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NIGHTCAPS

The Gentle Art of Reading in Bed
Explained and Illustrated

BY

E. B. OSBORN

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TO
GEORGE SAINTSBURY

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E. B. O.

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INTRODUCTION

ON BED-SIDE BOOKS

I

IT was Chaucer who began the business of making a small selection of bed-side books—for other people. He says and sings of his Clerk of Oxenford:

> For hym was levere have at his bedde's head
> Twenty bookés clad in blak or red
> Of Aristotle and his philosophie,
> Than robés riche or fithele or gay sautrie . . .

It was the custom of such poor unworldly scholars in the Oxford of Chaucer's age to do a good deal of hard reading in their beds in winter-time so as to save firewood, supposing they had any. I can see them in their dormitory, reciting *barbara celarent* through their noses like the school-children they were, and wishing the bitter black frost would break, or that some kind-hearted *Magister* would send the surly porter up with a gift of logs so that they could have a cheerful blaze and get up to drink hot beer and play marbles for a change. They were all wretchedly poor and compelled to pursue their studies with many

a hungry belly. Very few of them owned as many as twenty books—the average poor scholar had to stand in the college library by the hour and read in one of the iron-bound tomes chained to the high desks. How Chaucer's thread-bare clerk acquired his library who shall say? But we may be sure he lent them willingly to the other lads in his dormitory and often thought of the donors with a full heart:

> And bisily gan for the soule's preye
> Of hem that gaf him where-with to scoleye.

B-r-r . . . reading in bed at Oxford in winter-time was never done, even in our later luxurious days, except by those sad serious creatures who did not know of Jowett's wise maxim: "Never drudge," and sacrificed what was football or cricket sleep for their joyous companions ("Bed at eleven," was W. G.'s advice to young cricketers, though the "Old Man" himself never practised what he preached) and in the end got what their squandering of delicate darkness deserved —a Second! In the violet hours of the Oxford mid-summer, however, there were times when even the aspiring athlete could not sleep after turning in, and would read a novel or a book of verse until the tall window was filled with grey light and the birds began twittering. All my life I have been plagued on such occasions by some small strange fowl that repeats the words: "Pen-and-ink! pen-and-ink!" with a curious ironical intonation, and once he begins his metallic ditty the last chance of sleep has vanished.

No naturalist could ever tell me his scientific name, so I have always regarded him as an affliction peculiar and personal to myself, a sort of familiar spirit no bigger than a minute. If I am caught reading in bed late at night in these latter days, there is a fair Destiny who comes and says to me: "The Pen-and-ink bird is coming," and I put the book under my pillow for the morning and, if sleep is slow in coming, I have devices for passing the time pleasantly—nay, even profitably—that were unknown to the learned old Burton—of these devices more anon! But in the far, fair days when I was a Clerk of Oxenford, sleep as a rule arrived simultaneously with putting out the lamp, with turning on the soft and soothing darkness; and it was so with nearly all my fellow-citizens in that lost city of Eternal Youth. Indeed, it was only during one of the piratical love-affairs, which flamed up and blossomed at the beginning of Eights Week and were ashes of roses at the end, that the youth *bene natus, bene vestitus, moderate doctus* ever sat up to ponder the wan face of the Moon and re-discover Astrophel's sad conceit:

> What! may it be that even in heavenly place
> That busy archer his sharp arrows tries?
> Sure, if that long-with-love-acquainted eyes
> Can judge of love, thou feel'st a lover's case;
> I read it in thy looks; thy languished grace
> To me, that feel the like, thy state descries.

He was then likely to enter on a little course of reading or even writing in bed; being less like

Chaucer's young "philosophre" than his squire, that undying type of the gentle young Englishman, so easily kindled and so "curteis" and "servysáble":

> He koudé songés make and wel endite,
> Juste and eke daunce and weel purtreye and write.
> So hoote he lovéde that by nyghtertale
> He sleep namoore than dooth a nyghtyngale.

So he would lie awake in his narrow bed, reading in the golden book of English love-poems or even trying to add to their number.

This prelude has acquired an agreeable warmth, but it began in a bleak and cheerless fashion. I have been wondering how to work in the explanation. Just before beginning to write it, with a laden mind that parted as reluctantly with its contents as a full bottle of wine tilted upside-down, I had been reading some observations of Lord Grey of Fallodon on a curious and comfortable way of reading in bed. When he was threatened with blindness he learnt to read the Braille type for the sightless and found it a great comfort, because it made it possible to keep the book under the coverlet on a cold Northumbrian night and to doze off with a finger on the very word at which he had stopped reading. This suggests a new use for Braille, that inestimable boon for the blind. Incorrigible bed-readers have only to learn to read the embossed type and procure copies in it of their favourite authors to be able to economise in candles or electric light, and at the same time save their eyes. It is only in Spartan households,

where guests are not allowed fires in their bed-rooms, that such a precaution against getting one's hands frozen would ever be necessary. In these days, however, the house-pride of one's hostess almost always provides even the humblest visitor with a well-warmed bed-room, though it sometimes happens that the bed itself is of a kind which would hardly be tolerated by a French peasant. In France nobody ever forgets that human beings spend a third of their natural lives in bed, and that thick well-stuffed mattresses, warm all-wool blankets and cool linen sheets are essentials of living as a fine art. The French bed is a white, fragrant elysium, even if it be not a temple of Cupid and Psyche; and the solitary bliss of slipping sleepily into it always recalls to me the lines in Marvell's most wonderful poem:

> Two Paradises 'twere in one
> To live in Paradise alone.

No wonder that the De Goncourt brothers, when vexed by anything which awakened their sense of a cosmical grievance, invariably went to bed and stayed there until the cosmos had readjusted itself. A sarcastic criticism, the inability to find a *mot juste*, the loss of a perfect mistress—any such irritating incident, or grain of sand in the mechanism of life, would cause them to take refuge, with an armful of favourite books, in the white embraces of the finest and most complaisant sheets that money could buy, sheets that had been laundered by hand and

dried in morning zephyrs and laid by among branches of lavender. In England, however, the ruffled genius can never be sure of such a citadel of refuge. I have recollections of beds in quite opulent households which afflicted me like drinking cold claret or hearing a governess play Chopin or reading Mr. Arnold Bennett's essays. One very horrid recollection is that of staying in the house of a Church dignitary—a sort of Archdeacon Grantly—who put me in a bed-room facing north, with a bed that was like a pebbly beach and a bed-side table on which reposed a Bible, a Prayer-book, and a tiny volume of Pious Ejaculations. But that was not the worst of it. The sheets were of cotton, if you will believe me, and all night long I suffered a thousand times the physical exasperation experienced by the Etonian in the anecdote when he saw somebody wearing cotton gloves. It is surprising what mankind can endure and yet go on living; I survived that night of torture and breakfasted heartily and was reasonably polite to my host. As Nicias said in that fatal speech delivered when the Syracusan quarries yawned for the shattered remnant of the Athenian Expeditionary Force: "Others too, having done what men may, have borne what men must."

II

It is alas! no longer possible to evade facing the preposterous problem of making a selection of twenty

bed-side books for other people to read. Fortunately, I can evade all personal responsibility—for the task has been recently attempted by the excellent little journal which is edited by "John o' London,"[1] a gentleman whose love of literature and wide reading are to-day a noble contagion throughout the country. Thanks to his charming weekly, where one devout lover of books formerly existed, two or three are now gathered together. The late Maurice Hewlett (I was reading his "Forest Lovers" in bed during the worst heat wave last summer) started the discussion with the following list: (1) The Iliad; (2) Theocritus; (3) The Odes of Horace; (4) Dante's "Divine Comedy"; (5) "The Canterbury Tales"; (6) "Henry IV." (both parts); (7) "As You Like It"; (8) "A Midsummer Night's Dream"; (9) "Lycidas"; (10) "The Ancient Mariner"; (11) Montaigne; (12) Browne's "Religio Medici"; (13) Cowper's Letters; (14) Elia's "Essays" and "Last Essays"; (15) "Don Quixote"; (16) "The Heart of Midlothian"; (17) Heine; (18) Pascal's "Pensées"; (19) Dasent's "Burnt Njal"; (20) "Le Morte Darthur." A noble company, to be sure—but some quite cultured persons would no more think of inviting Dante to sit by the side of their beds than they would of asking the Archbishop of Canterbury to join them in strolling down the Strand. The selection has a suspicious resemblance to the lists of "The Hundred Best Books" (or any lesser number) which somebody

[1] Mr. Wilfrid Whitten.

was always compiling in the years before the war. It was submitted to other literary celebrities, who in turn submitted their own more or less confidential lists to John o' London's readers. Two personages gave reasonable reasons for refusing to send any list at all. Mr. H. A. L. Fisher, replying through his secretary, said that he never read in bed but used it solely as a place for sleeping. Evidently he is one of those fortunate people who can sleep whenever they choose—a rare gift, even among open-air men of action, in this neurotic age. I once knew a statesman who attributed his success to being able to snatch a few minutes' sleep in the House, or even on a public platform, whenever he felt he wanted it. His brother was an equally successful diplomatist who confessed that his career was due to a gift for graceful apologising—he would deliberately create opportunities for its exercise. Miss Rebecca West also refused to make out a list to placate the harmless ghost of the Clerk of Oxenford, not on the score that bed was solely a place for sleeping in, but because she would as soon have robés riche at her bedde's head as bookés. Still, she so far unbent from her all-round zest in all life's good things and all manner of books as to recommend for reading in bed volumes that would give the essence of Shakespeare and Dostoevsky and Dickens, the twentieth volume to be Mappe's translation of the "Celestina" of Fernando de Rojas. The last, she says, is a great book; I hope never to be compelled to take it to bed with me. And so with

all the Russian novelists—nothing in the world, not even the necessity of reviewing a translation of one of them early next morning, will ever persuade me to adopt them as bed-side companions. I don't know which would be more likely to infect me with *accidie* (Dante's term for the " cameelious hump ") and make me too depressed to think sleep worth the wooing—a Russian novel or the latest conscientious story of agricultural life by a New England author? The latter would keep you wretchedly awake, reading in spite of yourself, until you got to the critical scene on p. 393 where John Gardensass decides *not* to sell the cow to pay for having his actress daughter's nose remodelled. It causes you to lose your temper, but not your temperament. But the effects of reading a Russian novel in bed are much more devastating. Page after page the rain pours down steadily, making an infinity of infinitesimal splashes on the grey surface of the Bug (Boog) or some other beastly river, and incessantly the five geese walk in single file through the muddy byre, splashing in the malodorous puddles and making rude noises with their yellow beaks. Nothing else really happens till you get to p. 479 when the old man asleep on the stove wakes up and says, " My God! " and then goes to sleep again. There has been a revolution in Russia, I am told. I wish they would have one in the Russian novel. Miss Rebecca West does not *look* as if she really enjoyed that sort of thing.

The other makers of lists to catch the eye of "John o' London" refrained from the dreary business of trying to persuade the public that, even in bed, they read only the Best Books. Mr. J. C. Squire included not only Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason," but also "How to Mix Drinks" (1862, by Jerry Thomas, Bartender of the Metropolitan Hotel, New York). I am told he wrote his stirring poem of the Oxford and Cambridge rugger match in a single night, and it may be that his shorter lyrics are the outcome of running through the alphabetical gamut of drink sonatas from the Angel's Chirrup to the Zulu's Curse. In pre-Prohibition days the Transatlantic traveller could have used Jerry Thomas's epoch-making work (the poor man became a pariah among the members of his high and haughty profession because he had given away so many of their secret mysteries) as a hotel bed-side companion, reading it until he had hit on the sleep-provoking cock-tail congruent with his mood, and then ordering it through the telephone which, in any self-respecting caravanserai over there, is to be found at the bedde's head. Mr. E. F. Benson, though a little daunted by Mr. Hewlett's choice, confessed his predilection for "Alice in Wonderland," Anstey's "Vice-Versâ" and Lear's "Nonsense Verses." The last I should avoid, as being likely to beguile me into composing limericks myself, which is a task of appalling futility and fatal to one's chances of sleep. And that reminds me that a Canadian poet once assured me that he could always

put himself to sleep by repeating the following jingle over and over again:

A Canadian canner so canny
Cantilated this chant to his granny:
A canner can can
All a canner can can
But a canner can't can a can, can he?

Finally, here is Mr. John Galsworthy's list of the bed-side books which he can read again and again: (1) The Bible; (2) The Odyssey; (3) The Bacchae (Euripides translated by Gilbert Murray); (4) Plutarch's Lives; (5) Marcus Aurelius; (6) Shakespeare's Sonnets; (7) "Hamlet"; (8) "Lear"; (9) "Midsummer Night's Dream"; (10) "Don Quixote"; (11) Benvenuto Cellini's Autobiography; (12) "The Ancient Mariner"; (13) "The Pickwick Papers"; (14) "Smoke" (Turgenev-Garnett); (15) "The Three Musketeers"; (16) "War and Peace" (Tolstoi-Garnett); (17) "Alice in Wonderland"; (18) "Huckleberry Finn"; (19) Masefield's "Reynard the Fox"; (20) "Far Away and Long Ago" (Hudson). It is interesting to note how few, judging by their lists, are the points of contact between the minds of the authors of "The Forest Lovers" and of "The Forsyte Saga."

There is one point here that may be disposed of. Lists of bed-side books include as a rule only two or three novels of established fame. But the habit of reading novels in bed is universal, even among bishops and judges, and it is the modern more or

less ephemeral novel which is utilised in this way, because, no doubt, it need not be taken too seriously and can be "wolfed" with a clear (literary) conscience. There are novels, old and new, which I have read again and yet again. Here is a list in order of merit as judged by the number of times I have read them: (1) "Treasure Island" (at least 50 times); (2) "Esmond"; (3) The Polish Trilogy of Henry Sienkiwics; (4) "The War of the Worlds"; (5) "Clarissa Harlowe"; (6) "Huckleberry Finn"; (7) "The Virginian" (Owen Wister); (8) "Far from the Madding Crowd"; (9) "Griffith Gaunt"; (10) "Vanity Fair." These have all been read in bed, especially (1), (3) and (5), at one time or another, though I have come to prefer for such a purpose the books that do not tell a story but can be opened anywhere. Action is not the stuff of which bed-books should be compounded.

III

Since reading the articles on bed-books in John o' London's journal, I have collected about a hundred pronouncements on the subject from personal friends. Nearly everybody agrees that a guest-room should be provided with facilities for reading in bed: an electric lamp above the head of the bed, which can be switched off without getting out; a book-rest which can be placed in any position; and a supply of suitable

books, ancient and modern. "It would be a breach of hospitality," says one correspondent, "not to give one's guest a chance of occupying his or her mind pleasantly, for nearly everybody finds it hard to get to sleep in somebody else's house—I know I do." Another correspondent tells me of a clergyman, who is so strongly convinced that reading in bed is a salutary thing, that all the servants' bedrooms in his rectory have electric lamps fixed over the head of the bed. Some of the personal confessions are quite entertaining. One friend assures me that he only reads the books in bed which he would sooner not be seen reading. "*La Garçonne*," he adds in a post-script, "was my last serious bit of bed-reading." Another says that he only reads anything in bed when he has played a rotten round at golf and wants to forget all about his mistakes and, he adds, "I find the best book for the purpose is a nice, silly, sentimental story about a persecuted governess who meets a fellow in rough tweeds (why rough tweeds?) in a spinney, and falls in love with him, and he with her." A third, a famous Greek scholar, confesses that he has the feuilleton instalments cut out of several morning papers and invariably reads them all before going to sleep. A fourth, a woman doctor, would not tell me what she reads in bed on the score that "it would be infamous conduct (in the professional sense) to give myself away by telling you." A fifth, who shall be described as "a lady of fashion," tells me nothing whatever about herself (it is a secretive

sex, apparently) but provides me with an amusing example of self-deception in the matter of bed-reading. "My dear old father," she writes, "could not go to Oxford, having to look after his bed-ridden grandfather's estate, and he was always deploring his lack of education. So he decided to make good the deficiency by reading through a number of solid, informative works in the half-hours before sleeping. His first choice of a bed-side book was Gibbon's "Decline and Fall," and it was also the last, for he never got out of the first volume of that invaluable work. I have the volume still—and I verily believe he went no further than the first chapter!"

When it comes to the selection of a few bed-side books, it is a case of *quot homines, tot sententiæ*. Forty-three lists of from ten to twenty books contain the names of over three hundred works! It would seem to follow, then, that a bed-side book must be defined as any sort of printed matter that anybody can read in bed anywhere and in any circumstances. All these witnesses, by the way, have told me the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, about their private predilections; they are not in the least ashamed when they confess a weakness for novelettes borrowed from a maid, or books of cuttings, or "some modern equivalent of the dear old Newgate Calendar." Looking at the lists as a whole, however, I find that certain generalisations are possible. In the first place, the "dippable" book (to use Stevenson's epithet) is preferred to novels or other books

with a continuous thread of interest. Secondly, the younger my informant the greater is the proportion of ultra-modern books in his or her list. Thirdly, as regards providing a guest with bed-side books, a number of correspondents make the invaluable suggestion that he or she should be allowed to select what would be most pleasing from the house library. "It might be advisable," says one wary person, "to see that the borrowed books don't get accidentally packed up." Finally, it is a refreshing fact—for it justifies my selection of excerpts from old and well-tried authors—that there is hardly a list which does not contain one or more of the books, such as Browne's "Religio Medici," or Pepys' Diary, which have been approved by generation after generation of educated readers.

IV

Writing in bed is not to be commended as a preparation for sleep. Men and women of letters, however, whose slumbers are so often broken owing to living on their nerves, must have a pencil and a sheaf of paper on the bed-side table that they may scratch when the *scabies scribendi* insists on such relief. For the rest of the world bed-writing should be confined to posting up a Diary or saying good-night and God-bless-you in a little letter to the best-belovéd, as was Swift's custom, and he slept all the sounder for it. One of the most charming love-letters I know of

was written in hospital a few days before her death by a poor factory girl:

DEAR ALF

I seen you last night in my dream. O my dear I cried at waking up. What a silly girl you been and got. The pain is bad this morning but I laugh at the sollum clocks [1] of the sister and the sawbones. I can see they think I am booked but they dont know what has befalen between you and me. How could I die and leave my Dear. I spill my medecin this morning thinking of my Dear. Hopeing this finds you well no more from yours truly LIZ

But the victim of chronic sleeplessness will suffer less injury to his *morale* by getting excited over the composition of a story or a poem than by tossing about in the dark hour after hour and running through the dismal catalogue of his mistakes and misfortunes. If it had not been for his life-long inability to sleep at night, Lord Rosebery—an " amateur " of literature in the eighteenth century sense of the term—would never have given us his admirable lives of certain elder statesmen. So begin your novel or epic in the night-watches, if you must, and good luck to you, Sir or Madam.

Ever since I was eight years old pleasant alternatives to reading in bed have been the recital to myself of poetry learnt by heart, or the making-up of verses, without writing them down. I owe the capacity for these pleasant diversions to the best of fathers, a ripe scholar who won the Newdigate at Oxford and

[1] Faces.

taught all his children to love poetry and try to write it. He gave weekly prizes, ranging from twopence to a shilling, for original compositions, the prize-list being pinned up on his study door every Saturday morning. He also held periodical recitations, each child being put on for two or three lines here and there in the poems alleged to have been learnt by heart, and being ploughed in any one piece for three mistakes. The result was we all knew thousands of lines of true poetry (such solemn bosh as Longfellow's "Psalm of Life" was not tolerated) and, what is more, knew them accurately. I have long forgotten all my own little prize-poems, with the exception of one which got printed in a magazine and was paid for in golden guineas, but the only two ever sent in for competition by a brother, whose bent was for painting, stick in my memory to-day. One of them was a lay of disillusionment:

All things now appear so small
That once appeared so big.
The elephant of former days
Has dwindled to a pig.

The second was a sort of fantastic tragedy of the artistic temperament:

Little Willie Weasel
Seated at his easel
Painting of a picture grey:—
In came a monkey,
Made him drunky
Under the easel he lay.

All, or nearly all, our prize-poems were made up in bed and not written down till the following morning.

Thanks to this early training I have been able to endure white nights and dark storms of pain without falling a prey to any *negotium perambulans in tenebris* or Power of Darkness on the prowl (perhaps Self-Pity is the worst of the lot). Dare I submit two or three of the bed-poems produced in later years? Some of them were finished in an hour or two; others have been years in the making. The earliest of the series is a rather curious "Plaint of the Bells" composed at Oxford on a bitter-cold night in the Christmas vacation—there was ice in my tub next morning. The last stanza runs:

> "Vague voices we, housed high in misty air
> Of cankered ore by hands long perished wrought—
> Be this the burden of a night's despair:
> The Dead are nothing; we are less than nought."

A quaint expression of that dark melancholy which is the shadow of youth's joyousness! Still, my pessimism was never so darkly purple as that of a Public School poet, aged sixteen, who wrote a poem two years ago in which he compared his evil and disastrous passions to

> . . . scarlet lobsters prowling in the slime
> Of a foul heart and brandishing their eyes.

He can never have seen a live lobster, and so made the same mistake as the French poet who called it "The Cardinal of the Sea." Lyrics in lieu of letters to the

beloved were always easy, and the following example was finished in a couple of dog-watches:

I see thy spirit as a star
That moves to influences afar—
No more then may I take of thee
Than the star's picture in the sea?

Nay, still I keep my secret dream
That thou wilt nearer dearer gleam,
And from thy lonely zenith dart
To make a heaven of my heart.

Ah! burn, sweet jewel, in my breast
And give me fire and find thee rest
For ever in a life new-born,
My Star of Evening, Star of Morn.

It was entitled "Stella Maris"; the star is not yet fallen. Making very free translations of Greek epigrams has been a favourite nocturnal diversion of late years, and here are three examples, each the work of a wakeful half-hour:

(1) Child with the posies
Crying "Who'll Buy?"
We seek the Rose of Roses
So sweet, so shy;
With hearts, not tinkling pelf,
We'll buy your rosy self.

(2) I would I were the rose on thy dear breast,
Fading in fragrance in that white unrest!
A crimson flame amid the maiden snows
She breathes her soul out—happy, happy rose!

(3)

Awake, my Love, awake,
And for thy lover's sake
These morning roses take!

The buds thy hands now hold
In tender leaves unfold
To show a heart of gold.

They give themselves to thee
In their brief destiny—
So give thyself to me!

A three-stanza lyric in honour of London, on the other hand, took twelve years to finish. Watching the last Coronation Procession from the top of the tower of Westminster Cathedral, I suddenly found the following quatrain repeating itself again and again in my exultant mind:

O splendid, squalid London,
My joy and my despair!
All that I love's in London
All that I loathe is there.

This variant of the *Odi et Amo* motive I worked into my impression of the scene, and it was widely quoted, much to my surprise. I decided the complete lyric should have a final stanza in which the word "London" (the *motif* of the verse-form) should be repeated thrice, as the name of "Greece" is in a German lyric. I must have made hundreds of futile attempts to solve this abstruse problem of technique. The final result was achieved in the process of stoically ignoring a nasty attack of neuritis:

O splendid, squalid London,
My joy and my despair !
My loves were born in London
My hates begotten there.

Through the thronged streets of London
I walk aloof, alone.
Yet is the soul of London
Own sister to my own.

The lives and deaths of London
Shine, sigh unto no shore.
I live, I die in London,
My London evermore.

Last Christmas-tide I broke my right arm and could not, of course, use a pen for many weeks. The faculty of composing verse without putting it down on paper, *currente calamo*, proved a great boon, especially when the pain of the injury and, what was even worse, the oppression of being tightly strapped up prevented me from getting a wink of sleep all night long. One particularly gruesome night was made tolerable by listening to the footsteps passing in the street under my window, and making them the theme of the following fantastical verses :

Alone, in pain, without a light
I heard the footsteps pass by night,
Pacing swift or pausing slow
In the little street below.

First came a plutocratic tread
Emphatic, echoing overhead ;
And each advance, it seemed to me,
Was made with full security.

Next did the steps of lovers meet,
Her's audacious, his discreet;
They made a melody of time,
Breaking its rhythm as with rhyme.

Then hurried by with panting breath
A messenger of Life and Death—
But Life and Death, men's souls at stake,
Still careless twirled their Put-and-Take.

A dragging step! A stick's rap-tap!
Here comes, I thought, some poor old chap,
Whose dwindled shanks require a stave
To help him safely to the grave.

Time was when small and secret feet
Sped swallow-like into my street—
Naked they nestled in my hand,
Than steel more fine, than pearl more bland,
And young and slim as crescent moons,
And white as cream in silver spoons—
Ah, could I hear them hither dart,
As once they danced into my heart,
Better than this would I maintain
The finer usages of pain.

Alas! those wise and wingéd feet
Long since forsook me and my street.

If the victims of sleeplessness, or those whom pain keeps wretchedly awake, do not care for this prescription of verse-making, let them at any rate try the effect of learning poems or prose passages by heart and recalling them in the night-watches. It will be found a singular solace.

V

No doubt fashion governs the choice of bookés for reading in bed as it does that of robés riche. I am old enough to remember the time when the books found in guest-rooms were almost always of a devotional nature. Just as little children sang before sleeping the hymn which contains these lines:

> Teach me to live that I may dread
> The grave as little as my bed.
> Teach me to die that so I may
> Rise glorious at the awful day.—

so their elders were expected to use a spell of sleeplessness for the good of their souls. Like Lear's hand, all the bed-side books in a godly household did smell of mortality; Blair's "Grave," as I recall, was included in one selection. A cousin of mine was sternly rebuked by her god-mother for taking one of Miss Rhoda Broughton's novels to bed with her at a time when they were the *dernier cri* in that never-ending rebellion of the young against the middle-aged, which tramples on conventions with a conventionalism of its own. The young woman who described herself as "naughty but nice" rejoiced in their portraits of highly objectionable parents and plain-looking heroines who sat on garden walls and made a display of their ankles, and she would quote with solemn glee the "vulgar" rhymes that adorned the pages of everyday

dialogue. Two of these rhymes stick in my memory to this day :

(1) Different people have different opinions :
Some like apples, others like inions.

(2) Count Drotsky said to his ugly wife,
" I'm going to the river to fish for my life."
" You nasty beast, you know you ain't—
You're only going to gallivaint."

I cannot say in which novels these indecorous fragments are to be found, I have my doubts as to whether they are correctly quoted—but when some enterprising publisher discovers that Rhoda Broughton was a social historian of genius and the mistress of a style perfectly adapted to its purposes, and puts forth a library edition of " Nancy " and " Joan " and the rest, I shall make my peace with the venerable shade of Dr. Routh, sometime President of my old college, and verify these references—in bed ! . . . To return to my cousin, her god-mother was angry, not so much at the predilection for a novelist she regarded as a degree or two more objectionable than Ouida, as at the sacrilege of reading her in bed, a place having the white privacy of a youthful grave. " Supposing you were to pass away in the night after reading such a dreadful book— " said the good old lady in an awe-inspiring voice, leaving the horrible sequel to our imagination. In the silence that followed I produced the most happily inept Shakespearean quotation that ever occurred to a well-meaning person anxious to relieve a difficult situation : " Thou'rt on thy death-

bed." "Ay, but not yet to die." It is to be found, of course, in the last conversation between Othello and Desdemona, which one bright spirit advised me to include in my selection of passages for reading in bed. A cheerful thing to sleep on!

