His criticism of books and writers is feeble. In writing of a novelist, he occasionally produces a valuable sentence out of his own experience rather than in judgment of the subject. The rest is charming talk, or gentle commendation. Even in handling men whom he could, one supposes, have carved joint from joint—Emerson, or Norton—his touch is uncertain; there is a desire to be generous, a political motive, an admission (in dealing with American writers) that under the circumstances this was the best possible, or that it has fine qualities. His father was here keener than he. Henry was not a literary critic.

He was a critic who preyed not upon ideas, but upon living beings. It is criticism which is in a very
high sense creative. The characters, the best of them, are each a distinct success of creation: Daisy Miller's small brother is one of these. Done in a clean flat drawing, each is extracted out of a reality of its own, substantial enough; everything given is true for that individual; but what is given is chosen with great art for its place in a general scheme. The general scheme is not one character, nor a group of characters in a plot or merely in a crowd. The focus is a situation, a relation, an atmosphere, to which the writer wants. The real hero, in any of James's stories, is a social entity of which men and women are constituents. It is, in *The Europeans*, that particular conjunction of people at the Wentworth house, a situation in which several memorable scenes are merely timeless parts, only occurring necessarily in succession. In this aspect, you can say that James is dramatic; as what Pinero and Mr. Jones used to do for a large public, James does for the intelligent. It is in the chemistry of these subtle substances, these curious precipitates and explosive gases which are suddenly formed by the contact of mind with mind, that James is unequalled. Compared with the breaking open of characters supposed to be only accidentally in the same book. Naturally, there is something terrible, as disconcerting as a quicksand, in this discovery, though it only becomes absolutely dominant in such stories as *The Turn of the Screw*. It is partly foretold in Hawthorne, but James carried it much farther. And it makes the reader, as well as the personae, uneasily the victim of a merciless clairvoyance. It is partly foretold in Hawthorne, *The Middle Years*, reviewed by Ezra Pound

**THE MIDDLE YEARS**

**THE MIDDLE YEARS** is a tale of the great adventure; for, putting aside a few simple adventures, sentimental, phallic, Nimrodic, the remaining great adventure is precisely the approach to the Metropolis; for the provincial of our race the specific approach to London, and no subject surely could more brighten and warm the heart of the writer. An approach should be that of the greatest writer of our time and particular language. We may, I think, set aside Thomas Hardy as of an age not our own; perhaps Walter Scott's or of L'Abbe Prevost's, but remote from us and things familiarly under our hand; and we skip over the next few crops of writers as lacking in any comparative interest, interest in writing being primarily in his degree of sensitization; and on this count we may throw out the whole Wells-Bennet period, for what interest can we take in instruments which must of nature miss two-thirds of the vibrations in any conceivable situation. In James the maximum sensibility compatible with efficient writing was present. Indeed, in reading these pages one can but despair over the inadequacy of one's own literary sensitization, one's so utterly inferior state of awareness; even allowing for what the author himself allows: his not really, perhaps, having felt at twenty-six, all that at seventy be more or less read into the memory of his feelings. The point is that with the exception of exceptional moments in Hufier we find no trace of such degree of awareness in the next lot of writers, or until the first novels of Lewis and Joyce, whose awareness is, without saying, of a nature greatly different in kind.

It is not the book for any reader to tackle who has not read a good deal of James, or who has not in default of that reading, been endowed with a natural Jamesian sensibility (a case almost negligible by any
THE TWO UNFINISHED NOVELS*

Reviewed by Enrique Gomez

The two unfinished novels of James may easily be called the grave of his genius; it should be added, an impressive tomb; and they are as important as documents as the otherwise far more interesting and accomplished lady, even the denizen of Manchester or Wellington may know what it feels like to reach London, the Londoner born will not be able quite to reconstruct even this part of the book; and if for intimacy H. J. might have stayed at the same home on the same day as one's grandfather, and if the same Anna Jameson had part in one's own inceptions in London, one's own so wholly different and less padded inceptions; one has perhaps a purely personal, selfish, unliterary sense of intimacy: with, in my own case, the vast unbridgeable difference of settling-in and escape.


The effects of H. J.'s first breakfasts in Liverpool and —, invited upstairs at Half Moon Street, are of infinitely more value than any anecdote of the Laureate (even though H. J.'s inability not to see all through the Laureate is compensated by a quick melting one's personal objection to anything Tennyson touched, by making him merely an old gentleman whatsoever with a gleam of fun in his make-up).

All comers to the contrary, and the proportionate sale of his works and statistics whatsoever to the contrary, only an American who has come abroad will ever draw all the succulence from Henry James's writings; the denizen of Manchester or Wellington may know what it feels like to reach London, the Londoner born will not be able quite to reconstruct even this part of the book; and if for intimacy H. J. might have stayed at the same home on the same day as one's grandfather, and if the same Anna Jameson had part in one's own inceptions in London, one's own so wholly different and less padded inceptions; one has perhaps a purely personal, selfish, unliterary sense of intimacy: with, in my own case, the vast unbridgeable difference of settling-in and escape.


The effects of H. J.'s first breakfasts in Liverpool and —, invited upstairs at Half Moon Street, are of infinitely more value than any anecdote of the Laureate (even though H. J.'s inability not to see all through the Laureate is compensated by a quick melting one's personal objection to anything Tennyson touched, by making him merely an old gentleman whatsoever with a gleam of fun in his make-up).

All comers to the contrary, and the proportionate sale of his works and statistics whatsoever to the contrary, only an American who has come abroad will ever draw all the succulence from Henry James's writings; the denizen of Manchester or Wellington may know what it feels like to reach London, the Londoner born will not be able quite to reconstruct even this part of the book; and if for intimacy H. J. might have stayed at the same home on the same day as one's grandfather, and if the same Anna Jameson had part in one's own inceptions in London, one's own so wholly different and less padded inceptions; one has perhaps a purely personal, selfish, unliterary sense of intimacy: with, in my own case, the vast unbridgeable difference of settling-in and escape.


THE TURN OF THE SCREW

The two posthumous novels were hailed as shedding, by their incompleteness, a new light on James's craftsmanship. There was a tendency to forget an already existing source of information—the prefaces of the Collected Edition. True, the notes with which The Ivory Tower terminates are contemporary, while in the prefaces he is surveying his work across the gulf of a generation. But one does not feel the prefaces could have been very different, if they had been written at the time. It is his practice to name in them the actual starting-point from which the conception of each story arose. Generally a very slight hint sufficed; which hint taken, facts ceased to matter at all. He positively shut himself away from what came from outside and what had been evolved by his own imagination.

Thus he derives The Turn of the Screw from a story dealing with "a couple of small children in an out-of-the-way place, to whom the spirits of certain 'bad' servants, dead in the employ of the house, were believed to have appeared with the design of getting hold of them."

It is not impossible that part of this plot emanated from the writer's own invention. For example, the "getting hold of" the children seems an idea that belongs more to James than to the British ghost-story. The Turn of the Screw was published a year after Maisie. The similarity between the two tales is evident: the exposure of childish innocence to adult contamination being the theme of both. The phrase "get hold of" occurs in connexion with Maisie herself. But even if we accept James's account of the origin of the story, it is blankly impossible to believe in his classification of it as "a fairy-tale pure and simple." The ghosts are mere literary expedients for portraying in a vivid way the concrete for the abstract is well illustrated by the Private Life, in which the public man literally and not metaphorically "has no home life." He simply ceases, in that fantastic tale, to have any existence whatever, unless he is facing an audience.

