PHILOSOPHY: THE SCIENCE OF SIGNS. XVI. OUR PHILOSOPHY OF THE "REAL" (continued). By D. Marsden 89

CLAUDE DEBUSSY (continued). By Arthur Symons 93

FIGHTING PARIS. By M. C. 94

THE FISH. By Marianne Moore 95

EARLY TRANSLATORS OF HOMER. I. HUGHES SALEL. By Ezra Pound 95

THE ROAD. By Richard Aldington 97

THE FRENCH WORD IN MODERN PROSE. XI. ALAIN-FOURNIER. By Madame Ciolkowska 98

THE JAPANESE NOH PLAY. By Yone Noguchi 99

SHORT NOTICES. By T. S. E 99

XVI. OUR PHILOSOPHY OF THE "REAL" (continued)

III. The Organic Determination of Our Science of Mechanics

By D. Marsden

(55) In our last study we advanced the discarded theory of the early psychologists that the mental form was a copy of its related sensory form, and indicated the line of reasoning along which this view could be defended.

The success of such a defence would, of course, entail the establishment of a realistic version of phenomena with a corresponding outing of the theories both of idealism and pragmatism. However, the particular interpretation of reality which we put forward as logically self-consistent and self-supporting possesses a simplicity of definition totally unlike the involved and tortuous descriptions of reality in older realistic theories. And not only so. Its character is such that it absorbs the best points of the ousted theories. It takes up and incorporates, for instance, the idealistic contention that the intellect (the symbol-using faculty) is fount, source, instrument and criterion of all knowledge. On the other hand, it not only allows, but shows the absolute necessity for: ascribing full value to the power insisted upon by the pragmatist: the constructive utilitarian power of the hand. The prime importance of the intellect as the means of all knowledge has been a theme running through all our studies, and we shall not need to refer to it here. We can accordingly devote this study exclusively to a consideration of the place held by the manual activity in our theory of the real. Let us begin by an assembling of the main facts:

(56) The ideal form is a copy of the sensory form. The sensory form itself is constituted of movements in the tissues of the organism experiencing it. Therefore, the ideal form must be this self-same movement enacted in the self-same medium, but ordinarily of a more sparing degree of intensity and fullness. The less intense form can, moreover, be conjured up by the mere enunciation of the sensory form's associated symbol. There is therefore nothing fundamentally new in the content of the ideal form. Here, as elsewhere, experience makes no leaps and shows no unbridged gaps. What however is innovating in the ideal creation is the instrument which creates it and the supreme ease characteristic of the latter's employment. Now it is this innovating instrument—the symbol—which provides a relevant basis for the whole idea of reality and ushers in that species of activity previously non-existent, i.e. the creation of the real. To this stage, it is to be observed, the phenomenon of the real is intellectually, i.e. symbolically, determined.

(57) To proceed: Thanks to the ideal form's ease of origin, the possibility at once arises of combining together in the sphere of mind elements which, though sensorily familiar in isolation, are quite unfamiliar and new in the effected combinations. Hence, the symbol-employing organism finds himself confronted with a creation of mental forms which as far as their inter-union is concerned are not known forms but imaginary ones, and it is in relation to such forms that the practical activity of making real assumes its outstanding significance. Essentially, the labour of realizing is to convert an imaginary combination of known elements into a sensorily existing combination.

To make real is to make alien and diverse sensory elements fit into and coalesce one with another. Realizing is therefore a matter of fitting, of dovetailing, and of coalescence. Obviously then it is an affair of measuring: a task (once the combining symbol has done its part) to be handed over to our instruments of measure.

(58) Wherefore it follows that the possibilities of building up a world of reality will be identical with the possibilities inhering in our instruments of measure.
To the character of these instruments we must now therefore turn. As is recognized, all instruments of measure reduce to a single type: that of two solids, one superimposed upon the other and capable of moving freely upon it. It is obvious from what sources the idea of the measuring instrument has sprung, i.e., from the bodily limbs with their possibilities of free and repetitive movements over fixed areas. Obviously a foot, an arm, the phalange of a thumb, but above all the hand with its high sensitivity and freedom of movement. The activity of the hand that the quality which is the genius of all measuring operations, i.e., precision, has revealed infinite possibilities of attainment. By means of those creations of the hand—artificial instruments—it has become possible to present an incompatibly greater susceptibility to the impress of touch and to attain in consequence an incomparably greater nicety of measure than is possible for the unaided hand. It is to be insisted that the surpassingly great refinement and heightened discrimination of artificial instruments as compared with the natural manual one resides in the greater susceptibility to displacing influences of the movable solid in the instrument in question, and it is as a function of this property of susceptibility of sensitivity that the hand comes into being an ever deepening world of reality. Uniformly with this refined susceptibility to displacing influences of the movable solid there grows up of course a refinement in the enumerating powers of the numerical scale which forms an integral part of every instrument of measure and which indicates the amount of displacement effected in multiples or parts of fixed units of displacement. Thus a fine discrimination of response to displacing influences in the measuring instrument itself, and an index-scale fine enough to correspond, represent the two parallel avenues along which our physical knowledge progresses. A cernier will serve as the instance of the latter; of the former we might cite the vernier by which the early experiments of Gray and Ramsay were enabled to determine the weight of the radium emanation. This instrument embodied a method of weighing by displacement and presented results accurate to the limits of one quarter of a millionth of a milligram!

(59) The elements therefore upon which the mechanical form of science this is the prime fact to be taken into account for the supremacy of our mechanical form of science this is the prime fact to be taken account of, and of which our mechanical form of science is capable. These last two senses do not of course stand on an equal footing relative to the task of measuring. The importance of the other two, those of sight and saliency, is of an altogether different order of importance. It is german to the whole process: essential and indispensable to that of touch itself. Together these two senses form the pillars upon which the whole mechanical process rests.

