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VI. OBSERVATIONS PRELIMINARY TO A DEFINITION OF "IMAGINARY"

By D. Marsden

I

THE difficulties standing in the way of a satisfactory definition of *imaginary* very greatly exceed those presented by the term *real*, which was the subject of our last study. The reason is that the activities with which the latter is concerned, i.e. *whether a name has been rightly or wrongly applied to a given phenomenon*, can be expressed in terms which are comparatively superficial. The term *imaginary*, on the contrary, embodies a distinction between vital activities so basic that an adequate consideration of them forces a definition of the term *life* itself. That is, the ontological questions which, with anything approximating to skill one might successfully evade in considering *real*, become the ever-present substance of one's care in considering *imaginary*. It is perhaps desirable therefore to state our motive for insinuating a study of *imaginary* between *real* on the one hand, and its opposite, *illusory*, on the other. Our justification is, that in order to close up certain leakages of meaning in the term *real* itself it is necessary to do so. There exists a loosely held but widespread assumption, which psychologists themselves show no anxiety to undermine and to which indeed the perfunctory manner in which psychology deals with *imagination* is directly due, that the *imaginary* stands in some sort of antithetical relation to the *real*.

Yet that such assumption is erroneous is easily demonstrable. There is nothing in the meaning of either term to render the one exclusive of the other. On the contrary, both can be, and are, simultaneously applied to one and the same image: as when we quite correctly say of an image, "*It is really imaginary.*" The two terms do bear a close relation to each other, but it is not one of antithesis. The actual antithesis of *real* is, as we have already indicated, the term *illusory*.

(2) The first preliminary to our study then will be to indicate precisely what the relationship between *imaginary* and *real* is. It will be found that the ground has already been partly covered in our chapter on the *real*. It will moreover be further covered in connexion with *illusory*. At this point therefore we shall merely have to state the relationship in its categoric form. *Thought is a special mode of application of the powers of imagination.* When we *think*, we use imaginary images in a particular way. The element which distinguishes thought-inspired activity as against instinctive activity is the imaginative one; and men's minds have rightly apprehended the facts of the situation when they, speaking of the power of thought in general, usually intend that one shall understand thereby *imagination* rather than *thought* as the more characteristic and inclusive term.

(3) The characteristics which distinguish thought and imagination from each other can be reduced in words to very modest dimensions, though their issue in action involves all the difference which lies between the *imaginary* and the *real*. For thought produces the last and imagination the first. We will state the difference thus: In *imagination* the imaginary image combines with like imaginary images. In *thought* imaginary images pair, one by one, each with its corresponding *external* image. Thinking is therefore the interlacing of the *imaginary* with its external counterpart (as presumed). If when the latter is subjected to certain standard usages such presumption proves itself justified, upon the external image is superimposed a distinctive label. As product half of the imaginary and half the external it now constituted a *realized* image. In such manner does the imaginary image intertwining with the external call into existence the world of reality. After a like manner also does it create that of illusion.

(4) When we compare external with imaginary images, we find many common points of likeness. Both alike are *felt*. Both show liveliness and strength and both are equally capable of showing aspects of

keen pleasure and acute pain. Judged from the point of view of seeking an increase of satisfaction alongside a diminution of pain, however, an outstanding difference presents itself between them, in that imaginary images show an orderliness and intelligence of sequence in pursuit of these ends which is constantly giving a lead to the external world. It is the superiority of the imaginary in this very respect that gives purpose to the processes of thinking. Thought is a bridge which the human species has constructed as a means whereby the external order of images can be impregnated with something of the imaginary's particular quality in this respect. The *real* world as the immediate issue of thought is man's ingenious and unique creation giving body and form to this precise intention, giving a lead to the external world.

II

(5) Having dealt with the *imputed* antithesis of imaginary, our second preliminary will be concerned with its actual antithesis. The conception which opposes and completes that of the *imaginary* image is an *external* one. So! At the very threshold of our inquiry we are confronted with the riddle alike of philosophy and science—that of space. Whatever explanation one may be prepared to give of this element of disruption and cleavage operating among the totality of life's images, space must always remain the factor from which the *imaginary* derives its significance. No account of imaginary therefore can proceed any part of its course without giving some account of space also. We shall not pretend to offer here any detailed account of space. We shall merely hope to be able to indicate on what lines any such account must travel, the facts of life being what they are.

(6) Let the *vital unit* be described as the *unit of feeling*, the *unit of cognition*, *life*, the *ego* or the *universe*. By whatever name it is called, its essential characteristics will in each case be identical: it will comprehend within its borders distinction, difference, and division. Essentially, life is the unit which cannot be described (because it cannot be experienced) under a single aspect. Taken throughout its entire range from the cell which is simply a stomach to the complexest type of humanity, the number of elements under which the fact of life is expressible is threefold. We can speak of life even as we can experience it, only as a *trinity*: the trinity of *organism*, *external world*, and *space*. We might say that these three represent in an unrupturable union life's two poles, together with the axis which at once joins and divides them! And just as one pole is meaningless save in relation to the other and both meaningless save in relation to a dividing and uniting axis, so is an *organism* meaningless apart from its *world*, and both together meaningless apart from *space*. Hence, whether we elect to say that life is the establishment of an organism, or the establishment of space, or the birth of the external world matters nothing. Each statement equally inplicates the remaining two. Each portends the same single but triune-faced fact of life, of a universe, and of an ego.

Let us once more traverse the selfsame fact. Let us begin by saying that the minimum of life is the establishment of a Self. Even so, the same logical chain promptly ravels down. For the meaning of *self* exists only in relation to another term—the *not-self*, while the relation of a self to a not-self can be postulated only by postulating also the existence of some principle of division. And that brings us back to space again! Always the same three in one and one in three!

(7) Before considering whether even this triune aspect of life exhausts the prime and initial postulates necessary for the bare statement of life, let us see whether it is possible to assemble a set of conditions which could illustrate the facts as far as stated. Can we establish a unified system; a self-contained universe comprising within itself two worlds intimately combined and yet drastically alienated; alike yet opposite; different yet interacting in mutually fitting adjustment one with the other? Let us try to construct after the dynamic model a logical replica of such conditions. Let us postulate a nodule of energy comprising force in a state of steadily increasing tension. The tension growing, let us say that finally it reaches explosion-point; and the explosion effecting itself it has to show as its sequel a *disintegration* of the initial force into two streams differing from one another as positive to negative, equal but opposite and inclining to opposite poles. Say that each thread of each stream has its own twin poles, and that the positive poles of all the threads come together *and meet* round about a point, thus rendering the latter a nucleus from which the threads joining them with the negative poles strike outwards like radii from the centre to the circumference of a sphere. Add also that knots form in the outgoing threads, thus producing denser patches in the finer whole, and we can begin to allocate the rôles.

(8) The cluster of intercommunicating positive poles represents the organism—the self. The fine threads extending divergently from the centre to all points of the universe are the substance of space along which travel the currents passing between their respective poles and to whose contact with the positive poles we give the name sensation. At a relatively small distance from the actual centre, i.e. from the nuclei of the nervous system, there is woven out of the relatively dense and close-packed threads an outer line of defence—a system of limited entrances and exits—by way of which as the sense-organs the currents pass inward from the negative poles. The *expanse* of space is the direct measure of the strength of propulsion existing in the total vital system. The knots in the spatial substance are the furnishings of space: the objects comprising the external world. Life itself is the establishment and maintenance of space and the passage of the positive and negative currents travelling through space between their respective poles. Conversely must death be the shrinkage to vanishing-point of the threads of space. When "to dying eyes the casement slowly grows a glimmering square," the last weak rays of space are swiftly shrinking, fading, fainting. Then suddenly they are not; and life's brief adventure is finished: Organism, World, Space, and Time alike involved in the one common dissolution.

(9) Which brings us to the rôle, in the logical scheme of things, which has been labelled *Time*. For, once the fact of life has been rendered capable of logical manipulation (if we may use such a conjunction of term) by the postulating of a self, a world, and space, it becomes evident that this threefold rendering by no means exhausts the whole of life's prime aspects. It becomes clear that life is not merely a triune but a multi-featured fact; so that when one of its forms (to wit: man) is taken with a desire to paraphrase it by means of verbal symbols, these same symbols will run to a lengthy list before they have taken account of even its most essential features. Accordingly, the rôle of Time equally with those of space and the world is inherent in the account already given wherein we paraphrased the life's beginnings. If, for instance, the pre-vital condition be one of tension between forces, the one of which has to secure a preponderance of strength before the vital condition can establish itself, the system when so established will still retain within itself, in addition to forces of a vital tendency, those forces which were anti-vital. Life indeed will represent merely the domination of these latter forces by the former. That is, while the latter are dominated so long as life maintains itself, they are not annihilated. Accordingly, throughout

the period of existence of every vital system, certain forces will remain within it inimical to its preservation and maintenance. Not all currents therefore which travel between pole and pole can be equally vitally welcome; consequently the characteristic which we call *preference* will hold a prime place in every system. It is this fact of preference which constitutes the all-important vital attitude of *affirmation* and *negation*: the sense of *Is* and *Is-not* which attends in the nicest discrimination upon all things. The same fact, too, yields the attitude of *desire* and *repulsion*: *satisfaction* and *frustration*; all of them primary basic vital attitudes. As for time: *vital* time must be the *sustentation of effort*: the actual yielding of the toll levied upon a system's strength to the end that the forces within it making for its maintenance shall prevail against those which are warring against it. Thus *time* is the small change into which the vital strength of the system converts itself, and the form in which from its advent to its close it spends and exhausts itself upon its preferences.