In the prefaces to The Turn of the Screw, James indignantly denies the charge of "indiscreetly expatiating"; he claims that he has been "shy of specifications," has avoided the comparative vulgarity of "more than earthly beauty," the old contamination lures. It is this contamination which James materializes in the spooks of Peter Quint and Miss Jessel.

ARTHUR WALEY

PASSING PARIS

It had been prophesied that a period of oblivion for his work would immediately ensue upon the death of Rodin. The denial of an official funeral, the scratch attendance at the humble ceremony granted, the comparative indifference of the Press and public to the conclusion of a career one of the most signal in modern France, would seem to be circumstances symptomatic of the oracle's realistic spirit, that is, unvarnished truth. But, with experiences (common in this country, where children are in the charge of domestics) which are deliberately hidden from parents and relatives, the children may appear to be nothing that is not nice now as Mrs. Grose "lugubriously pleaded," but (such is James's thesis) beneath this mask of "absolutely unnatural goodness," of "more than earthly beauty," the old contamination lurks. It is this contamination which Rodin materializes in the spooks of Peter Quint and Miss Jessel.
merits, occurred to an insignificant minority. Nowadays favour is more freely directed towards those who hoist themselves on to the pyramid of their country's glory than to those who have been its builders.

The late Government played straight into M. Léon Daudet's hand when it took upon itself the public revelation of a letter privately addressed to the President. Had he himself managed the display it could not have been organized more entirely to M. Daudet's satisfaction.

Léon Daudet, son of Alphonse, is one of an almost extinct species of journalist, common to France in days past before Anglo-Saxon "phlegm" had become fashionable, distinguished by an extreme violence of language which people should be intelligent enough to take at its proportionate value. When Daudet calls a man a spy, a villain, a traitor or what not, the term does not carry half the weight a much more moderate qualification would from, say, M. Maurice Barrès. As Mr. Ezra Pound repeats so excellently, all "Neos" are to be avoided, and M. Léon Daudet is several times "neo": "neo-monarchist," "neo-Catholic," "neo-nationalist," "neo-abuser of language." Conclusion: obvious. No one seems to know exactly whether the man acts upon convictions or whether he is a hysterical blunderer. He would probably have to be questioned publicly as to what he understands precisely by the terms he uses before any counter-judgment can be passed upon his own sentences upon others. As this will never occur he will continue to have both partisans and opponents. The most equitable manner of dealing with him, which would be equitable also towards those who are the victims of his intemperance, if only intemperance it is, would be to convict him upon that very intemperance. If the world were ruled by rules of good taste and propriety it would be more habitable.

M. Daudet is supported—permanently by the one, incidentally by the other—by two men of great distinction of mind: M. Charles Maurras and M. Maurice Barrès. The former has not his peer among contemporary literary critics; the other, whatever he does or may do, cannot defame his past. Both are superb writers. Léon Daudet is superb in nothing.

Captain Canudo's temporary presence in Paris, on convalescent leave from Macedonia, was celebrated by a "festival Montjoie." When this writer, now a brilliant officer in a regiment of "Zouaves," named his gazette "after the war-cry of the kings of France he had little thought he would have occasion for that practical realization which has brought him wounds, high military rank, and the Legion of Honour. An Italian by birth, the author of La Ville Sans Chef elected to fight in the army of France, whose idiom he has adopted in literature.

An édition définitive appears (at Albin Michel's) of Le Feu, by Henri Barbusse. This work, which is two books in one, is, in its way, a work of romantic inspiration. There are dissertations in it as unnatural, or extra-natural, as any in Lamartine's Raphaël, and, as Le Feu has proved to a greater number of readers than has L'Enfer, it, too, is written by a master-writer and M. Barbusse, when composing his dialogues, considered how he would have formed them for the stage, the enormous error into which he falls after the first few chapters—which forebode genius—might have been in great measure avoided. I believe one of his intentions in this creation was to expound the obscurity and solitude of sexual passion. Lamartine also entertained an arrière-pensée in Raphaël which was in the interests of free-love and feminism. A deliberate revival of the great Romantic's manner on a modern, naturalistic basis was M. Saint Georges de Bouhéliers' La Route Noire, just given popular access in La Feuille Littéraire at 15 c., already referred to here in connexion with M. Montfort's essay on love—both works written at the age of twenty or thereabouts.

The author of La Passion de Notre Frère le Poilu has completed some more resonant verses in the rich dialect of his native Anjou. This extract has been quoted by M. Laurent Tailhade from the collection entitled Les Souvenirs des Tranchées d'un Poilu:

La bonne ventous', la bonne vampire
Qui vous engou', qui vous aspire!
I sembl', des fois, quand a vous prend,
Qu'ça s'rait eun' bête et qu'a comprend,
Et qu'a veut, après vous s'vanche,
Venger la Ter' qu'a trop souffert.
La Terr' la pauv' terre des tranchées,
Blessé' d' partout, qu'est là couchée.
Les trip' à l'air et l' ventre ouvert,
Tout écorché, tout amochée,
Terjous bêchée terjous pioché,
Tout' massacreé par les poils,
Tout' c'pérée par les obus.
Qui vers'ent des poissons dans ses plaies,
Ses plaies mal fermées par des claies.

Y a des jours, en regardant les trous
De ce pauv' Terr' tout' torturée,
Que j'pense à la Terr' de chez nous
Qu'est si gentiment labourée,
Qu'est'ent'vue avec tant d'œin;
La Terr' tranquill', la Terre heureuse,
Qu'est done', qu'est bon', qu'est généreuse
Pour chacun qu'la veut son bonheur.
La Terr' qui n'a point subi l'Boche;
Oh, qu'aus la paix des vil'a g' blancs,
Les vieux clochers, toujours tremblants,
Se renvoy'ént des appels de cloches.

After M. Charles Maurras and several lesser critics M. André Germain writes about Renée Vivien, the Anglo-American girl who became a great French poet, closing a trinity with Racine and Baudelaire.

Mme. Rachilde, for whom I have more admiration than love, writes war confessions for that untidy publication, La Vie, in which there is always something to be picked up. These notes, which she calls Dans le Puits ou La Vie Inférieure, contain both the charm and the tedium of personalities. This well is, as she says, only a tower upside down; needless to add, it is the well of truth "by descending which she will continue to have both partisans and opponents.

Concomitant with the vogue in Shakespeare is a craze in Beethoven. A recent "festival" devoted to the latter provoked enthusiasm such as no music has experienced for three long years. The public's craving for more and yet more of the greatest composer is an emphatic response to a certain critic's recent discovery that Beethoven had "no taste"! It was exactly this insufficiency with which Shakespeare was taunted by Voltaire and others of the "tasteful" eighteenth century.