(60) Before developing this statement in any way, let us consider for a moment the order of rank existing among the different senses in relation to the matter of preferred forms of evidence. Among the lowest forms of life the scheme of organic activity is regulated by a single undiscriminated sense of touch, this sense being the sole one organized on that basic level. On higher levels, out of this fundamental sense the more highly organized senses of sight, scent, and hearing have evolved and are in active operation as on the human level. What claims one’s notice, however, is that on the subhuman level there appears to exist among these more highly organized senses an equal rank of serviceability. Or rather, if preference is evident among them, it is not the same preference as that which prevails on the human level, where preference is for the evidence of sight. On the contrary, the senses of both sound and scent operate much more actively as the motive-powers of action, the reason being doubtless that these two senses do not have their effectiveness greatly marred by the mere interpretation of spatial relations. Moreover, the evidence which these senses yield is less ample and less precise than that yielded by the visual sense, it is more generally serviceable. On levels where a discreet caution is more helpful than either valour or any precise discrimination among phenomena, the fact that the evidence of these two senses usually becomes available at a point of time anterior to that of the visual sense places them at an obvious advantage, and their preference consequently.

(61) On the human level, however, that greater power of mastery over environment which the human equipment affords makes it sound policy for the human organism to wait for and base his activity more generally upon the ample content of the visual sensations. With his safety better guaranteed, he shows indeed a very marked preference for this species of evidence and allows it to determine his beliefs very powerfully. With Man—and particularly with non-scientific Man—seeing is believing. Primitive man will even believe in, i.e., let his actions be influenced by, his dreams because he sees them.

(62) We have just now allowed ourselves the use of the term "non-scientific man," but strictly speaking, Man is necessarily scientific by virtue of his specific physical endowment. All therefore which we would imply by such a term is the distinction which can be made between man so primitive that the strictly scientific method of experimentation is quite out of the question, and that man who has felt among the thousand other endowments which man holds in common with inferior organisms, and man of an advanced grade of humanity where the strict human endowment has defined itself and shown its true method and line of development. It is to man in the earlier human stage that we would ascribe the characteristic of reliance upon, as distinct from a preference for, the visual demonstration. With man of a more advanced grade we would associate the reliance upon (not preference for) demonstrations of the simple tactile order.

With science’s advent we have to identify man’s return to the dominance of evidence derived from the visual grade of sentiency: that is to say, there return is inevitably and necessarily due. This is an enduring tribute of the whole mechanical form of science this is the prime fact to be taken account of, and of which the mechanical form of science is capable. These last two senses do not of course stand on an equal footing relative to the task of measuring. These last two senses do not of course stand on an equal footing relative to the task of measuring. The importance of the other two, those of sight and saliency, is of an altogether different order of importance. It is german to the whole process: essential and indispensable to that of touch itself. Together these two senses form the pillars upon which the whole mechanical process rests.

(63) Our next section will be devoted to a consideration of the task of determining man’s reversion to the tactile in his search for a base for his science of control. This reversion is accounted for by the fact that man’s differentiating external feature—the hand—is at one and the same time his supreme organ of negotiation with the external world and also his supreme organ of touch. This combination of facts entails that the hand and the internal forms it deals in shall speak a common language: the language of displacements. This holds good
equally for the artificial instruments of measure built upon the manual model. The essential part of all such instruments is the sensitive movable solid whose action corresponds to the action of a hand. Its genius lies in the fact that all solids, organic and inorganic, reveal actions of touch by reactions of touch. That is to say, they reject upon any displacement of themselves by displacements of other connected bodies. Therefore, though we should address in vain to inorganic solids appeals concocted in sensory form more involved than the tactile (appeals which addressed to the human organism would receive immediate response), if we approach them in terms of touch, we will inevitably answer with like for like. That is to say, while a mere solid, when we approach them, weep and groan, present the most harrowing and the most disgusting pictures, the most seductive or most appalling scents and sounds all in vain, do we but touch them, they promptly respond in kind. To the precise extent that we do replace them they will displace other bodies. Hence in this community of reaction which the tangible sense presents in relation to all matter handled, we can practically condition of a language: a common medium of appeal and response.

(64) And since the movable solid of the measuring instruments corresponding to the action of a hand is made to move over a stationary area divided up and numbered to form a numerical scale, the index-finger does not remain a passive sufferer in the measuring operation to a given number on that scale will correspond to a tongue. Thus the instruments of measure will not merely effect displacements, they will speak forth the precise nature of those displacements. They will, in fact, make the external world give answers to man in terms of two senses which he uses himself. They will break down the dumbness of the world. Then is revealed that intercommunion between it and man. Anything which can be made to express itself as a displacing force can be made to utter forth its own character and this witness which it bears concerning itself will grow progressively more faithful and precise as its mouthpiece becomes more sensitive and perfect. In all relations in which we live and through which we have the highest and most purified faculties and which are naturally weighted towards their lowest grade.

There will be a natural tendency for the higher to displace other bodies. Hence in this community of displacement of themselves by displacements of other connected bodies. Therefore, though we should approach them in terms of touch, we will inevitably answer with like for like. That is to say, while a mere solid, when we approach them, weep and groan, present the most harrowing and the most disgusting pictures, the most seductive or most appalling scents and sounds all in vain, do we but touch them, they promptly respond in kind. To the precise extent that we do replace them they will displace other bodies. Hence in this community of reaction which the tangible sense presents in relation to all matter handled, we can practically condition of a language: a common medium of appeal and response.

(66) The science of mechanics is grounded then upon the conjoined phenomena of the spatial displacement of bodies and of their numerical aspects; the senses which the science involves being those of touch and saliency. In a secondary degree, in conjunction with the visible numerical scale which forms an integral part of every measuring-instrument, the sense of saliency is likewise involved. We have just now pointed out how the tactile sense has established its sway over science, inasmuch as its low grade of differentiation guarantees its universality of application. We have now to consider its complete partner in all essentially mechanical activity: the sense of saliency. This sense, unlike the tactile, occupies no recognized position, and the first part of our task will be to make clear its nature and explain why its existence should have been ignored.