A passage from Young's "Night Thoughts" is my sole concession to the old-fashioned idea, not yet altogether extinct, that bed is a place for dark and solemn communings, death's ante-chamber as it were. The joyous and single-hearted devotion of Thomas à Kempis is a very different matter to the morbidity of the later bed-side moralists. Burton recommends cheerful books as print night-caps, so to speak, but my own experience is that the divine melancholy of such a prose masterpiece as Malory's story of the parting and passing of Launcelot and Guenever makes for healthy and holy sleep, since it sets the soul above the small, fretting cares of the day's business. Such treasured passages should be as soverain a remedy against the tyranny of the Eternal Now as was M. Flammarion's discourse on the pettiness of the speck of cosmic dust, which is our planet, to the American politician who observed to a friend, after reading it, that it did not really matter after all whether the favourite son of his State got the Republican nomination—a favourite story of the late William James! I have tried to justify in a brief foreword each selection that follows from the old masters of English prose who were free from the cleverness that so fatally infects the great majority of modern essayists. Those

who know Burton and Browne and the rest as they deserve to be known—and, as I have said, some of those old masters are included in every list of bed-side books that has come to my notice—will be glad to find them quoted in my small anthology. Quotation, after all, is the sincerest form of literary criticism. Those who do not know them will surely be convinced, if they read these excerpts, that there were wise and witty writers in England before Shaw and Chesterton —jesters to this Alexandrine age who must never be neglected, but why begin your banquet of English literature with the savouries? There is nothing of our great poetry in my selection, and some may regard that as a deadly sin of omission. But I assume that everybody who is in the habit of reading in bed possesses copies of his or her favourite poets, in addition to a complete Shakespeare, and will also take my advice (if it be needed) and procure one or two of the excellent anthologies of English verse—say, "The Golden Treasury," and, for the work of still-living singers and makers, Mr. J. C. Squire's admirable selection. The second part of my book includes, to begin with, a group of fantasies (it is not easy to find the right name for them) which seem to me to explain the dwellers in classical antiquity as men much more like than unlike ourselves. The ancient Greeks, for example, so strongly, so strangely, resembled the people of England as to justify the lines:

> I deem the Englishman a Greek grown old,
> Deep waters crossed and many a watch-fire cold.

Only the other day I was delighted to discover a very similar thought in one of Mr. George Santayana's studies of the English people during war-time as kindly and joyous world-conquerors who had first of all conquered themselves. Lady Grey of Fallodon's essay on Dreams—an essay first lived, then written—is an admirable antidote to the Freudian theory that all such nocturnal dramas are inspired by suppressed wishes which we are ashamed to confess, even to ourselves, in waking hours. I for one will never believe that sex is the only driving-power in human affairs. The other contents of " Varia " have at any rate the merit of variety and dippability, to make a noun out of Stevenson's epithet. Concerning which, as Herodotus would say, let so much have been said.

PART I

OLD FRIENDS

I. AGAINST SLEEPLESSNESS

From "The Anatomy of Melancholy" by Robert Burton.

EITHER you adore the "Anatomy" or you detest it—have no use for it at all, as the Americans say. There is no half-way house. Hallam did not find much pleasure in "glancing over" it, and another stern critic described it as the "scourings of the Bodleian." Johnson (whom a personage mentioned in Farington's Diary described as looking as if he had been born saying "No, sir") affirms the contrary, declaring that it was the only book that fetched him from his bed two hours before his usual time for rising. It is not an early-morning book for us luxurious and degenerate moderns—I would as soon read it at the beginning of my day as play a match-game with Capablanca before breakfast or indulge in the long soliloquies on books over a dish of bacon-and-eggs which were regarded as entertainment for promising young men by mid-Victorian worthies. At such an unsuitable hour Burton would bring on an attack of mental dyspepsia as painful and prolonged as that which visited me after breakfasting as a boy with Robert Browning—a precise and mildly pompous old gentleman, as I remember him, who praised some boyish verses on Rienzi beginning:

> He stood upon the marble stair
> And viewed the bestial mob below;
> The saviour of his country there
> Was sought by all, a common foe,

and proceeded to instruct me in the whole art of writing poetry over a dish of bacon-and-eggs (not eggs-and-bacon, for I only got half a fried egg). It is at the end of the day that the "Anatomy" exercises its spell over its votaries, enticing them on from page to page and keeping them from sleep until the chill grey dawn filters through the drawn curtains. Then, as I have done twice or thrice, you get out of bed, brew yourself a cup of tea, raid the larder for bread and cheese, and go on reading in the intervals of refreshment. Burton was one of those omnivorous scholars of the Middle Ages who by some strange and happy chance survived into the seventeenth century ——he is indeed a Scholastic in the deference he exacts for written evidence; the more ancient, the more authoritative. Albertus Magnus would have admitted his erudition and thought it all to the glory of God. He himself says with whimsical self-criticism: "I have read many books, but to little purpose for want of method; I have confusedly tumbled over divers authors in our Libraries, with small profit, for want of art, order, memory, judgment." Possessed of a competence, he could afford to live a secluded life among books and to survey the workaday world from afar as "a mere spectator of other men's fortunes and adventures, and how they act their parts, which methinks are diversely presented unto me as from a common theatre or scene."

He calls himself Democritus Junior and it was his whim to imitate Democritus Senior described by Hippocrates and Diogenes Laertius as "a little wearish old man, very melancholy by nature, averse from company in his latter days, and much given to solitariness." Hippocrates once found him in the garden, sitting in the shade with a treatise on Melancholy on his knees and surrounded by carcases of beasts cut up and anatomised in the hope of finding the seat of the *atra bilis* and so discovering how melancholy was engendered in the human animal and

getting material for a treatise on its cure. Burton set himself to carry out the design conceived by the original Democritus and commended by Hippocrates. And, if Bishop Kennet's story is to be believed, Burton imitated the ancient philosopher's queer ways. Just as Democritus would stroll down to the harbour at Abdera and laugh at the queer things he saw and heard, so Burton would repair to the foot of the bridge below "The House" (presumably) and listen to the bargees swearing at one another, "at which he would set his hands to his side and laugh most profusely." He made his book on melancholy to cure melancholy in himself; it was *omne meum, nihil meum*, all the spirit his own but all the matter taken from others. Centuries passed before Christ Church, the society his folio was designed to honour, produced another wit as fine and fantastical—in Lewis Carroll, whose books for the Dean's little daughter and also his *Curiosa Mathematica* (wherein he shows you by a spoof solution how to guess with certainty the colours of the balls enclosed in a bag!) would have hugely delighted Burton. There was a streak of mathematical zeal in Burton; does he not recommend the study of Algebra as a means of purging the mind of soul-corroding thoughts? So I have found the quest for an explanation of the primeness of primes a pleasant remedy against the ill fancies that circle round incessantly in the gloomy mind at night like the dance of bats (few of them really mouse-angels) in a dark crypt.

There is such a shrewd and kindly wisdom in so much that Burton has written that I cannot believe he got all his knowledge of human nature from books. He is a master of all the prodigies and marvels the mind of man has ever created out of its inner consciousness. He has a complete knowledge of the spirits—including the Foliots (now known as *poltergeists*) who make noises in deserted houses (or, as happens to-day, in occupied ones). He

has travelled everywhere—yes, and everywhen—in the mediaeval wonder-world; how he would have rejoiced over Bernard Sleigh's "Antiente Mappe" of the Land of Faerie. He is at home in the green much-remembering countryside; he loves all country-games and, had he lived in a nearer century, would have had a vast zeal for village cricket, even to expecting the Recording Angel to keep a sinner's batting or bowling average and expounding the full coloration of the I Zingari blazer, which has been mistaken for a symptom of delirium tremens—"last time," said the patient, "it was merely a matter of a few pink rats and blue monkeys and green toads." He has sad truth to tell us of the hardships of scholars, and of the studious men of letters who, to fill their bellies, must "prostitute themselves as fiddlers and mercenary tradesmen to serve great men's turns for a small reward." But his knowledge of human nature is at its subtlest when he discusses Love-Melancholy and its cures so as "to season a surly discourse with a more pleasing aspersion of love matters." He admits he is "a contemplator only" in this fascinating field, and yet he must have had his own bitter-sweet experiences there, else why is he so severe upon young gentlewomen who are "so nice, they scorn all suitors, crucify their poor paramours, and think nobody good enough for them, as dainty to please as Daphne herself." His flow of language here wells up like a fountain under its mimic rainbow; all his heart is in the beguiling task. So have I found old Dons talk entrancingly on Love and give the young the best of advice. But this is not a sleep-provoking topic, and I have chosen as a specimen of his manner and matter his prescriptions against waking and terrible dreams.

AS waking, that hurts, by all means must be avoided, so sleep, which so much helps, by like ways [1] *must be procured, by nature or art, inward or outward medicines, and be protracted longer than ordinary, if it may be, as being an especial help.* It moistens and fattens the body, concocts, and helps digestion (as we see in dormice, and those Alpine mice that sleep all Winter), which *Gesner* speaks of, when they are so found sleeping under the snow in the dead of Winter, as fat as butter. It expels cares, pacifies the mind, refresheth the weary limbs after long work.

[2] Somne, quies rerum, placidissime Somne Deorum,
Pax animi, quem cura fugit, qui corpora duris
Fessa ministeriis mulces, reparasque labori.

Sleep, rest of things, O pleasing Deity,
Peace of the soul, which cares dost crucify,
Weary bodies refresh and mollify.

The chiefest thing in all Physick [3] *Paracelsus* calls it, *omnia arcana gemmarum superans et metallorum.* The fittest time is [4] *two or three hours after supper, when as the meat is now settled at the bottom of the*

[1] Interdicendæ vigiliæ; somni paulo longiores conciliandi. Altomarus, cap. 7. Somnus supra modum prodest, quovismodo conciliandus, Piso.

[2] Ovid [Met. xi. 623-625.]

[3] In Hippoc. Aphorism.

[4] Crato, cons. 21. lib. 2. Duabus aut tribus horis post cœnam, quum jam cibus ad fundum ventriculi resederit, primum super latere dextro quiescendum, quod in tali decubitu jecur sub ventriculo quiescat, non gravans sed cibum calefaciens, perinde ac ignis lebetem qui illi admovetur; post primum somnum quiescendum latere sinistro, &c.

stomack, and 'tis good to lie on the right side first, because at that side the liver doth rest under the stomack, not molesting any way, but heating him as a fire doth a kettle, that is put to it. After the first sleep 'tis not amiss to lie on the left side, that the meat may the better descend, and sometimes again on the belly, but never on the back. Seven or eight hours is a competent time for a melancholy man to rest, as *Crato* thinks; but, as some do, to lie in bed and not sleep, a day, or half a day together, to give assent to pleasing conceits and vain imaginations, is many ways pernicious. To procure this sweet moistening sleep, it's best to take away the occasions (if it be possible) that hinder it, and then to use such inward or outward remedies, which may cause it. *Constat hodie* (saith *Boissardus*, in his Tract *de magiâ*, *c.* 4), *multos ita fascinari, ut noctes integras exigant insomnes, summâ inquietudine animorum & corporum*; many cannot sleep for Witches and Fascinations, which are too familiar in some places, they call it, *dare alicui malam noctem.*[1] But the ordinary causes are heat and dryness, which must first be removed; [2]a hot and dry brain never sleeps well: grief, fears, cares, expectations, anxieties, great businesses, [3] *in aurem utramque otiose ut dormias*, and all violent perturbations of the mind must in some sort be qualified, before we can hope for any good repose.

[1 To give a person a bad night.]

[2] Sæpius accidit melancholicis, ut nimium exsiccato cerebro vigiliis attenuentur. Ficinus, lib. 1. cap. 29.

[3] Ter. [Heautontimorumenos, ii. iii. 101. That you may sleep soundly on either side.]

He that sleeps in the day time, or is in suspense, fear, any way troubled in mind, or goes to bed upon a full [1] stomack, may never hope for quiet rest in the night; *nec enim meritoria somnos admittunt*, as the [2] Poet saith; Inns and such like troublesome places are not for sleep; one calls Ostler, another Tapster, one cries and shouts, another sings, whoops, halloos,

——— [3] absentem cantat amicam,
Multâ prolutus vappâ, nauta atque viator.

Who, not accustomed to such noises, can sleep amongst them? He that will intend to take his rest must go to bed *animo securo, quieto et libero*, with a [4] secure and composed mind, in a quiet place: *omnia noctis erunt placidâ compôsta quiete*: [5] & if that will not serve, or may not be obtained, to seek then such means as are requisite. To lie in clean linen & sweet; before he goes to bed, or in bed, to hear [6] *sweet Musick*, which *Ficinus* commends, *lib.* 1. *cap.* 24, or as *Jobertus, med. pract. l.* 3. *c.* 10, [7] *to read some pleasant Author till he be asleep, to have a bason of water still*

[1] Ut sis nocte levis, sit tibi cœna brevis. [Regimen Sanitatis Salerni.]

[2] Juven. Sat. 3. [234-225.]

[3] Hor. Ser. lib. 1. Sat. 3. [15, 16. It is the tar's, likewise the traveller's fancy, when full of drink to sing of absent Nancy.]

[4] Sepositis curis omnibus quantum fieri potest, una cum vestibus, &c. Kirkst.

[5] A line of Varro, quoted by Seneca, Epist. 56.]

[6] Ad horam somni aures suavibus cantibus et sonis delinire.

[7] Lectio jucunda, aut sermo, ad quem attentior animus convertitur, aut aqua ab alto in subjectam pelvim delabatur, &c.

dropping by his bed side, or to lie near that pleasant murmur, [1] *lene sonantis aquæ*, [2] some flood-gates, arches, falls of water, like *London* Bridge, or some continuate noise which may benumb the senses. *Lenis motus, silentium et tenebræ, tum et ipsa voluntas somnos faciunt*; as a gentle noise to some procures sleep, so, which *Bernardinus Tilesius, lib. de somno*, well observes, silence, in a dark room, and the will itself, is most available to others. *Piso* commends frications, *Andrew Borde* a good draught of strong drink before one goes to bed; I say, a nutmeg and ale, or a good draught of muscadine, with a toast and nutmeg, or a posset of the same, which many use in a morning, but, methinks, for such as have dry brains, are much more proper at night; some prescribe a [3] sup of vinegar as they go to bed, a spoonful saith *Aëtius, Tetrabib. lib.* 2. *ser.* 2. *cap.* 10. *l.* 6. *cap.* 10, *Ægineta, lib.* 3. *cap.* 14, *Piso, a little after meat,* [4] *because it rarifies melancholy, and procures an appetite to sleep. Donat. ab Altomar, c.* 7, and *Mercurialis* approve of it, if the malady proceed from the [5] spleen. *Sallust. Salvian. lib.* 2. *cap.* 1. *de remed. Hercules de Saxoniâ, (in Pan.), Ælianus Montaltus, de morb. capitis, c.* 28, *de Melan.* are altogether against it. *Lod. Mercatus, de inter. Morb. cau. l.* 1. *c.* 17, in some cases doth allow it. [6] *Rhasis* seems to deliberate of it, though *Simeon*

[1] Ovid. [F. ii. 704.] [2] Of water low lapping.]

[3] Aceti sorbitio.

[4] Attenuat melancholiam,et ad conciliandum somnum juvat.

[5] Quod lieni acetum conveniat.

[6] Cont. 1. Tract. 9. meditandum de aceto.

commend it (in sauce peradventure) he makes a question of it: as for baths, fomentations, oils, potions, simples or compounds, inwardly taken to this purpose, [1] I shall speak of them elsewhere. If in the midst of the night when they lie awake, which is usual to toss and tumble, and not sleep, [2]*Ranzovius* would have them, if it be in warm weather, to rise and walk three or four turns (till they be cold) about the chamber, and then go to bed again.

Against fearful and troublesome dreams, *incubus*,[3] and such inconveniences, wherewith melancholy men are molested, the best remedy is to eat a light supper, and of such meats as are easy of digestion; no Hare, Venison, Beef, &c. not to lie on his back, not to meditate or think in the day time of any terrible objects, or especially talk of them before he goes to bed. For, as he said in *Lucian* [4] after such conference, *Hecatas somniare mihi videor*, I can think of nothing but Hobgoblins: and, as *Tully* notes, [5] *for the most part our speeches in the day time cause our phantasy to work upon the like in our sleep*, which *Ennius* writes of *Homer*:

Et canis somnis leporis vestigia latrat:

as a dog dreams of an hare, so do men on such subjects they thought on last.

[1] Sect. 5. Memb. 1. Subsect. 6.

[2] Lib. de sanit. tuenda.

[3] =nightmare.]

[4] Philopseudes, § 39.]

[5] In Som. Scip. Fit enim fere ut cogitationes nostræ et sermones pariant aliquid in somno, quale de Homero scribit Ennius, de quo videlicet sæpissimè vigilans solebat cogitare et loqui. [An. i. 3 ?]

[1] Somnia quæ mentes ludunt volitantibus umbris,
Nec Delubra Deûm, nec ab æthere Numina mittunt,
Sed sibi quisque facit, &c.

[The Gods send not our dreams, we make our own.]

For that cause, when *Ptolemy*, King of *Egypt*, had posed the 70 interpreters in order, and asked the nineteenth man, what would make one sleep quietly in the night, he told him [2] *the best way was to have divine and celestial meditations, and to use honest actions in the day time.* [3] *Lod. Vives wonders how Schoolmen could sleep quietly, and were not terrified in the night, or walk in the dark, they had such monstrous questions, and thought of such terrible matters all day long.* They had need amongst the rest to sacrifice to God *Morpheus*, whom [4] *Philostratus* paints in a white and black coat, with a horn and ivory box full of dreams, of the same colours, to signify good and bad. If you will know how to interpret them, read *Artemidorus*, *Sambucus*, and *Cardan*; but how to help them, [5] I must refer you to a more convenient place.

[1] Aristeæ Hist.

[2] Optimum de cœlestibus et honestis meditari, et ea facere.

[3] Lib. 3. de causis corr. art. Tam mira monstra quæstionum sæpe nascuntur inter eos, ut mirer eos interdum in somniis non terreri, aut de illis in tenebris audere verba facere, adeo res sunt monstrosæ.

[4] Icon. lib. 1.

[5] Sect. 5. Memb. 1. Subs. 6.

II. THE DIVINE LOVER

From the "Imitation of Christ" by Thomas à Kempis, Book III., Chapters V. and VI.

The *De Imitatione Christi* has been the chief of bed-side books in many times and climes. It is still highly valued as such to-day, though the anxiety of the mediaeval solitary to save his own soul at all costs, has an egotistical and anti-social aspect for the majority perhaps of modern Christians. For close on five centuries it has been a precious balm to all manner of men and women, having in it, as Cardinal Cajetan thought, "some Divine and secret virtue of the Holy Spirit which, when it is read with attention and devotion, is shed over the soul of the reader or hearer, until he is fully changed, and borne from created things to the Creator himself." St. Ignatius de Loyola read a chapter daily, alternately in order or where his copy chanced to open; with Pius V. and St. Charles Borromeo the book was a constant companion; and St. Francis de Sales said of it in scriptural words: "There is none like unto it." With Louis I. of Bavaria it was such a constant comrade that his copy was worn out, whole lines having been obliterated by constant reading; and Prince Eugene of Savoy, Marlborough's companion in arms, took it with him on all his campaigns. It was abounding in spiritual comfort for minds as different, nay divergent, as John Wesley's, Dr. Pusey's and George Eliot's. It has been translated into almost every language

—even into Turkish for the use of Mahommedans! We have no adequate translation; only a Crashaw could have captured the secret fire of the original.

I

I BLESS Thee, O Heavenly Father, Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, because Thou has vouchsafed to remember me, poor creature that I am.

O Father of mercies and God of all consolation, thanks be unto Thee, who sometimes with Thy comfort refreshest me, unworthy as I am of all comfort.

I will always bless and glorify Thee, with Thy Only-Begotten Son, and the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, for ever and ever.

Ah, Lord God, Holy Lover of mine! when Thou comest into my heart, all that is within me shall rejoice.

Thou art my Glory and the Exultation of my heart: Thou art my Defence and Refuge in the day of my tribulation.

II. But because I am as yet weak in love, and imperfect in virtue, I have need to be strengthened and comforted by Thee; visit me therefore often, and instruct me with all holy discipline.

Set me free from evil passions, and heal my heart of all inordinate affections; that being inwardly healed and throughly cleansed, I may be made apt to love, courageous to suffer, steady to persevere.

III. Love is a great thing, a great thing and alto-

gether good; by itself it makes everything that is heavy, light; and it bears evenly all that is uneven.

For it carries a burden which is no burden, and makes everything that is bitter, sweet and pleasant to the taste.

The noble love of Jesus impels a man to do great things, and stirs him up to be always longing for what is more perfect.

Love desires to soar on high, and will not be kept back by things of the world below.

Love desires to be free, and estranged from all worldly affections, that so its inward sight may not be hindered; that it may not be entangled by any temporal prosperity, nor subdued by any adversity.

Nothing is more delicious than Love; nothing more courageous; nothing higher; nothing wider; nothing more joyous; nothing fuller or better in Heaven or earth: because Love is born of God, and cannot rest but in God, above all created things.

IV. He that loveth, flyeth, runneth, and rejoiceth; he is free, and cannot be held in.

He giveth all for all, and hath all in all; because he resteth in One highest above all things, from Whom all that is good floweth and proceedeth.

He respecteth not the gifts, but turneth himself above all goods unto the Giver.

Love oftentimes knoweth no limitation, but is fervent beyond all measure.

Love feels no burden; thinks nothing a trouble; attempts nothing that is above its strength; pleads no

excuse of impossibility: for it thinks all things lawful for itself, and all things possible.

It is therefore able to undertake all things, and it completes many things, and warrants them to take effect, where he who does not love, would faint and lie down.

V. Love is watchful, and sleeping slumbereth not. Though weary, it is not wearied; though pressed, it is not oppressed; though confused, it is not confounded: but as a lively flame and burning torch, it forces its way upwards, and securely passes through all.

If any man love, he knoweth what is Love's cry. It is a loud cry in the ears of God, the glowing passion of the very soul, when it saith, "My God, my Love, Thou art all mine, and I am all Thine."

VI. Enlarge Thou me in love, that with the inward palate of my heart I may taste how sweet it is to love, and to be molten, and to bathe myself in Thy Love.

Let me be possessed by Love, rising above myself, by the fire and force of unbounded passion.

Let me sing the song of love; let me follow Thee, my Beloved, on high; let my soul spend itself in Thy praise, rejoicing through love.

Let me love Thee more than myself, nor love myself but for Thee: and in Thee all that truly love Thee, as the law of love commandeth, shining out from Thyself.

VII. Love is active, sincere, dutiful, joyous and amiable, courageous, patient, faithful, prudent, long-suffering, heroic, and seeketh not her own.

For in whatever instance a person seeketh his own self, there he falleth from Love.

Love is circumspect, humble and upright: not yielding to softness, nor to levity, not attending to vain things; it is sober, chaste, steady, quiet, and guarded in all the senses.

Love is subject, and obedient to its superiors; to itself mean and despised; unto God, devout and thankful, trusting and hoping always in Him, even then when God imparteth no divine relish unto it; for sorrow is the very life of Love.

VIII. He that is not prepared to suffer all things, and to stand to the will of his Beloved, is not worthy of the name of a lover.

A lover ought to embrace willingly all that is hard and distasteful, for the sake of his Beloved; and not to turn away from Him for any contrary accidents.

II

Son, thou art not yet a valiant and considerate lover.

Why not, O Lord?

Because for a slight opposition thou givest over thy undertakings, and too eagerly seekest consolation.

A valiant lover standeth firm in temptations, and giveth no credit to the crafty persuasions of the Enemy. As I please him in prosperity, so in adversity I am not displeasing to him.

II. A considerate lover regardeth not so much the gift of the Beloved, as the love of the Giver.

He esteems the good will rather than the value of the gift, and sets all gifts below Him whom He loves.

A noble-minded lover resteth not content in the gift, but in Me above every gift.

All therefore is not lost, if sometimes thou hast less feeling for Me or My Saints than thou wouldst.

That good and sweet affection which thou sometimes feelest, is the effect of grace present, and a sort of foretaste of thy heavenly home: but hereon thou must not lean too much, for it cometh and passeth away again.

But to strive against evil motions of the mind which may befall thee, and to reject with scorn the suggestions of the devil, is a notable sign of virtue, and shall have great reward.

III. Let no strange fancies therefore trouble thee, which on any subject whatever may crowd into thy mind. Keep to thy purpose, with courage, and an upright intention towards God.

Neither is it an illusion that sometimes thou art suddenly rapt on high, and presently returnest again unto the accustomed vanities of thy heart.

For these thou dost rather unwillingly suffer, than commit; and so long as they displease thee, and thou strivest against them, it is matter of reward, and no loss.

IV. Know that the ancient Enemy doth strive by all means to hinder thy desire to do good, and to keep thee idly free from all religious exercises; particularly from the reverent estimation of God's Saints, from the

devout commemoration of My Passion, from the profitable remembrance of thy sins, from the defence of thine own heart, and from the firm purpose of advancing in virtue.

Many evil thoughts doth he suggest to thee, that so he may cause a wearisomeness and horror in thee, to hold thee back from prayer and holy reading.

Humble confession is displeasing unto him; and if he could, he would cause thee to cease from Holy Communion.

Trust him not, nor care for him, although he should often set snares of deceit to entrap thee.

Charge him with it, when he suggesteth evil and unclean thoughts unto thee; say unto him, "Away, thou unclean spirit! blush, thou miserable wretch! most unclean art thou that bringest such things unto mine ears.

"Begone from me, thou wicked Seducer! thou shalt have no part in me: but Jesus shall be with me as a strong Warrior, and thou shalt stand confounded.

"I had rather die, and undergo any torment, than consent unto thee.

"Hold thy peace and be silent; I will hear thee no more, though thou shouldst work me many troubles. 'The Lord is my Light and my Salvation: whom then shall I fear?'

"Though an host of men were laid against me, yet shall not my heart be afraid. The Lord is my Helper and my Redeemer."

V. Fight like a good soldier; and if thou sometimes

shouldst fall through frailty, take again greater strength than before, trusting in My more abundant grace: and take great heed of vain pleasing of thyself, and of pride.

This brings many into error, and makes them sometimes fall into blindness almost incurable.

Let the fall of the proud, thus foolishly presuming on themselves, serve thee for a warning and keep thee ever humble.

III. A GREAT JOUSTING

From "The Chronicles of Sir John Froissart" (Chapter XX).

THE Chronicles of England, France, Spain, etc., by Sir John Froissart need no commendation save Sir Walter Scott's. "Whoever has taken up the chronicle of Froissart," says the Shirra, "must have been dull indeed if he did not find himself transported back to the days of Cressy and Poitiers. In truth his history has less the air of a narrative than of a dramatic representation. . . . In Froissart, we hear the gallant knights, of whom he wrote, arrange the forms of combat and the manner of the onset; we hear their soldiers cry their war-cries; we see them strike their horses with the spur; and the liveliness of the narration hurries us along with them into the whirlwind of battle. We have no hesitation to say, that a skirmish before a petty fortress, thus told, interests us more than the general information that twenty thousand Frenchmen bled on the field of Cressy. This must ever be the case, while we prefer a knowledge of mankind to a mere acquaintance with their actions; and so long also must we account Froissart the most entertaining, and perhaps the most valuable, historian of the Middle Ages." A single one of Froissart's stories—for example the lamentable tragedy of the plot to poison the Count of Foix, by means of his guileless son and the latter's death at his father's hand—tells us more about the life of the *interim* age (as St.

Augustine called the vast vista of eternity in front of him) than all the scientific historians and most of the historical novelists. Of the story of a great tournament I have chosen for quotation, Sir Henry Newbolt has made an enlarged picture, which is nearer to the truth, I think, than Scott's of the jousting at Ashby-de-la-Zouch.

YOU know, or must have heard it mentioned, that the intercourse of young gentlemen with fair ladies encourages sentiments of honour and love of fame. I mention this, because there were with the King of France three gentlemen of great valour and enterprise, which they were probably induced by that intercourse to display in the manner I shall relate. The names of the three were Sir Boucicaut the Younger, Sir Reginald de Roye, and the Lord de Saimpi. These knights were chamberlains to the king, and much esteemed by him; and being desirous of advancing themselves in the estimation of all present, and especially the ladies, they offered to hold a field of arms at the March of Calais in the course of the ensuing summer, against all foreign knights and squires, for the space of thirty days, and to tilt with blunt lances or sharp ones. The King of France was well pleased with the valiant challenge of his three knights, and declared his consent to it; moreover, he called them into his closet, and said, "Boucicaut, Reginald, and Saimpi, be attentive in this enterprise to guard your honour well, and that of our kingdom; let nothing be spared in the state you keep, for I will not fail to assist you as far as

10,000 francs." The King after this left Montpellier, following the road to Alipian, where he dined, and lay that night at St. Thibery.