M. C.
When Alphonse had been at Cambridge for some time, he began to work and row hard; the particular kinds of things he worked at filled him with enthusiasm, and he soon lost all wish to associate with girls for nearly four years. His life then reminded him of the first part of the second movement of Schubert's Symphony in A minor. All seemed to be a regular, joyous march and comradeship. He made friends easily and took friendship seriously; so seriously that he spent nearly the whole of the Michaelmas term following the taking of his degree in reading Aeschylus's Prometheus Bound and the Gospel according to St. Luke in the Greek with a much younger man—certain Roderick Gregory—who was in his second year, but had hitherto failed to pass his Little-Go. Roddy had a coach—once a week—but had a cheery disinclination to work, coupled with a great susceptibility to personal influence. The two were an odd pair; the one thin, not big, and dark; the other a huge, broad, fair-haired man, with his dark, round head apparently trying to be a sort of guardian to the dark graduate. Alphonse was not of a saturnine disposition; he was rather cheerful on the whole. And he was useful in stopping Roddy's sentimental theories about personages in the New Testament. So when Roddy begged his fellow-lodger—they "kept" together in lodgings at Park Parade—to hear him translate Aeschylus and St. Luke every morning, Alphonse said the necessary bad words under his breath, and, with the aid of a crib or of the Bible, spent half an hour every morning in keeping Roddy to the point, and off his favourite theory that Mary, the sister of Lazarus, was the only woman whom Jesus really loved, and in pointing out that, though that theory might interest the sort of person to whom Miss So-and-so's novels appeal, it would not get marks in the Little-Go. Well, Roddy passed the Little-Go that winter, and, in the Lent term, Roddy's mother and sister took a house in Cambridge for a short time. And, the next day after their arrival, Roddy took his sister for a walk, and brought her to tea at his lodgings.

That afternoon was spent by Alphonse in the University Library, reading Quain's Dictionary of Medicine. He was not a medical student; he was reading, because he was a little frightened about some things he had noticed about his walking in the dark, or coming quickly down steps. And one day a medical student discovered that he lacked what is called a "knee jerk," and said something about a "form of ataxia. And then the student asked him about his parents, and seemed surprised when told that they behaved normally. But he did not tell the student of the tales current in his family about his grandfather, nor did he tell him about his father's last stroke, after which he had nursed him... often alone, he used to be glad to think...

It begins when one is between twenty and thirty, said Roddy, as he should have known it. Perhaps in four or five years he would be thrown aside on the human rubbish-heap. And he had hardly begun to taste life.

He sat quite still for about half an hour. Then four o'clock struck, the closing time of the library. He got up slowly, and stood for a minute with his hands on his waist. Then, he staggered a little, clutched at the mantelpiece, and knocked over a small china ornament. The hand that he had been putting on his cap and gown and had not seen... Roddy saw an expression of horror pass over her face, and then one of disgust. The hand that she had stretched out to him when she began to say "Good-bye"... dropped to her side, and she turned and walked out of the room without a word.

"Well, so long, old chap," said Roddy in the passage. "You see," he said to Beatrice, "Alphonso dines in Hall later, with the B.A.'s, and works alone after Hall; all mathematical men do. So I don't suppose you're after more this morning. Got your broly?"

And the door banged, and the sound of their footsteps died away on the pavement outside.

Alphonse's head was sunk on the mantelpiece between his hands. The fit of giddiness had passed, but he stayed like that for a minute. Then he looked up with wild, miserable eyes. His glance fell on his favourite theory that Mary, the sister of Lazarus, was the only woman whom Jesus really loved.
His face was quite white, and his eyes frightened and desperate. “Only a few years more,” he kept saying half aloud, and then put on his cap and gown quickly and made for the road which skirts the grounds of Jesus College, he stopped, leaning heavily with his hands on two of the cast-iron posts of the stile. He was breathing hard after his run, and he began to think and feel acutely. The night was raw and foggy, and a lamp by the fringe of the road gave a dim light through the fog; he could hear a drip, drip from the trees, and the slow rumble of the little stream that moves sluggishly round part of the grounds of Jesus; and he could feel the coldness of the raised crosswise ribbing on the top of the iron posts.

Then a short, rather squat girl jumped quickly from the side of the path, and clutched his arm. “Can yer tell me what o’clock it is?” she giggled. Suddenly, it did all come over him. He began to run than to walk in the dark. And besides he need not think then . . .

When he got to the stiles through which one goes from one of the paths across Midsummer Common to get to the road which skirts the grounds of Jesus College, he stopped, leaning heavily with his hands on two of the cast-iron posts of the stile. He was breathing hard after his run, and he began to think and feel acutely. The night was raw and foggy, and a lamp by the fringe of the road gave a dim light through the fog; he could hear a drip, drip from the trees, and the slow rumble of the little stream that moves sluggishly round part of the grounds of Jesus; and he could feel the coldness of the raised crosswise ribbing on the top of the iron posts.

Then a short, rather squat girl jumped quickly from the side of the path, and clutched his arm. “Can yer tell me what o’clock it is?” she giggled. Suddenly, it did all come over him. He began to run than to walk in the dark. And besides he need not think then . . .
Stephen Bancroft came in. "No good," said Roddy, throwing the money down on the table, "she was there again, but she thought I was a prog and Joe and Stephen my two bulldogs, and fled."

"Roddy, make some coffee for Mansfield and Bancroft. Back in half an hour," said Alphonse; and gathering up the money and his cap and gown, he went out into the night.

He crossed Midsummer Common, keeping a sharp look-out for her. But he did not see her, and so he came to the house where she lived. When he knocked the door opened almost directly, and she whispered low and eagerly:

"Oh, I was 'oping yer'd come. I . . . I . . . went out to look for yer, an' then I got frightened an' came 'ome to wyte!"

There was an unshaded gas-flame in the passage, which lighted harshly and cruelly the cheap, peeling, yellow marbled wallpaper, the bare and dirty passage and staircase, and, when she moved farther into the passage, her tear-stained face. . . . She showed him into her comfortless, untidy little room, by a ramshackle screen. The table was half covered by a dirty table-cloth, and there was a dry bit of cheese, a knife, half a loaf, a bottle of vinegar, and an unused plate and glass on it. There was an unshaded oil lamp, with a white glass reservoir, on the table, the windows were hidden by curtains of faded moire, and in the fireless grate was a dusty bundle of white and gold paper strips. There was a look about the room as if it had been furnished by some one of the lower middle class, and then everything which was not either necessary or unsaleable had been stripped from it.

She hung on his arm, and looked up at him with the eyes of a spaniel who wanted a stick thrown for her to fetch. "I 'oped yer'd come," she said. A feeling of utter loathing came over him. She paused and tried to speak. . . . At last broken sentences came.

"It was Flo. She was my sister. Elder'n me. She hung on his arm, and looked up at him with the eyes of a spaniel who wanted a stick thrown for her to fetch. "I 'oped yer'd come," she said. A feeling of utter loathing came over him. She paused and tried to speak. . . . At last broken sentences came.

"It was Flo. She was my sister. Elder'n me. She came. In a 'at shop she was. An' she told me wot . . . 'ow . . . I swear you was the first." He had taken out the money, and now it dropped on the table and a sovereign rolled on to the floor. There was a greedy look in her eyes, but then she spoke in sudden fear.

"Yer'll come back; yer '11 come back! I swear you was the first. I'll move to better lodgings if you was the first. I'll move to better lodgings if you was the first."