(67) As for the latter point, the reason seems to lie fairly obviously in the interiorness of the sense’s action. In sharp contradistinction to the older senses whose initiating organs lie on the periphery of the organism, this new-comer acts primarily at the centre of the organism, and its peculiar sense-movements operate from the surface inwards, whereas the action of the new sense is outwards towards the external sense-organs themselves. It is in fact a sense-activity which the human organism can initiate independently of any stimulation in the outer sense-organs. Under what forms then is the new sense to be characterized? There are two possible aspects to the answer to this question. The first would be in terms of the changes to its emergence is traceable, and also in reference to those new qualities of consciousness with which it invests our felt experience. To avoid confusion let us note that the terms conscious and consciousness are used here to indicate only those heightened degrees of awareness which we associate with attentive feeling: that is, with purely human forms of awareness. For that large field of organic feeling which exists beneath these, but which evidence of the organism (the unconscious subconscious mentality), from the structural point of view then, we can describe the new sense as a new power of clutch over the entire organic apparatus and bestowed by that large accession of motor-power and motor-control which confers a new poise and balance upon the entire human structure. This new human power of grip is therefore one with a consistently upright attitude—that causing his lower limbs to become the main support of his body; when once an organism confers upon him his “two-handed” characteristic. It thus differentiates man from the quadruped. Also—inasmuch as the new balance is responsible for those modifications of throat and head that enable speech possible—it makes one with the power of symbolization. And this not only in rendering possible the new more connotation of linguistic forms, but also—inasmuch as it bestows heightened objectivity upon every sensory form upon which it acts, furnishing a foundation for that initiatory activity which provides the linguistic forms with their revolutionizing significance and makes true language possible. Also, we have already shown how its self-initiatory power has broken in upon that hypotonic condition under which the forms of the

* See THE EGOST, February 1918, “The Power of the Will.”
external world impose upon subhuman organisms certain inevitable modes of reaction, and how the comparative degree of independence to which man thus attains constituted the first step towards the human organism's progressive ascendency over the external world. The emergence of the new sense is, in short, of a piece and coincident with that accession of motor power and control which is the great fact behind human two-handedness and power of symbolization, and hence of all the constructive and controlling genius which springs from these two working in concert.

(68) The recital of these facts (already considered) is an entirely relevant and necessary part of our task. However, our immediate object, i.e. the elucidation of the connexion of the items of experience which we concentrate upon one particular aspect which the play of these facts immediately introduces into the realm of feeling. This aspect is the unitary character of those intensified items of feeling whose sum goes to make up consciousness. Apparently the increased human measure of motor-force is not fully expended on the maintenance of the erect posture of the body and the more obvious physical developments which flow from that. There exists apparently a reserve of force which the organism can employ spontaneously so as to reinforce the strengths in which any form of organic experience—sensory or ideal—is held, and the effect of this reinforcement is to "polarize" the movement thus concentrated upon into a form so perfectly typical that all existing forms are reduced to a negative condition under which no record is rendered in forms of feeling.

(69) When we come to a close observation of the mode of action of this reserve force we find this remarkable feature, i.e. that the force tends to exhaust itself upon every concentration which it makes. Its form of application might therefore be likened to the action of a spring having no end of movement in which a watch is wound. The winding-force finds and runs to the screw which constitutes the "set" of attention, say a sunset, an epidemic of influenza, beatitude, a bouquet as form be upon which the concentration falls, that form of any form becoming conscious, and whatever the unit of consciousness that, while the "grip" holds good, monopolizing the entire field of consciousness, say a sunset, an epidemic of influenza, beatitude, a bouquet as form be upon which the concentration falls, that form of any form becoming conscious, and whatever the

(70) This clutching concentration of energy which the organism so readily and unselfishly expends in the pursuit of its own operations to a typical form which, as embodied in its units; (ii) by reducing its operations to a formula which can be apprehended in one effort of the mind is, one might point out, the precise meaning of every process of generalization—mathematical or other.) The first form of procedure applies more essentially to arithmetic; the second form to algebra.

(71) If we state at the outset the purpose of this mathematical discipline it will tend to make much clearer any account of all mathematical development. The purpose is to economize the concentrative energy which shall differentiate between units according to its units; (ii) by reducing its operations to a formula which can be apprehended in one effort of the mind is, one might point out, the precise meaning of every process of generalization—mathematical or other.) The first form of procedure applies more essentially to arithmetic; the second form to algebra.

(73) These facts concerning the mode of activity of the saliency-sense are just sufficient to carry us to the threshold of the mathematical operation. There are the facts concerning the mode of reaction, inasmuch as they render possible the operation of addition independently even of the numerical symbols. The precise fact upon which the process of addition rests is that which makes it possible to reduce any form to a unit regardless of its content. We can thus have a unit of one; a unit of two; a unit of three and so on, the power of the clinch being to effect the summation operation. We can thus consider the power to add to be an immediate consequence of the set of the angle at which the human head rests upon its shoulders! Once this power is established it is a comparatively easy task to create and attach numerical symbols which shall differentiate between units according to their content and thus enlarge the power to add with the power to count. And since the typical arithmetical operations are merely variations of the basic operation of addition—subtraction being its inverse and multiplication and division being short cuts to the results of addition and subtraction respectively—when we have arrived at these we find ourselves equipped with everything that is essential for the numerical symbols to that unifying discipline which constitutes the art and science of mathematics.

(74) If we state at the outset the purpose of this mathematical discipline it will tend to make much clearer any account of all mathematical development. The purpose is to economize the concentrative energy which shall differentiate between units according to its units; (ii) by reducing its operations to a formula which can be apprehended in one effort of the mind is, one might point out, the precise meaning of every process of generalization—mathematical or other.) The first form of procedure applies more essentially to arithmetic; the second form to algebra.

(75) To instance the first: If we take a number of objects of attention, say a sunset, an epidemic of influenza, beatitude, a bouquet as form be upon which the concentration falls, that form of any form becoming conscious, and whatever the unit of consciousness that, while the "grip" holds good, monopolizing the entire field of consciousness, say a sunset, an epidemic of influenza, beatitude, a bouquet as form be upon which the concentration falls, that form of any form becoming conscious, and whatever the

VII

August 1918
function like some elemental intelligent soul. He continued to insinuate his creation into intimate himself and succeeded vastly. Meanwhile he has less so if they are to exist at all, but both are quite perfecting. To this task of perfecting man has set import of the speech is likewise. They could not be Outside these limits the forces of his machine cannot and speak. The sentiency is of the simplest and the expression of which his power of speech is the model. Conjointly he impresses them upon his machine which as it is, is the organ and just those powers which are most exclusively his own. Hence each will have its own typical standardized units as well as units held in common, there emerges also a unit standard of equivalence of which Joule's mechanical equivalent of heat is a type. In short, we begin to apprehend the full course of the circuit formed by the union of hand and mind. The creations of the imaginary world created by the symbol at last are given promise of unlimited realization. The power to present the composer unlimitedly whatever he can imagine, is symbolized in the power to compute numbers in any sort of new combination or degree of intricacy is precisely what the fitting, dovetailing, coalescing task of making the imaginary real was in need of. Any imaginary combination which is not symbolically contradictory possesses a means at least possible of realization. And the individual elements constituting that means all offer the prospect of unlimited development.