(10) The most obvious objection to any such paraphrase of the facts of life as the one just given is that it makes space and time into mere items or adjuncts of the individual vital system: beginning with it and ending with it. This objection, given force to as it is on the one hand by consideration of the illimitable and abiding-seeming character of the spatial "universe," and on the other by the unending tale of the world's history, in time looks sufficiently overwhelming. To our understanding, however, it seems that in a complete statement of a theory on these lines these objections, while serious, can be shown to stop just short of total overwhelmingness. And at this point we must leave the subject for the time being.

III

(11) The first important corollary to such a conception of space is that it forces an immediate overhauling of the dualism with which Descartes handicapped modern philosophy at its inception, and which has preyed upon its strength from that day to this. The essential *oneness in difference* of the cognitional activity involving as it does both "poles" (positive and negative, subjective or objective, just as we choose to name them), lays a ban upon a division into a "mind-stuff" which cognizes on the one hand and a "stuff" of a different kind which is cognized on the other. Descartes' first postulate of a *res cogitans* versus a *res extensa* is left without any logical base, and presents itself as a distortion of all that is characteristic of life as the unit of cognition and feeling. The attempt to set the "content" of cognition over against a cognitive "activity" abstracted by some asserted means from cognition as a whole, can hope for as much success as an analogous attempt to outline the course of an express train by constructing a stone wall across the railway-track. Such division, however, has obtained what practically we may call universal acceptance. The fact that it has accounts for the paralysed condition in which philosophy finds itself and for the open and—shall we say—shameless confession of impotence which philosophy's most earnest and strenuous servants find themselves driven to make. We have already quoted Spencer's opinion that this dualism—whose genuineness he accepts as wholeheartedly as any transcendentalist—is one "never to be transcended while consciousness lasts." A writer of like mental complexion, Dr. Tyndall, says: "The passage from the physics of the brain to the corresponding facts of consciousness is unthinkable. Granted that a definite thought and a definite molecular action in the brain occur simultaneously, we do not possess the intellectual organ which would enable us to pass by a process of reasoning from the one to the other. They appear together, but we do not know why." And Huxley says, "I know nothing whatever, and never hope to know anything, of the steps by which the passage from molecular movement to states of consciousness is effected."

(12) Among their very many differences and disagreements in creed and temperament, the one count on which idealist and (latter-day) materialist opinion are at one is that the phenomena of *thought* and *matter* present nowhere a mutual point of contact. Both schools hold that the two sets of phenomena run *parallel* courses and, because parallel, they remain for ever apart. A difference in manners perhaps: a deeper estimation of the value of suavity may inspire idealist opinion to garb itself in a more soothing raiment, and it might say that though the antithesis of thought and matter is a positive and indeed supreme fact, nature would not be so unkind as to leave us without a reconciling principle somewhere; that in fact there *is* a reconciling principle but that its place of residence is unfortunately outside the boundaries of Time and Space. Which is not much use to people whose interests all lie *within* Time and Space!

(13) Obviously this dualism which modern philosophy has maintained from first to last is a matter in which the *imaginary* has a paramount concern. Since we have claimed that *imagination* is the element of all that is essential in *thought*, we must be prepared to make the *imaginary* responsible for all that has rendered *thought* as contrasted with *matter* a mystery. For us this dualism which we hold is *not* impossible of resolution will have to be described as that of *imagination* versus *matter*, rather than that of *thought* (or *mind*) versus *matter*.

(14) While the working-out of the details of our position must be postponed until we have dealt with *imaginary* itself, we can here state a number of conclusions which will show what direction our argument is taking. In the first place, in accordance with the theory of space just outlined, we maintain that cognized images cannot be opposed to some cognizing activity which "achieves" them. There is nothing in experience to correspond with a *res cogitans* and a *res extensa*. Cognition, feeling, life, reduced to its very simplest element, constitutes a unity comprehending both aspects. Abstract from it either, and there remains—nothing! The spatial pole (if we may so describe it) is not one whit less involved in any single cognition than the organic pole, and vice versa. The current of movement which effects its course between the two achieves one single, unbroken, compound, cognitive fact. That compound creation we know under the description of things: of objects occupying space. *Matter*, that is *thinghood*, is the activity of both self and not-self acting as a whole.

(15) It is to be noted how persistently philosophy directs a blind eye upon this elementary fact of cognition. That every spatial fact is just as much a state of consciousness as is any inner or mental fact is always ignored in practice in spite of the lip-service which is paid to it in theory. Philosophers speak of "the passage from molecular movement to states of consciousness," as though it were possible to conceive of them as something other than states of consciousness. Yet molecular movement has as much claim to be regarded as just such a conscious state as a state of bliss or of agony or any kind of feeling whatsoever. In this respect there is no distinction to be drawn between the most ultimate ray of the remotest star or the instrument which fixes it, and the glow of exultation following upon the ray's discovery. All are states of consciousness equally. So too are the little shapes called figures under which the changes observed in a muscle are subsumed as quantities, together with the muscle itself, with the scalpel and the forceps and all the multitudinous images which constitute the physical

history of matter. In short, it is not possible to pass from anything whatsoever to a state of consciousness, simply because everything whatsoever *is* a state of consciousness.

(16) Where then are we to look for the source of confusion? That such a source exists is plain. The antithesis of mind *versus* matter would not have been so readily accepted unless it possessed something more than a mere show of speciousness. This is our theory: the mistaken distinctions as between a *res cogitans* and a *res extensa* has been inspired by the distinction genuinely obtaining between two orders of cognition, i.e. that between *cognition* and *recognition*. That we are in possession of the right clue in holding that the dualistic distinction has to do with a new form of cognitional activity which contrasts with the more elementary form of cognition is supported at the outset by the fact that philosophy accepts without demur all the facts of cognition. Otherwise how account for the easy, not to say glib way in which philosophers refer to the facts of *physics*: all of them cognitive facts. It is an activity which is like and yet unlike cognition which introduces uneasiness. It is the activity which supplements cognition which presents the stumbling-block. That activity is *recognition*: the activity which has become possible because man has discovered the way to create imaginary images. In the slow evolution of life's forms the imaginary image has supervened upon the cognitional world, and life has found itself impregnated with a new power. It is this newly acquired power which as *thought* and *mind* has baffled men's understanding from the beginning of his history. This revolutionary development in which cognitional activity is supplemented by an activity higher and more complex than itself but not basically different from it, made its appearance in creation with the advent of man. The instrument by which it effected itself, and by which it still develops from strength to strength, is that of SPEECH. By means of speech man has effected among his kind—in a kind of loop-line extension at cognition's positive pole—a prolongation of the current which in instinctive activity eventuates in an immediate and forthright response whenever the latter is stimulated by a current running inward from the spatial pole. It is in the mechanism of this "pause": rather in this extension of the current's circuit, that the substance of our theory of the *imaginary* is to be sought.

IV

(17) The foregoing section summarized amounts to this: On grounds which we propose soon to develop, we conclude that the supposed antithesis of matter and mind is actually reducible to what amounts to no more than a mere distinction between two forms of cognition: *cognition proper* and *recognition*. These two activities can be represented by their distinctive products as those productive characteristically of the world of external objects and the world of imagination. Both these worlds meet and combine to make the world of thought; while going back to the origin of the entire distinction again we have to say that the development of *recognition* out of its elemental form *cognition* was made possible in man because with him began the era of *Speech*. In short, life's dualism is a mistake which can be explained while it cannot be defended.

(18) This side of the subject we now leave to deal with another subject quite different from dualism intrinsically, but one which in its application has become closely implicated in dualism's defence. We refer to the presentment of the theory of psycho-physical parallelism which has latterly secured a dominant position as that which explains most acceptably the theory of dualism. In our opinion the enormities of the explanation exceed even those of the theory which it seeks to explain, inasmuch as it misconstrues the entire function of science and the whole meaning of knowledge. The theory maintains that while no state of consciousness ever takes place without concomitant changes in the neural system, yet is there no causal connexion between the two. The neural changes run their course concomitant with, and correlated to the changes in consciousness, but neither course ever overflows the limits of its own self-contained system so as to establish direct connexion with the other. The passage from Professor James which we quote below will describe the position: though it should be noted that of parallelists there are two varieties: one might say a higher and a lower accordingly as each holds that the one or the other of the self-contained systems is the dominant one.

"If we knew thoroughly the nervous system of Shakespeare, and as thoroughly all his environing conditions . . . we should be able . . . to show why his hand came to trace on certain sheets of paper those crabbed little black marks which we for shortness' sake call the manuscript of Hamlet. We should understand the rationale of every erasure and alteration therein, and we should understand all this without in the slightest degree acknowledging the existence of the thoughts in Shakespeare's mind. . . . On the other hand, nothing in all this could prevent us from giving an equally complete account of . . . Shakespeare's spiritual history, an account in which every gleam of thought and emotion should find its place. The mind-history would run alongside of the body-history of each man, and each point in the one would correspond to, but not react upon, a point in the other. So the melody floats from the harp-strings, but neither checks nor quickens its vibrations; so the shadow runs alongside the pedestrian, but in no way influences his steps."