"I didn't know I was the first," he said wretchedly; "I can't mend things, but I'll try." She did not understand at first. She looked triumphant, and then her face fell, as she grasped the yer like."

"Yer don't want ter!" she said sullenly, and tried to speak. . . . At last broken sentences came.

She paused and tried to speak. . . . At last broken sentences came.

"Yer weren't the first, then!" she said.

And it was only years afterwards that he knew that she had lied to him. * * *

Perhaps it is not part of a very high code of morality merely to take care not to be the first to help to send a woman downwards; but Alphonse felt it honestly then. And when he came into his sitting-room, he felt an indescribable relief. The fire was burning brightly, the lights were full on, the blinds and curtains undrawn, and he could see the long procession of gas-lamps going along the Chesterton road and across the foot-bridge: Mansfield and Bancroft were gone and Roddy could be heard faintly through the doors practising his 'cello in his bedroom, and the coffee-pot was keeping warm in the hearth, and a packet of twenty-five gratis copies, in pale blue covers, of a paper he had published in the Quarterly Journal of Mathematics had arrived from Metcalfe's that afternoon. All his old passion for work came back to him with a rush. He stood for a minute and looked down at the easy room and the pleasant chairs and books, and repeated to himself the only line of Browning which drew him to that author:

"I know so well what I mean to do when the long dark evenings come."

It was not particularly appropriate, for spring was coming now. He felt curiously light-hearted. First he addressed ten newspaper wrappers to friends, rolled up ten copies of his paper, and then fastened the wrappers. Then he drank coffee. Then—leaning slightly on the back of a chair—he returned to his desk—the 'cello had stopped—and wrote far into the morning.

You will remember that there is a sudden break in the second movement of Schubert's C major Symphony, and, for a space, the old march seems dead and unremembered. But soon, at first hesitatingly, it comes back.

J.

**ELIZABETHAN CLASSICISTS**

**By** **EZIA POUND**

**V**

**THERE is a certain resonance in **Certain Bokes of Virgiles AEnaeis by Henry Earl of Surrey** (apud Ricardum Tottel, 1557), which they all stood, with fixed face attent. When prince AEnaeus from the royal seat thus gan to speak, O Queene, it is thy will, I should renew a woe can not be told: How that the Grekes did spoile and overthrow The Faryngian wealth, and wailful realm of Troys; Those ruthless things that I myself beheld. And whereof no small part fel to my share, Which to expresso, who could refraigne from teres, What Myrmond, or yet what Dolopes? What stern Ulysses waged soldiar? And loe moist night now from the welkin falles And sterres declining counsel us to rest. Still there is hardly enough here to persuade one to reread or to read the AEnid. Besides, it is so "Miltonic." Tho. Phaer, Doctor of Phisike in 1562, published a version in older mould, whereof this tenebrous sample: Even in ye porche, and first in Limbo iawes done Wailings dwell. And Bugges with hundryd heades as Briary, and armid round And Carets on couches iyen, and Settled Minedes on vengeans fell Diseases leane and pale and combrous Age of dompishe yeres. And loe moist night now from the welkin falles And sterres declining counsel us to rest. Still there is hardly enough here to persuade one to reread or to read the AEnid. Besides, it is so "Miltonic." Tho. Phaer, Doctor of Phisike in 1562, published a version in older mould, whereof this tenebrous sample: Even in ye porche, and first in Limbo iawes done Wailings dwell. And Bugges with hundryd heades as Briary, and armid round And Carets on couches iyen, and Settled Minedes on vengeans fell Diseases leane and pale and combrous Age of dompishe yeres. In every doore they stampe, and Lyons sad with gnashing sound And Bugges with humdryd heads as Briary, and armid round. Chимерes fights with flames and gasty Gorgon grim to see, Eneas sodenly for feare his glistering sword out toke. He uses inner rhyme, and alliteration apparently without any design, merely because they happen. Such lines as Fra Troyis boundis, first that fugitive Fra Troyis boundis, first that fugitive * Written about 1512.
By late to Italie, came coist launye
Over land and se, eachit with melkill pyne
By force of goddis above, fra every stede
Of cruel Juno, throw auld remembrist feid
Grete payne in battelles, sufferit he also
Or he his goddis, brocht in latio
And belt the cite, fra quham of noble fame
The latyne peopl, taken has thare name.

His commas are not punctuation, but indicate his caesure. Approaching the passage concerning the "hundryd headed Bugges" of Dr. Phuer, Douglas translates as follows:

Fra thine strekis the way profound anone
Depe unto holliis flude, of Acherone
With holeisisme, and hiddious sweth unrule
Drumly of mude, and skaldand as it war wode.

Thir rierius and thir watteris kepit war
Be ane Charone, ane grisly ferrear
Terribyl of shape, and sluggard of array
Apoun his chin feill, Chanos haris gray.

I am inclined to think that he gets more poetry out of Virgil than any other translator. At least he gives one a clue to Dante's respect for the Mantuan. In the second book AEneas with the "traist Achates" translates as follows:

Amid the wod, his mother met them tuay
Semand and made, in vissage and array
With wappinnis, like the Virginis of spartha
Or the stowt wensche, of trace Harpalita
Haistand the hors, her fader to reskewe
Speriar than hebroun, the swift flude did persew.

This is not spoiled by one's memory of Chaucer's allusion.

Douglas continues:

Goyng in a queynt array
As she hadde ben an hunteresse,
With wynd blowynge upon hir tresse ;

From Æneas' answer, these lines:

Quhidder thou be diane, phebus sister brycht
Or than sum goddis, of thyr Nymphyis kynd
Or the stowt wensche, of trace Harpalita
Maistres of wod dis beis to, us happy and kynd

And after her prophecy:

Vera incessu patuit dea.
SHORT REVIEWS

THE FORTUNE. By Goldring. Maunsell and Co. 5s. net.

It is usually presumed that a moral or political motive is a detriment to a novel, but here is an instance where the question cannot be stated in such simple terms. For Mr. Goldring's book was definitely propagandist; it is a pacifist novel; and it is a novel with brilliant things and weak things in it. But the weakest things are not the propagandist things. Goldring has a definite point of view toward the war which is exposed in the second part of the book, and probably his conviction here has given him an interest in what he is doing which holds this first part of the book together. The first half of the book is boring. It is a hasty biography of a hero, or rather the hero's hero (cf. George Warrington), and this parergon, a very brief novel, offers interest as a work in a curious kind of satire which Mrs. Wharton has made her own; and just the kind of sympathetic, if rather wooden. He is real only as he is seem through the eyes of the high life into which Harold (the Pendennis, unfortunatley also Mr. Goldring's hero, and therefore rather unfortunate that poor, dear Harold should have fallen so completely under his domination. It's hypnotic influence. . . .

This novel told the story of Harold's wife, and this parergon, a very brief novel, offers interest as a work in a curious kind of satire which Mrs. Wharton has made her own; and just the kind of sympathetic, if rather wooden. He is real only as he is seem through the eyes of the high life into which Harold (the Pendennis, unfortunate that poor, dear Harold should have fallen so completely under his domination. It's hypnotic influence. . . .