On the morrow, after his morning draught, he set off and came to Beziers, where he was received most joyfully. He did not, however, remain long in this place, but made the best of his way to Toulouse, when, at the advice of his council, he summoned to him the Count de Foix, who had left Béarn, and fixed his residence in a town of Foix, called Mazeres, fourteen leagues from Toulouse. The Marshal of France and the Lord de la Riviére were appointed to acquaint the Count with the King's request; and he at once consented to comply. "Tell the King," said he to the messengers, "that I will be with him in Toulouse in four days." The Count accordingly made his preparations, and set forth to meet the King, attended by 200 knights and squires from Béarn; his two brothers, Sir Peter and Sir Arnold de Béarn, and his two bastard sons, whom he affectionately loved, also accompanied him. The Count made his entry into Toulouse rather late in the evening, and remained all that night at the convent of the Friar Preachers, where he and his household were lodged. On the morrow he and his retinue passed through the streets of Toulouse to the castle where the King resided. The Count entered the hall, whither the King had gone from his chamber to await his arrival, bare-headed, for indeed he never wore a cap; on seeing the King he bent his knee very low; he afterwards rose up and

knelt a second time close to the King, who raised him with his hand, and embracing him, said, "Fair cousin of Foix, you are welcome, for your visit gives us great joy." "My lord," replied the Count, "I thank you much for what you are pleased to say." A magnificent and sumptuous dinner was then provided; and after dinner, when the tables were removed, and grace said, the company amused themselves in various ways. Wine and spices were afterwards brought, and the comfit-box was presented solely to the King by the Count de Harcourt. Sir Gerard de la Pierre did the same to the Duke of Bourbon, and Sir Menaut de Noailles to the Count de Foix. When this was done it was about four o'clock in the afternoon; the Count then took his leave and returned to his lodgings, much pleased with the reception and entertainment which the King of France had given him. Not many days after this, the Count de Foix, attended by his barons and knights, waited on the King at the castle, and paid him homage for his County of Foix.

About this period Pope Urban VI. died, at Rome, to the sorrow of the Romans, who loved him much. He was buried with great solemnity in the church of St. Peter; and when the ceremony was ended, the cardinals formed a conclave to elect another pope, and hastened the matter, that it might be done before any intelligence of the death of Urban could be carried to Avignon. Pope Clement and his cardinals did not hear of the death of Urban until the tenth day after it had happened; however, they immediately assembled

at the palace, when many proposals were discussed, for they had great hopes that the schism of the Church would be concluded, and a union formed of the two parties. This subject was canvassed far and wide, and in the University at Paris it became the occasion of great disputes among the students, who neglected their usual studies, and employed themselves in disputing how the cardinals would act, whether they would elect a pope in the room of Urban, or acknowledge the Pope of Avignon. It was very soon reported, however, that the Roman cardinals had assembled in conclave, and elected to the papacy the Cardinal of Naples, a prudent and courageous clerk, who took the name of Boniface. The King of France and his lords were much annoyed at this, for it seemed as if the schism in the Church would now continue for a long time.

The time was now come for the three French knights, who had undertaken to maintain the lists against all comers at St. Inglevere, near Calais, to make good their engagement. This tournament had been proclaimed in many countries, especially in England, where it caused much surprise, and several valiant knights and squires undertook to attend. Sir John Holland, half-brother to the King of England, was the first to cross the sea; and with him were more than sixty knights and squires, who took up their quarters in Calais. On the 21st of May, as it had been proclaimed, the three knights were properly armed, and their horses ready saddled, according to the laws of the tournament; and on the same day, all

those knights who were in Calais sallied forth, as spectators or jousters, and being arrived at the spot, drew up on one side. The place of the tournament was smooth and green with grass. Sir John Holland, Earl of Huntingdon, was the first who sent his squire to touch the war target of Sir Boucicaut, who instantly issued from his pavilion, completely armed, and each having mounted his horse and grasped his spear, the two combatants took up their positions. They eyed each other for some time, and then spurred their horses and met full gallop, with such force indeed that Sir Boucicaut pierced the shield of the Earl of Huntingdon, and the point of his lance slipped along his arm, but without wounding him. The two knights having passed, continued their gallop to the end of the list. This course was much praised. At the second course they hit each other slightly, but no harm was done; and their horses refused to complete the third. The Earl of Huntingdon, who was heated, and wished to continue the tilt, returned to his place, expecting that Sir Boucicaut would call for his lance; but he did not, and showed plainly that he did not wish to tilt more with the Earl that day. Sir John, seeing this, sent his squire to touch the war target of the Lord de Saimpi. This knight, who was waiting for the combat, sallied out from his pavilion, and took his lance and shield. When the Earl saw he was ready, he violently spurred his horse, as did the Lord de Saimpi. They couched their lances, and pointed them at each other. At the onset their horses crossed

notwithstanding which they met, but by their crossing, which was blamed, the Earl was unhelmed. He returned to his people, who soon rehelmed him; and, having resumed their lances, they met full gallop, and hit each other with such force in the middle of their shields that they would have been unhorsed had they not kept tight seats, by the pressure of their legs against the horses' sides. They went to their proper places where they refreshed themselves and took breath. Sir John, who had a great desire to shine in the tournament, had his helmet braced, and grasped his spear again, whom the Lord de Saimpi, seeing him advance in a gallop, did not decline meeting; but, spurring his horse on instantly, they gave blows on their helmets, that were luckily of well-tempered steel, which made sparks of fire fly from them. At this course the Lord de Saimpi lost his helmet; but the knights continued their career, and returned to their places. The tilt was much praised, and both French and English said that the Earl of Huntingdon, Sir Boucicaut, and the Lord de Saimpi had excellently well jousted. The Earl wished to break another lance in honour of his lady, but it was refused him. He then quitted the lists to make room for others, for he had run his six lances with such ability and courage as gained him praise from all sides. After this, various other combatants entered the lists, and the tilting was continued till evening, when the English returned to Calais, and the French to St. Inglevere.

On Tuesday after mass, and drinking a cup, all those who intended to tilt, and those who wished to see them, left Calais, and rode to the same place where the lists had been held the preceding day. That day and the next the tilting continued, until the tournament was at an end, by reason of no more tilters appearing on the part of the English. The English and French knights separated in a most friendly manner on the plain of St. Inglevere; the former took the road to Calais, where, however, they made no long stay, for on Saturday morning they went on board passage boats, and landed at Dover about mid-day.

From the time the English knights left Calais, I never heard that any others came from England to St. Inglevere to try their skill at arms. The three knights, however, remained there until the thirty days were accomplished, and then leisurely returned each to his own home. When they waited on the King of France, the Dukes of Touraine, and the other lords at Paris, they were most handsomely received; indeed, they were entitled to such a reception, for they had behaved themselves gallantly, and well supported the honour of the King, and of the realm of France.

IV. THE MOTHER OF LIFE

From "The Golden Asse," Adlington's version of the *Metamorphoses* of Lucius Apuleius.

THE famous romance of Apuleius has been called the first novel, and many of the most renowned story-tellers have borrowed from the Latin sophist's gallimaufry of intrigues, sorceries, bickerings and ravishments. Cervantes, for example, based the incident of Don Quixote and the wineskins on the midnight fight between Lucius, "well tipled" from Byrrhena's banquet, and the bladders lying at Milo's door. Gil Blas' captivity among the robbers is another straightforward theft, and Boccaccio certainly borrowed two improper episodes for his "Decameron." Richard Burton is constantly referring to the story of the man made ass in "The Anatomy of Melancholy" (he seems to have missed Lucian's version of it, and steeped himself in Apuleius) and Heaven only knows how many adoptions and adaptations there have been of the fragrant episode of Cupid and Psyche, the most beautiful of all the world's wonder-tales. As a picture of life in the second century, when Rome was unchallenged mistress of the civilized world, the book is beyond all price; for it is the only one which gives us glimpses into the squalid underworld of the toilers and moilers, for the most part slaves, who bore up on their bowed shoulders the pomp and circumstance and splendid peace of the Age of the Antonines. In his asinine form, Lucius

collaborates with these dismal and despised workers (whose only chance of freedom and full bellies was to join some band of robbers) and we pass with him through the low doors of an *ergastulum*, or country labour-house, and see what had been made of human beings by the domestic economy of the frugal Cato, who insisted that a slave should be punished severely if he spent time on anything save work and the sleep that made him capable of more work. "O good Lord what a sort of poore slaves were there," exclaims the Man-Ass as he enters. "Some had their skinne black and blew, some had their backes stripped with lashes, some were covered with ragged sackes, some had their members onely hidden: some wore such ragged clouts, that you might perceive all their naked bodies, some were marked and burned in the head with hot yrons, some had their haire half clipped, some had lockes on their legges, some very ugly and evill favoured, that they could scarce see, their eyes and face were so blacke and dimme with smooke, like those that fight in the sands and know not where they strike by reason of dust." This was the proletariat of the days when "the grandeur that was Rome" still flourished, if "the glory that was Greece" had long since lost its earthly habitations. Christianity was a wide-spread secret influence, working for the hope of better things for the poor and oppressed, but there is no word of it in all the writings of Apuleius, Evening Star of the Platonic philosophy and Morning Star of the Neo-Platonic though he was. Still there can be little doubt that his sympathy was with the social under-dog, and he shows other signs of the *anima naturaliter Christiana*—especially when, as in the excerpt I have chosen, he kneels in adoration before a mystical Queen of Heaven who was a prototype of the Madonna of the Middle Ages. As a piece of literature, Adlington's translation is superior to the original; if he is grossly inaccurate in rendering the "dark and high stile" of Apuleius, who tried to trans-

plant all the subtleties and *tours-de-force* of the Greek sophists into the Latin that should always be massive and marmoreal, yet he gives us a version with all the fresh vigour of the best Elizabethan prose as well as its sonorous splendour and happiness in phrase-making. The original Latin, it is true, makes the improprieties of the narrative more tolerable to a modern mind than does the English with its natural exuberance. But, after all, it is nakedness, not nudity which implies the stripping away of veils, that shocks us in the story of Apuleius and Adlington's transmutation of it. The mirror is held up to reflect the life of a society which had not the Christian conception of decency, much less any touch of the Puritanical.

"WHEN midnight came that I had slept my first sleepe, I awaked with suddaine feare and saw the Moone shining bright, as when shee is at the full, and seeming as though she leaped out of the Sea. Then thought I with my selfe, that that was the most secret time, when the Goddesse Cere had most puissance and force, considering that all humane things be governed by her providence: and not onely all beasts private and tame, but also all wild and savage beasts be under her protection. And considering that all bodies in the heavens, the earth and the seas, be by her increasing motions increased, and by her diminishing motions diminished: as weary of all my cruell fortune and calamity, I found good hope and soveraigne remedy, though it were very late, to be delivered from all my misery, by invocation and prayer, to the excellent beauty of the Goddesse, whom I saw shining before mine

eyes, wherefore shaking off mine Assie and drowsie sleepe, I arose with a joyfull face, and mooved by a great affection to purifie my selfe, I plunged my selfe seven times into the water of the Sea, which number of seven is conveniable and agreeable to holy and divine things, as the worthy and sage Philosopher Pythagoras hath declared. Then with a weeping countenance, I made this Orison to the puissant Goddesse, saying: O blessed Queene of heaven, whether thou be the Dame Ceres which art the originall and motherly source of all fruitfull things in earth, who after the finding of thy daughter Proserpina, through the great joy which you diddest presently conceive, madest barraine and unfruitfull ground to be plowed and sowne, and now thou inhabitest in the land of Eleusie; or whether thou be the celestiall Venus, who in the beginning of the world diddest couple together all kind of things with an ingendered love, by an eternall propagation of humane kind, art now worshipped within the Temples of the Ile Paphos, thou which art the sister of the God Phoebus, who nourishest so many people by the generation of beasts, and art now adored at the sacred places of Ephesus, thou which art horrible Proserpina, by reason of the deadly howlings which thou yeeldest, that hast power to stoppe and put away the invasion of the hags and Ghoasts which appeare unto men, and to keepe them downe in the closures of the earth: thou which art worshipped in divers manners, and doest illuminate all the borders of the earth by thy

feminine shape, thou which nourishest all the fruits of the world by thy vigor and force ; with whatsoever name or fashion it is lawfull to call upon thee, I pray thee, to end my great travaile and misery, and deliver mee from the wretched fortune, which hath so long time pursued me. Grant peace and rest if it please thee to my adversities, for I have endured too much labour and perill. Remoove from me my shape of mine Asse, and render to me my pristine estate, and if I have offended in any point of divine Majesty, let me rather dye then live, for I am full weary of my life. When I had ended this orison, and discovered my plaints to the Goddesse, I fortuned to fall asleepe, and by and by appeared unto me a divine and venerable face, worshipped even of the Gods themselves. Then by little and little I seemed to see the whole figure of her body, mounting out of the sea and standing before mee, wherefore I purpose to describe her divine semblance, if the poverty of my humane speech will suffer me, or her divine power give me eloquence thereto. First, shee had a great abundance of haire, dispersed and scattered about her neck, on the crowne of her head she bare many garlands enterlaced with floures, in the middle of her forehead was a compasse in fashion of a glasse, or resembling the light of the Moone, in one of her hands she bare serpents, in the other, blades of corne, her vestiment was of fine silke yeelding divers colours, sometime yellow, sometime rosie, sometime flamey, and sometime (which troubled my spirit sore) darke

and obscure, covered with a blacke robe in manner of a shield, and pleated in most subtill fashion at the skirts of her garments, the welts appeared comely, whereas here and there the starres glimpsed, and in the middle of them was placed the Moone, which shone like a flame of fire, round about the robe was a coronet or garland made with flowres and fruits. In her right hand shee had a timbrell of brasse, which gave a pleasant sound, in her left hand shee bare a cup of gold, out of the mouth whereof the serpent Aspis lifted up his head, with a swelling throat, her odoriferous feete were covered with shoes interlaced and wrought with victorious palme. Thus the divine shape breathing out the pleasant spice of fertill Arabia, disdained not with her divine voyce to utter these words unto me: Behold Lucius I am come, thy weeping and prayers hath mooved mee to succour thee. I am she that is the naturall mother of all things, mistresse and governesse of all the Elements, the initiall progeny of worlds, chiefe of powers divine, Queene of heaven, the principall of the Gods celestiall, the light of the goddesses: at my will the planets of the ayre, the wholesome winds of the Seas, and the silences of Hell be disposed; my name, my divinity is adored throughout all the world in divers manners, in variable customes and in many names, for Phrygians call me the mother of the Gods: the Athenians, Minerva: the Cyprians, Venus: the Candians, Diana: the Sicilians, Proserpina: the Eleusians, Ceres: some Juno, other Bellona, other Hecate:

and principally the Æthiopians which dwell in the Orient, and the Ægyptians which are excellent in all kind of ancient doctrine, and by their proper ceremonies accustome to worship mee, doe call mee Queene Isis. Behold I am come to take pitty of thy fortune and tribulation, behold I am present to favour and ayd thee, leave off thy weeping and lamentation, put away all thy sorrow, for behold the healthfull day which is ordained by my providence, therefore be ready to attend to my commandement. This day which shall come after this night, is dedicated to my service, by an eternall religion, my Priests and Ministers doe accustome after the tempests of the Sea be ceased, to offer in my name a new ship as a first fruit of my Navigation. I command thee not to prophane or despise the sacrifice in any wise, for the great Priest shall carry this day following in procession by my exhortation, a Garland of Roses, next the timbrell of his right hand: follow thou my procession amongst the people, and when thou commest to the Priest make as though thou wouldest kisse his hand, but snatch at the Roses, whereby I will put away the skin and shape of an Asse, which kind of beast I have long time abhorred and despised, but above all things beware thou doubt not nor feare any of those things, as hard and difficull to bee brought to passe, for in the same houre that I am come to thee, I have commanded the Priest by a vision what he shall doe, and all the people by my commandement shall be compelled to give thee place and say nothing!

Moreover, thinke not that amongst so faire and joyfull Ceremonies, and in so good a company that any person shall abhorre thy ill-favoured and deformed figure, or that any man shall be so hardy, as to blame and reprove thy suddaine restoration to humane shape, whereby they should gather or conceive any sinister opinion: and know thou this of certaine, that the residue of thy life untill the houre of death shall be bound and subject to me! And think it not an injury to be alwayes serviceable towards me, since as by my meane and benefit thou shalt become a man: thou shalt live blessed in this world, thou shalt live glorious by my guide and protection, and when thou descendest to Hell, where thou shalt see me shine in that subterene place, shining (as thou seest me now) in the darkness of Acheron, and raigning in the deepe profundity of Stix, thou shalt worship me, as one that hath bin favourable to thee, and if I perceive that thou art obedient to my commandement, addict to my religion, and merite my divine grace, know thou, that I will prolong thy daies above the time that the fates have appointed, and the celestial Planets ordeined. When the divine Image had spoken these words, she vanished away! By and by when I awaked, I arose, haveing the members of my bodie mixed with feare, joy and sweate, and marvailed at the cleare presence of the puissant goddesse, and being sprinkled with the water of the sea, I recounted orderly her admonitions and divine commandements. Soone after, the darknes chased

away, and the cleare and golden sunne arose, whenas behold I saw the streets replenished with people going in a religious sort and in great triumph. All things seemed that day to be joyfull, as well all manner of beasts and houses, as also the very day it selfe seemed to rejoyce."

NOTE.—In this passage prose takes on at times the musical reiterations of poetry. It has a sleep-provoking effect, for a friend who made the attempt thrice failed to finish reading it before drowsing off—to be visited in a dream, let us hope, by the kind and immortal Lady who alone can change asses into men, and make men divine.

V. THE GREAT LOVERS

The parting and passing of Launcelot and Guenever, from *Le Morte Darthur* of Sir Thomas Malory (Book XXI., Chapters IX–XIII).

I NEVER take up Malory's immortal romance without a lively sense of gratitude to the "many noble and divers gentlemen of this realm of England" who instantly required William Caxton to imprint the history of King Arthur and his knights, and to Sir Thomas who did take it out of certain books of French and reduce it into English (adding his own soul to the work) and to the worthy printer himself. The book has been my constant companion since I was ten years old when I read it, with other books of *chevalerie*, and was moved thereby to make shining armour of tin plate for myself and my brothers, and arrange joustings among ourselves and our friends with clothes props and wooden swords and, on one great and glorious occasion, with the help of two fat lazy old carriage-horses conveyed privily out of their stable, a neighbour's property. When travelling in the Far West in quest of "coarse dust" (alluvial gold), or fur-bearing creatures—and "travelling very light," as they say out there, because every ounce of luxury weight might mean short commons later on—I took with me three books only: a thick volume of Plato's Dialogues, a seventeenth century edition of *Le Morte Darthur*, and "The Golden Treasury." Often have I turned in all standing, as sailormen describe sleeping in one's clothes, and used one of these precious

books as a pillow. I do not deny that Malory's romance has sleep-provoking qualities—the stereotyped descriptions of fighting and the lists of melodious names, like amber beads falling into a silver basin, have always been to me as good as a sleeping draught. For all that the book has more vivid interest than any dozen of the best modern novels. It is full of sudden pictures which have the lucidity and directness of a William Morris description in crystal-clear verse. The characters of the *personae dramatis* are drawn wonderfully well by their words and works; with a Caesarean brevity that is far more effectual than the "good analysis" of modern novelists. The whole book has an atmosphere of reality which transcends the careful realism of the conscious artist. Malory's history seems mainly derived from the *Historia Brithonum* of Geoffrey of Monmouth, and Sir Edward Strachey finds the details of Arthur's march to Rome so accurate that he thinks Malory—a close friend, no doubt, of King Edward the Fourth, the Last of the Paladins—may have had actual knowledge of the road. But, generally speaking, the history and the geography of the book are matters

> Apart from place, withholding time,
> But flattering the golden prime.

It is historical in that it mirrors the true manners of chivalry's ripest period and shows us men and women of action not unduly idealised—as are the heroes and heroines of Tennyson's "Idylls" who really inhabit a sort of upper middle-class wonderland run by Lytteltons and Arnolds and characterised by a filigree gentility which is at times reflected in the finickin' fine writing parodied by Calverley with diabolical dexterity. I could never quite forgive Tennyson for making Arthur say to Guenever, bowed at his feet in her great golden hair:

> Lo, I forgive thee as eternal God
> Forgives; do thou for thine own soul the rest.

I much prefer to that kind of Arthur the monarch in the nursery rhyme :—

> When good King Arthur ruled this land,
> He was a goodly king;
> He stole three bags of barley meal
> To make a bag pudding.

Indeed I do! Malory's Arthur is a king as well as a knight; his character was, I think, modelled on that of Edward the Fourth. He has a kingly imperiousness; as when, like Edward the Third in Froissart's chronicle refusing to hear Sir Walter de Manny's remonstrances on behalf of the Calais burgesses, he tells Sir Launcelot that he "takes no force whom he grieves." King in spite of himself at times; as when he regrets that he cannot do better for his wife, though believing in her innocence, because he must judge according to his laws. The real Arthur might have sent Guenever to the stake; he would never have preached at her. Again, Malory's style, midway between Chaucer's and Shakespere's, is of its kind perfect, when he is able to fuse his material in the mild furnace of his own spirit. As J. A. Symonds said: "The Morte Darthur was written at a lucky moment in our literary history, when the old Saxon fountain of speech was yet undefiled, and when printing had not introduced stereotyped forms or enforced the laws of a too scrupulous grammar; at the same time the language is truly English —rich in French and Latin words, as well as Saxon, and not so archaic as to be grotesque or repulsive." Finally, Malory lived in an age when men could still believe in knight-errantry which, a century later, Spenser could only use for the making of allegory and Cervantes for revealing the fantastical thoughts of a noble mind crazed and crossed.

All the passages I quote are pure gold; and the story therein, so true to the spirit of an age when the doors of

Heaven and Hell alike opened into life, has the pathos and the pang that no generous spirit can endure without tears—the very *lacrimae rerum* of Virgil. To shed such tears purges the soul of meanness, if it can be purged. Many years ago I asked the lamented Ada Rehan, that creature of dew and fire, half eagle and half dove, to read it in a quiet hour, at the end of the day's work and thinking over work. She did so, and later confessed that it kept her awake half the night; she could not bring herself not to be sorry that Guenever refused Launcelot a farewell kiss—and "never no more." "Never no more"—that lost Miranda's voice broke as she made a solemn music of the words, and her eyes were too bright to be tearless.

I

HOW SIR LAUNCELOT DEPARTED TO SEEK THE QUEEN GUENEVER, AND HOW HE FOUND HER AT ALMESBURY

THEN came Sir Bors de Ganis, and said, My lord Sir Launcelot, what think ye for to do, now to ride in this realm? wit thou well ye shall find few friends. Be as may be, said Sir Launcelot, keep you still here, for I will forth on my journey, and no man nor child shall go with me. So it was no boot to strive, but he departed and rode westerly, and there he sought a seven or eight days, and at the last he came to a nunnery, and then was queen Guenever ware of Sir Launcelot as he walked in the cloister, and when she saw him there she swooned thrice, that all the ladies and gentlewomen had work enough to hold the queen up. So when she might speak, she called ladies

and gentlewomen to her, and said, Ye marvel, fair ladies, why I make this fare. Truly, she said, it is for the sight of yonder knight that yonder standeth: wherefore, I pray you all, call him to me. When Sir Launcelot was brought to her, then she said to all the ladies, Through this man and me hath all this war been wrought, and the death of the most noblest knights of the world; for through our love that we have loved together is my most noble lord slain. Therefore, Sir Launcelot, wit thou well I am set in such a plight to get my soul's health; and yet I trust, through God's grace, that after my death to have a sight of the blessed face of Christ, and at doomsday to sit on his right side, for as sinful as ever I was are saints in heaven. Therefore, Sir Launcelot, I require thee and beseech thee heartily, for all the love that ever was betwixt us, that thou never see me more in the visage; and I command thee on God's behalf, that thou forsake my company, and to thy kingdom thou turn again and keep well thy realm from war and wrack. For as well as I have loved thee, mine heart will not serve me to see thee; for through thee and me is the flower of kings and knights destroyed. Therefore, Sir Launcelot, go to thy realm, and there take thee a wife, and live with her with joy and bliss, and I pray thee heartily pray for me to our Lord, that I may amend my mis-living. Now, sweet madam, said Sir Launcelot, would ye that I should return again unto my country, and there to wed a lady? Nay, madam, wit you well that shall I never do: for I shall never be

so false to you of that I have promised, but the same destiny that ye have taken you to, I will take me unto, for to please Jesu, and ever for you I cast me specially to pray. If thou wilt do so, said the queen, hold thy promise; but I may never believe but that thou wilt turn to the world again. Well, madam, said he, ye say as pleaseth you, yet wist you me never false of my promise, and God defend but I should forsake the world as ye have done. For in the quest of the Sancgreal I had forsaken the vanities of the world, had not your lord been. And if I had done so at that time with my heart, will, and thought, I had passed all the knights that were in the Sancgreal, except Sir Galahad my son. And therefore, lady, sithen ye have taken you to perfection, I must needs take me to perfection of right. For I take record of God, in you I have had mine earthly joy. And if I had found you now so disposed, I had cast me to have had you into mine own realm.

II

HOW SIR LAUNCELOT CAME TO THE HERMITAGE WHERE THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY WAS, AND HOW HE TOOK THE HABIT ON HIM

But sithen I find you thus disposed, I insure you faithfully I will ever take me to penance, and pray while my life lasteth, if that I may find any hermit either grey or white that will receive me. Wherefore, madam, I pray you kiss me, and never no more. Nay,

said the queen, that shall I never do, but abstain you from such works. And they departed. But there was never so hard an hearted man, but he would have wept to see the dolour that they made. For there was lamentation as if they had been stung with spears, and many times they swooned. And the ladies bare the queen to her chamber, and Sir Launcelot awoke, and went and took his horse, and rode all that day and all that night in a forest, weeping. And at the last he was ware of an hermitage and a chapel stood betwixt two cliffs, and then he heard a little bell ring to mass, and thither he rode and alight, and tied his horse to the gate, and heard mass. And he that sang mass was the bishop of Canterbury. Both the bishop and Sir Bedivere knew Sir Launcelot, and they spake together after mass. But when Sir Bedivere had told his tale all whole, Sir Launcelot's heart almost brast for sorrow, and Sir Launcelot threw his arms abroad, and said, Alas, who may trust this world! And then he kneeled down on his knees, and prayed the bishop to shrive him and assoil him. And then he besought the bishop that he might be his brother. Then the bishop said, I will gladly; and there he put an habit upon Sir Launcelot, and there he served God day and night with prayer and fastings.