Hence emerges the bearing of that first discipline of arithmetic, i.e. that all units which its symbols operate on shall first be reduced to a common denomination: to a common standard content that is. Then will the results of its operations be fore-determined homogeneous and the mathematician can proceed with his calculations without again needing to let attention fall upon the content of the units he is dealing with.

(76) While arithmetic generalizes the content of the unit, algebra generalizes the operations of arithmetic after the latter has been relieved of all concern regarding its unitary contents. Hence algebra reduces the specific processes of arithmetic in relation to specific numbers to formulas which apply to and hold good for all numbers. The arithmetical reduction of the multiplicity and particularism of unitary form is followed by the algebraic reduction of the multiplicity and particularism of arithmetic procedures. Generalization, i.e. unification, follows hard upon itself.

(77) And, because the generalizing mind does not live and work in a featureless vacuum but in a world presenting geometrical forms and motor-forces of very pronouncedly individualized character, the formula generalizing the specific numerical processes are such as apply with almost starting pertinence to our geometry and our mechanical operations generally. The generalizing influence of the machine is realized by the generalization of calculating processes is finally capped by a trend of activity which can be regarded as a natural development of the first arithmetical principle: that objects submitted for calculating operations must first be reduced to the same kind. Arithmetic does not, however, reach out to the great generalization that all objects, however varied in seeming, are actually homogeneous in nature. Arithmetic accepts practical facts as they seem. It is left for physics to show that objects, however diversified in appearance, are "in reality" all of a common stock: all modes of motion capable of doing "work"; that is to say, capable of touching or displacing other bodies by amounts quantitatively measurable. Some forms will reduce more readily to one of the great types of motion and some to others. Still is there forth-coming a sense of the existing these basic forms one into another. Hence each will have its own typical standardized units as well as units held in common, there emerges also a unit standard of equivalence of which Joule's mechanical equivalent of heat is a type. In short, we begin to apprehend the full course of the circuit formed by the union of hand and mind. The creations of the imaginary world created by the symbol at last are given promise of unlimited realization. The power to present the composer unlimitedly whatever he can imagine, is symbolized in the power to compute numbers in any sort of new combination or degree of intricacy is precisely what the fitting, dovetailing, coalescing task of making the imaginary real was in need of. Any imaginary combination which is not symbolically contradictory possesses a means at least possible of realization. And the individual elements constituting that means all offer the prospect of unlimited development.

(79) To what issue then do we come? This: That man, fabricator by right of his physical endowment and urged on by that endowment, has set out to manufacture in his own image a machine: an individual body containing numerical descriptions, yoked to the power of computing numbers in any sort of new combination or degree of intricacy is precisely what the fitting, dovetailing, coalescing task of making the imaginary real was in need of. Any imaginary combination which is not symbolically contradictory possesses a means at least possible of realization. And the individual elements constituting that means all offer the prospect of unlimited development.

Claude Debussy

III

THE name of Claude Debussy has been known in England for several years, but little of his music had been given here until the composer made his début with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. He played on December 13th, 1894, the first performance in this country of his Prelude à l'Après-midi d'un Faune, La Mer, Pelléas et Mélisande. He also played his Second Nocturne, Pour le pianoforte a quattro, and some of his other orchestral music. The programme was a kind of criticism, for there we got the beauty of his own, calculated, new, alluring; and Debussy is not less original, aloof, deliberately an artist. He has made for himself a new art which is like no other music, but which it is impossible to call anything but music. It is thin, remote, a gossamer web; it is diaphanous, frolicsome, fantastic; it plays with sounds, bringing new colour out of them; it gives us melody without the fixed tunes, he uses his orchestra to do certain feats, not big, unpleasant ones, as Strauss does, but small, delicate, acabrotic ones. It is personal, yet intensely French, for all the influences, Russian, German, Eastern; it has the typical French qualities of lightness, brilliance, agility; it requires little material for its purpose. To play the Overture to Elogia at the beginning of the concert was a kind of criticism, for there we got the great conception, together with the large, simple,
in the first four lines of Verlaine's genius, and Debussy's music is defined beforehand in the earlier work, and a new gaiety. The last movement, where the wind and the sea talk together, was finer still; it was like a drama of elements, it conveyed the same sense and had the same meaning as Verlaine's music which I have heard. The music was still, in a sense, imitative, but again it was not programme music. What it aimed at was a representation, through the suggestion of sounds, of a mood of nature; and I can see no suggestion, which passes, fluid as water, with the cadence of wind.

It is not easy, nor indeed very profitable, to compare the music of Debussy with any other contemporary or even earlier music. He stands alone, certainly the most individual and the most interesting and the most skilful of recent French composers. To compare him, as the brilliant and paradoxical Jean Marnold amuses himself by doing, with Beethoven and with Wagner; to look upon him as a great discoverer; to set him beside the most skilful of recent French composers. To compare the music of Debussy with any other contemporary music of the future.
THE EGOIST

95

EARLY TRANSLATORS OF HOMER

By EZRA POUND

MARIANNE MOORE

THE FISH

WADE through black jade.
Of the crow-blue mussel-shells, one
Keeps adjusting the ash-heaps;
Opening and shutting itself like
An injured fan.
The barnacles undermine the
Side of the wave—trained to hide
There—but the submerged shafts of the
Sun, split like spun
Glass, move themselves with spotlight swift­ness into the crevices—
In and out, illuminating

The turquoise sea
Of bodies. The water drives a
Wedge of iron into the edge
Of the cliff, whereupon the stars,

Pink rice grains, ink
Bespattered jelly-fish, crabs like
Green lilies and submarine
Toadstools, slide each on the other.