There's no getting away from it that Murdoch is an out-and-out bad man. . . . It is unfortunate that poor, dear Harold should have fallen so completely under his domination. I always thought there was something unceany about it. . . . It's my belief the man used hypnotic influence. . . . James at once lives, and he lives also in the admiration of Harold. This, and the character of Harold's wife, are extremely well done. There is a remarkably well-sustained chapter on Harold's sensations and ideas in the trenches. But the most successful part of the book is the presentation of the mind of English Society in August 1914; a telling and restrained satire. Very often in the writing there is a sentence too much; but this is unquestionably a brilliant novel.

SUMMER. By Edith Wharton. Macmillan and Co. 6s. net.

Even Mrs. Wharton's parerga have importance, and this parergon, a very brief novel, offers interest as a work in a curious kind of satire which Mrs. Wharton has made her own; and just the kind of sympathetic, if rather wooden. He is real only as he is seem through the eyes of the high life into which Harold (the Pendennis, unfortunate that poor, dear Harold should have fallen so completely under his domination. It's hypnotic influence. . . .

There's no getting away from it that Murdoch is an out-and-out bad man. . . . It is unfortunate that poor, dear Harold should have fallen so completely under his domination. I always thought there was something unceany about it. . . . It's my belief the man used hypnotic influence. . . . James at once lives, and he lives also in the admiration of Harold. This, and the character of Harold's wife, are extremely well done. There is a remarkably well-sustained chapter on Harold's sensations and ideas in the trenches. But the most successful part of the book is the presentation of the mind of English Society in August 1914; a telling and restrained satire. Very often in the writing there is a sentence too much; but this is unquestionably a brilliant novel.

ALFRED DE VIGNY ON THE ART OF THE STAGE

IT does not seem impossible that the none-too-well-known theories held by the poet Alfred de Vigny on dramatic art, though a century old, will be of interest to-day. Alfred de Vigny shares this peculiarity with George Bernard Shaw that he wrote prefaces to his plays no less important and arresting than the plays that called for them. But the difference distinguishing Alfred de Vigny from Bernard Shaw distinguishes also plays and prefaces.

The preface to Chatterton is one of the finest pieces of thinking and writing in the world; his "Reflections on truth in art," which prefaced Cing-Mars; the "Letter on a Dramatic System to Lord —," prefacing his translation of Othello, which enlightens on errors of the past and warns against errors in the future, probe as far as any dramatic critic has ever done since. They should be universally familiar.

When Alfred de Vigny translated Othello the French knew this masterpiece through the agency merely of an emasculated translation in monotonous, rhymed Alexandrines by a certain zealous Duchy who had the impudence to omit Iago from the dramatic personae. "As well omit the Serpent from the Book of Genesis," said Vigny. This parergon responded to a prevalent fear of marked characterization which expressed itself in a taste for attenuation and a singular prudishness which Alfred de Vigny illustrates in his letter on a dramatic system by various incredible instances. No one had dared translate Shakespeare—for the French suspected him of a barbarous ruggedness violating their laws of art and taste in the appropriate spirit "in which each character speaks according to his peculiar nature, passing, in art as in life, from customary simplicity to impassioned exaltation, from récitatif to song," and which it is to Alfred de Vigny's honour to have introduced.

Although Vigny's faithful translation, so new to the Parisians, was enthusiastically received by them, the prudishness of which he complains, but which he had thought nearly obsolete, suddenly revived on his account so late as 1848 when the censor put an abrupt end to a run of most successful performances of his exquisite little play Quitte pour la Peur, which is of the family of Marivaux, Sheridan, and Goldsmith. The theme is no more scabrous than that of Candida, but was pronounced a violation of morality by the Government authorities. This in France, the home of Brantôme and Laclos.

Alfred de Vigny did not, therefore, follow up his intention never to use the theatre for the expression of his own ideas, as he stated in the following preface. Quitte pour la Peur, in its way, and Chatterton, in another way, each express ideas.

Some slight omissions have been made from the translation of the "Letter to Lord —," passages not of direct interest to the foreign reader, and whose absence does not disturb the lines of the thesis developed, while relieving it of weight unnecessary here.

MURIEL CIOLKOWSKA

ALFRED DE VIGNY'S LETTER TO LORD —

ON THE PERFORMANCE OF OCTOBER 24, 1829, AND ON A DRAMATIC SYSTEM

You make a great mistake if you think that France is occupied with me, she who to-day hardly remembers Emperor Nicholas's conquest over the decrepit Empire of the Turks, which conquest dates from yesterday. I have had my evening, my dear Lord, and that is all. One evening decides the exist-
ence or the destruction of a tragedy, it is even, I assure you, all its life; for if you examine the question closely you will find that one hour before it was everything, one hour after, nothing. And this is the reason:

A tragedy is a thought which is suddenly metamorphosed into a machine; as complicated a mechanism as was the machine of Marly, of royal memory, of which you have seen some beams floating on mud. This mechanism is put into action at great expense of time, ideas, words, gestures, painted cardboard, canvases, and embroidered draperies. A great multitude comes to see it. When the evening has arrived, a button is pushed, the curtain goes up, and after about four hours: words fly, the gestures are made, the cardboard works backwards and forwards, the curtain goes up and down, the draperies are unfolded, and in all this medley the ideas do their best; and if, by great luck, nothing goes wrong, at the end of four hours the same person presses the same button, and the machinery stops. Every one retires, all is said. The next day the multitude is exactly half as numerous and the machine begins to stiffen. A little wheel or a lever is changed, it rolls on a certain number of times more; after which friction wears out the parts, which become disjointed and creak in the haste. After a few weeks or months the machine being always declined in quality, and the multitude in quantity, its action suddenly comes to a stop.

That is more or less the fate of all ideas reduced to a dramatic mechanism, and usually named tragedies, comedies, drama, opera, etc. etc., and there is not a student in Paris but can tell you within a couple of days how often this or that one can work consecutively; this one a hundred times, it is, they say, the maximum; the other six; this one more often, that one less.

It cannot, therefore, be denied that to produce a tragedy is nothing more than to prepare an evening, and the true title is the date of the performance. According to this theory, instead of As You Like It as Shakespeare wrote, I, in his place, being embarrassed for a title would have headed the play “January 6th, 1600.” And as far as I personally am concerned, The Moor of Venice is called on April 24th, 1829.

To-day the noise is over, the fireworks are extinguished. I won’t hide from you that when this idea struck me like a flash of light I found the preparation for this kind of evening “somewhat very long,” as our great Mohlère says so often. For instance, to arranged his 24th of October I had, to my great regret, to leave off working at a history, or the history (as you like), after the manner of Cing-Mars, which I was occupied with to amuse myself or, if I can, amuse little children. This interruption was a sacrifice. But it was necessary. I had something urgent to tell the public, and the machine I spoke to you about is the quickest agent. It is the only method for addressing some three thousand persons assembled together without their being able in any way to avoid hearing what one has to say. A reader disposes of all kinds of reasons for defending himself against us; he can, for instance, throw his book into the fire or out of the window: there is no known reply to the expression and imagination, but with the spectator one is much stronger: once in he is caught as in a trap and he will find it difficult to make an exit if his neighbours are ill-tempered, and noise is found disturbing. There are seats where he cannot even reach his handkerchief. In this state of contradiction and suffocation he must listen. When the evening is over three thousand intelligences have been filled with your ideas. Is not that a marvellous invention?