Thus the great host abode at Dover. And then Sir Lionel took fifteen lords with him, and rode to London to seek Sir Launcelot. And there Sir Lionel was slain and many of his lords. Then Sir Bors de Ganis made the great host for to go home again. And Sir Bors

Sir Ector de Maris, Sir Blamor, Sir Bleoberis, with more other of Sir Launcelot's kin, took on them to ride all England overthwart and endlong, to seek Sir Launcelot. So Sir Bors by fortune rode so long till he came to the same chapel where Sir Launcelot was. And so Sir Bors heard a little bell knell that rang to mass, and there he alight, and heard mass. And when mass was done, the bishop, Sir Launcelot, and Sir Bedivere came to Sir Bors. And when Sir Bors saw Sir Launcelot in that manner clothing, then he prayed the bishop that he might be in the same suit. And so there was an habit put upon him, and there he lived in prayers and fasting. And within half a year there was come Sir Galihud, Sir Galihodin, Sir Blamor, Sir Bleoberis, Sir Williars, Sir Clarrus, and Sir Gahalantine. So all these seven noble knights there abode still. And when they saw Sir Launcelot had taken him unto such perfection, they had no list to depart, but took such an habit as he had. Thus they endured in great penance six year, and then Sir Launcelot took the habit of priesthood, and a twelvemonth he sang mass. And there were none of these other knights but they read in books, and holp to sing mass, and rang bells, and did bodily all manner of service. And so their horses went where they would, for they took no regard of no worldly riches. For when they saw Sir Launcelot endure such penance, in prayers and fasting, they took no force what pain they endured, for to see the noblest knight of the world take such abstinence, that he waxed full lean. And thus upon

a night there came a vision to Sir Launcelot, and charged him, in remission of his sins, to haste him unto Almesbury,—And by then thou come there, thou shalt find queen Guenever dead: and therefore take thy fellows with thee, and purvey them of an horse bier, and fetch thou the corpse of her, and bury her by her husband the noble king Arthur. So this vision came to Launcelot thrice in one night.

III

HOW SIR LAUNCELOT WENT WITH HIS SEVEN FELLOWS TO ALMESBURY, AND FOUND THERE QUEEN GUENEVER DEAD, WHOM THEY BROUGHT TO GLASTONBURY

Then Sir Launcelot rose up or day, and told the hermit. It were well done, said the hermit, that ye made you ready, and that ye disobey not the vision. Then Sir Launcelot took his seven fellows with him, and on foot they went from Glastonbury to Almesbury, the which is little more than thirty miles. And thither they came within two days, for they were weak and feeble to go. And when Sir Launcelot was come to Almesbury, within the nunnery, queen Guenever died but half an hour before. And the ladies told Sir Launcelot that queen Guenever told them all, or she passed, that Sir Launcelot had been priest near a twelvemonth,—And hither he cometh as fast as he may to fetch my corpse: and beside my lord king Arthur he shall bury me. Wherefore the queen said

in hearing of them all, I beseech Almighty God that I may never have power to see Sir Launcelot with my worldly eyes. And thus, said all the ladies, was ever her prayer these two days, till she was dead. Then Sir Launcelot saw her visage, but he wept not greatly, but sighed. And so he did all the observance of the service himself, both the Dirige, and on the morn he sang mass. And there was ordained an horse bier; and so with an hundred torches ever burning about the corpse of the queen, and ever Sir Launcelot with his eight fellows went about the horse bier singing and reading many an holy orison, and frankincense upon the corpse incensed. Thus Sir Launcelot and his eight fellows went on foot from Almesbury unto Glastonbury; and when they were come to the chapel and the hermitage, there she had a Dirige with great devotion. And on the morn the hermit, that sometime was bishop of Canterbury, sang the mass of Requiem with great devotion: and Sir Launcelot was the first that offered, and then all his eight fellows. And then she was wrapped in cered cloth of Raines, from the top to the toe in thirty fold, and after she was put in a web of lead, and then in a coffin of marble. And when she was put in the earth, Sir Launcelot swooned, and lay long still, while the hermit came out and awaked him, and said, Ye be to blame, for ye displease God with such manner of sorrow making. Truly, said Sir Launcelot, I trust I do not displease God, for He knoweth mine intent, for my sorrow was not, nor is not, for any rejoicing of sin, but my sorrow

may never have end. For when I remember of her beauty, and of her noblesse, that was both with her king and with her; so when I saw his corpse and her corpse so lie together, truly mine heart would not serve to sustain my careful body. Also when I remember me, how by my default, mine orgule, and my pride, that they were both laid low, that were peerless that ever was living of christian people, wit you well, said Sir Launcelot, this remembered, of their kindness and mine unkindness, sank so to my heart, that I might not sustain myself. So the French book maketh mention.

IV

HOW SIR LAUNCELOT BEGAN TO SICKEN, AND AFTER DIED, WHOSE BODY WAS BORNE TO JOYOUS GARD TO BE BURIED

Then Sir Launcelot never after eat but little meat, nor drank, till he was dead; for then he sickened more and more, and dried and dwined away; for the bishop nor none of his fellows might not make him to eat, and little he drank, that he was waxen by a cubit shorter than he was, that the people could not know him; for evermore day and night he prayed, but sometime he slumbered a broken sleep, and ever he was lying groveling on the tomb of king Arthur and queen Guenever. And there was no comfort that the bishop, nor Sir Bors, nor none of his fellows could make him, it availed not. So within six weeks after

Sir Launcelot fell sick, and lay in his bed; and then he sent for the bishop that there was hermit, and all his true fellows. Then Sir Launcelot said with dreary voice, Sir bishop, I pray you give to me all my rights that longeth to a christian man. It shall not need you, said the hermit and all his fellows, it is but a heaviness of your blood: ye shall be well amended by the grace of God to-morn. My fair lords, said Sir Launcelot, wit you well, my careful body will into the earth, I have warning more then now I will say, therefore give me my rights. So when he was houseled and eneled, and had all that a christian man ought to have, he prayed the bishop that his fellows might bear his body to Joyous Gard. Some men say it was Anwick, and some say it was Bamborow. Howbeit, said Sir Launcelot, me repenteth sore, but I made mine avow sometime that in Joyous Gard I would be buried, and because of breaking of mine avow, I pray you all lead me thither. Then there was weeping and wringing of hands among his fellows. So at a season of the night they went all to their beds, for they all lay in one chamber. And so after midnight, against day, the bishop that was hermit, as he lay in his bed asleep, he fell upon a great laughter; and therewith all the fellowship awoke, and came into the bishop, and asked him what he ailed. Alas! said the bishop, why did ye awake me, I was never in all my life so merry and so well at ease. Wherefore? said Sir Bors. Truly, said the bishop, here was Sir Launcelot with me, with more angels than ever I saw men upon one

day; and I saw the angels heave Sir Launcelot unto heaven, and the gates of heaven opened against him. It is but the vexing of dreams, said Sir Bors, for I doubt not Sir Launcelot aileth nothing but good. It may well be, said the bishop, go ye to his bed, and then shall ye prove the sooth. So when Sir Bors and his fellows came to his bed they found him stark dead, and he lay as he had smiled, and the sweetest savour about him that ever they had felt. Then there was weeping and wringing of hands, and the greatest dole they made that ever made men. And on the morn the bishop did his mass of Requiem; and after the bishop and all the nine knights put Sir Launcelot in the same horse bier that queen Guenever was laid in tofore that she was buried: and so the bishop and they altogether went with the corpse of Sir Launcelot daily, till they came to Joyous Gard, and ever they had an hundred torches burning about him; and so within fifteen days they came to Joyous Gard. And there they laid his corpse in the body of the quire, and sang and read many psalters and prayers over him and about him; and ever his visage was laid open and naked that all folk might behold him; for such was the custom in those days, that all men of worship should so lie with open visage till that they were buried. And right thus as they were at their service, there came Sir Ector de Maris, that had seven year sought all England, Scotland, and Wales, seeking his brother Sir Launcelot.

V

HOW SIR ECTOR FOUND SIR LAUNCELOT HIS BROTHER DEAD. AND HOW CONSTANTINE REIGNED AFTER ARTHUR, AND OF THE END OF THIS BOOK

And when Sir Ector heard such noise and light in the quire of Joyous Gard, he alight and put his horse from him, and came into the quire, and there he saw men sing and weep. And they all knew Sir Ector, but he knew not them. Then went Sir Bors unto Sir Ector, and told him how there lay his brother Sir Launcelot dead. And then Sir Ector threw his shield, sword, and helm from him; and when he beheld Sir Launcelot's visage he fell down in a swoon. And when he awaked it were hard any tongue to tell the doleful complaints that he made for his brother. Ah, Launcelot, he said, thou were head of all christian knights; and now I dare say, said Sir Ector, thou Sir Launcelot, there thou liest, that thou were never matched of earthly knight's hand; and thou were the courteoust knight that ever bare shield; and thou were the truest friend to thy lover that ever bestrode horse; and thou were the truest lover of a sinful man that ever loved woman; and thou were the kindest man that ever strake with sword; and thou were the goodliest person ever came among press of knights; and thou was the meekest man and the gentlest that ever ate in hall among ladies; and thou were the

sternest knight to thy mortal foe that ever put spear in the rest.

Then there was weeping and dolour out of measure. Thus they kept Sir Launcelot's corpse on loft fifteen days, and then they buried it with great devotion. And then at leisure they went all with the bishop of Canterbury to his hermitage, and there they were together more than a month. Then Sir Constantine, that was Sir Cador's son, of Cornwall, was chosen king of England; and he was a full noble knight, and worshipfully he ruled this realm.

VI. WISDOM OF MONTAIGNE

Three excerpts from his Essays.

MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE is, in my judgment, the greatest of all the essayists, ancient or modern. Forty years ago, in that Paris of the *bien pensants* which no mere tourist ever gets a glimpse of, the crucial question as to a young man's education might still be: "Does he know his Montaigne?" He was in his life-time the friend of princes and peasants; and he could have played a great part in politics and established himself in a lofty position but for the wise intent to live by his motto *Otio et Libertati* (which Disraeli, as he told an old friend of my family, had in mind when he invented his maxim *Imperium et Libertas*) and to prefer happiness to high fortune. To him the literature that he loved, in which he found such ample consolation for age and ill-health, was but a single branch of the art of living, and he is the least bookish of all the sages that have written books. The greatest minds of the centuries that have passed since his death have drawn upon his inexhaustible store of wisdom, and it often happens—as you will know, when you have mastered his writings—that what seemed a novel and profound reflection on their part is really taken straight out of Montaigne's Essays. Other writers were once light-houses, but the sea of living has receded. Montaigne is still as fixed and undimmed a guide as the Pole star, and you and I may profit as much from his guidance as Bacon and Shakspeare did—

and did not Victor Hugo, who also sat at this Gamaliel's feet, once claim for him the credit of having led Shakspeare from the *concetti* of the Italian school, the confetti of literature, to the graver thought of which "Hamlet" is an example? He is, to take but one instance of his noble singularity, the only writer who ever told the whole truth about himself and his book in a Preface. "Reader," he says, "thou hast here an honest book; it doth at the outset forewarn thee that, in contriving the same, I have proposed to myself no other than a domestic and private end; I have had no consideration at all either to thy service or to my glory. . . . Had my intention been to seek the world's favour, I should surely have adorned myself with borrowed beauties; I desire therein to be viewed as I appear in mine own genuine, simple, and ordinary manner, without study and artifice; for it is myself I paint." Indeed his book is a proof that one man at any rate has lived in the world who had mastered the ancient adage: "Know Thyself," with all its applications and implications. If his knowledge of the Greek language was imperfect, as he admits, he had the Greek spirit of perfect disinterestedness in the quest of truth—especially the truth about himself. He is a friend indeed to all who seek him, and he talks to us as one gentleman unafraid to another in a tone of perfect good breeding and with the most beguiling smile. With posterity, as with his friends, he is charitable—and courtesy with him is ever the better part of charity. "O," exclaimed the Châtelaine des Rochers, "what capital company he is, the dear man! He is my old friend; and just for the reason that he is so, he always seems new. My God! how full is that book of sense!" Indeed it is not a book you are reading—it is Montaigne talking to you just for so long as you wish!

OF BOOKS

I MAKE no doubt but that I often happen to speak of things that are much better and more truly handled by those who are masters of the trade. You have here purely an essay of my natural parts, and not of those acquired: and whoever shall catch me tripping in ignorance, will not in any sort get the better of me; for I should be very unwilling to become responsible to another for my writings, who am not so to myself, nor satisfied with them. Whoever goes in quest of knowledge, let him fish for it where it is to be found; there is nothing I so little profess. These are fancies of my own, by which I do not pretend to discover things but to lay open myself; they, may, peradventure, one day be known to me, or have formerly been, according as fortune has been able to bring me in place where they have been explained; but I have utterly forgotten it; and if I am a man of some reading, I am a man of no retention; so that I can promise no certainty, more than to make known to what point the knowledge I now have has risen. Therefore, let none lay stress upon the matter I write, but upon my method in writing it. Let them observe, in what I borrow, if I have known how to choose what is proper to raise or help the invention, which is always my own. For I make others say for me, not before but after me, what, either for want of language or want of sense, I cannot myself so well express. I do not

number my borrowings, I weigh them; and had I designed to raise their value by number, I had made them twice as many; they are all, or within a very few, so famed and ancient authors, that they seem, methinks, themselves sufficiently to tell who they are, without giving me the trouble. In reasons, comparisons, and arguments, if I transplant any into my own soil, and confound them amongst my own, I purposely conceal the author, to awe the temerity of those precipitate censors who fall upon all sorts of writings, particularly the late ones, of men yet living, and in the vulgar tongue which puts every one into a capacity of criticising and which seem to convict the conception and design as vulgar also. I will have them give Plutarch a fillip on my nose, and rail against Seneca when they think they rail at me. I must shelter my own weakness under these great reputations. I shall love any one that can unplume me, that is, by clearness of understanding and judgment, and by the sole distinction of the force and beauty of the discourse. For I who, for want of memory, am at every turn at a loss to pick them out of their national livery, am yet wise enough to know, by the measure of my own abilities, that my soil is incapable of producing any of those rich flowers that I there find growing; and that all the fruits of my own growth are not worth any one of them. For this, indeed, I hold myself responsible; if I get in my own way; if there be any vanity and defect in my writings which I do not of myself per-

ceive nor can discern, when pointed out to me by another; for many faults escape our eye, but the infirmity of judgment consists in not being able to discern them when by another laid open to us. Knowledge and truth may be in us without judgment, and judgment also without them; but the confession of ignorance is one of the finest and surest testimonies of judgment that I know. I have no other officer to put my writings in rank and file, but only fortune. As things come into my head, I heap them one upon another; sometimes they advance in whole bodies, sometimes in single file. I would that every one should see my natural and ordinary pace, irregular as it is; I suffer myself to jog on at my own rate. Neither are these subjects which a man is not permitted to be ignorant in, or casually and at a venture, to discourse of. I could wish to have a more perfect knowledge of things, but I will not buy it so dear as it costs. My design is to pass over easily, and not laboriously, the remainder of my life; there is nothing that I will cudgel my brains about; no, not even knowledge, of what value soever.

I seek, in the reading of books, only to please myself, by an honest diversion; or, if I study, 'tis for no other science than what treats of the knowledge of myself, and instructs me how to die and how to live well.

"Has meus ad metas sudet oportet equus." [1]

[1] "My horse must be trained to this course"—Propertius, iv. i. 70.

I do not bite my nails about the difficulties I meet with in my reading; after a charge or two, I give them over. Should I insist upon them, I should lose both myself and time; for I have an impatient understanding, that must be satisfied at first: what I do not discern at once, is by persistence rendered more obscure. I do nothing without gaiety; continuation and a too obstinate endeavour, darkens, stupefies, and tires my judgment. My sight is confounded and dissipated with poring; I must withdraw it, and refer my discovery to new attempts; just as to judge rightly of the lustre of scarlet, we are taught to pass the eye lightly over it, and again to run it over at several sudden and reiterated glances. If one book do not please me, I take another; and never meddle with any, but at such times as I am weary of doing nothing. I care not much for new ones, because the old seem fuller and stronger; neither do I converse much with Greek authors, because my judgment cannot do its work with imperfect intelligence of the material.[1]

KINGSHIP

(From "The Inconveniences of Greatness," Book III, Chapter VII.)

The most painful and difficult employment in the world, in my opinion, is worthily to discharge the office of a king. I excuse more of their mistakes than men commonly do, in consideration of the intolerable

[1] Montaigne refers to his imperfect knowledge of the Greek language.

weight of their function, which astounds me. 'Tis hard to keep measure in so immeasurable a power; yet so it is, that it is, even to those who are not of the best nature, a singular incitement to virtue, to be seated in a place where you cannot do the least good that shall not be put upon record; and where the least benefit redounds to so many men, and where your talent of administration, like that of preachers, principally addresses itself to the people, no very exact judge, easy to deceive and easily content. There are few things wherein we can give a sincere judgment, by reason that there are few wherein we have not, in some sort, a private interest. Superiority and inferiority, dominion and subjection, are bound to a natural envy and contest, and must of necessity perpetually intrench upon one another. I believe neither the one nor the other touching the rights of the other party; let reason therefore, which is inflexible and without passion, determine when we can avail ourselves of it. 'Tis not above a month ago that I read over two Scotch authors contending upon this subject, of whom he who stands for the people makes kings to be in a worse condition than a carter; and he who writes for monarchy places them some degrees above God Almighty in power and sovereignty.

Now, the inconveniency of greatness that I have made choice of to consider in this place, upon some occasion that has lately put it into my head, is this: there is not, peradventure, anything more pleasant in

the commerce of men than the trials that we make against one another, out of emulation of honour and worth, whether in the exercises of the body or in those of the mind, wherein sovereign greatness can have no true part. And, in earnest, I have often thought that by force of respect itself men use princes disdainfully and injuriously in that particular; for the thing I was infinitely offended at in my childhood, that they who exercised with me forbore to do their best because they found me unworthy of their utmost endeavour, is what we see happen to them daily, every one finding himself unworthy to contend with them. If we discover that they have the least desire to get the better of us, there is no one who will not make it his business to give it them, and who will not rather betray his own glory than offend theirs; and will, therein, employ so much force only as is necessary to save their honour. What share have they, then, in the engagement, where every one is on their side? Methinks I see those Paladins of ancient times presenting themselves to jousts and battle with enchanted arms and bodies. Brisson,[1] running against Alexander, purposely missed his blow, and made a fault in his career; Alexander chid him for it, but he ought to have had him whipped. Upon this consideration Carneades said,[2] that "the sons of princes learned

[1] Plutarch, On Satisfaction or Tranquillity of the Mind. But in his essay, How a Man may Distinguish a Flatterer from a Friend, he calls him Chriso.

[2] Plutarch, How a Man, etc., *ubi supra*.

nothing right but to ride; by reason that, in all their other exercises, every one bends and yields to them; but a horse, that is neither a flatterer nor a courtier, throws the son of a king with no more ceremony than he would throw that of a porter."

Homer was fain to consent that Venus, so sweet and delicate a goddess as she was, should be wounded at the battle of Troy, thereby to ascribe courage and boldness to her; qualities that cannot possibly be in those who are exempt from danger. The gods are made to be angry, to fear, to run away, to be jealous, to grieve, to be transported with passions, to honour them with the virtues that, amongst us, are built upon these imperfections. Who does not participate in the hazard and difficulty can claim no interest in the honour and pleasure that are the consequents of hazardous actions. 'Tis pity a man should be so potent that all things must give way to him; fortune therein sets you too remote from Society, and places you in too great a solitude. This easiness and mean facility of making all things bow under you is an enemy to all sorts of pleasure: 'tis to slide, not to go; 'tis to sleep, and not to live. Conceive man accompanied with omnipotence: you overwhelm him; he must beg disturbance and opposition as an alms: his being and his good are in indigence.[1]

[1] In the Bordeaux copy, Montaigne here adds, "Evil to man is, in its turn, good; and good, evil. Neither is pain always to be shunned, nor pleasure always to be pursued."

Their good qualities are dead and lost; for they can only be perceived by comparison, and we put them out of this: they have little knowledge of true praise, having their ears deafened with so continual and uniform an approbation. Have they to do with the stupidest of all their subjects? They have no means to take any advantage of him; if he but say: "'Tis because he is my king," he thinks he has said enough to express that he, therefore, suffered himself to be overcome. This quality stifles and consumes the other true and essential qualities: they are sunk in the royalty; and leave them nothing to recommend themselves with but actions that directly concern and serve the function of their place; 'tis so much to be a king, that this alone remains to them. The outer glare that environs him conceals and shrouds him from us; our sight is there repelled and dissipated, being filled and stopped by this prevailing light. The senate awarded the prize of eloquence to Tiberius; he refused it, esteeming that though it had been just, he could derive no advantage from a judgment so partial, and that was so little free to judge.

As we gave them all advantages of honour, so do we soothe and authorise all their vices and defects, not only by approbation, but by imitation also. Every one of Alexander's followers carried his head on one side, as he did;[1] and the flatterers of Dionysius ran against one another in his presence, and

[1] Plutarch, On the Difference, etc., *ubi supra.*

stumbled at and overturned whatever was under foot, to show they were as purblind as he. Hernia itself has also served to recommend a man to favour; I have seen deafness affected; and because the master hated his wife, Plutarch [1] has seen his courtiers repudiate theirs, whom they loved; and, which is yet more, uncleanliness and all manner of dissolution have so been in fashion; as also disloyalty, blasphemy, cruelty, heresy, superstition, irreligion, effeminacy, and worse, if worse there be; and by an example yet more dangerous than that of Mithridates' [2] flatterers who, as their master pretended to the honour of a good physician, came to him to have incisions and cauteries made in their limbs; for these others suffered the soul, a more delicate and noble part, to be cauterised.

OF LIARS

There is not a man living whom it would so little become to speak from memory as myself, for I have scarcely any at all, and do not think that the world has another so marvellously treacherous as mine. My other faculties are all sufficiently ordinary and mean; but in this I think myself very rare and singular, and deserving to be thought famous. Besides the natural inconvenience I suffer by it (for, certes, the necessary use of memory considered, Plato

[1] *Idem, ibid.*, who, however, only gives one instance, and in this he tells us that the man visited his wife privately.

[2] *Idem, ibid.*

had reason when he called it a great and powerful goddess), in my country, when they would say a man has no sense, they say, such a one has no memory; and when I complain of the defect of mine, they do not believe me, and reprove me, as though I accused myself for a fool: not discerning the difference betwixt memory and understanding, which is to make matters worse for me. But they do me wrong: for experience, rather, daily shows us, on the contrary, that a strong memory is commonly coupled with infirm judgment. They do me, moreover (who am so perfect in nothing as in friendship), a great wrong in this, that they make the same words which accuse my infirmity, represent me for an ungrateful person; they bring my affections into question upon the account of my memory, and from a natural imperfection, make out a defect of conscience. "He has forgot," says one, "this request, or that promise; he no more remembers his friends; he has forgot to say or do, or conceal such and such a thing, for my sake." And, truly, I am apt enough to forget many things, but to neglect anything my friend has given me in charge, I never do it. And it should be enough, methinks, that I feel the misery and inconvenience of it, without branding me with malice, a vice so contrary to my humour.

However, I derive these comforts from my infirmity: first, that it is an evil from which principally I have found reason to correct a worse, that would easily enough have grown upon me, namely, ambition;

the defect being intolerable in those who take upon them public affairs. That, as several like examples in the progress of nature demonstrate to us, she has fortified me in my other faculties proportionably as she has left me unfurnished in this; I should otherwise have been apt implicitly to have reposed my mind and judgment upon the bare report of other men, without ever setting them to work upon their own force, had the inventions and opinions of others been ever present with me by the benefit of memory. That by this means I am not so talkative, for the magazine of the memory is ever better furnished with matter than that of the invention. Had mine been faithful to me, I had ere this deafened all my friends with my babble, the subjects themselves arousing and stirring up the little faculty I have of handling and employing them, heating and extending my discourse, which were a pity: as I have observed in several of my intimate friends, who, as their memories supply them with an entire and full view of things, begin their narrative so far back, and crowd it with so many impertinent circumstances, that though the story be good in itself, they make a shift to spoil it; and if otherwise, you are either to curse the strength of their memory or the weakness of their judgment: and it is a hard thing to close up a discourse, and to cut it short, when you have once started; there is nothing wherein the force of a horse is so much seen as in a round and sudden stop. I see even those who are pertinent enough, who would, but cannot stop

short in their career; for whilst they are seeking out a handsome period to conclude with, they go on at random, straggling about upon impertinent trivialities, as men staggering upon weak legs. But, above all, old men who retain the memory of things past, and forget how often they have told them, are dangerous company; and I have known stories from the mouth of a man of very great quality, otherwise very pleasant in themselves, become very wearisome by being repeated a hundred times over and over again to the same people.

Secondly, that, by this means, I the less remember the injuries I have received; insomuch that, as the ancient said,[1] I should have a register of injuries, or a prompter, as Darius, who, that he might not forget the offence he had received from those of Athens, so oft as he sat down to dinner, ordered one of his pages three times to repeat in his ear, "Sir, remember the Athenians;"[2] and then, again, the places which I revisit, and the books I read over again, still smile upon me with a fresh novelty.

It is not without good reason said "that he who has not a good memory should never take upon him the trade of lying." I know very well that the grammarians[3] distinguish betwixt an *untruth* and a *lie*, and say that to tell an *untruth* is to tell a thing that is false, but that we ourselves believe to be true; and that the definition of the word to *lie* in Latin, from

[1] Cicero, *Pro Ligar.*, c. 12. [2] Herod., v. 105.

[3] Nigidius, Aulus Gellius, xi. 11; Nonius, v. 80.

which our French is taken, is to tell a thing which we know in our conscience to be untrue; and it is of this last sort of liars only that I now speak. Now, these do either wholly contrive and invent the untruths they utter, or so alter and disguise a true story that it ends in a lie. When they disguise and often alter the same story, according to their own fancy, 'tis very hard for them, at one time or another, to escape being trapped, by reason that the real truth of the thing, having first taken possession of the memory, and being there lodged and impressed by the medium of knowledge and science, it will be difficult that it should not represent itself to the imagination, and shoulder out falsehood, which cannot there have so sure and settled footing as the other; and the circumstances of the first true knowledge evermore running in their minds, will be apt to make them forget those that are illegitimate, and only forged by their own fancy. In what they wholly invent, forasmuch as there is no contrary impression to jostle their invention, there seems to be less danger of tripping; and yet even this also, by reason it is a vain body, and without any hold, is very apt to escape the memory, if it be not well assured. Of which I have had very pleasant experience, at the expense of such as profess only to form and accommodate their speech to the affair they have in hand, or to the humour of the great folks to whom they are speaking; for the circumstances to which these men stick not to enslave their faith and conscience being subject to several changes, their

language must vary accordingly: whence it happens that of the same thing they tell one man that it is this, and another that it is that, giving it several colours; which men, if they once come to confer notes, and find out the cheat, what becomes of this fine art? To which may be added, that they must of necessity very often ridiculously trap themselves; for what memory can be sufficient to retain so many different shapes as they have forged upon one and the same subject? I have known many in my time very ambitious of the repute of this fine wit; but they do not see that if they have the reputation of it, the effect can no longer be.

In plain truth, lying is an accursed vice. We are not men, nor have other tie upon one another, but by our word. If we did but discover the horror and gravity of it, we should pursue it with fire and sword, and more justly than other crimes. I see that parents commonly, and with indiscretion enough, correct their children for little innocent faults, and torment them for wanton tricks, that have neither impression nor consequence; whereas, in my opinion, lying only, and which is of something a lower form, obstinacy, are the faults which are to be severely whipped out of them, both in their infancy and in their progress, otherwise they grow up and increase with them; and after a tongue has once got the knack of lying, 'tis not to be imagined how impossible it is to reclaim it: whence it comes to pass that we see some, who are otherwise very honest men, so subject and enslaved to this vice. I have an honest lad to my tailor, whom I

never knew guilty of one truth, no, not when it had been to his advantage. If *falsehood* had, like *truth*, but one face only, we should be upon better terms; for we should then take for certain the contrary to what the liar says: but the reverse of *truth* has a hundred thousand forms, and a field indefinite, without bound or limit. The Pythagoreans make *good* to be certain and finite, and *evil*, infinite and uncertain. There are a thousand ways to miss the white, there is only one to hit it. For my own part, I have this vice in so great horror, that I am not sure I could prevail with my conscience to secure myself from the most manifest and extreme danger by an imprudent and solemn lie. An ancient father says "that a dog we know is better company than a man whose language we do not understand." "Ut externus alieno non sit hominis vice." [1] And how much less sociable is false speaking than silence?