All external
Marks of abuse are present on
This defiant edifice—
All the physical features of

Accident—lack
Of cornice, dynamite grooves, burns
And hatchet strokes, these things stand
Out on it; the chasm side is

Dead. Repeated
Evidence has proved that it can
Live on what cannot revive
Its youth. The sea grows old in it.

I. HUGHES SALEL

THE DILECTION OF GREEK POETS HAS WANTED DURING THE LAST PESTILENT CENTURY, AND THIS DECLINE HAS, I THINK, KEP PACE WITH A DECLINE IN THE USE OF LATIN CRIBS TO GREEK AUTHORS. THE CLASSICS HAVE MORE AND MORE BECOME A BATON EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE CULDRESSING OF SCHOOLBOYS, AND LESS AND LESS A DIVERSION FOR THE MATURE.

I do not imagine I am the sole creature who has been well taught his Latin and very ill-taught his Greek (beginning at the age, say, of twelve, when one is unready to discriminate matters of style, and when the economy of the adjective cannot be wholly absorbing). A child may be bulldozed into learning almost anything, but man accustomed to some degree of freedom is loath to approach a masterpiece through five hundred pages of grammar. Even a
scholar like Porson may confer with former translators.

We have drifted out of touch with the Latin authors as well, and we have mislaid the fine English versions: Golding’s Metamorphoses; Gavin Douglas’Æneas; Marlowe’s Eclogues from Ovid, in each of which books a great poet has compensated, by his own skill, any loss in transition; a new beauty has in each case been created. Greek in English remains almost wholly unsuccessful, or rather, there are glorious passages but no long or whole satisfaction. Chapman remains the best English “Homer,” marred though he may be by excess of added ornament, and many passages marred by parentheses and inversions, to the point of being very hard to read in many places.

Grant even that if one turn to Chapman for almost any favourite passage one is almost sure to be disappointed, on the other hand I think no one will excel the plainer passages of narrative, as of Priam’s going to Achilles in the XXIVth Iliad. Note, however, that he breaks down in Priam’s prayer at just the point where the language should be the simplest and austerest.

Pope is perhaps easier reading, and out of fashion though he is, he has at least the merit of translating Homer into something. The nadir of Homeric translation is reached by the Leaf-Lang prose; Victorian faddism having persuaded these gentlemen into a belief in King James fustian; their alleged prose translation is reached by the Leaf-Lang prose; Victorian faddism having neither the concision of verse nor the virtues of direct motion. In their preface they grumble about Chapman’s “manners,” yet their version is full of “Now behold I” and “yea even as” and “even as when,” tusheryyeryeryeryery only to an affected and oft beat on phrase. For, having, despite the exclusion of the Dictionnaire Philosophique from the island, finally found that the Bible couldn’t be retained either as history or as private Reuter from J'hvh’s Hebrew Press bureau, the Victorians tried to boom it, and even its wilfully bowdlerized translations, as literature.

“So spake he, and roused Athene that already was set thereon. . . . Even as the son of . . . even in such guise. . . .’" perhaps no worse than "With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving” but bad enough anyway.

Of Homer two qualities remain untranslated: the magnificent onomatopoea, as of the rush of the waves on the sea-beach and their recession in:

πανα θύης, πάλιν ἀνεφύλλησα θάλασσαι
untranslated and untranslatable; and secondly the authentic cadence of speech; the absolute conviction that the words used, let us say by Achilles to the “dog-faced” chicken-hearted Agamemnon, are in the actual swing of words spoken. This quality of actual speaking is not untranslatable. Note how Pope fails to translate it

"There sat the seniors of the Trojan race (Old Priam’s chiefs, and most in Priam’s grace): The kings, the first Thyestes and Alecile; Lampus and Clytius, long in counsel try’d; Panthius and Hecetaun, once the strong; And next, the wisest of the reverend throng, Antenor grave, and sage Ucalegon, Lean’d on the walls, and bask’d before the sun. Chiefs, who no more in bloody fights engage, But wise through time, and narrative with age.

In summer days like grasshoppers rejoice, A bloodless race, that send a feeble voice.

* Milton, of course, whom my detractors say I condemn without due circumspection.

These, when the Spartan queen approach’d the tower,
No second own’d resistless beauty’s power:
They cried, No wonder, such celestial charms
For nine long years have set the world in arms!
What winning graces! What majestic mien!
She moves a goddess, and she looks a queen!
Yet hence, oh Heaven, convey that fatal face,
And from destruction save the Trojan race.

This is anything but the “surge and thunder,” on the other hand it is a definite idiom, within the limits of the rhymed pentameter couplet it is even musical in parts; there is imbecility in the antithesis, and bathos in “she looks a queen,” but there is fine accomplishment in:

“Wise through time, and narrative with age,”

Mr. Pope’s own invention, and excellent. What we definitely can not hear is the voice of the old men speaking. The simile of the grasshoppers is well rendered, but the old voices do not ring in the ear.

Homer (iii. 156-160) reports their conversation:

Οὐ χάριας, Τρόιαι καὶ Σιλβήδας Ἀχαϊοι
Τοῦτ’ ἐμφαγεῖ φολιά σινθομένοι πάχοι
Αἰνεῖ παθιόμενοι διότι τίς ἄστα τοιοῦ.

"Alas and ah, they war no voice, in very voice ye shall hear, And might hear restlessly t, again a voice to whom Apollo.

Which is given in Sam. Clark’s ad verbum translation:

"Non est indigne ferendum, Trojanos et bene-oceatos Achivos
Tali de longe longum tempus dolores pati:
Omnino immortalibus deabus ad vultum similis est.
Sed et sic, talis quamvis sit, in navibus redeat,
Neque nobis liberisque in posterum detrimentum.