Now this is the sum of what I had to say to these intelligences on the 24th of October, 1829:

“A simple question waits for a solution. Here it is. Is the French stage open to a modern tragedy producing: in its conception, a broad view of life, instead of the narrow picture of a plot: in its composition, characters instead of parts, calm scenes without drama, mingled with comic and tragic scenes: in its execution, a familiar style, comic, tragic, and sometimes epic?

To solve this threefold query an invented tragedy would not answer the purpose because, at a first performance, the public, concentrating its attention on the plot, progresses blindly and, being ignorant of its general scheme, fails to understand the reason for the variations of style.

A novel theme has not the authority requisite to concentrate execution equally new, and necessarily succumbs under double censure; worthy attempts have proved it.

A new work only shows that I have invented either a good or a bad tragedy; but disputes are bound to arise on the point as to whether it is a satisfactory example of the system to be established, and these disputes would be interminable for us, the only arbiters being posterity.

Posterity having pronounced at Shakespeare’s death the words which make the great man: therefore, one may remark that the system, in which I believe, is the only satisfactory example.

“Being, this first time, only preoccupied with the question of style I chose a work consecrated by several centuries and all nations.

I submit it, not as a model for our time, but as the demonstration of a foreign mechanism, defended by the most powerful hand that ever wrote for the stage, and according to the system I consider suited to our period, exempting the differences the progress in the general mind have introduced in philosophy and science, in a few stage customs and in chastity of speech.

Listen, this night, to the language which I think should be that of modern tragedy in which each character speaks according to his peculiar nature, passing in art as in life, from customary simplicity to impassioned exaltation; from récitatif to song.”

Such was the object of this, on my part and in spite of its success, entirely disinterested enterprise; for it is possible that, after having touched, tried and examined, that hundred-voiced instrument called the theatre with a Shakespeare prelude, I shall never use it for the expression of my own ideas. Dramatic art is too active not to disturb the poet’s meditations; apart from that it is the narrowest of arts; bound in the scope of its philosophic possibilities owing to the impatience of the audience and the restrictions of time, it is limited by all kinds of impediments. The heaviest are those of dramatic censure which always prevents the sounding of the characters on whom the whole of modern civilization rests—the priest and the king: this is sketched in, which is unworthy of every serious man feeling the need to fathom to its very foundations everything he approaches. I do not take into account the innumerable and obscure resistances which must be overcome when but a transitory result is desired. This modest translation of mine, which was announced as such, to solve this threefold query an invented tragedy, was received by the most powerful hand that ever wrote for the stage, and according to the system I consider suited to our period, exempting the differences the progress in the general mind have introduced in philosophy and science, in a few stage customs and in chastity of speech.

Listen, this night, to the language which I think should be that of modern tragedy in which each character speaks according to his peculiar nature, passing in art as in life, from customary simplicity to impassioned exaltation; from récitatif to song.”

Such was the object of this, on my part and in spite of its success, entirely disinterested enterprise; for it is possible that, after having touched, tried and examined, that hundred-voiced instrument called the theatre with a Shakespeare prelude, I shall never use it for the expression of my own ideas. Dramatic art is too active not to disturb the poet’s meditations; apart from that it is the narrowest of arts; bound in the scope of its philosophic possibilities owing to the impatience of the audience and the restrictions of time, it is limited by all kinds of impediments. The heaviest are those of dramatic censure which always prevents the sounding of the characters on whom the whole of modern civilization rests—the priest and the king: this is sketched in, which is unworthy of every serious man feeling the need to fathom to its very foundations everything he approaches. I do not take into account the innumerable and obscure resistances which must be overcome when but a transitory result is desired. This modest translation of mine, which was announced as such, to solve this threefold query an invented tragedy, was received by the most powerful hand that ever wrote for the stage, and according to the system I consider suited to our period, exempting the differences the progress in the general mind have introduced in philosophy and science, in a few stage customs and in chastity of speech.

Listen, this night, to the language which I think should be that of modern tragedy in which each character speaks according to his peculiar nature, passing in art as in life, from customary simplicity to impassioned exaltation; from récitatif to song.”

Such was the object of this, on my part and in spite of its success, entirely disinterested enterprise; for it is possible that, after having touched, tried and examined, that hundred-voiced instrument called the theatre with a Shakespeare prelude, I shall never use it for the expression of my own ideas. Dramatic art is too active not to disturb the poet’s meditations; apart from that it is the narrowest of arts; bound in the scope of its philosophic possibilities owing to the impatience of the audience and the restrictions of time, it is limited by all kinds of impediments. The heaviest are those of dramatic censure which always prevents the sounding of the characters on whom the whole of modern civilization rests—the priest and the king: this is sketched in, which is unworthy of every serious man feeling the need to fathom to its very foundations everything he approaches. I do not take into account the innumerable and obscure resistances which must be overcome when but a transitory result is desired. This modest translation of mine, which was announced as such, to solve this threefold query an invented tragedy, was received by the most powerful hand that ever wrote for the stage, and according to the system I consider suited to our period, exempting the differences the progress in the general mind have introduced in philosophy and science, in a few stage customs and in chastity of speech.
Let us speak about the public.

Let us, for once, do justice to it, for it has eloquently manifested that it desired to hear and see that truth for which all strong men fight in all arts to-day. I unless it is the majority, am incapable, and intellectual direction from the most hands form a chain which impedes and envelops it; nearly always a crowd of crippled, lazy minds holding back, and claims men ready to advance; but these I have endeavoured to cure, for their palor and delicacy, being accustomed to gentle, lukewarm draughts, they cannot endure generous wines; it is "everything is hurricane to them," a quotation from La Fontaine. Being debilitated and delicate, being thrown into an ocean of circumstances, thrust here by one wave, there by another, carried along by a current which he would turn to his advantage, changes his course twenty times, forgetting the principle he wanted to bring to light, and often seeks excuses for misconduct to fortune.

The word being thus justified, let us return for its application to the two dramatic systems occupying certain minds, the one by its agony, the other by its birth.

I would follow the order established above and speak first and foremost of the composition of works.

Thanks be to Heaven the old tripod of the unities on which Melpomene used to sit, with little case sometimes, preserves but the one solid basis of which it cannot be deprived: unity of interest in the development. [The French classical theory exacted that a play should follow sequence of time and place: one plot, one place, one period; this observance was called "the three unities."] One smiles with pity in reading from one of our authors: "The spectator remains but three hours at the play; the plot must therefore not last more than three hours." You might as well say: The reader reads such a poem or novel in four hours; the plot must, therefore, not last more than four hours. This sentence sums up all the errors that are due to the foregoing one. But it does not suffice to have freed oneself from these heavy impediments; the narrow spirit which engendered them must also be effaced.

Consider, it is conceivable that in the system which has just died out every tragedy was a catastrophe and the solution of a situation which was already ripe at the raising of the curtain, holding only by a thread and ready to drop. To this is due the mistake in French tragedy which strikes you and all foreigners: this parsimony in scenes and developments, the false delays, and then the haste to finish mingled with the fear, making itself nearly everywhere felt, that there will not be enough material to go round the five acts. Far from diminishing my esteem for the men who have adhered to this system, this consideration increases it, for each tragedy required a preparation and development which had nothing to do with the poverty to which the author was condemned; it was like trying to rise and to stretch the last rag of an otherwise lost and wasted purple for covering.