King Francis I. bragged that he had, by this means, nonplussed Francisco Taverna, ambassador of Francisco Sforza, Duke of Milan, a man very famous for his science in talking in those days. This gentleman had been sent to excuse his master about a thing of very great consequence, which was this: the king, still to maintain some intelligence with Italy, out of which he had lately been driven, and particularly with the duchy of Milan, had thought it convenient to

[1] "As a foreigner cannot be said to supply to us the place of a man."—Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, vii. 1; whose text, however, is "*pene* non sit," etc.

have a gentleman on his behalf to be with that duke: an ambassador in effect, but in outward appearance a private person who pretended to reside there upon his own particular affairs; for the duke, much more depending on the emperor, especially at a time when he was in a treaty of a marriage with his niece, daughter to the King of Denmark, and now dowager of Lorraine, could not manifest and practise and conference with us, but very much to his own prejudice. For this commission one Merveille, a Milanese gentleman, and an equerry to the king, being thought very fit, was accordingly despatched thither with private credentials, and instructions as ambassador, and with other letters of recommendation to the duke about his own private concerns, the better to mask and colour the business; and was so long in that court, that the emperor at last had some inkling of his real employment there; which was the occasion of what followed after, as we suppose; which was, that under pretence of some murder, his trial was in two days despatched, and his head in the night struck off in prison. Messire Francisco being come and prepared with a long counterfeit history of the affair (for the king had applied himself to all the princes of Christendom, as well as to the duke himself, to demand satisfaction), had his audience at the morning council; where, after he had for the support of his cause laid open several plausible justifications of the fact, that his master never looked upon this Merveille for other than a private gentleman, and his own subject, who

was there only in order to his own business, neither had he ever lived after any other aspect; absolutely disowning that he had ever heard he was one of the king's household, or that his majesty so much as knew him, so far was he from taking him for an ambassador: the king, in his turn, pressing him with several objections and demands, and sifting him on all hands, gravelled him at last by asking, why, then, the execution was performed by night, and as it were by stealth? At which the poor confounded ambassador, the more handsomely to disengage himself, made answer, that the duke would have been very loath, out of respect to his majesty, that such an execution should have been performed by day. Any one may guess if he was not well rated when he came home, for having so grossly tripped in the presence of a prince of so delicate a nostril as King Francis.

Pope Julius II. having set an ambassador to the King of England to animate him against King Francis, the ambassador having had his audience, and the king, before he would give an answer insisting upon the difficulties he should find in setting on foot so great a preparation as would be necessary to attack so potent a king, and urging some reasons to that effect, the ambassador, very unseasonably, replied that he had also himself considered the same difficulties, and had represented them to the Pope. From which saying of his, so directly opposite to the thing propounded, and the business he came about, which was immediately to incite him to war, the king first

derived argument (which also he afterwards found to be true), that this ambassador, in his own mind, was on the side of the French ; of which having advertised the Pope, his estate at his return home was confiscated, and he himself very narrowly escaped the losing of his head.[1]

[1] Erasmi Op. (1703) iv. col. 684.

VII. THE ABBEY OF THELEME

As designed by François Rabelais.

GARGANTUA and Pantagruel sit by my bed at times, towering stupendous in the outer dusk and filling the hollow midnight with lusty laughter. Why should I be ashamed of such company? It is only the squeamishness of a particular time and clime which, in certain households I know of, causes the immortal masterpiece of Rabelais to be kept in a locked book-case and never allowed to escape upstairs. It was in its day the fatal and final indictment of the monkish superstitions, which insisted that the body must be made miserable, that ignorance is a divine attribute, that uncleanliness is next to godliness. Rabelais takes us into the smoking-room of heaven, as it were, and the blue clouds of smoke-and-talk form themselves into the fantastic figures of his creative wit. All the same I have a small secret liking for the Mendicant Friar who was invited to supper in the refectory of a great monastery, famous as a seat of learning, and when he heard the Prior's brief grace: *Benedictus benedicat*, thinking it a reference to St. Benedict, bawled out *Franciscus franciscat.* After all the author of the Franciscan order, himself no lazy and illiterate monk, would have seen the unconscious humour of his disciple's pig-Latin (*pauca verba*). The sunny joyousness, which is truly Franciscan, shines in the excerpt I have chosen from the sage of Meudon's amazing book, and it can be read and enjoyed by anybody's maiden

aunt. The translator, Sir Thomas Urquhart, has given us a well-nigh perfect version of the French original. There never lived a more complete Rabelaisian than the knight of Cromartie who, when translating it, honoured Scotland by his exact scholarship and was a great benefactor to all who can boast of:

> A bibulous big bottle-nose,
> As richly coloured as the rose,
> Proof against all doctrinal shocks,
> And never aught but orthodox.

His *Logopandekteision*, a description of a new, philosophic language, in which verbs have four voices, seven moods and ten tenses, and nouns eleven genders, is as fantastical as any of the colossal conceits of the procreator of Pantagruel. The "Epistle Dedicatory to Nobody" is a wonderful piece of polysyllabic nonsense. Here is the first paragraph:

MOST HONOURABLE,—My non-supponent Lord and Sovereign Master of contradictions in adjected terms, that unto you I have presumed to tender the delicacies of this introduction, will not seem strange to those that know how your concurrence did further me to the accomplishment of that new Language, into the frontispiece whereof it is permitted.

Let all whose souls are not like parched peas in a bladder, rattling at Mrs. Grundy's slightest sniff in a dry perturbation, read and enjoy his Rabelais in bed as I have done for many a year. I should have included one of the master's blazons or fantastical lists, but there were reasons against so doing. Charles Kingsley, a devout Rabelaisan who presided over Sunday cricket at Eversley with a big, black, fizzling briar in the corner of his mouth ("His whiskers drooped over," I was told by a farmer who remembered him well), has imitated these blazons in his

" Water Babies," itself a delightful bed-side book. There is the address to the " Backstairs " and the list of remedies tried for curing the Professor from Bumpsterhausen's Blue Follicles: both in the right Rabelaisian mode.

I

WHAT MANNER OF DWELLING THE THELEMITES HAD

IN the middle of the lower Court there was a stately fountain of faire Alabaster, upon the top thereof stood the three Graces, with their cornucopias, or hornes of abundance, and did jert out the water at their breasts, mouth, eares, eyes, and other open passages of the body; the inside of the buildings in this lower Court stood upon great pillars of Cassydonie stone, and Porphyrie marble, made arch-wayes after a goodly antick fashion. Within those were spacious galleries, long and large, adorned with curious pictures, the hornes of Bucks and Unicornes: with Rhinoceroses, water-horses called Hippopotames, the teeth and tusks of Elephants, and other things well worth the beholding. The lodging of the Ladies (for so we may call those gallant women) took up all from the tower Aretick unto the gate Mesembrine: the men possessed the rest, before the said lodging of the Ladies, that they might have their recreation between the two first towers. On the out-side were placed the tilt-yard, the barriers or lists for turnements, the hippodrome or riding Court, the theater or publike play-house, and Natatorie or place to swim in, with

most admirable bathes in three stages, situated above one another, well furnished with all necessary accommodation, and store of myrtle-water. By the river-side was the faire garden of pleasure; and in the midst of that the glorious labyrinth.

Between the two other towers were the Courts for the tennis and the baloon. Towards the tower Criere stood the Orchard full of all fruit-trees, set and ranged in a quincuncial order. At the end of that was the great Park, abounding with all sort of Venison. Betwixt the third couple of towers were the buts and marks for shooting with a snap-work gun, an ordinary bowe for common archery, or with a Crosse bowe. The office-houses were without the tower Hesperie, or one story high. The stables were beyond the offices, and before them stood the Falconrie, managed by ostridge-keepers and Falconers, very expert in the art, and it was yearly supplied and furnished by the Canadians, Venetians, Sarmates (now called Moscoviters) with all sorts of most excellent hawks, eagles, gerfalcons, gosehawkes, sacres, lanners, falcons, sparhawks, Marlins, and other kindes of them, so gentle and perfectly well manned, that flying of themselves sometimes from the Castle for their own disport, they would not faile to catch whatever they encountered. The Venerie where the Beagles and Hounds were kept, was a little farther off drawing towards the Park.

All the halls, chambers, and closets or cabinets, were richly hung with tapestrie, and hangings of divers sorts, according to the variety of the seasons

of the year. All the pavements and floors were covered with green cloth: the beds were all embroidered: in every back-chamber or withdrawing room there was a looking-glasse of pure crystal set in a frame of fine gold, garnished all about with pearles, and was of such greatnesse, that it would represent to the full the whole lineaments and proportion of the person that stood before it. At the going out of the halls, which belong to the Ladies lodgings, were the perfumers and trimmers, through whose hands the gallants past when they were to visit the Ladies; those sweet Artificers did every morning furnish the Ladies chambers with the spirit of roses, orange-flower-water and Angelica; and to each of them gave a little precious casket vapouring forth the most odoriferous exhalations of the choicest aromatical sents.

HOW THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDER OF THELEME WERE APPARELLED

The Ladies at the foundation of this order were apparelled after their own pleasure and liking; but since that of their own accord and free will they have reformed themselves, their accoutrement is in manner as followeth. They wore stockins of scarlet crimson, or ingrained purple die, which reached just three inches above the knee, having a list beautified with exquisite embroideries and rare incisions of the Cutter's art. Their garters were of the colour of their bracelets, and circled the knee a little both over and

under. Their shoes, pumps, and slippers were either of red, violet, or crimson-velvet, pinked and jagged like Lobster wadles.

Next to their smock they put on the pretty kirtle or vasquin of pure silk chamlet: above that went the taffatie or tabie vardingale, of white, red, tawnie, gray, or of any other colour. Above this taffatie petticoat they had another of cloth of tissue or brocado, embroidered with fine gold, and interlaced with needle-work, or as they thought good, and according to the temperature and disposition of the weather had their upper coats of sattin, damask or velvet, and those either orange, tawnie, green, ash-coloured, blew, yelow, bright, red, crimson or white, and so forth; or had them of cloth of gold, cloth of silver, or some other choise stuffe, inriched with purple, or embroidered according to the dignity of the festival dayes and times wherein they wore them.

Their gownes, being still correspondent to the season, were either of cloth of gold frizled with a silver-raised work: of red sattin, covered with gold purle; of tabie, or taffatie, white, blew, black, tawnie, etc., of silk serge, silk chamlot, velvet, cloth of silver, silver tissue, cloth of gold, gold wire, figured velvet, or figured sattin tinselled and overcast with golden threads, in divers variously purfled draughts.

In the summer some dayes in stead of gowns they wore light handsome mantles, made either of the stuffe of the aforesaid attire, or like Moresco rugs, of violet, velvet frizled, with a raised work of gold upon

silver purle, or with a knotted cord-work of gold embroiderie, every where garnished with little Indian pearles. They alwayes carried a faire Pannache, or plume of feathers, of the colour of their muffe, bravely adorned and tricked out with glistening spangles of gold. In the winter-time, they had their taffatie gownes of all colours, as above-named: and those lined with the rich furrings of hinde-wolves, or speckled linxes, black-spotted weesils, martlet-skins of Calabria, sables, and other costly furres of an inestimable value. Their beads, rings, bracelets, collars, carcanets and neck-chaines, were all of precious stones, such as carbuncles, rubies, baleus, diamonds, saphirs, emeralds, turkoises, garnets, agates, berilles, and excellent margarits. Their head-dressing also varied with the season of the yeare, according to which they decked themselves. In winter it was of the French fashion, in the spring of the Spanish; in summer of the fashion of Tuscanie, except only upon the holy dayes and Sundayes, at which times they were accoutred in the French mode, because they accounted it more honourable, and better befitting the garb of a matronal pudicity.

The men were apparelled after their fashion; their stockins were of tamine or of cloth-serge, of white, black, scarlet, or some other ingrained colour: their breeches were of velvet, of the same colour with their stockins, or very near, embroidered and cut according to their fancy; their doublet was of cloth of gold, of cloth of silver, of velvet, sattin, damask, taffaties,

etc., of the same colours, cut, embroidered, and suitably trimmed up in perfection: the points were of silk of the same colours, the tags were of gold well enameled: their coats and jerkins were of cloth of gold, cloth of silver, gold, tissue or velvet embroidered, as they thought fit: their gownes were every whit as costly as those of the Ladies: their girdles were of silk, of the colours of their doublets; every one had a gallant sword by his side, the hilt and handle whereof were gilt, and the scabbard of velvet, of the colour of his breeches, with a chape of gold, and pure Goldsmiths work: the dagger was of the same: their caps or bonnets were of black velvet, adorned with jewels and buttons af gold; upon that they wore a white plume, most prettily and minion-like, parted by so many rowes of gold spangles, at the end whereof hung dangling in a more sparkling resplendencie faire rubies, emeralds, diamonds, etc., but there was such a sympathy betwixt the gallants and the Ladies, that every day they were apparelled in the same livery: and that they might not misse, there were certain Gentlemen appointed to tell the youths every morning what vestments the ladies would on that day weare; for all was done according to the pleasure of the Ladies. In these so handsome clothes, and abiliaments so rich, think not that either one or other of either sex did waste any time at all; for the Masters of the wardrobes had all their raiments and apparel so ready for every morning, and the chamber-Ladies so well skilled, that in a trice they would be dressed, and compleatly in their clothes

from head to foot. And to have those accoutrements with the more conveniency, there was about the wood of Theleme a row of houses to the extent of half a league, very neatly and cleanly, wherein dwelt the Goldsmiths, Lapidaries, Jewellers, Embroiderers, Tailors, Gold-drawers, Velvet-weavers, Tapestrie-makers and Upholsterers, who wrought there every one in his own trade, and all for the aforesaid jollie Friars and Nuns of the new stamp, they were furnished with matter and stuffe from the hands of the Lord Nausiclete, who every year brought them seven ships from the Perlas and Cannibal-islands, laden with ingots of gold, with raw silk, with pearles and precious stones. And if any margarites (called unions), began to grow old, and lose somewhat of their natural whiteness and lustre, those with their Art they did renew, by tendering them to eat to some pretty cocks, as they use to give casting into hawkes.

HOW THE THELEMITES WERE GOVERNED, AND OF THEIR MANNER OF LIVING

All their life was spent not in lawes, statutes or rules, but according to their own free will and pleasure. They rose out of their beds, when they thought good : they did eat, drink, labour, sleep, when they had a minde to it, and were disposed for it. None did awake them, none did offer to constrain them to eat, drink, not to do any thing; for so had Gargantua established it. In all their rule, and strictest tie of their

order, there was but this one clause to be observed,

DO WHAT THOU WILT.

Because men that are free, well-borne, well-bred, and conversant in honest companies, have naturally an instinct and spurre that prompteth them unto vertuous actions, and withdraws them from vice, which is called honour. Those same men, when by base subjection and constraint they are brought under and kept down, turn aside from that noble disposition, by which they formerly were inclined to vertue, to shake off and break that bond of servitude, wherein they are so tyrannously inslaved; for it is agreeable with the nature of man to long after things forbidden, and to desire what is denied us.

By this liberty they entered into a very laudable emulation, to do all of them what they saw did please one; if any of the gallants or Ladies should say, Let us drink, they would all drink: if any one of them said, Let us play, they all played; if one said, Let us go a walking into the fields, they went all: if it were to go a hawking or a hunting, the Ladies mounted upon dainty well-paced nags, seated in a stately palfrey saddle, carried on their lovely fists, miniardly be-gloved every one of them, either a sparhawk, or a Lancret, or a Marlin, and the young gallants carried the other kinds of Hawkes: so nobly were they taught, that there was neither he nor she amongst them, but could read, write, sing, play upon several musical instruments, speak five or sixe several languages, and compose in them all very quaintly, both in Verse and

Prose: never were seen so valiant Knights, so noble and worthy, so dextrous and skilful both on foot and a horseback, more brisk and lively, more nimble and quick, or better handling all manner of weapons than were there. Never were seene Ladies so proper and handsome, so miniard and dainty, lesse froward, or more ready with their hand, and with their needle, in every honest and free action belonging to that sexe, then were there; for this reason, when the time came, that any man of the said Abbey, either at the request of his parents, or for some other cause, had a minde to go out of it, he carried along with him one of the Ladies, namely her whom he had before that chosen for his Mistris, and were married together: and if they had formerly in Theleme lived in good devotion and amity, they did continue therein and increase it to a greater height in their state of matrimony: and did entertaine that mutual love till the very last day of their life, in no lesse vigour and fervency, than at the very day of their wedding.

VIII. THREE GREAT MYSTERIES

By Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam.

FRANCIS BACON is the great English master of philosophy cast into the form of aphorisms—as a man might pay his debt, not by a cheque or bank-notes, but by ringing coins of gold, silver, and copper—and, so far as my inquiries go, seems to be a favourite among the older bed-side companions. Each of these three essays is a night-cap in itself, if you try to master its intricate argument.

I

OF TRUTH

WHAT *is Truth?* said jesting *Pilate*; And would not stay for an Answer. Certainly there be, that delight in Giddinesse; And count it a Bondage, to fix a Beleefe; Affecting Free-will in Thinking, as well as in Acting. And though the Sects of Philosophers of that Kinde be gone, yet there remaine certaine discoursing Wits, which are of the same veines, though there be not so much Bloud in them, as was in those of the Ancients. But it is not onely the Difficultie, and Labour, which Men take in finding out of *Truth*; Nor againe, that when it is found, it imposeth upon mens Thoughts; that

doth bring *Lies* in favour: But a naturall, though corrupt Love, of the *Lie* it selfe. One of the later Schoole of the Grecians, examineth the matter, and is at a stand, to thinke what should be in it, that men should love *Lies*; Where neither they make for Pleasure, as with Poets; Nor for Advantage, as with the Merchant; but for the *Lies* sake. But I cannot tell: This same *Truth*, is a Naked, and Open day light, that doth not shew, the Masques, and Mummeries, and Triumphs of the world, halfe so Stately, and daintily, as Candlelights. Truth may perhaps come to the price of a Pearle, that sheweth best by day: But it will not rise, to the price of a Diamond, or Carbuncle, that sheweth best in varied lights. A mixture of a *Lie* doth ever adde Pleasure. Doth any man doubt, that if there were taken out of Mens Mindes, Vaine Opinions, Flattering Hopes, False valuations, Imaginations as one would, and the like; but it would leave the Mindes, of a Number of Men, poore shrunken Things; full of Melancholy, and Indisposition, and unpleasing to themselves? One of the Fathers, in great Severity, called Poesie, *Vinum Daemonum*; because it filleth the Imagination, and yet it is, but with the shadow of a *Lie*. But it is not the *Lie*, that passeth through the Minde, but the *Lie* that sinketh in, and setleth in it, that doth the hurt, such as we spake of before. But howsoever these things are thus, in mens depraved Judgements, and Affections, yet *Truth*, which onely doth iudge it selfe, teacheth, that the Inquirie of *Truth*, which is

the Love-making, or Wooing of it; The knowledge of *Truth* which is the Presence of it; and the Beleefe of *Truth*, which is the Enjoying of it; is the Soveraigne Good of humane Nature. The first Creature of God, in the workes of the Dayes, was the Light of the Sense; The last, was the Light of Reason; And his Sabbath Worke, ever since, is the Illumination of his Spirit. First he breathed Light, upon the Face, of the Matter or Chaos; Then he breathed Light, into the Face of Man; and still he breatheth and inspireth Light, into the Face of his Chosen. The Poet, that beautified the Sect, that was otherwise inferiour to the rest, saith yet excellently well: *It is a pleasure to stand upon the shore, and to see ships tost upon the Sea: A pleasure to stand in the window of a Castle, and to see a Battaile, and the Adventures thereof, below: But no pleasure is comparable, to the standing, upon the vantage ground of Truth:* (A hill not to be commanded, and where the Ayre is alwaies cleare and serene;) *And to see the Errours, and Wandrings, and Mists, and Tempests, in the vale below:* So alwaies, that this prospect, be with Pitty, and not with Swelling, or Pride. Certainly, it is Heaven upon Earth, to have a Mans Minde Move in Charitie, Rest in Providence, and Turne upon the Poles of *Truth.*

To passe from Theologicall, and Philosophicall *Truth*, to the *Truth* of civill Businesse; It will be acknowledged, even by those, that practize it not, that cleare and Round dealing, is the Honour of

Mans Nature; And that Mixture of Falshood, is like Allay in Coyne of Gold and Silver; which may make the Metall worke the better, but it embaseth it. For these winding and crooked courses, are the Goings of the Serpent; which goeth basely upon the belly, and not upon the Feet. There is no Vice, that doth so cover a Man with Shame, as to be found false, and perfidious. And therefore *Mountaigny* saith prettily, when he enquired the reason, why the word of the *Lie*, should be such a Disgrace, and such an Odious Charge? Saith he, *If it be well weighed, To say that a man lieth, is as much to say, as that he is brave towards God and a Coward towards Men.* For a *Lie* faces God, and shrinkes from Man. Surely the Wickednesse of Falshood, and Breach of Faith, cannot possibly be so highly expressed, as in that it shall be the last Peale, to call the Judgements of God, upon the Generations of Men, It being foretold, that when Christ commeth, *He shall not finde Faith upon the Earth.*

NOTES. *Vinum Daemonum* (Devils' wine).—It is not certain to whom Bacon is here referring. He may have been quoting from memory and had in mind a passage in one of St. Jerome's letters to Damasus in which that Ciceronian, turned Christian at last (did not Christ rebuke him in a vision for preferring to be Ciceronian rather than Christian?), roundly declares: *Daemonum cibus est carmina poetarum* (Devil's food is poetry). Also he may have had a remembrance of the "devils' cup" of the Vulgate of 1. Cor. x. 20.

"The Poet, that beautified the Sect."—Lucretius is the Poet, and his Sect the Epicureans; the passage in italics is a free, but rather inadequate, translation of Lucr. ii. 1-10, a favourite passage with Bacon, for he also quotes it in his "Advancement of Learning."

" As Montaigny saith prettily."—In this passage Montaigne alludes to the saying of Lysander recorded by Plutarch: " For he sayd, that children should be deceived with the play of kayles and men with othes of men " (North's translation); on which Plutarch observes, " for he that deceiveth his enemy, and breaketh his othe to him: sheweth plainly that he feareth him, but that he careth not for God."

2

OF BEAUTY

Vertue is like a Rich Stone, best plaine set: And surely, Vertue is best in a Body, that is comely, though not of Delicate Features: And that hath rather dignity of Presence, then *Beauty* of Aspect. Neither is it almost seene, that very *Beautiful Persons*, are otherwise of great Vertue; As if Nature, were rather Busie not to erre, then in labour, to produce Excellency. And therefore, they prove Accomplished, but not of great Spirit; And Study rather Behaviour, then Vertue. But this holds not alwaies; For *Augustus Caesar*, *Titus Vespasianus*, *Philip le Belle* of *France*, *Edward* the *Fourth* of *England*, *Alcibiades* of *Athens*, *Ismael* the *Sophy* of *Persia*, were all High and Great Spirits; And yet the most *Beautiful Men* of their Times. In *Beauty*, that of Favour, is more then that of Colour, And that of Decent and Gracious Motion, more then that of Favour. That is the best Part of *Beauty*, which a Picture cannot expresse; No nor the first Sight of the Life. There is no Excellent *Beauty*, that hath not some Strangenesse in the Proportion. A Man cannot tell whether *Apelles*, or

Albert Durer, were the more Trifler: Whereof the one would make a Personage by Geometricall Proportions: The other, by taking the best Parts out of divers Faces, to make one Excellent. Such Personages, I thinke, would please no Body, but the Painter, that made them. Not but that I thinke a Painter, may make a better Face, then ever was; But he must doe it, by a kinde of Felicity, (As a Musician that maketh an excellent Ayre in Musicke) And not by Rule. A Man shall see Faces, that if you examine them, Part by Part, you shall finde never a good; And yet all together doe well. If it be true, that the Principall Part of *Beauty*, is in decent Motion, certainly it is no marvaile, though *Persons in Yeares*, seeme many times more Aimable; *Pulchrorum Autumnus pulcher:* For no *Youth* can be comely, but by Pardon, and considering the *Youth*, as to make up the comelinesse. Beauty is as Summer-Fruits, which are easie to corrupt, and cannot last: And, for the most part, it makes a dissolute *Youth*, and an *Age* a little out of countenance: But yet certainly againe, if it light well, it maketh Vertues shine, and Vices blush.

NOTE. Apelles and Albert Durer.—It was not Apelles, but Zeuxis, who, when painting a picture for the temple of Juno Lacinia at Croton, selected five of the most beautiful maidens of the city, that his work might present the best features of each. The allusion to Albert Durer concerns his *De Symmetria Partium Humani Corporis*, a treatise recalled in the fourth of Donne's Satires:

> And thou by Durer's rules survey the state
> Of his each limb, and with the strings the odds tries
> Of his neck to his leg, and waste to thighs.

3

OF LOVE

The Stage is more beholding to *Love*, then the Life of Man. For as to the Stage, *Love* is ever matter of Comedies, and now and then of Tragedies: But in Life, it doth much mischiefe: Sometimes like a *Syren*; Sometimes like a *Fury*. You may observe, that amongst all the great and worthy Persons (whereof the memory remaineth, either Ancient or Recent), there is not One, that hath beene transported, to the mad degree of *Love*: which shewes, that great Spirits, and great Businesse, doe keepe out this weake Passion. You must except, neverthelesse, *Marcus Antonius* the halfe Partner of the Empire of Rome; and *Appius Claudius* the *Decemvir*, and Law-giver: Whereof the former, was indeed a Voluptuous Man, and Inordinate; but the latter, was an Austere, and wise man: And therefore it seemes (though rarely) that Love can finde entrance, not only into an open Heart; but also into a Heart well fortified; if watch be not well kept. It is a poore Saying of *Epicurus*; *Satis magnum Alter Alteri Theatrum sumus*: As if Man, made for the contemplation of Heaven, and all Noble Objects, should doe nothing, but kneele before a little Idoll, and make himselfe subject, though not of the mouth (as Beasts are) yet of the Eye; which was given him for higher Purposes. It is a strange Thing, to note the Excesse of this Passion; And how

it braves, the Nature, and value of things; by this, that the Speaking in a perpetuall *Hyperbole*, is comely in nothing, but in *Love*. Neither is it meerely in the Phrase; For whereas it hath beene well said, that the Arch-flatterer, with whom all the petty Flatterers have Intelligence, is a Mans Selfe; Certainly the *Lover* is more. For there was never Proud Man, thought so absurdly well of himselfe, as the *Lover* doth of the Person *loved*: And therefore, it was well said; *That it is impossible to love and to be wise.* Neither doth this weaknesse appeare to others onely, and not to the Party *Loved*; But to the *Loved*, most of all: except the *Love* be reciproque. For, it is a true Rule, that *Love* is ever rewarded, either with the Reciproque, or with an inward, and secret Contempt. By how much the more, Men ought to beware of this Passion, which loseth not only other things, but it selfe. As for the other losses, the Poets Relation, doth well figure them; That he that preferred *Helena*, quitted the Gifts of *Iuno*, and *Pallas*. For whosoever esteemeth too much of Amorous Affection, quitteth both *Riches*, and *Wisedome*. This Passion, hath his Flouds, in the very times of Weaknesse; which are, great *Prosperitie*; and great *Adversitie*; though this latter hath beene lesse observed. Both which times kindle *Love*, and make it more fervent, and therefore shew it to be the Childe of Folly. They doe best, who, if they cannot but admit *Love*, yet make it keepe Quarter: And sever it wholly, from their serious Affaires, and Actions of Life: For

if it checke once with Businesse, it troubleth Mens Fortunes, and maketh Men, that they can, no wayes be true, to their owne Ends. I know not how, but Martiall Men, are given to *Love*: I thinke it is, but as they are given to *Wine*; For Perils, commonly aske, to be paid in *Pleasures*. There is in Mans Nature, a secret Inclination, and Motion, towards *love* of others; which, if it be not spent, upon some one, or a few, doth naturally spread it selfe, towards many; and maketh men become Humane, and Charitable; As it is seene sometime in Friars. Nuptiall *love* maketh Mankinde; Friendly *love* perfecteth it; but Wanton *love* Corrupteth, and Imbaseth it.