(19) Now what kind of reason is offered in defence of the bold assertion that phenomena, presenting themselves in such unvarying interconnexion as the theory of parallelism says neural and conscious processes do, stand in no sort of *causal* connexion the one with the other? We will let its advocates speak for themselves. Professor Stout (who would be classified as of the "higher persuasion) puts the reason expressly in the passage in the subjoined quotation which we have marked by italics:

"When we come to the direct connexion between a nervous process and a correlated conscious process, we find a complete solution of continuity. The two processes have no common factor. Their connexion lies entirely outside of our total knowledge of physical nature on the one hand, and of conscious process on the other. The laws which govern the change of position of bodies and of their component atoms and molecules in space, evidently have nothing to do with the relation between a material occurrence and a conscious occurrence.

"*No reason in the world can be assigned why the change produced in the grey pulpy substance of the cortex by light of a certain wave-length should be accompanied by the sensation red, and why that produced by light of a different wave-length should be accompanied by the sensation green. It is equally unintelligible that a state of volition should be followed by a change in the substance of the cortex and so immediately by the contraction of a muscle.*"

The writer is here unmistakably arguing that notwithstanding the strict correlation and concomitance existing between the two processes, science must still further supply a satisfying answer to one particular *why* or be accounted incapable of establishing causal connexion between them. Now let us note minutely what kind of query this *why* represents. What the passage demands to know is why light of a certain wave-length should be accompanied by the

(*Continued on page* 31)

PYGMALION

By H. D.

I

SHALL I let myself be caught
in my own light,
shall I let myself be broken
in my own heat,
or shall I cleft the rock as of old
and break my own fire
with its surface ?

Does this fire thwart me
and my work,
or my work—
does it cloud this light ;
which is the god,
which the stone
the god takes for his use ?

II

Which am I,
the stone or the power
that lifts the rock from the earth ?
Am I the master of this fire,
Is this fire my own strength ?

Am I the master of this
swirl upon swirl of light—
have I made it as in old times
I made the gods from the rock ?

Have I made this fire from myself,
or is this arrogance—
is this fire a god
that seeks me in the dark ?

III

I made image upon image for my use,
I made image upon image for the grace
of Pallas was my flint
and my help was Hephæstos.

I made god upon god
step from the cold rock,
I made the gods less than men
for I was a man and they my work.

And now what is it that has come to pass
for fire has shaken my hand,
my strivings are dust.

IV

Now what is it that has come to pass ?
Over my head, fire stands,
my marbles are alert.

Each of the gods, perfect,
cries out from a perfect throat :
you are useless,
no marble can bind me,
no stone suggest.

V

They have melted into the light
and I am desolate,
they have melted
each from his plinth,
each one departs.

They have gone,
what agony can express my grief ?
Each from his marble base
has stepped into the light
and my work is for naught.

VI

Now am I the power
that has made this fire
as of old I made the gods
start from the rocks—
am I the god
or does this fire carve me
for its use ?

JAMES JOYCE

AT LAST THE NOVEL APPEARS*

IT is unlikely that I shall say anything new about Mr. Joyce's novel, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.* I have already stated that it is a book worth reading and that it is written in good prose. In using these terms I do not employ the looseness of the half-crown reviewer.

I am very glad that it is now possible for a few hundred people to read Mr. Joyce comfortably from a bound book, instead of from a much-handled file of EGOISTS or from a slippery bundle of type-script. After much difficulty THE EGOIST itself turns publisher and produces *A Portrait of the Artist* as a volume, for the hatred of ordinary English publishers for good prose is, like the hatred of the *Quarterly Review* for good poetry, deep-rooted, traditional.

Since Landor's *Imaginary Conversations* were bandied from pillar to post, I doubt if any manuscript has met with so much opposition, and no manuscript has been more worth supporting.

Landor is still an unpopular author. He is still a terror to fools. He is still concealed from the young (not for any alleged indecency, but simply because he did not acquiesce in certain popular follies). He, Landor, still plays an inconspicuous rôle in university courses. The amount of light which he would shed on the undergraduate mind would make students inconvenient to the average run of professors. But Landor is permanent.

Members of the " Fly-Fishers " and " Royal Automobile " clubs, and of the " Isthmian," may not read him. They will not read Mr. Joyce. *E pur si muove.* Despite the printers and publishers the British Government has recognized Mr. Joyce's literary merit. That is a definite gain for the party of intelligence. A number of qualified judges have acquiesced in my statement of two years ago, that Mr. Joyce was an excellent and important writer of prose.

The last few years have seen the gradual shaping of a party of intelligence, a party not bound by any central doctrine or theory. We cannot accurately define new writers by applying to them tag-names from old authors, but as there is no adequate means of conveying the general impression of their characteristics one may at times employ such terminology, carefully stating that the terms are nothing more than approximation.

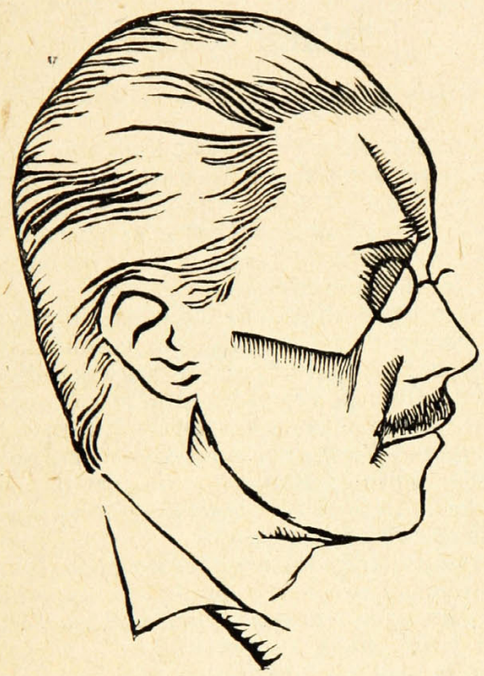
With that qualification, I would say that James Joyce produces the nearest thing to Flaubertian prose that we have now in English, just as Wyndham Lewis has written a novel which is more like, and more fitly compared with, Dostoievsky than is the work of any of his contemporaries. In like manner Mr. T. S. Eliot comes nearer to filling the place of Jules La Forgue in our generation. (Doing the " nearest

* *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man,* by James Joyce. THE EGOIST LTD. Ready now, price 6s.

thing" need not imply an approach to a standard, from a position inferior.)

Two of these writers have met with all sorts of opposition. If Mr. Eliot probably has not yet encountered very much opposition, it is only because his work is not yet very widely known.

My own income was considerably docked because I dared to say that Gaudier-Brzeska was a good sculptor and that Wyndham Lewis was a great master of design. It has, however, reached an almost irreducible minimum, and I am, perhaps, fairly safe in reasserting Joyce's ability as a writer. It will cost me no more than a few violent attacks from several sheltered, and therefore courageous, anonymities.



JAMES JOYCE By Roald Kristian

When you tell the Irish that they are slow in recognizing their own men of genius they reply with street riots and politics.

Now, despite the jobbing of bigots and of their sectarian publishing houses, and despite the "Fly-Fishers" and the types which they represent, and despite the unwillingness of the print-packers (a word derived from pork-packers) and the initial objections of the Dublin publishers and the later unwillingness of the English publishers, Mr. Joyce's novel appears in book form, and intelligent readers gathering few by few will read it, and it will remain a permanent part of English literature—written by an Irishman in Trieste and first published in New York City. I doubt if a comparison of Mr. Joyce to other English writers or Irish writers would much help to define him. One can only say that he is rather unlike them. *The Portrait* is very different from *L'Education Sentimentale*, but it would be easier to compare it with that novel of Flaubert's than with anything else. Flaubert pointed out that if France had studied his work they might have been saved a good deal in 1870. If more people had read *The Portrait* and certain stories in Mr. Joyce's *Dubliners* there might have been less recent trouble in Ireland. A clear diagnosis is never without its value.

Apart from Mr. Joyce's realism—the school-life, the life in the University, the family dinner with the discussion of Parnell depicted in his novel—apart from, or of a piece with, all this is the style, the actual writing: hard, clear-cut, with no waste of words, no bundling up of useless phrases, no filling in with pages of slosh.

It is very important that there should be clear, unexaggerated, realistic literature. It is very important that there should be good prose. The hell of contemporary Europe is caused by the lack of representative government in Germany, *and* by the non-existence of decent prose in the German language. Clear thought and sanity depend on clear prose. They cannot live apart. The former produces the latter. The latter conserves and transmits the former.

The mush of the German sentence, the straddling of the verb out to the end, are just as much a part of the befoozlement of Kultur and the consequent hell, as was the rhetoric of later Rome the seed and the symptom of the Roman Empire's decadence and extinction. A nation that cannot write clearly cannot be trusted to govern, nor yet to think.

Germany has had two decent prose-writers, Frederick the Great and Heine—the one taught by Voltaire, and the other saturated with French and with Paris. Only a nation accustomed to muzzy writing could have been led by the nose and bamboozled as the Germans have been by their controllers.

The terror of clarity is not confined to any one people. The obstructionist and the provincial are everywhere, and in them alone is the permanent danger to civilization. Clear, hard prose is the safeguard and should be valued as such. The mind accustomed to it will not be cheated or stampeded by national phrases and public emotionalities.

These facts are true, even for the detesters of literature. For those who love good writing there is no need of argument. In the present instance it is enough to say to those who will believe one that Mr. Joyce's book is now procurable.