Mr. Pope has given six short lines for five long ones, but he has added “fatal” to face (or perhaps only lifted it from νίκης), he has added “winning graces,” “majestic,” “looks a queen.” As for owning beauty’s resistless power secretly or in the open, the Greek is:

Τοιοὶ ἢ ἔργα ἡγήροις ἢρτοι ἐπί πήγαμον.
"He has added "winning graces", but he has added "fatal" to face (or perhaps only lifted it from νίκης), he has added “winning graces,” “majestic,” “looks a queen.” As for owning beauty’s resistless power secretly or in the open, the Greek is:

καὶ τοῖς ἄγαλμα ἔτα κτερεῖσθαι ἄγρεμα.
And Sam. Clark as follows:

"Tales utique Trojanorum proceres sederant in turris. Hi autem ut viderunt Helenam ad turrim veniendam, Submissae inter se verbis alatis dixerunt:"

"Hea is an adjective of sound, it is purely objective, even supposition is an addition; though 'hea might, by a slight strain, be taken to mean that the speech of the old men came little by little, a phrase from each of the elders. Still it would be purely objective. It does not even say they spoke humbly or with resignation.

Chapman is no closer than his successor. He is so gaudiest in fact, that I thought I had found his inscription in Rochefort. The passage is splendid, but splendidly unhomeric:

"All grave old men, and soldiers they had been, but splendidly unhomeric:

Now left the wars; yet counsellors they were exceedingly sage. And as in well-grown woods, on trees, cold spiny grasshoppers

Sitting chirping, and send voices out, that scarce can pierce our ears
For softness, and their weak faint sounds; so,
Talking on the tow’r,

These seniors of the people sat; who when they saw the pow’r

* I.e. Clark is “correct,” but the words shade differently.

‘Hea means low, quiet, with a secondary meaning of little by little. Submissae means low, quiet, with a secondary meaning of modestly, humbly.
Of beauty, in the queen, ascend, ev'n those cold-spirited peers, 
Those wise and almost wither'd men, found this heat in their years, 
That they were fore'd (though whispering) to say: 
"What man can blame The Greeks and Trojans to endure, for so admir'd a dame, 
So many mis'ries, and so long? In her sweet count'nance shine 
Looks like the Goddesses. And yet (though never so divine) 
Before we boast, unjustly still, of her enforced prise, 
And justly suffer for her sake, with all our progenies, 
Labour and ruin, let her go; the profit of our land Must pass the beauty." Thus, though these could bear so fit a hand 
On their affections, yet, when all their gravest powers were us'd, 
They could not choose but welcome her, and rather they accus'd 
The fading from the beauty; for thus spake the most-fam'd king of Troy: " 
The last sentence representing mostly 'et àr' én' in the line: 
'
'Sie dixerunt: Priamus autem Helenam vocavit voce.' 
Chapman is nearer Swinburne's ballad with: 
"But those three following men," etc. 
than to his alleged original. 
Rochefort is as follows (Iliade, Livre iii, M. de Rochefort, 1772): 
"Hélène à ce discours sentit naître en son âme 
Un doux ressouvenir de sa première flamme; 
Le désir de revoir les lieux qu'elle a quittés, 
Fut comme un trouble inconnu dans ses sens agités. 
Tremblante elle se lève et les yeux pleins de larmes, 
Puisse-t-elle bientôt à son époux rendue, 
Mieux qu'en leurs jeunes ans défendoient leur païs. 
Mais qui, près de leur Roi, par de sages avis, 
N'alloient plus au combat signaler leur courage, 
Mais quelque soit l'amour qu'inspirent ses attraits, 
Sur le trône des cieux Vénus n'est pas plus belle. 
Lorsqu'aux longs jours d'été cachée en un buisson, 
Elle vient dans les champs annoncer la moisson. 
Cette douceur enflamma les cœurs, 
Puisse IIion enfin la perdre pour jamais, 
Puisse-t'elle bientôt à son époux rendre, 
Conjurer l'infortune en ces lieux attendue.' " 
Hughes Sadel (1545) praised by Ronsard, is more pleasing: 
"Le Roi Priam, et auce luu bon nombre 
De grandz Seigneurs estoient à l'ombre 
Sur les Creneaux, Tymoetes et Panthus, 
Lampus, Clytus, excellentz en vertus, 
Hictaon renomme en bataille, 
Lesquelz voyans la diuine Grégeoise, 
Disoient entre eux que si la grande noise 
De ces deux camps duroit longe saison, 
Certainement ce n'estoit sans raison: 
Veau la Beauté, et plus que humain outrage, 
Qui raysoit en son dian visage. 
Ce neantmoins il vauldrait mieux la rendre, 
(Ce disoient ilz) sans guères plus attendre, 
Pour éviter le mal qui peut venir, 
Qui la voudra encore retenir.'" 
Sadel is a most delightful approach to the Iliads; he is still absorbed in the subject-matter, as Douglas and Golding were absorbed in their subject-matter. Note how exact he is in the rendering of the old men's mental attitude. Note also that he is right in his era. I mean simply that Homer is a little rustre, a little, or perhaps a good deal, mediseal, he has not the dovetailing of Ovid. He has onomatopoeia, as of poetry sung out; he has authenticity of conversation as would be demanded by an intelligent audience; not yet laminated with aesthetics; capable of recognizing reality. He has the repetitions of the chanson de geste. Of all the French and English versions I think Sadel alone gives any hint of some of these characteristics. Too obviously he is not onomatopoeic, no. But he is charming, and readable, and "Briseis Fleur des Demoiselles" has her reality. 
Nicola Valla is, for him who runs, closer: 
"Consili virtus, summis de rebus habebant 
Sermones, et multa inter se et magna loquentes, 
Arboribus quales gracili stridere cicadas, 
Argolicasque pati. longique in tempore bellum 
Adversus quos longos dies jde echees en un buisson, 
Ela gens enflamma les cœurs, 
Puisse IIion enfin la perdre pour jamais, 
Puisse-t'elle bientôt à son époux rendre, 
Conjurer l'infortune en ces lieux attendue.' " 
This hexameter is rather heavily accented. It shows, perhaps, the source of various "ornaments" in later English and French translations. It has indubitable sonority even though monotonous. It is the earliest Latin verse rendering I have yet come upon, and is bound in with Raphael of Volterra's first two Iliads, and some further renderings by Obsideo. My impression is that I saw an Iliad by Andreas Divus on the Quais in Paris, at the time I found his version of the Odyssey, but an impression of this sort is, after eight years, untrustworthy, it may have been only a Latin Iliad in similar binding. 
(To be continued) 