NOTE. It would seem, from this somewhat shallow and contemptuous essay, that Bacon had never felt the precious pangs of an engrossing love for a woman. The proper antidotes to his shallow philosophy are to be found in the poems of Donne and Coventry Patmore, who cannot, unfortunately, be recommended as bed-side poets—they are too apt, I find, to kindle an inward fire which makes sudden excursions and destroys the predisposition to rest. Donne's wonderful poem of "The Ecstasy" with its final precept:

> Love's mysteries in souls do grow,
> But yet the body is his book,

is perhaps the greatest pronouncement on the deeper significance of the love between man and woman; yet, read in the refuge-city of bed, it may give the wearied fugitive a tiring ecstasy instead of the sweet sleep he or she desires. The passage analysing Love's perversity in "The Angel in the House" by Coventry Patmore would have enlightened Bacon, could he have read it, and read with understanding, which might well have been beyond the capacity of one so deeply corroded by self-seeking ambition. Here are a few lines from this illuminating passage:

Because she's constant, he will change,
And kindest glances coldly meet,
And, all the time he seems so strange,
His soul is fawning at her feet;
Of smiles and simple heaven grown tired,
He wickedly provokes her tears,
And when she weeps, as he desired,
Falls slain with ecstasies of fears;
He blames her, though she has no fault,
Except the folly to be his;
He worships her, the more to exalt
The profanation of a kiss;
Health's his disease; he's never well
But when his paleness shames her rose;
His faith's a rock-built citadel,
It's sign a flag that each way blows;
His o'erfed fancy frets and fumes;
And Love, in him, is fierce like Hate,
And ruffles his ambrosial plumes
Against the bars of time and fate.

For all reasonable persons a comparison of Bacon's conception of Love with the doctrine variously expressed in Shakespere's Poems and Plays is sufficient to confute the attribution of them to "the mightiest and the meanest of mankind," whose meanness, as I think, was rooted in an utter lack of the capacity for service, blissful, sacrificial, keen, such as Love requires of his accepted votaries.

IX. THREE AUGUST ARGUMENTS

By Sir Thomas Browne.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE (1605-1682) is our greatest writer of prose in the grand style. His *Hydriotaphia* or "Urne Burialle" has been likened to a symphony of Beethoven, and all that he has written is full of the thunders and splendours of a solemn musical diction which expresses more than is articulately apparent. There is a wise and inexhaustible kindness—rooted in a toleration which is almost modern—and a sweet reasonableness in his *Religio Medici* which brought on him the heavy wrath of dogmatic philosophers and theologians, but the blows from their controversial bludgeons could not touch its spiritual substance:

> For it was as the air invulnerable,
> And *these* vain blows malicious mockery.

He lived at peace with the world and himself all his life, and even "the drums and tramplings of conquest" during the Civil War did not disturb his quiet labours. His *Religio*, which had been read in manuscript by an ever-widening circle of friends, became famous with unparalleled rapidity when he published the authentic text—with his characteristic charity entrusting the task to the very publisher who had issued a pirated edition. Sir Kenelm Digby tells us how he sent his man out to buy a copy, received it at bed-time, and read it with rapt attention through the night-watches. He was

greatly interested in scientific investigations, and it is strange that he was never enrolled in the Royal Society, few of whose members could show anything like the natural history collections in his Norwich home, or had shown such zeal in research as to make experimental meals off spiders and bees—Sir Thomas Browne might, in the matter of small orgies of omnivorousness, claim as a disciple the learned and humorous Sir Arthur Shipley, who is wont to tell his pupils what it is that monkeys find to eat in scratching themselves and what it tastes like! Mr. Edmund Gosse has suggested that Browne was deliberately excluded from the Royal Society because that body had set its face against the "amplications, digressions, and swellings of style" of the old sumptuous and sonorous prose and had "exacted from all its members a close, naked, natural way of speaking; positive expressions . . . bringing all things as near the mathematical plainness as they can." But, despite his lack of the Baconian brevity, he is one of the glories of English letters, and the haunting charm, a kind of noble contagion, of his books consists in they teach us the sweet usages of toleration ("I am of a constitution so general," he writes, "that it consorts and sympathizeth with all things") and also because there shines in them a more than mortal wisdom. It is the latter characteristic, definitely felt but not easily defined, which has made his *Religio Medici* a favourite bed-side book. He was an Oxford scholar; a fellow-commoner at Pembroke College (then called Broadgates Hall), where, a century later, Johnson proudly concealed his poverty. And, as I read him in the night-watches, he seems to me in the succession of those Oxonian teachers, from Wicliffe to T. H. Green and Aubrey Moore, who were thought by their youthful disciples to have "cornered the Absolute" and to possess a wisdom beyond and above the learning of their contemporaries. Man, after all, may be greater in his

personality than in his philosophy; that was the secret of the spell they cast over the young.

I

ALMS FOR OBLIVION

(From *Hydriotaphia* or "Urne Buriall")

BUT the iniquity of oblivion blindely scattereth her poppy, and deals with the memory of men without distinction to merit of perpetuity. Who can but pity the founder of the Pyramids? *Herostratus* lives that burnt the Temple of *Diana*, he is almost lost that built it; Time hath spared the Epitaph of Adrians horse, confounded that of himself. In vain we compute our felicities by the advantage of our good names, since bad have equall durations; and *Thersites* is like to live as long as *Agamemnon*, Who knows whether the best of men be known? or whether there be not more remarkable persons forgot, then any that stand remembered in the known account of time? Without the favour of the everlasting register, the first man had been as unknown as the last, and *Methuselahs* long life had been his only Chronicle.

Oblivion is not to be hired: The greater part must be content to be as though they had not been, to be found in the Register of God, not in the record of man. Twenty-seven Names make up the first story before the flood, and the recorded names ever since contain not one living Century. The number of the dead long

exceedeth all that shall live. The night of time far surpasseth the day, and who knows when was the Æquinox? Every hour adds unto that current Arithmetique which scarce stands one moment. And since death must be the *Lucina* of life, and even Pagans [1] could not doubt, whether thus to live, were to dye. Since our longest sunne sets at right descensions, and makes but winter arches, and therefore it cannot be long before we lie down in darknesse, and have our light in ashes.[2] Since the brother of death daily haunts us with dying *mementos*, and time that grows old in it self, bids us hope no long duration: Diuturnity is a dream and folly of expectation.

Darknesse and light divide the course of time, and oblivion shares with memory, a great part even of our living beings; we slightly remember our felicities, and the smartest stroaks of affliction leave but short smart upon us. Sense endureth no extremities, and sorrows destroy us or themselves. To weep into stones are fables. Afflictions induce callosities, miseries are slippery, or fall like snow upon us, which notwithstanding is no unhappy stupidity. To be ignorant of evils to come, and forgetfull of evils past, is a merciful provision in nature, whereby we digest the mixture of our few and evil dayes, and our delivered senses not relapsing into cutting remembrances,

[1] Euripides.

[2] According to the custom of the *Jews*, who place a lighted wax-candle in a pot of ashes by the corpse.—*Leo.*

our sorrows are not kept raw by the edge of repetitions. A great part of Antiquity contented their hopes of subsistency with a transmigration of their souls. A good way to continue their memories, while having the advantage of plurall successions, they could not but act something remarkable in such variety of beings, and enjoying the fame of their passed selves, make accumulation of glory unto their last durations. Others, rather then be lost in the uncomfortable night of nothing, were content to recede into the common being, and make one particle of the public soul of all things, which was no more then to return into their unknown and divine Originall again. Ægyptian ingenuity was more unsatisfied, contriving their bodies in sweet consistencies, to attend the return of their souls. But all was vanity, feeding the winde,[1] and folly. The Ægyptian Mummies, which *Cambyses* or time hath spared, avarice now consumeth. Mummie is become Merchandise, *Mizraim* cures wounds, and *Pharaoh* is sold for balsoms.

In vain do individuals hope for Immortality or any patent from oblivion, in preservations below the Moon: Men have been deceived even in their flatteries above the Sun, and studied conceits to perpetuate their names in heaven. The various Cosmography of that part hath already varied the names of contrived constellations; *Nimrod* is lost in *Orion*, and *Osyris*

[1] *Omnia vanitas et pastio venti, νομὴ ἀνέμου καὶ βόσκησις, ut olim Aquila et Symmachus* v. *Drus. Eccles.*

in the Doggestarre. While we look for incorruption in the heavens, we finde they are but like the Earth; Durable in their main bodies, alterable in their parts: whereof beside Comets and new Stars, perspectives begin to tell tales. And the spots that wander about the Sun, with *Phaetons* favour, would make clear conviction.

There is nothing strictly immortall, but immortality; whatever hath no beginning, may be confident of no end—which is the peculiar of that necessary essence that cannot destroy itself; And the highest strain of omnipotency, to be so powerfully constituted as not to suffer even from the power of itself: All others have a dependent being, and within the reach of destruction, But the sufficiency of Christian Immortality frustrates all earthly glory, and the quality of either state after death, makes a folly of posthumous memory. God who can only destroy our souls, and hath assured our resurrection, either of our bodies or names, hath directly promised no duration. Wherein there is so much of chance, that the boldest Expectants have found unhappy frustration; and to hold long subsistence, seems but a scape in oblivion. But man is a Noble Animal, splendid in ashes, and pompous in the grave, solemnizing Nativities and Deaths with equal lustre, not omitting Ceremonies of bravery in the infamy of his nature.

II

THE MYSTERY OF SLEEP

(From *Religio Medici*)

There is surely a piece of Divinity in us, something that was before the Elements, and owes no homage unto the Sun. Nature tells me I am the Image of God, as well as Scripture: he that understands not thus much, hath not his introduction or first lesson, and is yet to begin the Alphabet of man. Let me not injure the felicity of others, if I say I am as happy as any: *Ruat cœlum, fiat voluntas Tua*, salveth all; so that whatsoever happens, it is but what our daily prayers desire. In brief, I am content; and what should Providence add more? Surely this is it we call Happiness, and this I do enjoy; with this I am happy in a dream, and as content to enjoy a happiness in a fancy, as others in a more apparent truth and reality. There is surely a neerer apprehension of any thing that delights us in our dreams, than in our waked senses: without this I were unhappy; for my awaked judgment discontents me, ever whispering unto me, that I am from my friend; but my friendly dreams in the night requite me, and make me think I am within his arms. I thank God for my happy dreams, as I do for my good rest; for there is a satisfaction in them unto reasonable desires, and such as can be content with a fit of happiness: and surely it is not a melancholy conceit to think we are all asleep in this World, and that the

conceits of this life are as meer dreams to those of the next; as the Phantasms of the night, to the conceits of the day. There is an equal delusion in both, and the one doth but seem to be the embleme or picture of the other: we are somewhat more than our selves in our sleeps, and the slumber of the body seems to be but the waking of the soul. It is the ligation of sense, but the liberty of reason; and our waking conceptions do not match the Fancies of our sleeps. At my Nativity my Ascendant was the watery sign of Scorpius; I was born in the Planetary hour of Saturn, and I think I have a piece of that Leaden Planet in me. I am no way facetious, nor disposed for the mirth and galliardize of company; yet in one dream I can compose a whole Comedy, behold the action, apprehend the jests, and laugh my self awake at the conceits thereof. Were my memory as faithful as my reason is then fruitful, I would never study but in my dreams; and this time also would I chuse for my devotions: but our grosser memories have then so little hold of our abstracted understandings, that they forget the story, and can only relate to our awaked souls, a confused and broken tale of that that hath passed. Aristotle, who hath written a singular Tract *Of Sleep*, hath not, methinks, thoroughly defined it; nor yet Galen, though he seem to have corrected it; for those Noctambuloes and night-walkers, though in their sleep, do yet injoy the action of their senses. We must therefore say that there is something in us that is not in the jurisdiction of Morpheus; and that those

abstracted and estatick souls do walk about in their own corps, as spirits with the bodies they assume, wherein they seem to hear, see, and feel, though indeed the Organs are destitute of sense, and their natures of those faculties that should inform them. Thus it is observed, that men sometimes, upon the hour of their departure, do speak and reason above themselves; for then the soul, beginning to be freed from the ligaments of the body, begins to reason like her self, and to discourse in a strain above mortality.

We term sleep a death; and yet it is waking that kills us, and destroys those spirits that are the house of life. 'Tis indeed a part of life that best expresseth death; for every man truely lives, so long as he acts his nature, or some way makes good the faculties of himself. Themistocles, therefore, that slew his Soldier in his sleep, was a merciful Executioner: 'tis a kind of punishment the mildness of no laws hath invented: I wonder the fancy of Lucan and Seneca did not discover it. It is that death by which we may be literally said to dye daily; a death which Adam dyed before his mortality; a death whereby we live a middle and moderating point between life and death: in fine, so like death, I dare not trust it without my prayers, and an half adieu unto the World, and take my farewel in a Colloquy with God.

> The night is come, like to the day,
> Depart not Thou, great GOD, away.
> Let not my sins, black as the night,
> Eclipse the lustre of Thy light:

Keep still in my Horizon; for to me
The Sun makes not the day, but Thee.
Thou, Whose nature cannot sleep,
On my temples Centry keep;
Guard me 'gainst those watchful foes,
Whose eyes are open while mine close.
Let no dreams my head infest,
But such as Jacob's temples blest.
While I do rest, my Soul advance;
Make my sleep a holy trance;
That I may, my rest being wrought,
Awake into some holy thought;
And with as active vigour run
My course, as doth the nimble Sun.
Sleep is a death; O make me try,
By sleeping, what it is to die;
And as gently lay my head
On my grave, as now my bed.
Howere I rest, great GOD, let me
Awake again at last with Thee;
And thus assur'd, behold I lie
Securely, or to awake or die.
These are my drowsie days; in vain
I do now wake to sleep again:
O come that hour, when I shall never
Sleep again, but wake for ever.[1]

This is the Dormative I take to bedward; I need no other Laudanum than this to make me sleep; after which I close mine eyes in security, content to take my leave of the Sun, and sleep unto the Resurrection.

[1] Much of our best-known Evening Hymn is held in solution, as it were, in these solemn lines.

III

CHARITY

(From *Religio Medici*)

But to return from Philosophy to Charity: I hold not so narrow a conceit of this virtue, as to conceive that to give Alms is onely to be Charitable, or think a piece of Liberality can comprehend the Total of Charity. Divinity hath wisely divided the act thereof into many branches, and hath taught us in this narrow way many paths unto goodness; as many ways as we may do good, so many ways we may be charitable. There are infirmities not onely of Body, but of Soul, and Fortunes, which do require the merciful hand of our abilities. I cannot contemn a man for ignorance, but behold him with as much pity as I do Lazarus. It is no greater Charity to cloath his body, than apparel the nakedness of his Soul. It is an honourable object to see the reasons of other men wear our Liveries, and their borrowed understandings do homage to the bounty of ours; it is the cheapest way of beneficence, and, like the natural charity of the Sun, illuminates another without obscuring itself. To be reserved and caitiff in this part of goodness, is the sordidest piece of covetousness, and more contemptible than pecuniary Avarice. To this (as calling myself a Scholar), I am obliged by the duty of my condition: I make not therefore my head a grave, but a treasure, of knowledge; I intend no Monopoly,

but a community, in learning; I study not for my own sake only, but for theirs that study not for themselves. I envy no man that knows more than my self, but pity them that know less. I instruct no man as an exercise of my knowledge, or with an intent rather to nourish and keep it alive in mine own head then beget and propagate it in his: and in the midst of all my endeavours there is but one thought that dejects me, that my acquired parts must perish with my self, nor can be Legacied among my honoured Friends. I cannot fall out or contemn a man for an errour, or conceive why a difference in Opinion should divide an affection; for Controversies, Disputes, and Argumentations, both in Philosophy and in Divinity, if they meet with discreet and peaceable natures, do not infringe the Laws of Charity. In all disputes, so much as there is of passion, so much as there is of nothing to the purpose; for then Reason, like a bad Hound, spends upon a false Scent, and forsakes the question first started. And this is one reason why Controversies are never determined; for, though they be amply proposed, they are scarce at all handled, they do so swell with unnecessary Digressions; and the Parenthesis on the party is often as large as the main discourse upon the subject. The Foundations of Religion are already established, and the Principles of Salvation subscribed unto by all: there remains not many controversies worth a Passion; and yet never any disputed without, not only in Divinity, but in inferiour Arts. What a *βατραχομυομαχία*[1] and hot

[1] Battle between Frogs and Mice.

skirmish is betwixt S. and T. in Lucian! How do Grammarians hack and slash for the Genitive case in *Jupiter*! How do they break their own pates to salve that of Priscian!

Si foret in terris, rideret Democritus.[1]

Yea, even amongst wiser militants, how many wounds have been given, and credits slain, for the poor victory of an opinion, or beggarly conquest of a distinction! Scholars are men of Peace, they bear no Arms, but their tongues are sharper than Actius his razor; their Pens carry farther, and give a louder report than Thunder: I had rather stand the shock of a Basilisco, than the fury of a merciless Pen. It is not meer Zeal to Learning, or Devotion to the Muses, that wiser Princes Patron the Arts, and carry an indulgent aspect unto Scholars; but a desire to have their names eternized by the memory of their writings, and a fear of the revengeful Pen of succeeding ages; for these are the men, that, when they have played their parts, and had their *exits*, must step out and give the moral of their Scenes, and deliver unto Posterity an Inventory of their Virtues and Vices. And surely there goes a great deal of Conscience to the compiling of an History: there is no reproach to the scandal of a Story; it is such an authentick kind of falsehood that with authority belies our good names to all Nations and Posterity.

There is another offence unto Charity, which no Author has ever written of, and few take notice of;

[1] If he were in the world, Democritus would laugh at it.

and that's the reproach, not of whole professions, mysteries, and conditions, but of whole Nations, wherein by opprobrious Epithets we miscall each other, and by an uncharitable Logick, from a disposition in a few, conclude a habit in all.

> Le mutin Anglois, et le bravache Ecossois,
> Et le fol François,
> Le poultron Romain, le larron de Gascongne,
> L'Espagnol superbe, et l'Aleman yvrongne.

St. Paul, that calls the Cretians *lyars*, doth it but indirectly, and upon quotation of their own Poet. It is as bloody a thought in one way, as Nero's was in another; for by a word we wound a thousand, and at one blow assassine the honour of a Nation. It is as compleat a piece of madness to miscal and rave against the times, or think to recal men to reason by a fit of passion. Democritus, that thought to laugh the times into goodness, seems to me as deeply Hypochondriack as Heraclitus, that bewailed them. It moves not my spleen to behold the multitude in their proper humours, that is, in their fits of folly and madness; as well understanding that wisdom is not prophan'd unto the World, and 'tis the privilege of a few to be Vertuous. They that endeavour to abolish Vice, destroy also Virtue; for contraries, though they destroy one another, are yet the life of one another. Thus Virtue (abolish vice,) is an Idea. Again, the community of sin doth not disparage goodness; for when Vice gains upon the major part, Virtue, in whom it remains, becomes more excellent; and being lost

in some, multiplies its goodness in others which remain untouched and persist intire in the general inundation. I can therefore behold Vice without a Satyr, content only with an admonition, or instructive reprehension; for Noble Natures, and such as are capable of goodness, are railed into vice, that might as easily be admonished into virtue; and we should all be so far the Orators of goodness, as to protect her from the power of Vice, and maintain the cause of injured truth. No man can justly censure or condemn another, because indeed no man truly knows another. This I perceive in my self; for I am in the dark to all the world, and my nearest friends behold me but in a cloud. Those that know me but superficially, think less of me than I do of my self; those of my neer acquaintance think more; GOD, Who truly knows me, knows that I am nothing; for He only beholds me and all the world, Who looks not on us through a derived ray, or a trajection of a sensible species, but beholds the substance without the helps of accidents, and the forms of things as we their operations. Further, no man can judge another, because no man knows himself: for we censure others but as they disagree from that humour which we fancy laudable in our selves, and commend others but for that wherein they seem to quadrate and consent with us. So that, in conclusion, all is but that we all condemn, Self-love. 'Tis the general complaint of these times, and perhaps of those past, that charity grows cold; which I perceive most verified in those which most do manifest

the fires and flames of zeal; for it is a virtue that best agrees with coldest natures, and such as are complexioned for humility. But how shall we expect Charity towards others, when we are uncharitable to our selves? *Charity begins at home*, is the voice of the World; yet is every man his greatest enemy, and, as it were, his own Executioner. *Non occides*, is the Commandment of GOD, yet scarce observed by any man; for I perceive every man is his own *Atropos*, and lends a hand to cut the thred of his own days. Cain was not therefore the first Murtherer, but Adam, who brought in death; whereof he beheld the practice and example in his own son Abel, and saw that verified in the experience of another, which faith could not perswade him in the Theory of himself.

X. EUPEPTIC DIARIES

I

WHENEVER I dine out and entertain the company with a well-compiled epigram or an apposite anecdote (both adopted and adapted from the latest published Diary) I see the next notorious Diarist's eye fixed on me—*she* is taking a mental note or *he* is scribbling the good thing secretively on his shirt cuff! Indeed it is not long since I caught the shirt-cuff chronicler at his surreptitious business (somebody else had the ear of the table), and imagined the surprising announcement of the sale a century hence at Christie's of the original documents: —" So-and-so's Diary complete in 737 shirts: very unique." I once saw the expression " very unique " in an American sale catalogue of the curios collected by one of those New York multi-millionaires who live in brown-stone mansions on Fifth Avenue and wear plum-coloured velvet house suits in the evening—they are extraordinarily like the cut-throat Italian princes of the Renaissance. An American collector, of course, would buy the shirt-cuff Diary for a huge sum of dollars.

However, it is our duty to suffer the Diarist gladly, for he or she—she, more especially—adds to the eupepticism of the nation by providing a topic of easy conversation. There is nothing that helps digestion better than a brisk flow of cheerful chatter. A Diary, as Mr. A. B. Ponsonby says in his "English Diaries," which is an admirable survey of all such chronicles from the Sixteenth to the Twentieth century, "catches a mood and picks up an impression which may in twenty-four hours evaporate, and in a week or two will have entirely vanished." It gives us something more real than the realism of the most outspoken biography or even autobiography; it gives us slices of a warm, quivering reality, like the steaks in the African traveller's tall tale that were cut from the living bullock. The writer of a Diary day by day has no time for second or third thoughts—no leisure for applying that tendency to idealise personages and provide each public reputation with a pedestal which has, in these latter days, caused the old, kindly adage to become *de mortuis nil nisi bunkum.* A Diary, always provided it be not written up with a view to publication in the diarist's life-time, has the chance of being infinitely indiscreet. "Indiscretions are sometimes the colour of a diary," observes the judicious Mr. Ponsonby, "and their removal seriously impairs the quality of the writing. Autobiographers, and more especially biographers, may find themselves compelled to cut away personalities from the more modern diaries in their fear of offending the susceptibilities

of the living. That is why the older diaries, where no such scruples need exist, are often more real and more human." English diarists, by the way, are seldom introspective. We have our Haydons and Barbellions, it is true, but even they have not the deadly industry in digging out their "complexes" which is a characteristic of such experts in introspection as Tolstoi, Amiel and Marie Bashkirtseff. It has been said of the English writers who take to keeping diaries that they do not like to be too intimate even with themselves. This national squeamishness may prevent a full self-revelation—but it prevents them from falling over the slippery verge of self-pity and dropping into those pits of slime, oubliettes of the soul, in which so many unhappy egoists have committed moral suicide.

II

The Diary of Samuel Pepys is the best of all English diaries—the best, I think, in any language. It was kept for his own eye; to serve, I suppose, as a means of conjuring up the joyous days that had been when he was too old, too much of an invalid, to play the part of a *vieux marcheur*. Such was Stevenson's view, and it is supported by his use of short hand (first deciphered by John Smith, Rector of Baldock in Hertfordshire, between 1819 and 1822) and his secrecy as to its existence. Sir William Coventry was the only friend who was told it existed, and Pepys afterwards regretted this sole confidence—"it not being

necessary nor may be convenient to have it known." He never intended it to be read by others when writing it—yet, since he did not leave directions for destroying it on his death, we must believe that he decided, by way of a final jest, to bequeath it as a puzzle to posterity. It is well he did so ; had it been otherwise, we should have missed one of the best bed-side books we have, a book which, like the presence of a well-tried and eupeptic friend, infects every reader with the diarist's keen zest in living. Whenever I read it in bed, I seem to see him sitting on the counterpane in his night-shirt, utterly unashamed of the lack of the fine clothes he took such delight in, and unabashed in the revelation of his peccadilloes and repentances. He is as intimate a friend as Montaigne, who is the better in his breeding by far and only sensuous where Pepys is sensual. The expurgated form of the famous Diary as commonly read does not give us the man-in-himself or his age—if you want to see the real Pepys in his Restoration setting, you must study the original documents with their coarse tone and nasty, realistic detail.

III

The relationship between the Diarist and his wife is one of the continuous threads of vivid human interest that run through this priceless record. The story of Mr. and Mrs. Pepys, as set forth in his occasional references, is worth half-a-dozen modern novels having marriage for their main theme. He

was far from being a model husband. She had good cause for complaint in his unfaithfulness, his innumerable flirtations, his niggardliness as regards her dress allowances which contrasts so curiously with the large sums he spent on his own clothes. He, on the other hand, was constantly annoyed by her untidiness and her ignorance of the art of dressing which prevented her from showing her beauty to the best advantage—like all husbands, he loved to see his wife admired by other men and feel himself approved by them as a man of taste for choosing her. Yet it is clear that a profound affection, safely rooted in the flesh, kept them united in spite of very frequent dissensions. Here is a little collection of excerpts which throw light on the relations of these wedded lovers, for such they were beyond a shadow of doubt.

I was angry with my wife for her things lying about, and in my passion kicked the little fine basket which I bought her in Holland and broke it, which troubled me after I had done it.

Somewhat vexed at my wife's neglect in leaving of her scarfe, waistcoate and nightdressings in the coach to-day, that brought us from Westminster, though I confess she did give them to me to look after. It might be as good as 25s. loss.

My Lord (Lord Sandwich) replied thus: "Sir John, what do you think of your neighbour's wife?" looking upon me. "Do you not think that he hath a great beauty to his wife?" "Upon my word he hath." Which I was not a little proud of.

(Lord's Day) I and my wife up to her closet, to examine her kitchen accounts, and there I took occasion to fall out with her, for her buying a laced handkerchief and pinner without my leave. From this we began both to be angry, and so continued till bed.

Lay long in bed talking with pleasure with my poor wife, how she used to make coal fires and wash my foul clothes with her own hand for me, poor wretch! in our little room at my Lord Sandwich's: for which I ought for ever to love and admire her and do; and persuade myself she would do the same thing again if God should reduce us to it.

My wife, dressed this day in fair hair, did make me so mad that I spoke not one word to her though I was ready to burst with anger.

So home to dinner with my wife very pleasant and pleased with one another's company, and in our general enjoyment one of another, better we think than most other couples do.

Away home when I told my wife where I had been. But she was as mad as a devil and nothing but ill words between us all the evening while we sat at cards, even to gross ill words, which I was troubled for.

My wife extraordinary fine to-day, in her flower tabby suit bought a year and more ago, before my mother's death put her into mourning and so not worn till this day; and everybody in love with it; and indeed she is very fine and handsome in it.

My wife fell into her blubbering . . . and then all came out that I loved pleasure and denied her any. I said nothing but with very mild words and few, suffered her

humour to spend till we began to be very quiet and I think all will be over and friends.