Ezra Pound

AUTUMN RAIN

THE plane leaves
Fall black and wet
On the lawn:

The cloud-sheaves
In heaven's fields yet
Droop, and are strewn

In falling seeds of rain,
The seed of heaven
Over my face

Falling: I hear again
Like echoes even
That softly pace

Heaven's muffled floor,
The winds that tread
Out all the grain

Of tears, the store
Of harvest bread
From the sheaves of gain

Caught up aloft,
The sheaves of dead
Men and their pain

Now winnowed soft
From the floor of heaven,
Manna invisible

Of all their pain
From the floor of heaven
Finely divisible
Falling as rain.

D. H. Lawrence

THE EXILES*

IT seems impossible that this war should have spared a breath of life in what lingered here and there of realism in art: that realism to which all representation is legitimate but which ever falls short of reality.

The significance of tragedy has already undergone a metamorphosis. The tragic situations of our modern romantic and naturalistic schools were drawn from sources some of which have immutable values, others of which are of relative and transient value. These are already on the shelf with a number of sentiments and sentimentalities we can afford to accommodate no longer. The circumstances of war cannot subtract from the pathos of *Dombey and Son* or *Tess* or *Jude*; it does not compete with Balzac. Not even Zola's divulgences are extinguished. Each continues in its peculiar sphere of drama. But the author to come finds himself faced by a world of unprecedented events which he cannot ignore if he persist in realistic evocations.

The trivialities, offered to the public as a derivative from the war, are indicative of a vague, subconscious awakening even among the vulgarest to the impossibility of measuring it with common sense. For no common sense can measure the war. Failing a higher ideal, the purveyors of the public's recreations supply it with diversions making no appeal whatever to the reason. Thus may one briefly explain the detestable futilities indulged in by all the belligerent countries' capitals and bigger agglomerations during circumstances which call at the very least for flagellation, sackcloth, and ashes if any ever did. Thus may one excuse the antics entirely novel and most wonderfully unseasonable peculiar to the former capital of Puritania.

The poets alone have a free field before them. For they, having their own code, may, like Kabalists, translate all themes. The prose-writers, the playwrights, will be constrained to make a review of their stock of subjects, problems and plots. The real tragedies, borne in the souls (and bodies) of the majority, are too bleeding and sore; they are like some of those unhappy wounded who, bandaged all over, do not present a patch of immune flesh by which one dare touch them: only the minor tragedies will bear handling—therefore they won't deserve to be handled. A minor tragedy being no tragedy. Everything dwindles before the enormous facts defying comment and for which alone allegory has the necessary capaciousness. Probably a great upheaval, some violent transformation such as the one we are experiencing, provoked the *Odyssey* and *Iliad*.

Most certainly an Arnold Bennett or Paul Bourget will (or ought to) have little to say in future, though far be it from me to disparage their efforts hitherto, criticism of which should take into account the period for which, and in which, they wrote. Subsequent to this war there will, or should be, no room for a hybrid form of art combining imagination and realism. Between purely creative art and faithful records of facts I can see no occasion for compromise. To the former category alone genius can make answer. In the latter the war will leave a vast bibliography which for sensation and emotions will eclipse all the novels and problem-plays any Wedekind or Shaw in the world can write.

It happens that these soliloquies were animated by a record of the kind: *Au Sortir des Camps allemands; Soldats internés en Suisse*, by Noëlle Roger. The writer, apparently a nurse tending the "exchanged" French prisoners who are recuperating in the Alps, relates what she has seen as these things should be told: with as little comment as description will allow and without any fear of overloading her observations. Have you ever been shown a photograph of a prisoners' camp, for instance, without minutely examining the tiniest detail from the expression on the men's faces to the time by the clock on the shelf? For what can be indifferent where a new world is concerned—a new species of men bred by new conditions, new sensations, new privations, new sufferings, new joys even?

Mme. Noëlle Roger appears to have lived in close contact with the French and English invalids who have been sent from the German camps to Switzerland from the moment of their crossing the frontier. After such reminiscences as hers, what "fiction" can make us weep, what psychological conflict deserves examination? A story that will cause you to smile twice is a good story; a narrative which can on two successive readings draw tears is unsurpassed in pathos: such a one as this, for example:

> The English came last. Château d'Oex . . . had been selected for them.
>
> "The English . . . we saw them at Constance [where the final medical revision is made and prisoners not considered ill enough for sojourn in Switzerland are sent back to their camps]. They are in even worse state than us."
>
> The first convoy comprised 304 men, thirty of whom were officers. When they crossed the frontier, they too, like the French on the previous day and the preceding ones, saw, on the extremest point of Swiss soil, facing the German sentry, little groups of children waving flags and throwing flowers, and a crowd lined all along the railway-line cheering the passing train.
>
> At Zurich the enthusiasm was beyond words. The police were overwhelmed. The crowds had to be allowed into the stations. At Berne refreshments were handed to the "Tommies." Then they continued on their triumphant way. When at six o'clock in the morning they arrived at Montreux, the roofs, the terraces were black with a cheering, weeping, laughing multitude.
>
> The train stopped. The notes of the British National Anthem, the same as the Swiss, resounded. And the soldiers in the carriages and the crowd on the quays sang it together.
>
> We saw these tall, thin fellows, with their hollow cheeks and drawn features, trim in their khaki uniforms or black prisoners' garbs, alight. They had put so many flowers in their caps that they seemed wreathed with roses. Their procession was at once superb and pitiable: all those long, damaged bodies, those limp and lame, paralysed, twisted, shortened legs which they seemed to carry before them like something cumbersome, all the crippled N.C.O.'s! Others were carried by on stretchers and so covered with flowers that their uniforms were completely hidden. Only the pale, smiling face was visible.

The writer describes the arrival in the hotels, the assigning of clean, steam-heated rooms and beds with sheets on them, to men who had not known comfort or privacy for months, their emotion at the sight of these luxuries added to the effusions of the receptions—always spoilt by the haunting vision of the comrades left behind and those, especially, who at Constance saw the gates closed on them. . . .

She alludes to the touching idea of the German-Swiss peasants who received their French and English visitors silently at first, for, not knowing any other tongue, they feared that the sound of their Teutonic dialect would not be agreeable to them.

Who said things would fall back into their old places?

MURIEL CIOLKOWSKA

* *Au Sortir des Camps allemands; Soldats internés en Suisse*, par Noëlle Roger (Edition Atar, Genève).

THE CHILD

I. VISIONARY

i

FROM the Ferry in the east to the Ferry in the west,
The river and the grey esplanade,
And the high white palisade
Go on and on and on, three abreast.
Down our lane,
To the end of the esplanade and back again,
Is as far as you can walk when you're four,
Like me.
Doors all along in the palisade,
Doors that open and shut without handles or latches or anything else you can see ;
I must count every one,
Up to seven ; I mustn't miss one ;
Because I'm afraid
Of the seventh door.
(I don't know why :
You're like that when you're four.)
White clouds going up from the river, and blue sky and the sun ;
Something wild in the air,
Something strange in the sky ;
I saw God there
In the clouds and the sky and the sun.

ii

I saw him with great joy and without any awe
(Whatever that is) ;
A strange, new bliss,
Utterly candid, pure from the taint of sin.
Yet I hid it away ;
I hid it as if it were sin,
Until one day
I let it out when I ought to have kept it in.
There must be something odd
About seeing God ;
For they
Go worrying, worrying, worrying all the way
To make me confess that I saw what They think I saw.
And it comes to this,
That I set my small face hard, as who shall say :
I'm sorry. But that's what I saw ;
I nod
My head with an obstinate glee ;
I grin
With joy that isn't utterly pure from sin ;
And at last I say :
" Don't you wish you were me,
To be able to see
God ? "

iii

They are telling me now they will have to put me to bed,
Not for anything specially wrong I've done,
But for going on saying the naughty thing I've said.
Well—I don't care
If they do put me to bed,
If I *am* more tiresome to-day than ever I've been,
If they don't know what I mean,
If nobody *has* ever seen—
If they *have* put me to bed,
If they *have* turned out the light,
If I *am* afraid of what comes and stands by your bed at night.
I don't care.
I know that I saw God there
In the sky and the clouds and the sun.

II. PRISON-HOUSE

THEY say
God hides somewhere
High up, ever so high,
Above the clouds and the sun ;
No use at all to try
And see God up there.
No one has ever seen him with his long white beard and his hair,
And that funny thing the angels make him wear
All undone.
But if heaven is God's chair,
And earth the little stool he kicks away,
And the sky's all stuck between,
Why hasn't somebody seen
God's feet coming through ?
Sharp white feet tearing the blue.
And there's another thing always puzzles me :
They say
There are three up there
There's God—that's one ;

And, Jesus, his little son ;
That's two ;
And the Holy Ghost and the dove coming down from heaven :
If you count the dove, that's more
Than three, that's four.
Why—
That must be what they mean
By the Three and One.
Three and one *does* make four.
(These are the things that bothered me when I was seven.)

What do you say about somebody having seen
God once, up in the sky ?
Oh no, it couldn't have been.

Well—if I did—it was ever so long ago.
I was only four, you know.