The dramatic poet of the future will not proceed thus. First, he will take an ample handful of time and whole lives will be enacted therein; he will create many generations of men, a whole race, and finally, the poem or novel in four hours; the plot must, therefore, not last more than four hours. This sentence sums up all the errors that are due to the foregoing one. But it does not suffice to have freed oneself from these heavy impediments; the narrow spirit which engendered them must also be effaced.
Then, far from finding his characters too small for their space he will groan, and cry out that they lack and in life a man's action involves a whirl of necessary under all his sentiments, and his soul will make itself to the mortal heart and not according to the imagined the late system of tragedy; but everything was break with him. Let him not try to appear what the feudal and theocratic been, as food for fate; but this being must or I

abstractions of passion personified took the place of

men; now nature has never produced a family of

regna!

men, an entire house in the sense of the ancients (domus) where father and sons, masters and servants were equally sensible to, and moved to an equivalent degree by the same event, throwing themselves into it, wholeheartedly, taking seriously and in good faith the most obvious surprises and pitfalls, experiencing solemn satisfaction, pain or indignation; preserving the one sentiment which animated them at the first phase of the event until its climax, occupied with but one business, that of beginning a plot and delaying it without ceasing to speak about it.

O vain phantasmagoria! Shadows of men in the shadow of nature! Empty kingdoms! . . .

And it could only be with the force of their genius or skill that the greatest of each period have succeeded in throwing some light on this shade, in defining a few beautiful forms in this chaos; their works were magnificent exceptions, they were mistaken for the rule. The remainder have fallen into the common ditch of this wrong road.

It is, however, not impossible that there still are men able to speak this language well. In the fifteenth century discourses were written in Latin which were highly estimated.

For my part I believe it would not be difficult to prove that the power which retained us so long in this world of convention, that the muse of this inferior art was the muse of Politeness. Yes, it was certainly she. She alone was empowered to banish at the same time true as well as coarse characters, simple as well as trivial language, the ideality of philosophy and the passions as extravagance, and poetry as incongruity.

Politeness, though a child of the courts, was and ever will be levelling, it effaces and smooths down everything; its motto is "neither too high nor too low." It does not hear Nature crying from every­where to genius as did Macbeth: "Come high or low!"

The poet of the future will realize, therefore, that to poetry rather than to drama. The lyrical poet may chant his lines, I believe even he ought to do so, carried away as he is by his inspiration. To him may be applied this dictum:

Poetry by lyre bred,
Should be sung and not read.

But a drama will never show anything but a number of characters grouped together to discuss their affairs; they should, therefore, speak. The simplicity of the récitatif of which Molière is the leading example in our language, should be written for it; when passion or grief shall animate their hearts then let the lines rise for a moment to the sublime moves of sentiment which seem like a song while raising the soul in us!

Has not each man in his habitual speech, pet terms, customary words which are due to his education, his profession, his tastes, learnt at home and inspired by his natural preferences or aversions, by his nature, be it sour, choleric, or nervous, dictated by a cold or passionate temper, a calculating or a candid heart? Does he not make favourite comparisons and would not a friend recognize him by his vocabulary, by the turn of his phrase, without even hearing his voice? Must each character use the same words, the same metaphors as the rest? No, he must be concise or diffuse, neglectful or on his guard, prodigal or avaricious of epithet according to his nature, his age, his inclinations. Molière never failed to put those firm, frank touches which are taught by close observation; and Shakespeare does not emit a proverb or an aphorism, without even hearing his voice? Must each character use the same words, the same metaphors as the rest? No, he must be concise or diffuse, neglectful or on his guard, prodigal or avaricious of epithet according to his nature, his age, his inclinations. Molière never failed to put those firm, frank touches which are taught by close observation; and Shakespeare does not emit a proverb or an aphorism, without even hearing his voice?

representation of an ill-imagined character, for it is then that the poet truly deserves the name of "phantom imitator whom Plato would expel from his Republic."

It is, especially, in the details of style that you will be able to judge the manner of the polite school we find so completely dull to-day. I do not think a foreigner can understand the degree of artifice attained by certain of our versifiers for the stage—

I cannot call them poets. To give you an instance in a hundred thousand, when one wanted to say spy, one said, like Ducis: "Those mortals whose vigilance the State rewards."

You realize that nothing but extreme politeness towards words and persons in his early youth; how he was born to so elegant a paraphrase, and that all such mortals who, peradventure, happened to be in the audience, must necessarily have felt much obliged. A natural style, moreover, for you do not easily conceive that a king, instead of saying simply to the chief of police: Send a hundred spies to the frontier" should say: "My Lord, send a hundred mortals whose vigilance is rewarded by the State." That is noble, polite, and harmonious.

Many authors and mostly skilful ones—the one whom I have quoted was so—have been carried along by this desire to attain what is called harmony, seduced by the example of a great master who only dealt with classical themes; therefore, the phrase was suitable. Through the desire to preserve they have debased, obliged, as they were, by the changes which carried them along in spite of themselves to deal with modern subjects, they have used language imitated from the classical (and not even purely classical); thence has emanated this style in which each word is an anachronism, where Chinese, Turks, and Red Indians speak in classical circumlocution.

The harmony sought for is applicable, I should think, to poetry rather than to drama. The lyrical poet may chant his lines, I believe even he ought to do so, carried away as he is by his inspiration. To him may be applied this dictum:

Poetry by lyre bred,
Should be sung and not read.
Can you believe, you English, you who know what French tragedy took ninety years to make up her prudishness and embarrassment, are as follows: who said "dog" and "sponge" quite openly? The stages through which she passed, with amusing prudishness and embarrassment, are as follows:

In the year 1732 Melpomene, at the marriage ceremony of a virtuous Turkish lady . . . needing her pocket-handkerchief, but not daring to pull it out of the pocket of her paniers, drew out a letter instead. In 1792, Melpomene again needed this handkerchief for the hymen of a Venetian. . . . This time, now thirty-seven years ago, Melpomene was on the point of taking this handkerchief; but, either because in those days it was still too daring to appear with a handkerchief, or that more luxury was exacted, she did not hesitate, but put a tiara of diamonds on her head which she even kept on in bed for fear of appearing in too marked négligé.

In 1820, French tragedy, at last frankly giving up its nickname Melpomene, translating from the German, had again to deal with a handkerchief over the will of a certain Queen of Scotland; she was allowed to move forth, hold it in her hand before every one, frown and call it out loudly: "web" and "gift." This meant a great step forward.

At last, in 1829, thanks to Shakespeare, the big word has been uttered, to the terror and fainting of the feeble who threw forth long and dolorous cries of protest, but not wanting to be squeezed, beaten, and twisted by the critics, have understood the literal rendering of each word, each phrase, in words, verse, and phrases of another language. A translation is to the original what a another instrument; it has, therefore, another sound.
I have here only given you an aspect of this literary attempt. The whole system is better explained by words than by theories. In poetry, philosophy, action, what is system, manner, characteristic, tone, or style? These questions are only solved by one word, and this word a name. Each one's brain is a mould moulding a model, and Whithorn, the last of the Age of the Middle, do not attempt to recompose a similar aggregate. It is destroyed for ever.