Dined in my wife's chamber, she being much troubled with the tooth-ake, and I staid till a surgeon of hers came, one Leeson, who had formerly drawn her mouth, and he advised her to draw it; so I to the Office, and by and by word is come that she hath drawn it, which pleased me, it being well done. So I home, to comfort her.

This evening I observed my wife mighty dull and I myself not mighty fond because of some hard words she did give me at noon out of jealousy of my being abroad this morning . . . but I to bed thinking but she would come after me . . . after an hour or two she silent and I now and then praying her to come to bed, she fell out into a fury that I was a rogue and false to her. I did, as I might truly, deny it and was mightily troubled but all would not serve. At last about one o'clock she came to my side of the bed and drew my curtain open and with tongs red hot at the ends, made as if she did design to pinch me with them, at which in dismay I rose up and with a few words she laid them down and did little by little very sillily let all the discourse fall and about two, but with much seeming difficulty, came to bed and there lay well all night and long in bed talking together with much pleasure.

There is much for husbands and wives to learn and discern in these and many other similar passages in the Diary. Pepys could not help running after all the pretty ladies; he was compelled, he confesses, by "a strange slavery that I stand in to beauty, that I value nothing near it." It was worth while to set together some of the scattered passages touching on his relations

with his wife—" poor wretch ! " he cries, and the world has echoed and re-echoed the cry. If we had a few such faithful records of the *vie intime* of modern couples, there would be fewer divorces and separations. And cases of infidelity on the part of husbands would be far less numerous if wives always dressed well when at home, especially in the early morning and after office hours.

IV

There is no other Diary which can be recommended as a constant bed-side companion. Evelyn's Diary, though invaluable to the social historian, is not an intimate revelation. In reading it we have an impression of a very sedate personage, and it is necessary to go to Pepys for a human picture of one who was not only " a very fine gentleman " but also " a most excellent humoured man." Next to Pepys's Diary, I think Charles Greville's Journal is the most interesting ; he writes of famous men as he finds them, trusting his own judgment and uttering what seems to him the truth in almost vitriolic terms, and when one reads his descriptions of William IV as " only a mountebank but he bids fair to be a maniac " and " a silly bustling old fellow " it is not surprising that Queen Victoria was very indignant with the first published instalment of the Journal. The third place might be given to James Farington, whose Diary is a wonderful repository of curious facts and was worth the hundred odd guineas for which it was acquired by the

Morning Post a great many times over (the Royal Academy ought to have bought it even at the cost of pawning some of their pictures with a friendly pawnbroker). Many of the lesser Diarists are very entertaining, and Mr. Ponsonby's book which is a complete and charming anthology of quotations from them, has a good claim to a place next to Pepys on the bed-side bookshelf. Dr. John Rutty, for example, who caused Johnson to laugh heartily, is an ever-striving spiritually-minded person—but the unconscious humour of his ejaculatory remarks on his sins and the consequences thereof is irresistible. Here are some characteristic entries :—

> An hypochondriac obnubilation from wind and indigestion
>
> A little incubus on too much spinage
>
> Although I dined with the saints I drank rather beyond bounds
>
> Brittle again
>
> Spent my mattin in spiritual fox-hunting,
>
> A frappish cholerick day

A religious-minded man, no doubt, but the seat of his religion was in the stomach, which is better, perhaps, than having it in the liver. There is no really great Diary by a woman in the language; Lady Charlotte Bury's is my favourite, not because it prompted Hood's question :—

When I resign the world so briery
To have across the Styx my ferrying
O may I die without a DIARY
And be interred without a BURYing,

but because of its epic cattishness. I also like Caroline Fox for her sweet seriousness, and Fanny Burney for her " Evelina " style (when she lapses into Johnsonese she is intolerable). But I would give all these ladies for Mrs. Pepys in one volume.

XI. SWIFT TO STELLA

A New Year's message from the collection of Swift's Letters known as "The Journal to Stella." (From Letter No. XII.)

THERE is nothing new and true to be said of the career and character of Dean Swift. His inner life is covered by the terrible epitaph he made for himself:

Ubi saeva indignatio
Cor ulterius lacerare nequit;

yet he had one great and abiding consolation—his loving friendship with Mistress Esther Johnson who never failed him until the day of her death. He trusted her as he trusted nobody else, had implicit confidence in her unfaltering good sense and unfailing judgment of persons, books and affairs, and found in her a perfect Egeria—"the truest, most virtuous and valuable friend that I, or perhaps any other person, was ever blessed with." To be a man's best friend a woman must be beautiful, or at any rate he must see beauty in her, and Swift says that "her hair was blacker than a raven and every feature of her face in perfection," and again, "she was one of the most beautiful, graceful and agreeable young women in London, only a little too fat." But what were their real relations? That is one of the unsolved and, I think, insoluble problems of the history of men of letters, the most perplexed page in all the annals of mankind. The

" little language " of Swift's letters resembles that which every ordinary lover invents for the private ear and eye of the bĕloved—her that was so sweet and small, so child-like and tender, in the critical ordeal of her white unveiling. Swift had known Stella as a child at Sir William Temple's house, and it may well be that this intimate talk originated in reminiscences of her childish prattle. But the use of such baby-talk is always, so far as my experience goes, a proof that love between man and woman has blossomed to some kind of fruition, and I believe it to have been so in the case of Swift and Stella. It is a significant fact that Swift himself began the business of editing his letters by erasing here and there fragments of his little language. Furthermore, to judge by his portraits, he was not one of the types that are incapable, or contemptuous, of physical passion. Indeed, his rather heavy face, with the great blue eyes smouldering in it like the Hope Diamond, suggests a familiar type of the amorist, and the coarseness of his language—he had the foulest pen in English literature—tends to confirm this impression. Some of his biographers have been inclined to attach too much importance to the witness of Lord Orrery as to the conduct of the twain after their alleged marriage. " Nothing appeared in their behaviour," says this authority, " inconsistent with decorum or beyond the limit of Platonic love " . . . " It would be difficult to prove that they had ever been together without some third person." Again, the way he associates Mrs. Dingley with Stella throughout his letters is another point on which stress has been laid by those who accept the theory of Platonic love (I always mentally apologise to Plato when quoting that preposterous phrase). But, when it is remembered that Swift was a church dignitary, who hoped for the highest preferment and very well knew that his enemies would turn any open scandal to account, it is obvious that he would take the utmost care to prevent the world from

penetrating into his intimacy with this raven-haired Egeria. And every man of the world, who knows how and why a duenna must be placated, will see in his treatment of M. E. (Madam Elderly, *i.e.* Mrs. Dingley) a subtle corroboration that this couple did not "forget the he and she" in their long-continued intercourse. It is not necessary, of course, to suppose that the at-one-ment was complete—it may have resembled the mysterious bargain of "Cadenus and Vanessa" (the Dean himself and the ill-starred Miss Vanhomrigh) in regard to which Swift confesses that what really happened, what compromise philosophie and age make with painting young love:

> Must never to Mankind be told,
> Nor shall the conscious Muse unfold.

I find the man utterly detestable, his women adorable. It is only when he was in bed, writing his diary-letters to Stella, that I think Swift really human and companionable. As he scribbles his screed, in pallid ink and the smallest of hand-writing, the pangs of egoism depart and the heavy hectoring face takes on a look of sweetness and tenderness, light and delight from within. As he finishes his letter he murmurs the strange repetitions—"Farewell deelest riches MD, MD, MD, FW, FW, FW, FW, FW, ME, ME, ME, Lele, ME, Lelc, Lele, richar MD"—which have so puzzled his biographers. MD, MD, MD,—repeated quickly the sounds suggest kissing, do they not? And so on and so on. Having finished writing Pdfr (Poor dear foolish rogue?) puts up a silent prayer for his beloved, and then blows out the candle. What a pity he was not a marrying man? With Stella for wife, and Stella's children, he could have endured the shutting of preferment's door without raging in vain like a poisoned rat in a hole.

JANUARY 1 [1711]. Morning. I wish my dearest pretty Dingley and Stella a happy new year, and health, and mirth, and good stomachs, and Fr's company. Faith, I did not know how to write Fr. I wondered what was the matter; but now I remember I always write Pdfr. Patrick wishes me a happy new year, and desires I would rise, for it is a good fire, and faith 'tis cold. I was so politic last night with MD, never saw the like. Get the Examiners, and read them; the last nine or ten are full of the reasons for the late change, and of the abuses of the last ministry; and the great men assure me they are all true. They are written[1] by their encouragement and direction. I must rise and go see Sir Andrew Fountaine; but perhaps to-night I may answer MD's letter; so good morrow, my mistresses all, good morrow.

I wish you both a merry new year,
Roast beef, minced pies, and good strong beer,
And me a share of your good cheer.
That I was there, or you were here,
And you're a little saucy dear.

Good morrow again, dear sirrahs; one cannot rise for your play.—At night. I went this morning to visit Lady Kerry and Lord Shelburn, and they made me dine with them. Sir Andrew Fountaine is better. And now let us come and see what this saucy dear letter of MD says. Come out, letter, come out from between the sheets; here it is underneath, and it

[1] By Swift himself.

won't come out. Come out again, I say: so there. Here it is. What says Presto to me, pray? says it. Come, and let me answer for you to your ladies. Hold up your head then, like a good letter. There. Pray, how have you got up with Presto, Madam Stella? You write your eighth when you receive mine: now I write my twelfth when I receive your eighth. Don't you allow for what are upon the road, simpleton? what say you to that? and so you kept Presto's little birthday, I warrant: would to God I had been at the health, rather than here, where I have no manner of pleasure, nothing but eternal business upon my hands. I shall grow wise in time; but no more of that: only I say Amen with all my heart and vitals, that we may never be asunder again ten days together while poor Presto lives. ——————————I can't be merry so near any splenetic talk; so I made that long line, and now all's well again. Yes, you are a pretending slut, indeed, with your fourth and fifth in the margin, and your journal, and every thing. Wind —we saw no wind here, nothing at all extraordinary at any time. We had it once when you had it not. But an old saying and a true:

> I hate all wind, before and behind,
> From cheeks with eyes, or from blind.

Your chimney fall down! God preserve you. I suppose you only mean a brick or two: but that's a damned lie of your chimney being carried to the next house with the wind. Don't put such things upon us; those matters will not pass here; keep a little to

possibilities. My Lord Hertford[1] would have been ashamed of such a stretch. You should take care of what company you converse with: when one gets that faculty, 'tis hard to break one's self of it. Jemmy Leigh talks of going over; but *quando?* I don't know when he'll go. O, now you have had my ninth, now you are come up with me; marry come up with you, indeed. I know all that business of Lady S. Will nobody cut that D———y's throat! Five hundred pounds do you call poor pay for living three months the life of a king? They say she died of grief, partly being forced to appear as witness in court about some squabble among their servants.—The Bishop of Clogher showed you a pamphlet.[2] Well, but you must not give your mind to believe those things; people will say any thing. The character is here reckoned admirable, but most of the facts are trifles. It was first printed privately here; and then some bold cur ventured to do it publicly, and sold two thousand in two days: who the author is must remain uncertain. Do you pretend to know, impudence? how durst you think so? pox on your parliaments: the Archbishop has told me of it; but we do not vouchsafe to know any thing of it here. No, no, no more giddiness yet; thank you, Stella, for asking after it; thank you; God Almighty bless you for your kindness to poor Presto. You write to Lady Giffard

[1] Son of the Duke of Somerset.

[2] The "Character of Thomas, Earl of Wharton," written by Swift himself.

and your mother upon what I advise, when it is too late. But yet I fancy this bad news will bring down stocks so low, that one might buy to great advantage. I design to venture going to see your mother some day when Lady Giffard is abroad. Well, keep your Rathburn and stuff. I thought he was to pay in your money upon his houses to be flung down about the what do you call it?—Well, Madam Dingley, I sent your enclosed to Bristol, but have not heard from Raymond since he went. Come, come, young women, I keep a good fire; it costs me twelvepence a-week, and I fear something more; vex me, and I'll have one in my bedchamber too. No, did not I tell you but just now, we have no high winds here? Have you forgot already?—Now you're at it again, silly Stella; why does your mother say, my candles are scandalous? they are good sixes in the pound, and she said I was extravagant enough to burn them by daylight. I never burn fewer at a time than one. What would people have? the D———burst Hawkshaw. He told me he had not the box, and the next day Sterne [1] told me he had sent it a fortnight ago; Patrick could not find him t'other day, but he shall to-morrow: dear life and heart, do you teaze me? does Stella tease Presto? that palsy water was in the box: it was too big for a packet, and I was afraid of its breaking. Leigh was not in town then, or I would not have trusted it to Sterne, whom yet I have befriended enough to do me more kindness than that. I'll never

[1] Clerk to the Irish House of Lords.

rest till you have it, or till it is in a way for you to have it. Poor dear rogue, naughty to think it teazes me: how could I ever forgive myself for neglecting any thing that related to your health? sure I were a devil if I did. * * * * * * See how far I am forced to stand from Stella, because I am afraid she thinks poor Presto has not been careful about her little things; I am sure I bought them immediately according to order, and packed them up with my own hands, and sent them to Sterne, and was six times with him about sending them away. I am glad you are pleased with your glasses. I have got another velvet cap, a new one Lord Herbert bought and presented me one morning I was at breakfast with him, where he was as merry and easy as ever I saw him, yet had received another challenge half an hour before, and half an hour after fought a duel. It was about ten days ago. You are mistaken in your guesses about Tatlers: I did neither write that on Noses,[1] nor Religion,[2] nor do I send him of late any hints at all.—Indeed, Stella, when I read your letter, I was not uneasy at all; but when I came to answer the particulars, and found that you had not received your box, it grated me to the heart, because I thought through your little words, that you imagined I had not taken the care I ought. But there has been some blunder in this matter, which I will know to-morrow, and write to Sterne, for fear he should not be within.—And pray,

[1] "Tatler," No. 260. It was written by Steele and Addison.

[2] "Tatler," No. 257. Written by Steele and Addison.

pray, Presto, pray now do.—No, Raymond was not above four times with me while he staid, and then only while I was dressing. Mrs. Fenton has written me another letter about some money of hers in Lady Giffard's hands, that is intrusted to me by my mother, not to come to her husband. I send my letters constantly every fortnight, and if you will have them oftener you may, but then they will be the shorter. Pray, let Parvisol sell the horse. I think I spoke to you of it in a former letter: I am glad you are rid of him, and was in pain while I thought you rode him: but if he would buy you another, or any body else, and that you could be often able to ride, why don't you do it?

2. I went this morning early to the Secretary of State, Mr. St. John, and he told me from Mr. Harley, that the warrant was now drawn, in order for a patent for the First-Fruits: it must pass through several offices, and take up some time, because in things the Queen gives, they are always considerate; but that he assures me 'tis granted and done, and past all dispute, and desires I will not be in any pain at all. I will write again to the Archbishop to-morrow, and tell him this, and I desire you will say it on occasion. From the Secretary I went to Mr. Sterne, who said he would write to you to-night, and that the box must be at Chester, and that some friend of his goes very soon, and will carry it over. I dined with Mr. Secretary St. John, and at six went to Darteneuf's house to drink punch with him, and Mr. Addison, and little

Harrison, a young poet, whose fortune I am making. Steele was to have been there, but came not, nor never did twice, since I knew him, to any appointment. I staid till past eleven, and am now in bed. Steele's last Tatler came out to-day. You will see it before this comes to you, and how he takes leave of the world. He never told so much as Mr. Addison of it, who was surprised as much as I; but to say the truth, it was time, for he grew cruel dull and dry. To my knowledge he had several good hints to go upon; but he was so lazy and weary of the work, that he would not improve them. I think I'll send this after[1] to-morrow; shall I before 'tis full, Dingley?

3. Lord Peterborow yesterday called me into a barber's shop, and there we talked deep politics: he desired me to dine with him to-day at the Globe in the Strand; he said he would show me so clearly how to get Spain, that I could not possibly doubt it. I went to-day accordingly, and saw him among half a dozen lawyers and attornies and hang dogs, signing of deeds and stuff before his journey; for he goes to-morrow to Vienna. I sat among that scurvy company till after four, but heard nothing of Spain; only I find by what he told me before, that he fears he shall do no good in his present journey. We are to be mighty constant correspondents. So I took my leave of him, and called at Sir Andrew Fountaine's, who mends much. I came home, an't please you, at six, and have been studying till now past eleven.

[1] "After is underlined." (Note to original edition.)

4. Morning. Morrow, little dears. O, faith, I have been dreaming; I was to be put in prison, I don't know why, and I was so afraid of a black dungeon: and then all I had been inquiring yesterday of Sir Andrew Fountaine's sickness I thought was of poor Stella. The worst of dreams is, that one wakes just in the humour they leave one. Shall I send this to-day? with all my heart: it is two days within the fortnight; but may be MD are in haste to have a round dozen, and then how are you come up to me with your eighth, young women? But you indeed ought to write twice slower than I, because there are two of you; I own that.—Well then, I will seal up this letter by my morning candle, and carry it into the city with me, where I go to dine, and put it in the post-office with my own fair hands. So let me see whether I have any news to tell MD. They say, they will very soon make some inquiries into the corruptions of the late ministry: and they must do it, to justify their turning them out. Atterbury, we think is to be Dean of Christchurch in Oxford; but the college would rather have Smallridge.—What's all this to you? what care you for Atterburys and Smallridges? No, you care for nothing but Presto, faith. So I'll rise and bid you farewell; yet I am loth to do so, because there is a great bit of paper yet to talk upon; but Dingley will have it so; yes, says she, make your journals shorter, and send them oftener; and so I will. And I have cheated you another way too; for this is clipped paper, and holds at least six

lines less than the former ones. I'll tell you a good thing I said to my Lord Carteret. So, says he, my Lord —— came up to me, and asked me, &c. No, said I, my Lord —— never did, nor ever can *come up* to you. We all pun here sometimes. Lord Carteret set down Prior t'other day in his chariot, and Prior thanked him for his charity; that was fit for Dilly.[1] I don't remember I heard one good one from the ministry, which is really a shame. Henley is gone to the country for Christmas. The puppy comes here without his wife, and keeps no house, and would have me dine with him at eating-houses; but I have only done it once, and will do it no more. He had not seen me for some time in the coffeehouse, and, asking after me, desired Lord Herbert to tell me, I was a beast for ever after the order of Melchisedec. Did you ever read the Scripture? it is only changing the word priest to beast.—I think I am bewitched to write so much in a morning to you, little MD. Let me go, will you? and I'll come again to-night in a fine clean sheet of paper; but I can nor will stay no longer now; no, I won't, for all your wheedling: no, no, look off, don't smile at me, and say, pray, pray, Presto, write a little more. Ah! you're a wheedling slut, you be so. Nay, but pray thee turn about, and let me go, do: 'Tis a good girl, and do. O faith, my morning candle is just out, and I must go now in spite of my teeth; for my bed-chamber is dark

[1] Dillon Ashe, brother of the Bishop of Clogher, vicar of Finglas, afterwards the poet Parnell's parish.

with curtains, and I'm at the wrong side. So farewell, &c. &c.

I am in the dark almost: I must have another candle, and when I am up, to seal this; but I'll fold it up in the dark, and make what you can of this, for I can only see this paper I am writing upon. Service to Mrs. Walls and Mrs. Stoyte.

God Almighty bless you, &c. What I am doing I can't see; but I'll fold it up, and not look on it again.

XII. NIGHT THOUGHTS

From Dr. Edward Young's "Night Thoughts."

DR. EDWARD YOUNG'S "Night Thoughts" is one of the most famous bed-side books. Charles Wesley was wont to say of them that, save and except the Holy Scriptures, no writings were so useful to him. His sombre and mystical reflections are often overcast with a melancholy that is anything but "dainty," and that is why, no doubt, his book is now only to be found as a rule in the locked book-cases of serious, old-fashioned folk, seldom in a guest's bed-room. Still, the reading of his magniloquent lines and strong-winged flights of fancy (as of a raven moving solemnly towards a cloud-encumbered moon) has a soothing effect, I find, and also intrigues one with a sense of a profound and unusual personality. "Young," writes the first Lord Lytton whose prose is full of occluded proofs of his admiration for the poet's "Night Thoughts" and "Satires," "is not done justice to, popular as he is with a certain class of readers. He has never yet had a critic to display and make current his most peculiar and emphatic beauties. He is of all poets the one to be studied by a man who is about to break the golden chains that bind him to the world—his gloom does not then appal or deject; the dark river of his solemn genius sweeps the thoughts onward to eternity." Young, however, was vivacious in society; when he and Voltaire

were fellow-guests of Lord Melcomb at Eastbury, the English poet proved himself the more brilliant conversationalist, firing off a famous extempore epigram after hearing the French wit severely criticise Milton's allegorical description of Sin and Death :

> Thou art so witty, profligate, and thin,
> Thou seem'st a Milton with his Death and Sin.

Yet there seems to have been a background of sombre seriousness to his every mood. It was told of him even in his younger years that, when writing verse, he would shut out the sunlight and create the darkness of night about him, and that Wharton procured a skull for him into which was fixed a candle, by the weird light of which he wrote many of his most solemn lines. A characteristic anecdote tells us how Lord Melcomb (then plain Mr. Dodington) said to him during a thunderstorm that it was " a dreadful night," whereupon he replied : " No, Sir, it is a fine night ; the Lord is abroad." In his garden at Welwyn Rectory (where he founded an " assembly " that young men and maidens might meet together, and laid out a bowling green for the recreation of their elders) there was an alcove in which you saw a bench that invited to repose. On approaching close it was seen to be a painted illusion, and a motto could then be read : *Invisibilia non decipiunt* (the unseen things deceive us not). It was the text to which his life was lived, and since he was sincerely preoccupied with the eternal things that lie beyond the mirage of living, there is nothing morbid in his reflections on the vanities of man's lot on earth. The night is dark, but the chill wind of doctrine that blows out of the dead sunset is keen and salutary.

(From "Night I.")

NIGHT, sable goddess! from her ebon throne,
In rayless majesty, now stretches forth
Her leaden sceptre o'er a slumb'ring world.
Silence, how dead! and darkness, how profound!
Nor eye, nor list'ning ear, an object finds;
Creation sleeps. 'Tis as the gen'ral pulse
Of life stood still, and nature made a pause;
An awful pause! prophetic of her end.
And let her prophecy be soon fulfill'd;
Fate! drop the curtain; I can lose no more.

Silence and darkness! solemn sisters! twins
From ancient night, who nurse the tender thought
To reason, and on reason build resolve
(That column of true majesty in man),
Assist me: I will thank you in the grave;
The grave, your kingdom; there this frame shall fall
A victim sacred to your dreary shrine.
But what are ye?—

Thou, who didst put to flight
Primeval silence, when the morning stars,
Exulting, shouted o'er the rising ball;
O Thou, whose word from solid darkness struck
That spark, the sun; strike wisdom from my soul;
My soul, which flies to Thee, her trust, her treasure,
As misers to their gold, while others rest.

Through this opaque of nature, and of soul,
This double night, transmit one pitying ray,

To lighten, and to cheer. O lead my mind
(A mind that fain would wander from its woe),
Lead it through various scenes of life and death;
And from each scene, the noblest truths inspire.
Nor less inspire my conduct, than my song;
Teach my best reason, reason; my best will
Teach rectitude; and fix my firm resolve
Wisdom to wed, and pay her long arrear;
Nor let the phial of thy vengeance, pour'd
On this devoted head, be pour'd in vain.

The bell strikes one. We take no note of time
But from its loss. To give it then a tongue
Is wise in man. As if an angel spoke,
I feel the solemn sound. If heard aright,
It is the knell of my departed hours:
Where are they? With the years beyond the flood.
It is the signal that demands despatch:
How much is to be done? My hopes and fears
Start up alarm'd, and o'er life's narrow verge
Look down.—On what? a fathomless abyss;
A dread eternity! how surely mine!
And can eternity belong to me,
Poor pensioner on the bounties of an hour?

How poor, how rich, how abject, how august,
How complicate, how wonderful, is man!
How passing wonder He who made him such!
Who centred in our make such strange extremes!
From diff'rent natures marvellously mixt,
Connection exquisite of distant worlds!

Distinguish'd link in being's endless chain!
Midway from nothing to the deity!
A beam ethereal, sullied, and absorpt!
Though sullied, and dishonour'd, still divine!
Dim miniature of greatness absolute!
An heir of glory! a frail child of dust!
Helpless immortal! insect infinite!

A worm! a god!—I tremble at myself,
And in myself am lost! at home a stranger,
Thought wanders up and down, surprised, aghast
And wond'ring at her own: how reason reels!
O what a miracle to man is man,
Triumphantly distress'd! what joy, what dread!
Alternately transported, and alarm'd!
What can preserve my life? or what destroy?
An angel's arm can't snatch me from the grave;
Legions of angels can't confine me there.

'Tis past conjecture; all things rise in proof:
While o'er my limbs sleep's soft dominion spread;
What though my soul fantastic measures trod
O'er fairy fields; or mourn'd along the gloom
Of pathless woods; or down the craggy steep,
Hurl'd headlong, swam with pain the mantled pool;
Or scaled the cliff; or danced on hollow winds,
With antic shapes, wild natives of the brain?
Her ceaseless flight, though devious, speaks her nature
Of subtler essence than the trodden clod;
Active, aerial, tow'ring, unconfined,
Unfetter'd with her gross companion's fall.

Ev'n silent night proclaims my soul immortal:
Ev'n silent night proclaims eternal day.
For human weal, Heaven husbands all events;
Dull sleep instructs, nor sport vain dreams in vain.

Why then their loss deplore, that are not lost?
Why wanders wretched thought their tombs around,
In infidel distress? Are angels there?
Slumbers, raked up in dust, ethereal fire?

They live! they greatly live a life on earth
Unkindled, unconceived; and from an eye
Of tenderness let heavenly pity fall
On me, more justly number'd with the dead.
This is the desert, this the solitude.
How populous, how vital, is the grave!
This is creation's melancholy vault,
The vale funereal, the sad cypress gloom;
The land of apparitions, empty shades!
All, all on earth is shadow, all beyond
Is substance; the reverse is folly's creed.
How solid all, where change shall be no more!

This is the bud of being, the dim dawn,
The twilight of our day, the vestibule;
Life's theatre as yet is shut, and death,
Strong death, alone can heave the massy bar,
This gross impediment of clay remove,
And make us embryos of existence free.
From real life, but little more remote
Is he, not yet a candidate for light,

The future embryo, slumb'ring in his sire.
Embryos we must be, till we burst the shell,
Yon ambient azure shell, and spring to life,
The life of gods, O transport ! and of man.

Yet man, fool man ! here buries all his thoughts,
Inters celestial hopes without one sigh.
Prisoner of earth, and pent beneath the moon,
Here pinions all his wishes ; wing'd by Heaven
To fly at infinite ; and reach it there,
Where seraphs gather immortality,
On life's fair tree, fast by the throne of God.
What golden joys ambrosial clust'ring glow,
In his full beam, and ripen for the just,
Where momentary ages are no more ;
Where time, and pain, and chance, and death expire !
And is it in the flight of threescore years
To push eternity from human thought,
And smother souls immortal in the dust ?
A soul immortal, spending all her fires,
Wasting her strength in strenuous idleness,
Thrown into tumult, raptured, or alarm'd,
At aught this scene can threaten or indulge,
Resembles ocean into tempest wrought,
To waft a feather, or to drown a fly.

Where falls this censure ? It o'erwhelms myself ;
How was my heart incrusted by the world !
O how self-fetter'd was my grov'ling soul !
How like a worm, was I wrapt round and round

In silken thought, which reptile fancy spun,
Till darken'd reason lay quite clouded o'er
With soft conceit of endless comfort here,
Nor yet put forth her wings to reach the skies!