III. FRIGHT

FRIGHT.
I have been naughty to-day.
My mother sits in her chair,
With the dark of the room and the light
Of the fire on her face and hair.
Her head is turned away,
And she will not say
Good night.
I kneel at her knees ; I try
To touch her face ; I throw
My body in torment down at her feet and cry
Quietly there in my fright.
For I think, perhaps, perhaps she will die in the night,
And never know
How sorry I am.
Surely, surely she will not let me go
Out of her sight,
Like this,
Without a word or a kiss ?
I was her little lamb
Yesterday.
I climb the last stair
Where the gas burns always low ;
In the big dark room my bed
Stands very small and white—
God—God—are You there ?
I feel with my hands as I go ;
The floor
Cries out under my tread ;
Somebody shuts the door ;
Somebody turns out the light
At the head of the stair ;
And I know
That God isn't anywhere,
And that Mother will die in the night.

MAY SINCLAIR

THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN HUMOUR

IT would be an interesting psychological study to trace back how the so-called American humour happened to bloom in the grim, cold ground of the Puritan mind. In the early days in America, when people had to struggle against the ever-combative Nature and Indians, to be optimistic, or at least to pretend to be optimistic, was considered a part most courageous, and the play of humour was certainly the best and most sensible self-protection from moral degeneration. But if we can say that the real trouble with the present Americans lies in nothing but their optimism, nourished by their hasty belief in humanity and carelessly endorsed and encouraged by their newspapers, we will have no hesitation to say that the American humour—harmless, doubtless, but often superficial and slight—is a menace to the real development of morality. I find it, in eight or nine cases out of ten, to be merely a joke or horse-laugh not backed by life's tragedy or tears; while such a humour, unlike the English humour which, as somebody said, was officially created by *Punch*, has an agreeable aspect of not patronizing the readers, it shows, on the other hand, quite an American-like character in forcing them into its personal comprehension or confidence. It is simple-minded because it rarely claims more than laughter; it is again simple-minded because it merely looks, as anything else in America, upon the quantity and not on the quality. I cannot take the words seriously when we are told that the so-called American humour is the pride of American hearts; besides, I have seen proof enough that its effectiveness is often doubtful—indeed, the Americans forget sometimes their own pride of humour quite plainly. Here is, among many others, one example in the "Question between Japan and America." We are periodically told of the war and the Japanese peril in American papers, yellow or what not; and the other day we were told that a certain American senator had declared that to have Japanese inhabitants in California meant to keep and feed hateful spies in the domain. What a lack of "the sense of humour"! I read in the first part of the article "The Mission of Humour," by a scholarly American lady, the following words: "Just as the most effective way to disparage an author or an acquaintance—and we have often occasion to disparage both—is to say that he lacks a sense of humour, so the most effective criticism we can pass upon a nation is to deny it this valuable quality." Indeed the sense of humour is the most valuable quality of one's life or nation; but why do some Americans at least forget their pride of humour towards us Japanese? Why does their sense of humour fail to appear when it should appear? It is far from my idea to say that the American humour of the present time is but a sort of recreation; but I should like to say that it is fed by the unreality of the so-called American optimism, and it has, naturally, no footing on life's inevitable realism. What I want to say is that the American humour needs to be aroused to consciousness of itself, and to be taught a real proposition toward life. Even in America the age of irresponsible laughter and optimism is already passed; the time has arrived when humour also should act a true part in life. The American humour is strong enough to cast off its superficial exaggeration, which as literature is really old-fashioned and cowardly, and it is old enough to learn, as Meredith was happy to say, the smile of the mind. Take off your clown's powder and paint and become real, you American humour, to steer a wise course amid the grave, confused moral questions. We expect many things from you.

When I was shown by Sir Owen Seaman of *Punch* a large round table in the office (with the carved names of Thackeray and my beloved Du Maurier and many others) where once a week those English professional laughter-makers or, more true to say, the smile-makers, serious and silent in face perhaps more than Lamb's Quakers, used to sit for the manufacture of humour or merriment, I at once felt as if I had discovered the true reason why the English humour was rather unnatural, forced, always reflective and even philosophical, but not impulsive; it is, unlike the huge laughter of American humour, a smile decidedly sardonic, which is still afraid to lose its pride of aristocratic scholarliness; its fear of democratic open-mindedness makes it unnecessarily lonely and sad. I have many a reason now to say that the importation of the so-called American humour into England will do a great service in brightening up the English life, which has been depressed and darkened by the present War. And at the same time I should say that it is the very time for the American humour at home to learn to stop its laughter or joke; this is the time to remind the Americans to free themselves from the illusion of an age of optimistic extravaganza, now when they see such a human tragedy in all Europe. America should also enter into the age when no absolute independence in action is to be tolerated in the solution of the problems of humanity and the world; how can the American humour alone hold its own old masquerading? As a piece of literature it should be ruled by the meaning of modern literature, which has left romanticism even for the realism of Russian fashion; and to become the best literature, of its own kind, it should leave the quantitative standard and aim at the true quality. (I say this as if I were speaking on quality before quantity for any other phase of American life.) I say that the days of Artemus Ward, Mark Twain, Bill Nye, even the days of Mr. Dooley and George Ade, are already passing, not because they did not, as Chesterton desired in his *Defence of Nonsense*, represent the allegorical view of the whole universe or Cosmos, but because from the very weakness of their being too optimistic they did not help much for life's spiritual development; in another way of saying, from being rather outside of real life, they did not make the American life either richer or intenser. The new humour of America should not become a thing to play with, but it must be a true literature built with human blood and soul; and it should act to strengthen life's conscience and force, keeping the belief that a literature grows more perfect and true as it grows simpler. It should not, as in the olden days, be its office to amuse people, but to back humanity and life (the nation, of course) with its own belief should be its greatest aim. You must not think that I wish to make humour a symbol of wisdom; what I want to say is that we wish to make ourselves wise enough by its thrice blessed quality to laugh or smile, as somebody said, when we should otherwise be in danger of crying.

As I said before, I do not believe in the American humour of the present form because it has not realism for its background. I never mean to break the democratic aspect of the American humour from any point; but as the meaning of American democracy has changed to-day from the country's losing the absolute solitariness in contact with the inevitable disillusionment of the modern age, the American humour too, as a literary demonstration, should undergo the proper change quite natural of the nation. The American humour, at least at present, only serves as a clown along life's highway.

I should like to remind the American humorist that life and the world are not so light-hearted as it often supposes; the true humour is but another phase of the real tear laughingly interpreted, and is, let me say, a twin sister or brother of the tear differently born by a twist of evolution. I would advise

the world-famous American humour that it should be more serious if it wants to act, with other phases of American literature, in solving the destiny of the nation.

YONE NOGUCHI

Nakano, Japan.

ENVY

I ENVY you, I envy you,
amid the rumble and hoot and clatter
of London's traffic.

Happy pair!
Your left and right hands drop
and find each other
and wring each other.

White in the sun
from hat to shoes,
only the pink of your ankles showing
through the white stockings.

Straight-limbed,
firm-bosomed,
soft in the folds of your blouse.

And you, O Youth,
with the flush on your cheeks,
in your eyes a happy admiration,
I envy you.

Your hands seek and wring each other;
your limbs attract each other
through their clothing;
and you would marry
if this and that concurred.
Foolish, oh foolish!
It is not your youth,
your straightness, your cleanness, your bloom,
I envy;
it is your virginity.
You would part with it in a burst of joy,
and would not know your loss,
perceiving it.

But beauty,— . . .
do you not feel it upon you? . . .
Strive to reach the grape, but do not pluck it.
The gesture is all.

F. S. FLINT

PASSING PARIS

A PASSAGE from M. Pierre Mille in his charming *En Croupe de Bellone* (Crès, 1 fr. 25):

"You're not cross with me at least, are you?"

"And why should I be?"

"For being a refugee. For a refugee, I may tell you, is a man who sits down at your table, who eats as though he had been fasting for a fortnight, and sometimes he may have been. And who says afterwards: 'Ah! I don't feel at home.' . . ." He was full of energy, certain of victory. The home, the works, would be rebuilt. Things would go well after the war—business would be better than ever. And with the businesslike manner natural to his compatriots he pointed out what would have to be done to set things going again. But suddenly he interrupted himself:

"D'you know what moved me most, what won't leave my head?"

"No. The ruins, the fires, the bombardment?"

"It should be that. And yet it is something else. . . . I am almost ashamed to own up to it, it is almost trivial . . . it was when they came in, those Germans! They sang. . . ."

"Well?"

"Well, I knew those people were stained with crimes, I knew they were the assassins of Belgium; but I could not help admiring. It was so beautiful! They marched parade-fashion in that step which is so ridiculous; their uniforms, a dirty green colour, were covered with wine and grease—filthy! But all that was lost in their song. Grave songs, in three parts, semi-religious. Not a voice was out of tune, all were in time; in a word, music, real music, popular tunes, but not vulgar, simple and yet learned. And at that moment I was, I tell you, more wretched than ever! I thought: 'We shall be victorious, I am sure; we shall chase them from here, we shall impose peace terms which shall keep them from doing harm—but *that* we shall never have!' Can you explain to me why it seems impossible to revive a popular sense of true music in France?"

I could not explain, but it seems to me too evident that most unfortunately he is right. Certain southern departments excepted, there is no doubt that our popular soul is to-day incapable of expression otherwise than by unisons, and what unisons! Ninety-nine Frenchmen out of a hundred are unable to retain a single musical phrase which might happen to be—I will not say complicated but a little long. . . . The popular French ideal of music takes the form of the most stupidly sentimental waltz on the one hand or, on the other, of the vulgar nigger chorus: degradation of both joy and melancholy, impotence in serene, grave enthusiasm. . . .