THE ROAD 

TO have watched all night at the feast where Socrates spoke of love, letting fall from tranquil fingers white violets in the cold black wine; or to have listened while some friend of Beno talked of the groves of Academe and made golden flesh for us the ghosts of dead Greeks—who would shrink from so exquisite a vigil? Then indeed not to sleep would be divine, and dawn—the first birds among the trees in the misty park, the first gold flush—would fill us perhaps with regret, certainly with exultation. 
But there is no exultation for those who watch beside the Road, the road some know too bitterly and some will never know, the road which is the Place of Skulls—for it starts from a graveyard and passes through graveyards and ends in a graveyard. By day the road is empty and desolate; no boot
or wheel marks its mud, no human figure is reflected in its deep shell-pools. By day the road is silent. But by night it is alive with a harsh monotonous epic. Along that muddy trail move the rattling transport limbers, the field-guns, the ammunition wagons; the Red Cross cars lurch and sway on their springs over its deep ruts. Down that road come the weary battalions, platoon after platoon, heroic in their mud and silence, up that road go the fresh battalions, platoon after platoon, heroic in their cleanliness and silence. Down that road come the dead men on their silent wheeled stretchers. All that goes up that road is young and strong and alive; all that comes down is weary and old or dead. Over that road shriek and crash the shells; the sharp bullets strike gold sparks from its stones; the mortars tear craters in it. And just before dawn an instant: there luminous lanterns and the last stretcher has gone back to the line, then the ghosts of the dead armies march down, heroic in their silence, battalion after battalion, brigade after brigade, division after division; the immeasurable forces of the dead youth of Europe march down the road past the silent sentry by the ruined house, march back, march home.

Richard Aldington

THE FRENCH WORD IN MODERN PROSE

XI. ALAIN-FOURNIER: Le Grand Meaulnes

This, the only work of one who has been missing since the autumn of 1914, is called by the French critics a return to the roman d’aventures. It came into the world miraculously, having no immediate antecedents. Its success was not due to any inherent glamour. No quieter book was ever written, and its originality is absolutely free from sensational devices.

There is a something divine in the spirit of this beautiful work, for beautiful is the epithet it deserves. It partakes of the sublime candour of youth and of its perfection. It is not in vain that the age of childhood is called “Golden” (the title of a book I read many a year ago, and which Alain-Fournier’s brought back to my memory). The narrative is as even as a child’s gestures are harmonious. There is not a trace of self-consciousness or even of self in it. It is the work of an experienced writer who had preserved the heart of a child. The only mistake is a “grown-up” one — the luminous lantern, the meeting of Meaulnes with Frantz’s fiancée committed in a desire to enlarge on the “plot.” Otherwise no error, no weakness can be traced.

On retrace à chaque page [wrote M. Georges Le Cardonnel] ce souci de la besogne de l’écrivain loyalement accomplie, que possédaient au plus haut point les écrivains et les artisans français d’autrefois, que ce cessait de jouer Léop. Ce jeune écrivain, d’une si grande probité, qui ne pensait pas qu’il y eût de petites besognes. … Ce jeune écrivain avait au plus haut point cette conscience, cette loyauté d’esprit, cet ensemble de qualités qui donnent à un être sa valeur morale, et sans lesquelles il est certes possible de monter une certaine habileté littéraire mais impossible de dépasser une hauteur en somme moyenne. … J’imagine le Lieutenant Alain-Fournier tenant tête à l’ennemi avec la même conscience qu’il apportait, écrivain, à écire une page, la même passion lucide, le même enthousiasme réfléchi.

But this insists a little too much perhaps on the qualities of conscience and métier. Alain-Fournier possessed a gift which these qualities served: a sense of the miraculous and wonderful which makes itself apparent in his use of certain words, like adventure, fête, fiancée, lost, meeting, gipsy, bonheur, étrange, news, etc. To Alain-Fournier all adventure was “wonderful adventure.” He attributes to these words a peculiar, mysterious meaning, and adds to them terms one is not accustomed to meeting outside Stevenson’s boy-stories. The adventures are adventures of the imagination. They are not sought by the adventurous, but seek these out and then pursue them logically, rationally.

The narrative is overshadowed by an uninterrupted melancholy, which is, perhaps, borrowed from the character of the country in which the story is placed and had its gestation. You feel here that “un paysage est un état d’âme” may be reversed. Both thought and style bear the imprint of a calm landscape, with tree-grown, gently coursing streams, vast blank plains veined with paths leading one knows not where, long distances separating towns and villages and farmsteads and sky, sky, sky.

At one moment I thought there might be some link between this author and Barrie, but on investigation the latter appears much thinner, much more diluted. Like all Frenchmen, and like so few Englishmen, Alain-Fournier makes no effort to evade reality. You feel the footsoldier is sounder while the naturalness is never self-conscious, and this is how it proceeds:

Puis le journal reprenait. Il avait noté des souvenirs sur un séjour qu’avaient fait tous deux à la campagne, je ne sais où. Mais, chose étrange, à partir de cet instant, peut-être par un sentiment de pudor secrète, le journal était redigé de façon si hachée, si informe, griffonné si hâtement aussi, que j’ai dû reprendre moi-même et reconstituer toute cette partie de son histoire.

Mille frotta les souliers devant la porte et rentra dans la froide salle à manger, remettre en ordre ce qui avait été dérangé. Quant à moi je me trouvais, pour la première fois depuis de longs mois, seul en face d’une longue soiree de Jeudi avec l’impression dans cette vieille voiture, mon adolescence venait de s’en aller pour toujours.

He had a concise, easy way of situating a scene or sketching a portrait:

Il paraissait très troublé de me voir. D’un bond j’étais monté sur l’esrade. Mais, chose étrange à dire, il ne songea pas même à me tendre la main vers le siège, les mains derrière le dos, appuyé contre la table, renversé en arrière, et l’air profondément gêné. Déjà, me regardant sans me voir, il était absorbé par ce qu’il allait me dire. Comme autresfois et comme toujours, homme lent à commencer de parler, ainsi que sont les solitaires, les chasseurs et les hommes d’aventures, il avait pris une décision sans se souvenir des mots qu’il faudrait pour l’expliquer. Et maintenant que j’étais devant lui, il commençait seulement à formuler péniblement les paroles nécessaires.