An imitator of Shakespeare would be as artificial in our times as those who imitate Athalie.

Again, let it be said, we advance and though Shakespeare has perhaps attained the highest degree attainable by modern tragedy, he attained it according to this notion. This notion and model are as perfect as ever, since inspiration does not progress, and individual nature does not change; but divine or human philosophy must correspond to the needs of the society among which the poet lives, and society changes.

Nowadays the movement is so rapid that a man of thirty has seen two contrary centuries each of ten years, the one all of extreme action and warfare, conquering, rude, strong, and glorious, but without life, and as it were frozen interiorly, almost wholly deficient in progress and poetry, philosophy and the arts, or only showing a movement of transition; the other, immobile and exteriorly languishing, of undetermined and slow movements, with a process of brilliancy of deeds, but agitated, interiorly devoured by a prodigious intellectual labour, and fermentation without example in history and dissembling a glowing furnace, recasting, elaborating, founding, and coordinating all thought, in all its forms, moulds, and diverse orders; the one all body, the other all spirit. Such a double system must give birth to a new race of ideas. Who can be surprised at all that is achieved unless he be, like Jerusalem, without eyes to see? Applying this only to dramatic art I fancy that in the future this art will be more than ever difficult in France, precisely because it is freed from the heaviest rules. Formerly the heavy pendulum in having produced something in spite of them and to follow had them might bring fame. But henceforth created tragedy will be considered from another point of view; she will need the more natural beauties since she will possess less conventional ones.

Liberty, yielding everything at once, infinitely multiplies the difficulties of selection and removes all supports. It is perhaps for this reason that since Shakespeare England counts but a very small number of tragedies and not one drama worthy of that great man's system, while we possess a great number of secondary authors who have produced their theatre, a respectable collection on the Racinean model.

I have insisted on this remark because I foresee that when the examples come, the critics will, at the performance, arm themselves with them, and their fate to combat the entire rules and system, without considering the new difficulties and much vaster scale by which future works will be gauged. For indeed, to all Shakespeare's rules and his gift of observation, must be added the sum or flower of contemporary philosophy and science. The attempts will be numerous and courageous and will not carry shame, for in this new world, author and public must educate each other anew. I hope that, after all I have told you, you will not again reproach me and my friends with too ardent zeal after innovation.

Do you remember that big old clock I used often to show you? If so let it serve to express my thought, for it is to me the exact image of society at all times. Its face, with its column like Roman figures, is secured by three hands. The one: large, broad, powerful, the colour of which is like that of a lance and the shape like a sheaf of weapons, advances so slowly that its movement might be denied; the most acute and steady and persevering eye cannot discern any motion from it; one would think it seated, incrustated, riveted to its place for all eternity, and yet at the end of an hour it has travelled round the twelfth part of the face. Does not this hand seem to express at once the slowness of progress without revolution, steadily but imperceptibly?

The other hand, more rapid, advances quietly enough for its movement to be discernible without extraordinary attention; this one makes the same journey in five minutes that the other makes in an hour and gives the exact proportion of the progress of the enlightened over and beyond the crowd following them.

But above these two hands is another far more agile whose progress is followed with difficulty; it has covered sixty times the space before the second has walked and the third dragged itself to it.

I have never considered this hand indicating the seconds, this arrow so swift, anxious, bold, and quivering threatening itself as though conscious of its audacity, as though taking pleasure in its conquest over time, never have I looked at it without thinking that the poet always has had and must thus promptly anticipate the centuries and the general spirit of his nature, beyond even its most enlightened section.

And the heavy pendulum governing them by its unchanging motion, does it not represent the perfect symbol of the inflexible law of progress whose advance carries away with it the three degrees of the human mind which are indifferent to it and only serve, after all, to mark successively its step towards an, alas, unknown goal?

November 1, 1829.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

CORRESPONDENCE

BALMONT

To the Editor of The Egoist

MADAM,—On the point on which I have been "pulled up," I am informed that Mme. de Holstein and M. René Ghil preceded the translator mentioned by Mr. Montagu Nathan, for they published extracts from his works in Les Écrits pour l'Art as far back as 1895. The following year they were asked to translate all Balmont's poetic works for La Toison d'Or, a publication appearing in French and Russian at Moscow. Subsequently Mr. Balmont authorized these collaborators to publish an anthology not of various Russian poets, such as Mr. Chuzeville's, in which Mr. Balmont only figures in the number, but of his own works exclusively. This remains the first and only French edition of poems by Balmont. The earliest translator of certain extracts was, it is supposed, Mme. Raix-Savitzy. But this is a point not entirely clear. The other is.

"YOUR CORRESPONDENT."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A new novel by Mr. James Joyce, Ulysses, will start in the March issue of The Egoist.

In March Mr. Wyndham Lewis's novel, Tarr, which ran serially in The Egoist from April 1916 to November 1917, will be published in book form by The Egoist. Chapters which were omitted to shorten the serial will appear in full in the book. The earliest translator of certain extracts was, it is supposed, Mme. Raix-Savitzy. But this is a point not entirely clear. The other is.

"YOUR CORRESPONDENT."

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

Theobald's Road, W.C.
The Little Review

"THE MAGAZINE THAT IS READ BY THOSE WHO WRITE THE OTHERS"

The following Authors have contributed or will contribute to the current volume (begun May 1917):

- W. B. YEATS (14 poems)
- LADY GREGORY (complete play)
- FORD MADOX HUEFFER (prose series)
- ARTHUR SYMONS (complete play)
- WYNDHAM LEWIS (regularly)
- T. S. ELIOT
- EZRA POUND (London Editor)
- ARTHUR WALEY (translations from the Chinese)

MARGARET ANDERSON, Editor

Yearly Subscription: England, 7/-; U.S.A., $1.50

THE LITTLE REVIEW
24 West 16th Street, New York City, U.S.A.
5 Holland Place Chambers, London, W.8

Enclosed please find Seven Shillings for one year’s subscription

Name
Address

THE CONTEMPORARY SERIES

IMAGES—OLD AND NEW
By Richard Aldington
The only volume of verse by one of the most important contemporary poets.

FIVE MEN AND POMPEY
By Stephen Vincent Benet
A series of dramatic portraits, being moments in the lives of Sertorius, Lucullus, Cicero, Cesar, Crassus, and Pompey, outlining the drama of the Republic’s fall.

THE ENGLISH TONGUE
By Lewis Worthington Smith
War poems—a group of inspiring and fiery lyrics of the modern ballad type.

HORIZONS.
By Robert Alden Senborn
A First volume of poems in which many critics see unmistakable signs of genius.

JUDGMENT.
By Amelia J. Burr
Play in one act in verse, by the author of The Roadside Fire. A poignant tragedy of Salem witchcraft days.

THE HOMECOMING.
By Paul Eldridge
Two one-act plays of the Great War.

Each volume about 5 by 7 inches; printed on heavy antique paper; bound with coloured wrapper over boards; covers ornamented with designs. Send for complete descriptive catalogue. Price 60 cents each at all booksellers. Postage extra. For sale at The Poetry Bookshop, London.

THE FOUR SEAS COMPANY, PUBLISHERS
Cornhill, Boston, U.S.A.