So much also for "Tipperary" and the British musical nullity which M. Pierre Mille tries to explain away by the substitution of barbarity by civilization—an explanation which is like a *sortie de secours*, or an escape from a dilemma.

* * * *

From the same author:

All that is terrible, and I say: "It is terrible." But what is cruellest of all, most humiliating, is that my horror comes not from my senses, but from my reason, because my nerves expected it, knew it, have worn out their capacity of suffering and revolt. The refugee is not shocked by this callousness.

"I am like you," he said. "When I came there on the way from Holland I was so well prepared for what I saw that it didn't touch me; no, not in the least, not even to see my house fallen into the cellar. I should never have thought that so much hardness of heart could be opposed to one's own pain. It's probably because the calamity is too big, universal. One says to oneself: 'No doubt, it had to take place.' Or perhaps one fails to understand; it is beyond one's grasp, like a noise which is so loud that it stuns you. But there is one thing that tears the heart, all the same. You may have seen everything without weeping; but that *must* move you to tears.

"Oh! it is nothing, nothing at all. One blushes that it should so impress one. . . . I don't need to tell you that in that country every one has a dog: these for sport or as pets, those as watch-dogs. And they have stayed in the town, these dogs, when the inhabitants fled or were shot; they have stayed in a town where not a single stone is in its place. How they keep alive, how they do not die of starvation, I cannot tell you. No doubt they do their own hunting, catch rats, scour the country. But they return as fast as they can and all group together at the entrance to the town, on the road.

"There may be two hundred of them, perhaps three—hounds, spaniels, sheep-dogs, terriers, even lapdogs, tiny ridiculous animals; and they wait, with their heads turned in the same direction with a look of intensely sad and passionate interest. What they are expecting is easy to understand. Sometimes one of the former citizens of the town makes up his mind and comes back from Holland. The longing to see his country, to find out what has been made of his house, to rout among the ruins, is stronger than everything, than fear or hatred. And sometimes it happens that one of the dogs *recognizes him.* His dog! If you could see that! Could you but imagine it! This flock of dogs, with ears pointing as far as they can, see a man on the road from Holland, a man without a helmet, not in uniform. The painful anxiety, the motionless anxiety of all these staring beasts, staring as hard as they can—dogs have not very good eyes—and who scent, scent at a long distance, because their noses

are better than their eyes. And at last the leap, the great leap, of one of these dogs when it has smelt its master; its wild, savage race on the road, ravaged and furrowed by guns and heavy motor convoys; its joy, its joyful bark, its dancing tail, its skipping paws, its licking tongue, its whole body which is one tremor of joy! It doesn't leave the man now, it doesn't want to lose him again. For a day, or two days, it sticks to his back, without eating, and leaves with him. But the others, what becomes of them? They are always on the road, always on duty. And when they see the dog leave, the dog which has at last found what they want always, what they want till their last day, they all raise their snouts in despair and whine, whine for ever, with great howls filling the heavens and which last till there's nothing left on the road. Then they stop; but they don't budge. They remain. They hope.

"And you weep, monsieur, when you see that: you weep like they do—floods of tears. I beg your pardon. . . ."

To be also especially recommended in this collection: *La Mort du Gentleman*, wherein it is shown that conscription makes an end of that peculiarly British speciality.

* * * *

The Prix Goncourt has been awarded to M. Henri Barbusse, whose *L'Enfer* was reviewed in these columns last year. Few, if any, other English publications had, I believe, dealt with it. Since then M. Barbusse has published *Le Feu*, which obtained the prize. The attribution for 1914 has not yet been voted.

* * * *

The death has occurred of Théodule Ribot, the philosopher—who resented being thus qualified—author of *L'Attention*, *Les Maladies de la Volonté*, *Les Maladies de la Mémoire*, etc., which went through as many editions as popular novels. Other of his works studied the *Passions*, the *Logic of Sentiments*, the *Creative Imagination*. Théodule Ribot discovered two new principles: psycho-physiology and psycho-pathology—which discoveries founded a school of investigators. He realized that the study of the unhealthy condition was as essential in psycho-philosophical research as the study of the healthy form.

M. C.

EZRA POUND

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF JEAN DE BOSSCHÈRE

II

NOW we come to the *Lustra* of Ezra Pound. It is the moment to get away from myself and ask what other people think about Pound. What position has he in the crowd of poets? In the "portrait" of Pound I sketched out an appreciation of his worth, but Mr. Carl Sandburg has looked at the poet's work from a great distance—from across the Atlantic. His judgment is concerned rather with the work or the attitude of the man than with the man himself. Mr. Sandburg writes:

> If I were driven to name one individual who, in the English language, by means of his own examples of creative art in poetry, has done most of living men to incite new impulses in poetry, the chances are I would name Ezra Pound.
>
> This statement is made reservedly, out of knowing the work of Pound and being somewhat close to it three years or so. . . .
>
> If, however, as a friendly stranger in a smoking compartment, you should casually ask me for an off-hand opinion as to who is the best man writing poetry to-day, I should probably answer, "Ezra Pound." All talk on modern poetry, by people who know, ends by dragging in Ezra Pound somewhere. He may be named only to be cursed as wanton and mocker, *poseur*, trifler, and vagrant. Or he may be classed as filling a niche to-day like that of Keats in a preceding epoch. The point is, he will be mentioned.

That is true. First of all, Pound will be mentioned because he is the best-known poet of his generation. Is it because he is the best poet? Who is the greatest French, German, Russian, or Italian poet to-day? One might ask this question of the Academies, of the Nobel tribunals. Their answer would certainly not be the same as ours. Not because we should give another name, but a whole list of names, where probably the one quoted by the wiseacres would not be found.

Every good poet has a group of qualities which make him a poet. Is he who possesses all those we know of the truest poet? Is it he who, lacking in several, possesses a new quality in an unusual degree? Is there a hierarchy among these qualities? Is there a certain inferiority of talent for which the finest gifts will not atone? Do not let us try to class Pound or any other poet.

But there is a point at which one can define. We can say with a little more certainty in what degree such and such a poet has one of the poetic qualities. It remains to be seen whether we are all agreed as to the value of this quality, or whether it is the kind that will shine out in the woof of the poetic fabric.

If the name of Pound comes into all discussions on art it is because he has, to an unusual degree, certain qualities, and that at least two of them are very apparent, and greatly appreciated.

He is free and without rhetoric—no one more so. His vision is direct; he does not use the image, but shows the things themselves with power. This is indeed a quality of the *Imagistes*. His independence comes from the fact that he has dug into the past with a keener mind, and more profoundly than is necessary for ordinary culture. The number of influences he has passed under have also freed him, and he has made his departure from the known with rare audacity.

Formulæ and rules no longer limit and cut off his perspectives, but are a pretext for breaking loose. He does not respect originals. How indeed can a poet be made out of any one who has not destroyed or pulled down everything, if only for a few hours?

The poet is a sceptic madly in love, who wants in spite of everything to create his dream. Up to now Pound has beaten out a path for his creations; he uproots weeds of æsthetics and morals; he makes one look in front, not to the side, or through a veil of passive acceptance. Everywhere his poems incite man to exist, to profess a becoming egotism, without which there can be no real altruism.

> I beseech you enter your life.
> I beseech you learn to say "I"
> When I question you.
> For you are no part, but a whole;
> No portion, but a being.

That at least is the illusion he gives at moments when one wants to see the world as a poet; that is to say in one's most lucid and human moments. One must believe in one's own existence, and this faith begins with negation. One must be capable of reacting to stimuli for a moment, as a real, live person, even in face of as much of one's own powers as are arrayed against one, balanced by an immediate avowal:

> And who are we, who know that last intent,
> To plague to-morrow with a testament!

But a kind of disease called hope cannot be cut out of a man's heart. He goes on believing in the successive moments. It is great poetry, the intimate drama of this struggle, to go on believing in spite of the appearance of emptiness. The groans, the

virile complaint, the revolt of the poet, all which shows his emotion—that is poetry.

Speak against unconscious oppression,
Speak against the tyranny of the unimaginative,
Speak against bonds.

Be against all forms of oppression,
Go out and defy opinion.

This is the old cry of the poet, but more precise, as an expression of frank disgust:

Go to the adolescent who are smothered in family.
O, how hideous it is
To see three generations of one house gathered together!
It is like an old tree without shoots,
And with some branches rotted and failing.

Each poem holds out of these cries of revolt or disgust, but they are the result of his still hoping and feeling:

Let us take arms against this sea of stupidities.

But despite the irony, one feels his emotion:

O World, I am sorry for you.
O most unfortunate age!

Nevertheless, he often rises into peace and the impersonal; he wants to detach himself, and says:

Why should we stop at all for what I think?

Pound knows very well what awaits him. He has experience of the folly of the Philistines who read his verse. Real pain is born of this stupid interpretation, and one does not realize how deep it is unless one can feel, through the ejaculations and laughter, what has caused these wounds, which are made deeper by what he knows, and what he has lost.

In a crude poem he has also expressed his surprise and anger:

O my fellow-sufferers, songs of my youth,
A lot of asses praise you because you are "virile";
We, you, I! We are "Red Bloods"!
Imagine it, my fellow-sufferers—
Our maleness lifts us out of the ruck;
Who'd have foreseen it?