This direct allusion to Meaulnes’ characteristics comes at the end of the book, and is the only one.

One of the most remarkable chapters is the visit to the widow-aunt whose confidences release the keystone of the intrigue, is the widow-aunt whose confidences release the keystone of the intrigue, is the widow-aunt whose confidences release the keystone of the intrigue, is the widow-aunt whose confidences release the keystone of the intrigue, is the widow-aunt whose confidences release the keystone of the intrigue, is the widow-aunt whose confidences release the keystone of the intrigue, is the widow-aunt whose confidences release the keystone of the intrigue, is the widow-aunt whose confidences release the keystone of the intrigue, is the widow-aunt whose confidences release the keystone of the intrigue, is the widow-aunt whose confidences release the keystone of the intrigue, is the widow-aunt whose confidences release the keystone of the intrigue, is the widow-aunt whose confidences release the keystone of the intrigue, is the widow-aunt whose confidences release the keystone of the intrigue, is the widow-aunt whose confidences release the keystone of the intrigue, is the widow-aunt whose confidences release the keystone of the intrigue, is the widow-aunt whose confidences release the keystone of the intrigue, is the widow-aunt whose confidences release the keystone of the intrigue, is the widow-aunt whose confidences release the keystone of the intrigue, is the widow-aunt whose confidences release the keystone of the intrigue, is the widow-aunt whose confidences release the keystone of the intrigue, is the widow-aunt whose confidences release the keystone of the intrigue, is the widow-aunt whose confidences release the keystone of the intrigue, is the widow-aunt whose confidences release the keystone of the intrigue, is the widow-aunt whose confidences release the keystone of the intrigue, is the widow-aunt whose confidences release the keystone of the intrigue, is the widow-aunt whose confidences release the keystone of the intrigue, is the widow-aunt whose confidences release the keystone of the intrigue.

People who seek in French books “forbidden fruit” will be disappointed, for the fruit in this book is rare, but not forbidden. It will bear reading several times, and gain on acquaintance. At a first reading its familiar dilatoriness, scenes and circumstances unusual in novels, and an unwonted manner of approaching the reader, take him by surprise and estrange him. He is so occupied in seeking his way of approaching the reader, take him by surprise and estrange him. He is so occupied in seeking his way of approaching the reader, take him by surprise and estrange him. He is so occupied in seeking his way of approaching the reader, take him by surprise and estrange him.

Muriel Ciolkowska
THE JAPANESE NOH PLAY

THE aim of the Noh play, I have no hesitation to say, is to express a desire or yearning, not for beauty, but for the beauty we dream; therefore the worth of the play depends, not upon the truth or humanity treated, but upon the total effect of the beauty, which is poetry. When I see the Noh play with my particular mood, beautifully freed from any obligation toward reason or fact, I often think that Edgar Allan Poe's poetical principles are even then alight, when they are good. Poe's conception of the Noh play is to struggle by multiform combinations among the things and thoughts of time to attain a portion of that loveliness whose very elements, perhaps, appertain to Eternity alone." The purpose of these combinations and rearrangements in the case of the Noh play is, of course, to make the expression of eternal order more distinct and beautiful. And the Noh play is pleased, strictly by virtue of being emotional, to understand this eternal order not as truth or morality, but as beauty which includes all others; the elements of stories in the plays are valuable only because they are the means of approach to the final great end, which is to excite or elevate the soul by the demonstration of that eternal order. Shortly, the stories themselves are secondary matters. It is seldom that a Noh play forgets the poetical effect which it is its first and last concern to create; it would be clear that the actors must protect themselves from falling into the bathos of reality which would, in nine cases out of ten, alienate them from the rhythmical creation of beauty. Poe said somewhere: "And in regard to Truth—if, to be sure, through the attainment of a truth we are led to perceive a harmony where none was apparent before, we experience at once the true poetical effect: but this effect is referable to the harmony alone, and not in the least degree to the truth which merely served to render the harmony manifest." In such language Poe might have spoken of the Noh plays, which, at their best, are poignant breathing; that might be from the too serious nature some strange pervading power which makes one feel rhythmically the statuesque stillness. Although the speech of the chorus, are, of course, the main part in the Noh play with my particular mood, beautifully succeed in developing that poetical yearning of the speech."

In all the rendering of the lines of the Noh plays, I am sure that the actors are taught not to forget they are at the same time the direct expression of the characters, and also poetry, that is a thing with its own reasons for existence; they might give, I often think, many a valuable suggestion to the poets of the West who are eager to invent some vocal manner between speaking and singing. Strictly speaking, the rendering of words of the Noh plays should be called speaking, not singing; therefore there is the danger of overemphasizing the meaning. But when the actors fall sometimes into the danger of overemphasizing the sound, it is at the time when their natural wealth of vocalism runs wild and careless; it goes without saying that they are superb when their gift is well regulated.

YONE NOGUCHI

SHORT NOTICES

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Miss Farjeon writes sonnets with Rossettian echoes, but looser in form, more Mrs. Browning. She is most agreeable in the lighter Christina style:

Dying leaf and dead leaf,
Yellow leaf and red leaf
And white-backed beam,
Lay along the woodland road
As quiet as a dream.

The authors of —Esquets trickle down a fine broad page in a pantoum, a roundel, a villanelle, occasionally pagan, mode of thirty years ago:

Why then, O foolish Christ
Didst thou keep tryst
With maudlin harlots wan
With glad things gone?

To which the obvious answer is. Why did you? Young poets ought to be made to be cheaply printed; such sumptuous pages deceive many innocent critics.

Captain Faber did not observe very much of importance In the Valley of Vision, but he has a fine heroic note, and should apply to Mr. St. L. Strachey:

Sublime! Oh, 'tis the very word of the age. (P. 63.)

Mr. Waugh is more modern, and would appear to have been influenced by some older person who admired Rupert Brooke. He is stark realism:

Route march . . . field day . . . church parade . . .
Wondering would it ever end,
Wondering what the hell it meant.
Picking girls up in the street
Rather than face the empty tent.

Mr. Waugh is said to be very young, and to have written a novel. That is a bad beginning, but something might be made of him.

In retrospect, I believe Miss Farjeon is the least unsupportable of this lot.

T. S. E.
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