O my fellow-sufferers, we went out under the trees,
We were in especial bored with male stupidity.
We went forth gathering delicate thoughts,
Our *fantastikon* delighted to serve us.
We were not exasperated with women,
for the female is ductile.
And now you hear what is said to us:
We are compared to that sort of person
Who wanders about announcing his sex
As if he had just discovered it.
Let us leave this matter, my songs,
and return to that which concerns us.

His appeal to strength and liberty can only be understood by such Philistines as a sort of pornography, or at least, as an appeal to brute force.

III

The verses I have quoted show how far he is from any deception. His tone is admirable when he thus speaks the truth. It is familiar, but so permeated with truth that it seems harsh. The irony only decreases to make way for mischief, and then mischief gives way to sarcasm.

This tone, which is at once jocund and keen, is one of Pound's qualities. Ovid, Catullus—he does not disown them. He only uses these accents for his familiars; with the others he is on the edge of paradox, pamphleteering, indeed of abuse. When he comes out of his distraction he seems to end by taking one's arm. Often his manner is more brusque. Elsewhere he paints in a homely way, sometimes with corroded colours. And sometimes he speaks behind the scenes.

"Let there be commerce between us," he says to Walt Whitman. "I make a pact with you, Walt Whitman—I have detested you long enough."

Then he is charming. "Or with two light feet, if it please you!"

But nowhere do the movement and the tone unite so well to create a sense of strange life as in the verses where he announces Hermes. They pant, they are hurried; he foresees that he is not alone; that Hermes, the ingenious rascal, the malicious catcher of men, follows him: he foresees mockery, and that one must speak despite the presence of the god:

The fricksome Hermes is here;
He moves behind me
Eager to catch my words,
Eager to spread them with rumour,
To set upon them his change
Crafty or subtle;
To alter them to his purpose;
But do thou speak true, even to the letter.

This emphasis, this brusque note, and his way of putting things are an important part of his technique—if there be here a technique.

I have said that his images are designs from nature, not transpositions, metaphors, nor fragments of allegories, derived from elements of symbolism.

Read this modern painting, hard as a triangle. I give it both for the rhythm and the hard, clear outline, with its colours of an Oriental market:

THE STUDY IN ÆSTHETICS

The very small children in patched clothing,
Being smitten with an unusual wisdom,
Stopped in their play as she passed them
And cried up from their cobbles,
Guarda! Ahi, guarda! ch' è be' a!

But three years after this
I heard the young Dante, whose name I do not know—
For there are, in Sirmione, twenty-eight young
Dantes and thirty-four Catulli.

And there had been a great catch of sardines,
And his elders
Were packing them in the great wooden boxes
For the market in Brescia, and he
Leapt about, snatching at the bright fish
And getting in both of their ways;
And in vain they commanded him to *sta fermo!*
And when they would not let him arrange
The fish in the boxes
He stroked those which were already arranged,
Murmuring for his own satisfaction
This identical phrase,
Ch' è be' a.
And at this I was mildly abashed.

I quote these other lines and no more.

"I have seen their smiles full of teeth." "And the fish swim in the lake and do not even own clothing" (from *Salutation*). "Thy face as a river with lights."

Here the image is opposed to the object, as in a dyptich, like Homer, but it is triumphantly simple. Some poems are formed of an uninterrupted succession of clear, bold patterns. Elsewhere, among abstract thoughts, he throws out a splendid phrase, like the stroke of an axe, a flash of silver. "Unkillable infants of the poor," he says, with a shake of the head. "Black lightning." "But seems like a person just gone"—a line which is a true image.

The poem *Salutation*, from which I have quoted two verses, is a series of delightfully original *mots*. In short, I repeat, in spite of all his literary inspirations and all his conscious imitation, Pound is the most original of life's spectators. In the ancient world of verse he is seldom old.

(*To be concluded*)

[NOTE. The drawing of Mr. Pound in the last issue of THE EGOIST was by M. Jean de Bosschère, the writer of the article.—EDITOR.]

TARR

BY WYNDHAM LEWIS

PART V

A MEGRIM OF HUMOUR

CHAPTER V

TARR soon regretted this last anti-climax stage of his adventure. He would have left Kreisler alone in future, but he felt that by frequenting him he could save Bertha from something disagreeable. With disquiet and misgiving every night now he sat in front of his Prussian friend. He watched him gradually imbibing enough spirits to work him up to his pitch of characteristic madness.

"After all, let us hear really what it all means, your Kreisler stunt, and Kreisler?" he said to her four or five days after his reappearance. "Do you know that I act as a dam, or rather a dyke, to his outrageous flood of liquorous spirits every night? Only my insignificant form is between you and destruction, or you and a very unpleasant Kreisler, at any rate.—Have you seen him when he's drunk?—What, after all, does *Kreisler* mean? Satisfy my curiosity."

Bertha shuddered and looked at him with dramatically wide-open eyes, as though there were no answer.

"It's nothing, Sorbert, nothing," she said, as though Kreisler were the bubonic plague and she were making light of it.

Yet a protest had to be made. He had rather neglected the coincidence of his arrival and Bertha's refusal to see Kreisler. He must avoid finding himself manœuvred into appearing the cause. A tranquil and sentimental revenant was the rôle he had chosen. Up to a point he encouraged Bertha to see his boon companion and relax her sudden exclusiveness. He hesitated to carry out thoroughly his part of go-between and reconciler. At length he began to make inquiries. After all, to have to hold back his successor to the favours of a lady, from going and seizing those rights (presumably temporarily denied him), was a strange situation. At any moment now it seemed likely that Kreisler would turn on him. This would simplify matters. Better leave lovers to fight out their own quarrels and not take up the ungrateful rôle of interferer and voluntary policeman. All his retrospective pleasure was being spoilt. But he was committed to remain there for the present. To get over his sensation of dupe, he was more sociable with Kreisler than he felt. The German interpreted this as an hypocrisy. His contempt and suspicion of the peculiar revenant grew.

Bertha was tempted to explain, in as dramatic a manner as possible, the situation to Tarr. But she hesitated always because she thought it would lead to a fight. She was often, as it was, anxious for Tarr.

"Sorbert, I think I'll go to Germany at once," she said to him, on the afternoon of his second visit to Renée Lipmann's.

"Why, because you're afraid of Kreisler?"

"No, but I think it's better."

"But why, all of a sudden?"

"My sister will be home from Berlin, in a day or two——"

"And you'd leave me here to 'mind' the dog."

"No.—Don't see Kreisler any more, Sorbert. Dog is the word indeed! He is mad: *ganz verucht!*—Promise me, Sorbert"—she took his hand—"not to go to the café any more!"

"Do you want him at your door at twelve to-night?—I feel I may be playing the part of—gooseberry, is it——?"

"Don't, Sorbert. If you only knew!—He was here this morning, hammering for nearly half an hour. But all I ask you is to go to the café no more. There is no need for you to be mixed up in all this. I only am to blame."

"I wonder what is the real explanation of Kreisler?" Sorbert said, pulled up by what she had said. "Have you known him long—before you knew me, for instance?"

"No, only a week or two—since you went away."

"I must ask Kreisler. But he seems to have very primitive notions about himself."

"Don't bother any more with that man, Sorbert. You don't do any good. Don't go to the café to-night!"

"Why to-night?"

"Any night."

Kreisler certainly was a "new link"—too much. The chief cause of separation had become an element of insidious *rapprochement*.

He left her silently apprehensive, staring at him mournfully.

So that night, after his second visit to Fräulein Lipmann's, he did not seek out Kreisler at his usual headquarters with his first enthusiasm.

CHAPTER VI

ALREADY before a considerable pile of saucers, representing his evening's menu of drink, Kreisler sat quite still, his eyes very bright, smiling to himself. Tarr did not at once ask him "what Kreisler meant." "Kreisler" looked as though it meant something a little different on that particular evening. He acknowledged Tarr's arrival slightly, seeming to include him in his reverie. It was a sort of silent invitation to "come inside." Then they sat without speaking, an unpleasant atmosphere of police-court romance for Tarr.

Tarr still kept his retrospective luxury before him, as it maintained the Kreisler side of the business in a desired perspective. Anastasya, whom he had seen that evening, had come as a diversion. He got back, with her, into the sphere of "real" things again, not fanciful retrospective ones.

This would be a reply to Kreisler (an Anastasya for your Otto) and restore the balance. At present they were existing on a sort of three-legged affair. This inclusion of the fourth party would make things solid and less precarious again.

To maintain his rôle of intermediary and go on momentarily keeping his eye on Kreisler's threatening figure, he must himself be definitely engaged in a new direction, beyond the suspicion of hankerings after his old love.

Did he wish to enter into a new attachment with Anastasya? That could be decided later. He would make the first steps, retain her if possible, and out of this charming expedient pleasant things might come. He was compelled to requisition her for the moment. She might be regarded as a travelling companion. Thrown together inevitably on a stage-coach journey, anything might happen. Delight, adventure, and amusement was always achieved: as his itch to see his humorous concubine is turned into a "retrospective luxury," visits to the Lipmann circle, mysterious relationship with Kreisler. This,

in its turn, suddenly turning rather prickly and perplexing, he now, through the medium of a beautiful woman, turns it back again into fun; not serious enough for Beauty, destined, therefore, rather for her subtle, rough, satiric sister.

Once Anastasya had been relegated to her place rather of expediency, he could think of her with more freedom. He looked forward with gusto to his work in her direction.

There would be no harm in anticipating a little. She might at once be brought on to the boards, as though the affair were already settled and ripe for publicity.

"Do you know a girl called Anastasya Vasek? She is to be found at your German friend's, Fräulein Lipmann's."

"Yes, I know her," said Kreisler, looking up with unwavering blankness. His introspective smile vanished. "What then?" was implied in his look. What a fellow this Englishman was, to be sure! What was he after now? Anastasya was a much more delicate point with him than Bertha.

"I've just got to know her. She's a charming girl, isn't she?" Tarr could not quite make out Kreisler's reception of these innocent remarks.

"Is she?" Kreisler looked at him almost with astonishment.

There is a point in life beyond which we must hold people responsible for accidents and their unconsciousness. Innocence then loses its meaning. Beyond this point Tarr had transgressed. Whether Tarr knew anything or not, the essential reality was that Tarr was beginning to get at him with Anastasya, just having been for a week a problematic and officious figure suddenly appearing between him and his prey of the Rue Martine. The habit of civilized restraint had kept Kreisler baffled and passive for a week. Annoyance at Bertha's access of self-will had been converted into angry interest in his new self-elected boon companion. He had been preparing lately, though, to borrow money from him. Anastasya brought on the scene was another kettle of fish.

What did this Tarr's proceedings say? They said: "Bertha Lunken will have nothing more to do with you. You mustn't annoy her any more. In the meantime, I am getting on very well with Anastasya Vasek!"

A question that presented itself to Kreisler was whether Tarr had heard the whole story of his assault on his late fiancée? The possibility of his knowing this increased his contempt for Tarr.

Kreisler was disarmed for the moment by the remembrance of Anastasya. By the person he had regarded as peculiarly accessible becoming paradoxically out of his reach, the most distant and inaccessible—such as Anastasya—seemed to be drawn a little nearer.

"Is Fräulein Vasek working in a studio?" he asked.

"She's at Serrano's, I think," Tarr told him.

"So you go to Fräulein Lipmann's?"

"Sometimes."

Kreisler reflected a little.

"I should like to see her again."

Tarr began to scent another mysterious muddle. Would he never be free of Herr Kreisler? Perhaps he was going to be followed and rivalled in this too? With deliberate meditation Kreisler appeared to be coming round to Tarr's opinion. For his part too, Fräulein Vasek was a nice young lady. "Yes, she is nice!" His manner began to suggest that Tarr had put her forward as a substitute for Bertha!

For the rest of the evening Kreisler insisted upon talking about Anastasya. How was she dressed? Had she mentioned him? etc. Tarr felt inclined to say, "But you don't understand! She is for *me*. *Bertha* is your young lady now!" Only in reflecting on this possible remark, he was confronted with the obvious reply, "But *is* Bertha my young lady?"

(To be continued)

CORRESPONDENCE

DREISER PROTEST

To the Editor of THE EGOIST

MADAM,—In your December number "A Member of the Authors' League of America" attacked me for my outspoken criticism of my own disgraced and unfortunate country. I have not replied until now, as I wished to learn something of this "Authors' League." I am now able to supply from their own official stationery a list of their "Council," "Executive Board," etc.

I beg the reader to witness the number of professional "red-bloods," and of writers of the sentimental-suggestive, boudoir-and-delicious-caresses type of novel, who have NOT supported the Dreiser protest. These leading lights of American Democracy are banded together presumably for the protection of the rights of authors and of literature. Many of them have not only failed to support Dreiser's fearless and unexaggerated realism, but cowering before the successor to Anthony Comstock of foul and ridiculous memory, the majority of them have combined together and DISMISSED the former secretary of their society BECAUSE he showed himself too active in organizing the protest against the suppression of Dreiser's book.

O patria mia, vedo le mura e gli archi as usual, and the cowardice of a servile democracy, also as usual, and the pusillanimity of America's popular writers, also as usual, and the inactive timidity of America's "elder generation of *literati*," also as usual, and my contempt for these national characteristics remains unaltered—as usual.

I append the list of officials and have starred those who have signed the protest: seventeen out of a council of sixty.

EZRA POUND

January 22, 1917.

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(*Continued from page* 20)

sensation *red*, while another of a different wave-length should be accompanied by that of *green*. Now why indeed? The whole meaning and purport of science is involved in the answer.

(20) What is it that science does? It watches things happen in order to enable itself to say WHEN they happen. The elucidation of the "when" of events is the whole business of science. It seeks to know under just *what conditions assembled* specific events take place. That is: the business of science in any given case is to take note on an event's concomitants. Its motive in doing so is obvious. The ambition of science is to be able to issue guaranteed *recipes* for reproducing all events whatsoever. Its entire attitude is constructive; it seeks to do; it reproduces *by reassembling* the invariably concomitant conditions of any event: which same concomitants it calls the event's *cause*. Thus the process of science consist of two stages: (1) of descriptive assertions saying what events occur, giving *all* the concomitant conditions *whenever* they occur, and (2) of descriptive assertions of the same event under varying conditions giving only such concomitants as invariably recur under *all* conditions. When science has delivered itself of this last description it holds that it has furnished the event's *cause*; and it would claim that by reassembling just those conditions the event could moreover be made and remade again at will. The first stage might be called that of description, and the second stage the explanatory; but obviously, at root, both stages are descriptive equally and solely. Explanation is detailed and compared description. It is description very carefully done. So: for science, things happen—thus and thus—whereupon science obediently recites how. Science *accepts* happenings. It asks nothing and gets to know nothing as to *why* they happen. Obedience and acceptation of the inexorableness of events is science's whole attitude. In that way, and in that way only does it find it can bring them to terms; for science apprehends that while they are inexorable, they are pliant and manageable within the limits of their inexorableness.

(21) Let us recite some of the simplest assertions science makes. It says, for instance, that every particle of matter in the universe attracts every other particle with a force of fixed potentialities for all given cases. It says that two gases, H and O, combine under certain conditions and in certain proportions as water. It says that liquids become gases under definite conditions. It tells tales of magic like this: "Rub a glass rod with a silk handkerchief. The rod will then have power to attract a pith-ball. The handkerchief will have likewise. But once let the rod *touch* the ball and lo and behold, the handkerchief will *repel* the pith-ball!" Or it will say that if the tips of two carbon pencils to which are attached wires charged respectively with negative and positive electric currents are brought almost together a bright flame will establish itself between them. Or it will say that if you bring a small quantity of gunpowder into contact with a tiny spark, you will get an explosion disproportionately large compared with either of them. And so on, and so on. Let the tale be simple or complex, most commonplace-seeming or the most recondite magic, the basic characteristic of every instance is the same. All are assertions as to when things happen. Never are they statements explaining *why* things happen.

If when science has pushed its observations deeper and deeper and is able to give an account of the *when* on a level which grows correspondingly wide as it grows deep, the *when* of a more superficial happening may for convenience in reference be regarded as a corollary of the wider generalization. But that is merely a matter of economy of statement and enumeration. It does not mean that the superficial happening is *caused* by the more comprehensively stated happening in the sense that the latter affords a *reason* why the former happens.

What science calls a law is merely a compendious way of grouping a vast number of statements about specific happenings under one big "general" statement. The assertion embodying what is called a universal law differs from that embodying an isolated happening in its quantitative bearing only. In *kind*, both are identical. Both are assertions to the *when*; neither has a shred of bearing on any *why*.

(22) If our account appears doubtful let us return to our scientific instances and charge into them with a phalanx of "why's." *Why* do all particles of matter attract one another? Why do they not rather fly apart? Why do not bodies *flee* the earth? Why do not H and O combine as something other than water? Why should like electric poles so persistently repel? "No reason in the world can be assigned" why they should not bethink themselves and *attract*. Why do the two opposite currents passing through the carbon tips create a flame? Why do they not rather play a tune? Why does not gunpowder greeted by a spark gracefully dissolve as a dewdrop or a sweetly exciting odour? Why, oh why? As the children say, "*Because;* they do because they do, and they don't because they don't": which being translated means that the notion of cause has here outstepped its province. The intrusion here of a *why* is an absurdity. These are not the circumstances in which science knows of any *why*. Science knows only of *when's*, and if the term *why* makes any appearance whatsoever among the causal connexions investigated by science it is actually the term *when* itself wearing a disguise. Of the *why* used as the author whom we quote uses it, in the sense of *motive* or *reason*, scientific investigation reveals not a trace. An interesting chapter in philosophy indeed awaits the writing. If the task is undertaken by a writer of the old school, the chapter through sheer persistency of habit will appear as "The true nature of cause." If it is written by one of the new school it will be "The function of the term why: a definition"!

(23) The inference we shall draw herefrom in reference to psycho-parallelism is obvious. In their desire to remain faithful to the dualistic conception of phenomena, philosophers have been driven to truly desperate proceedings. They have in the first place been driven to conceive and acknowledge such conditions of concomitance, correspondence, and correlation between neural and conscious facts as *in themselves* fulfil all the requirements necessary to establish the relationship of scientific cause and effect! Having done so, and as their sole answer to the obvious, they have thereupon distorted the whole meaning of science by demanding from it an answer to a species of question which it is an absurdity to ask! Still not content with their exploits, some of them have added insult to injury and declared that owing to a native defect inhering in the human intellect, a riddle has been propounded too subtle for solution while consciousness lasts! In our opinion, however, there is a very much shorter way with riddles of this description.

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