Night-visions may befriend (as sung above);
Our waking dreams are fatal. How I dreamt
Of things impossible! (Could sleep do more?)
Of joys perpetual in perpetual change!
Of stable pleasures on the tossing wave!
Eternal sunshine in the storms of life!
How richly were my noontide trances hung
With gorgeous tapestries of pictured joys!
Joy behind joy, in endless perspective!
Till, at death's toll, whose restless iron tongue
Calls daily for his millions at a meal,
Starting, I woke, and found myself undone.
Where now my frenzy's pompous furniture?
The cobwebb'd cottage, with its ragged wall
Of mould'ring mud, is royalty to me!
The spider's most attenuated thread
Is cord, is cable, to man's tender tie
On earthly bliss; it breaks at every breeze.

O, ye blest scenes of permanent delight!
Full above measure! lasting beyond bound!
A perpetuity of bliss is bliss.
Could you, so rich in rapture, fear an end,
That ghastly thought would drink up all your joy,
And quite unparadise the realms of light?
Safe are you lodged above these rolling spheres;

The baleful influence of whose giddy dance
Sheds sad vicissitude on all beneath.
Here teems with revolutions every hour;
And rarely for the better; or the best,
More mortal than the common births of fate.
Each moment has its sickle, emulous
Of Time's enormous scythe, whose ample sweep
Strikes empires from the root; each moment plays
His little weapon in the narrower sphere
Of sweet domestic comfort, and cuts down
The fairest bloom of sublunary bliss.

Bliss! sublunary bliss!—proud words, and vain!
Implicit treason to divine decree!
A bold invasion of the rights of Heaven:
I clasp'd the phantoms, and I found them air.
O, had I weigh'd it ere my fond embrace!
What darts of agony had miss'd my heart?

XIII. CHARACTER OF A GREAT MAN

From "The Life of Jonathan Wild the Great," by Henry Fielding. The great novelist's most elaborate essay in irony.

JONATHAN WILD had every qualification necessary to form a GREAT MAN. As his most powerful and predominant passion was ambition, so nature had, with consummate propriety, adapted all his faculties to the attaining those glorious ends to which this passion directed him. He was extremely ingenious in inventing designs; artful in contriving the means to accomplish his purposes, and resolute in executing them: For, as the most exquisite cunning, and most undaunted boldness qualified him for any undertaking, so was he not restrained by any of those weaknesses which disappoint the views of mean and vulgar souls, and which are comprehended in one general term of honesty, which is a corruption of Honosty, a word derived from what the Greeks call an Ass. He was entirely free from those low vices of modesty and good-nature, which, as he said, implied a total negation of human GREATNESS, and were the only qualities which absolutely rendered a man incapable of making a considerable figure in the world.

His lust was inferior only to his ambition; but, as for what simple people call love, he knew not what it was. His avarice was immense; but it was of the rapacious not of the tenacious kind; his rapaciousness was indeed so violent, that nothing ever contented him but the whole; for, however considerable the share was, which his coadjutors allowed him of a booty, he was restless in inventing means to make himself master of the smallest pittance reserved by them. He said, laws were made for the use of Prigs only, and to secure their property; they were never therefore more perverted than when their edge was turned against these; but that this generally happened through their want of sufficient dexterity. The character which he most valued himself upon, and which he principally honoured in others, was that of hypocrisy. His opinion was, that no one could carry Priggism very far without it; for which reason, he said, there was little GREATNESS to be expected in a man who acknowledged his vices; but always much to be hoped from him who professed great virtues; wherefore, though he would always shun the person whom he discovered guilty of a good action, yet he was never deterred by a good character, which was more commonly the effect of profession than of action: For which reason, he himself was always very liberal of honest professions, and had as much virtue and goodness in his mouth as a saint; never in the least scrupling to swear by his honour, even to those who knew him the best; nay, tho' he held good-nature and

modesty in the highest contempt, he constantly practised the affectation of both, and recommended this to others, whose welfare, on his own account, he wished well to. He laid down several maxims, as the certain methods of attaining GREATNESS, to which, in his own pursuit of it, he constantly adhered. As :

1. Never to do more mischief to another than was necessary to the effecting his purpose; for that mischief was too precious a thing to be thrown away.

2. To know no distinction of men from affection ; but to sacrifice all with equal readiness to his interest.

3. Never to communicate more of an affair than was necessary, to the person who was to execute it.

4. Not to trust him, who hath deceived you, nor who knows he hath been deceived by you.

5. To forgive no enemy; but to be cautious and often dilatory in revenge.

6. To shun poverty and distress, and to ally himself as close as possible to power and riches.

7. To maintain a constant gravity in his countenance and behaviour, and to affect wisdom on all occasions.

8. To foment eternal jealousies in his gang, one of another.

9. Never to reward any one equal to his merit; but always to insinuate that the reward was above it.

10. That all men were knaves or fools, and much the greater number a composition of both.

11. That a good name, like money, must be parted

with, or at least greatly risked, in order to bring the owner any advantage.

12. That virtues, like precious stones, were easily counterfeited; that the counterfeits in both cases adorned the wearer equally, and that very few had knowledge or discernment sufficient to distinguish the counterfeit jewel from the real.

13. That many men were undone by not going deep enough in roguery; as in gaming any man may be a loser who doth not play the whole game.

14. That men proclaim their own virtues, as shopkeepers expose their goods, in order to profit by them.

15. That the heart was the proper seat of hatred, and the countenance of affection and friendship.

He had many more of the same kind, all equally good with these, and which were after his decease found in his study, as the twelve excellent and celebrated rules were in that of king Charles the First; for he never promulgated them in his lifetime, not having them constantly in his mouth, as some grave persons have the rules of virtue and morality, without paying the least regard to them in their actions: whereas our hero, by a constant and steady adherence to his rules in conforming every thing he did to them, acquired at length a settled habit of walking by them, till at last he was in no danger of inadvertently going out of the way; and by these means he arrived at that degree of GREATNESS, which few have equalled; none, we may say, have exceeded: For, tho' it must

be allowed that there have been some few heroes, who have done greater mischiefs to mankind, such as those who have betrayed the liberty of their country to others, or have undermined and overpowered it themselves; or conquerors who have impoverished, pillaged, sacked, burned, and destroyed the countries and cities of their fellow creatures, from no other provocation than that of glory; *i.e.* as the tragic poet calls it,

——a privilege to kill,
A strong temptation to do bravely ill;

yet, if we consider it in the light wherein actions are placed in this line,

Laetius est quoties magno tibi constat honestum;

when we see our hero, without the least assistance or pretence, setting himself at the head of a gang, which he had not any shadow or right to govern; if we view him maintaining absolute power, and exercising tyranny over a lawless crew, contrary to all law, but that of his own will; if we consider him setting up an open trade publickly, in defiance, not only of the laws of his country, but of the common sense of his countrymen; if we see him first contriving the robbery of others, and again the defrauding the very robbers of that booty, which they had ventured their necks to acquire, and which without any hazard they might have retained: Here sure he must appear admirable, and we may challenge not only the truth of history, but almost the latitude of fiction to equal his glory.

Nor had he any of those flaws in his character, which, though they have been commended by weak writers, have (as I hinted in the beginniug of this history) by the judicious reader been censured and despised. Such was the clemency of Alexander and Caesar, which nature hath as grossly erred in giving them, as a painter would, who should dress a peasant in robes of state, or give the nose, or any other feature of a Venus, to a satyr. What had the destroyers of mankind, that glorious pair, one of whom came into the world to usurp the dominion, and abolish the constitution of his own country; the other to conquer, enslave, and rule over the whole world, at least as much as was well known to him, and the shortness of his life would give him leave to visit; what had, I say, such as these to do with clemency? Who cannot see the absurdity and contradiction of mixing such an ingredient with those noble and great qualities I have before mentioned? Now in Wild, everything was truly GREAT, almost without alloy, as his imperfections (for surely some small ones he had) were only such as served to denominate him a human creature, of which kind none ever arrived at consummate excellence: but surely his whole behaviour to his friend Heartfree is a convincing proof, that the true iron or steel GREATNESS of his heart was not debased by any softer metal. Indeed while GREATNESS consists in power, pride, insolence, and doing mischief to mankind;—to speak out,—while a GREAT man and a GREAT rogue are synonymous terms, so long shall

Wild stand unrivalled on the pinnacle of GREATNESS. Nor must we omit here, as the finishing of his character, what indeed ought to be remembered on his tomb or his statue, the conformity above mentioned of his death to his life; and that Jonathan Wild the Great, after all his mighty exploits, was what so few GREAT men can accomplish—hanged by the neck 'till he was dead.

NOTE. In this excerpt, as in M. Anatole France's picture of the Bard of Kyme, the irony is largely the irony of circumstance —and all the greatness, which is rooted in war, is derided and defied between the lines of what is written.

XIV. AN EVENING WITH COLERIDGE

From the Diary of James Farington, R.A.

JAMES FARINGTON, R.A., whose Diary was re-discovered in 1921 among the effects of the late Miss M. L. E. Tyrwhitt, might be described as the greatest "tweenie" of affairs that ever lived. He was not a brilliant artist yet he came to be known as the "Dictator of the Academy" owing to the way in which he controlled all its proceedings, public or private. If a Turner or a Constable wished to be elected A.R.A., if a Lawrence or a Wilkie were anxious to become a full Academician, his influence was eagerly sought, and it was through him that noble lords and eminent commoners were invited to the Academy's exclusive annual dinners. There was no business too large or too small to be outside his sphere of activity, and he cannot be written down as a mere busybody, because he was constantly taking infinite pains to carry through acts of kindness for which no reward of any kind could be expected. He knew almost every famous man or woman of his period, and he kept a record of all he heard at town or country houses, at clubs or coffee-houses, and made little pictures, often all the more effective for their lack of literary artifice, of the personages and episodes he saw with his own eyes. Literature is well represented in his pertinacious chronicle. He evokes pleasant memories of the departed Johnson, takes us to Horace Walpole's (Lord Orford's) "Gothic Vatican of Greece and Rome," sets down Chesterfield's blunt criticism of Wordsworth's

poetry and Wordsworth's opinion of Sir Walter Scott's romances, collects Boswell's *obiter dicta*, and introduces us to his fellow-guest, Robert Burns, in the following terms:

Mr. Burns, the Scottish poet. At present an Exciseman in Dumfries, on £70 a year. He is married, and has a family. He is a middle-sized man, black-complexioned, and his general appearance is that of a tradesman or mechanic. He has a strong expressive way of delivering himself in conversation. He is not acquainted with the Latin language. His father was a gardener in Ayrshire.

As a diarist he is "facty" and lacks vision; the greatness of Burns was beyond his comprehension, no doubt. And with all the curiosity of Pepys and that worthy's love of running about, he somehow remains a vague and concealed personality; so that he never becomes an intimate friend of the reader, but is just a pleasant acquaintance whom one would like to introduce to some historian of his period. Yet the two volumes of his Diary which have been published come into the category of what may perhaps be called bran-pie bed-side books—you dip into them, and you always get some curious fact for a prize, which may or may not be of ulterior significance. I supply the details (I can imagine him saying) and you the imagination to interpret them—and do not expect a person with a presence to keep up to give himself away in the manner of a rascal of genius like Pepys! His account of a conversation with Coleridge, whose "oomjective" and "soomjective" still boom across the gulf of years, is an excellent example of his method.

MARCH 25.—(*George*) *Dance* called on me & I went with him to dinner at *Sir George Beaumonts*.—The conversation after dinner & throughout the evening was very metaphysical in which *Coleridge* had the leading & by far the greatest

part of it. His habit seems to be to analyse every subject. A comparison was made between the powers required, or rather what was requisite for Painting & Sculpture. *Sir George* was decidedly of opinion that it required much more to make a complete work in Painting than to arrive at perfection in Sculpture. He instanced *colouring* which alone had occupied the greatest talents to arrive at excellence yet it was but a part of what was necessary to make a picture.

Coleridge concurred with him. Upon it being observed that in Sculpture to make a *perfect form* it was necessary not to copy any individual figure for nothing human is perfect, but to make a selection of perfect parts from various figures & assemble them together & thereby constitute a perfect whole. *Coleridge* observed that it was the same in good poetry,—nature was the basis or original from which all should proceed. He said that perhaps there was not in any poem a line which separately might not have been expressed by somebody, it was the assembling so many expressions of the feelings of the mind and uniting them consistently together that delighted the imagination.—*Architecture* was spoken of. *Dance* said that the *Temple at Paestum* was only one remove, as architecture, above *Stone-Henge.*—He derided the prejudice of Uniting Designs in Architecture within certain rules, which in act though held out as laws had never been satisfactorily explained. He said that in His opinion that architecture unshackled wd. afford to the greatest genius the greatest opportunities of

producing the most powerful efforts of the human mind.—*Coleridge sd. Dr. Darwin*[1] was a great *plagiarist.* "He was like a pigeon picking up peas, and afterwards voiding them with excrementitious additions."

Novels were mentioned. *Coleridge* objected to them altogether; even the best of them did harm, "they afforded amusement to the mind without requiring exertion." At *Lady* Beaumont's desire I related the story of the *Apparition* of His *Brother* (*John*) appearing to *Captn. Wynyard.* It was told at the private instigation of *Lady Beaumont* who was desirous to hear *Coleridge's* opinion upon it.—He gave a decided opinion upon it "That it (was) an *Ocular Spectrum,*" a deception created by the disordered imagination of *Captn Wynyard* when in a nervous, languid state, & that *Coll. Sherbroke* who also professed to have seen the apparition had the notion of it excited by the sudden assertion of the other.

The evening was passed not in conversation but in listening to a succession of opinions, & explanations delivered by *Coleridge,* to which I attended from a desire to form a judgment of his ability. It was all metaphysical, frequently perplexed, and certainly at times without understanding his subject. Occasionally there was some brilliance, but I particularly noticed that His *illustrations* generally disappointed me, & rather weakened than enforced what He had

[1] Erasmus Darwin (1731-1802), physician and poet, published the "Botanic Garden," his best-known work, in 1794-96.

before said. He read some lines written by Wordsworth upon "*The Maid of Loch Lomond*," a pretty girl they found residing there; and also some lines upon *Westminster Bridge* (which begin "Earth hath not anything to show more fair") & the scenery from it. His Dialect particularly when reading, is what I shd. call *Broad Devonshire*, for a gentleman.—His manner was good-natured & civil, & He went on like one who was accustomed to take the lead in the Company He goes into. He sd. *His mother* is 80 years of age, from which I judge Him to be 35 (he was 32).—

On coming away I expressed to *Dance* how much I was fatigued by that sort of confinement we had been under. He sympathised in it.

March 26.—*Northcotes* I dined at. Before dinner *Northcote* shewed us a *Head* of *Coleridge* which He began yesterday & finished to-day. It is for *Sir G.*: *Beaumont* & is very like. *Coleridge* is going to *Malta*[1] for his health. He and *Southey* married 2 sisters.—

[1] *Coleridge*, much broken in health by the use of narcotics, sailed for *Malta* on April 2, 1804, and became Secretary to *Sir Alexander Ball*, the Governor. Neither the work nor the social conditions of the island suited him, and he gradually grew worse, increased doses of opium failing to relieve him of pain. He left *Malta* in September, 1805, and while at *Rome*, on the homeward journey, he was warned *that Napoleon* was on the watch for him for certain articles written during the *Peace of Amiens* for the *Morning Post*, which, *Fox* asserted in *Parliament*, caused the renewal of *the war*.

Coleridge sailed from *Leghorn* in an American ship, and, the story goes, on being chased by a French cruiser, he threw his papers overboard. "After a miserable passage of fifty-five days, in which his life was twice given over," *Coleridge* reached *England*, "ill, penniless, and worse than homeless."

When Sir George first mentioned *Coleridge* to *Northcote* the latter expressed His surprise observing that He was "*a great Democrat.*" *Sir George* sd. His opinions were altered.—*Opie* mentioned that *William Godwin*[1] has a high idea of the powers of *Coleridge*, and "*of the riches of his mind.*" (*Prince*) *Hoare* sd. some Sonnets published by Him are very good.—*Fuseli* had met him at *Johnsons* (? the bookseller) and thought little of him.—*Northcote* & *Coleridge* had differed abt. the *disposition of Milton.*—*Coleridge* sd. He was next to our *Saviour* in *humility*. *Northcote* on the contrary thought that ambition was the prevailing quality in his mind. That He was arrogant and tyrannical.—*Opie* sd. that *Don Quixotte* was nearer to that pattern of humility than *Milton.*—*Coleridge* noticed to *Northcote* the *high family* of *Sir George Beaumont.* The latter (*Northcote*) replied that He was surprised *that* shd. seem to him (*Coleridge*) to be any consideration, He who held all distinctions so cheap.

Fuseli speaking of *Shakespere* sd. that if *Macbeth* only was put against all the works that had been since produced by a succession of Poets *Dryden & Pope* included it shd. be preserved though the whole were to be sacrificed for it.—*Hoare* said and *Milton into the bargain.* This was instantly opposed by *Fuseli* & *Opie*—*Fuseli* sd. the speech of *Adam* to *His Creator* requiring a *Mate* was equal to anything. *Opie* sd. throughout it abounded with the highest excellence. —*Northcote* spoke of *B*(*eaumont*) as having a full sense

[1] Author of *Caleb Williams.*

of his claim to family distinction but as being very humble in other respects, in *pretensions* of the mind. —*Hoare* & *Opie* differed from him saying it was visible that there was a full feeling & consciousness of possessing powers.—I was referred to & agreed with them.—

Northcote heard *Coleridge* read a long poem of his own composing. He said His manner & tone put him in mind of " the drone of a presbyterian parson." [1] —*Lady Beaumont* and a Sister of *Mr. Addington*, (the Premier) appeared to be delighted.—We continued our conversation at *Northcotes* after tea, which was sent to us, till 11 oClock.—*Opie* invited the party to dine with him on Monday next.

[1] This statement bears out what *De Quincey* said of *Coleridge's* lectures at the *British Institution*. He was languid, and read badly, and, according to another listener, " Nobody read poetry so ill."

XV. MOTHER AND DAUGHTER

From the unpublished " My Diary " of Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell.

THE efflux of time has but increased the reputation of Mrs. Gaskell as a novelist, whose books, apart altogether from their appeal as stories, are a precious kind of social history—in this respect they are comparable with Thomas Hardy, who shows how the aristocratic families go downhill (Paradelles and D'Urbervilles become Priddles and Durbeyfields), how the new lords of the land gain wealth before they learn how to use it (as with the Stoke D'Urbervilles), how the old farming and antique customs pass away, and how reluctantly country folk are absorbed by the ever-growing towns. Mrs. Gaskell is the only great Victorian novelist who lived on the contact-line between North and South, the industrial England and the England of ancient amenities, and can show us how pride of birth and pride in money-making made treaties of reconciliation. She knows the heart of man as well as the heart of woman, and all the persons of her dreams are living, breathing creatures. Molly Gibson in her unfinished " Wives and Daughters " is, next to Shirley and Tess, the heroine in regional novels I love best of all. I would gladly marry all three of them, as an experiment in literary polygamy. Mrs. Gaskell's " Cranford " is, of course, a classic; it is one of the most popular of bed-side books. But I prefer to give excerpts from the delightful Diary, not yet given to the public at large (though the chief

libraries have been supplied with private copies through the beneficence of Mr. Clement Shorter), which throws more light on the deep seriousness (*gravitas* the Romans called it) and wise loving-kindness of the diarist's character than any biography I know.

TO my dear little Marianne I shall "dedicate" this book, which, if I should not live to give it her myself, will I trust be reserved for her as a token of her Mother's love, and extreme anxiety in the formation of her little daughter's character. If that little daughter should in time become a mother herself, she may take an interest in the experience of another; and at any rate she will perhaps like to become acquainted with her character in its earliest form. I wish that (if ever she sees this) I could give her the slightest idea of the love and the hope that is bound up in her. The love which passeth every earthly love; and the hope that however we may be separated on earth, we may each of us so behave while sojourning here that we may meet again to renew the dear and tender tie of Mother and Daughter.

* * * * * * * *

Marianne is now becoming every day more and more interesting. She looks at and tries to take hold of everything. She has pretty good ideas of distance and does not try to catch sunbeams now, as she did two months ago. Her sense of sight is much improved lately in seeing objects at a distance, and distinguishing them. For instance, I had her in my arms to-day in the drawing-room, and her Papa was

going out of the gate, and she evidently knew him; smiled and kicked. She begins to show a decided preference to those she likes; she puts out her little arms to come to me, and would, I am sure, do so to her Papa. She catches the expression of a countenance to which she is accustomed directly; when we laugh, she laughs; and when I look attentive to William's reading, it is quite ridiculous to see her little face of gravity, and earnestness, as if she understood every word. I try always to let her look at anything which attracts her notice as long as she will, and when I see her looking very intently at anything, I take her to it, and let her exercise all her senses upon it, even to tasting, if I am sure it can do her no harm. My object is to give her a habit of fixing her attention.

She takes great delight in motion just at present—dancing, jumping; shutting and opening the hand pleases her very much. I had no idea children at her age made such continued noises; she shouts, and murmurs, and talks in her way, just like conversation, varying her tones, etc. I wish we could know what is passing in her little mind. She likes anything like singing, but seems afraid of the piano; to-day she even began to cry when I began to play.

* * * * * * * *

I am rather afraid, from being an only child, she is a little too dependent on others; for instance, if when sitting on the floor a plaything rolls away, she has no idea of scrambling after it, but looks up beseechingly for someone to help her. To be sure, she is very

weak in her limbs, scarcely attempting to walk with two hands, though nearly sixteen months.

She is extremely fond of her Papa, shouting out his name whenever she hears his footsteps, never mistaking it, and dancing with delight when she hears the bell which is a signal for her to come in after dinner.

She will talk before she walks, I think. She can say pretty plainly, "Papa, dark, stir, ship, lamp, book, tea, sweep," &c.—leaving poor Mama in the background. She is delighted when we stir the fire or make any *commotion* in the room.

I am sometimes surprised to find how she understands, and tries to understand, what we say amongst ourselves.

For instance, I was one day speaking of *biscuits*, but fearing if she understood me, her hopes would be excited, I merely described them as "things that were on the breakfast-table this morning" (there were none in the room at the time), when immediately she began to dance in Fanny's arms, saying, "Bis, bis, bis."

There have been times when I have felt, oh! so cast down by her wrongdoings; and, as I think I am very easily impressible, I have fancied there must have been some great mismanagement to produce such little obstinate fits, and whole hours of wilfulness. I do not, however, think that this has been often the case and, when it has, my cooler judgment has been aware of some little circumstance connected with her

physical state that has in some measure accounted for it. For instance, she (like her mother) requires a great deal of sleep.

We have been puzzled for a punishment. The usual one, putting the little offender into a corner, had no effect with her, as she made it into a game to "I *do* into a corner and be naughty little girl"; so the last we have tried is putting her into a high chair, from which she cannot get out, and leaving her there (always in the same room with one of us) till some little sign of sorrow is shown. This, with grave and sorrowful looks on our part, has generally had the desired effect. She often talks to herself about the consequences of her conduct. "Baby *d*ood *d*irl, make Papa and Mama happy." Baby not dood dirl, Papa and Mama so sorry," &c. I think, for so young a child, she has a pretty correct idea as to whether actions are right or wrong.

* * * * * * * *

The two dear little sisters are very fond of one another. Marianne gives up anything she has if Meta wants it. Almost too much I fancy sometimes. And Meta looks so relyingly for Marianne's help if she has lost any little plaything or in any distress. And she crows and dances when she hears Marianne's voice. Oh! how I hope this love will last. I must do my best to cherish it. Oh! God, help me in all my good resolutions with regard to these two dear children, for without thee I have no strength. Amen.

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When I last wrote in my journal, I was stopped by the lateness of the hour before I had put down any particulars about Meta, I have been amused on looking at my former writing in this book to perceive the difference between the two little girls. Meta is far more independent than Marianne was at her age, which I suppose is owing to her having enjoyed more uninterrupted good health. She can crawl about anywhere as quickly as many children walk, and if the door is open, she is in the passage directly making towards the kitchen. She can raise herself by anything on to her feet, but has no idea of walking. She will play on the floor for an hour at a time in preference to being nursed. She has no idea of talking, though she is constantly singing and making noises. She is very affectionate, but not so sensitive as M.A. was: for instance she does not in the least care for being laughed at, but rather enjoys a joke. But I am afraid she runs some little danger of being spoilt, for nearly every one in the house pets her, and she is very full of caprices, and sometimes gives way to sad little fits of passion, if she is a little bit affronted by the most trifling thing. I am sometimes afraid she is not checked enough; Elizabeth (her nurse) always says "Poor thing, it is time enough to begin——" This I know is wrong, though I am not sure if I act upon my knowledge. Meta loves her Papa so warmly that I think his influence may do much towards conquering her little passions. If he says "Naughty little Meta!" she sobs as if her heart would break; so, of

course, we avoid such a working upon her sensibility. She is generous in giving a piece of anything she likes, but not good in giving up a plaything, and whenever she sees Marianne occupied or amused by anything, that is the very thing she wants to have. She wants every eatable or drinkable she sees others having, and, what is more, likes them all down to rhubarb and magnesia.

In general the sisters are very kind to one another, though sometimes I have been sorry to see Marianne, without any anger, or any apparent bad feeling, hurt little Meta, knowing that she hurts her. I think it must be from the love of power, but of course we try to check it. May God bless and *preserve* them both.

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She, Marianne, is a most sympathetic little thing. She tries so to comfort me if she sees me looking sad, or thinks that anything has happened to discompose me. Her great faults are unaccountable fits of obstinacy; which are, I hope, diminishing, and a want of perseverance and dependance upon others as to her occupations and amusements. I have begun to teach her a little prayer morning and night, merely a few words of thanksgiving and blessing. I am not sure that she attaches much devotional feeling to this observance, but I thought it desirable to lead her to something beyond the visible and material, and some day I hope more interest will be shown as to the Being to whom they are addressed. She also comes in every morning, while her Papa reads from Doddridge's Exposition and

prays. I sometimes fear this service is too long for her, but I think she likes coming in, though at first we had a great struggle, owing I think to a sort of nervous shyness. God bless and preserve my darling Marianne! As to dear little Meta, she is totally different from Marianne, though very like her in person. She is a more popular character; very lively, enjoying a joke, always busy for herself; but she is passionate and wilful, though less so, I think, than she was. She is a most generous little creature, always ready to give away eatables. Not so generous as to her playthings, but often very good about that. She has many engaging ways, kissing if she thinks she has offended or hurt in any way. She is very backward in her talking—"tata" being the only word she can say—with an attempt at "please." But she understands and notices every word that is spoken before her, and makes herself understood too, by signs and noises. She has walked this two months, being a very good walker at eighteen months. She has just cut her last eye-tooth, and I am glad that trial is over for her, poor darling, though she has not suffered much to what many children do. Marianne has within this last fortnight begun to have a little animal food, but we keep Meta to the old plain diet. May God bless both my dear children!

XVI. A. K. H. B.

A Bed-side Divine.

IT is a pleasant and profitable thing to consort with country parsons. They are not afraid of the truths which town wits regard as truisms; their simplicity is often a kind of green and growing sagacity; their eloquence is more a matter of works than words; and their minds at rest diffuse an *aura* of restfulness which is a cure for worry, the worst of town-bred plagues. Five saints have I known in my time, and three of them were country parsons—two holding a cure of souls in far corners of the English countryside, and the third a peripatetic preacher in a half-conquered Canadian wilderness, where the rivers run over the brink of evening, so that one sees:

> On tremulous waters far away,
> Resting, the dying Rose of Day.

He was not a great preacher, according to Western ideas; he had not the fluency of the clever young Presbyterians who gleaned where he, having sown, had reaped silently and invisibly. There was a drop of Indian blood in his veins; you saw it in his dark deep-set eyes and lank black hair; in his trick of

saying "s'oes" for "shoes," &c., for the least little bit of Indian in a man prevents him from framing to pronounce "sh" aright. Like the Ephraimites at the crossing of Jordan; perhaps they also had a touch of the wilderness blood. He would sometimes, when seeing things with imagination's unwinking eye, drop into his great-grandmother's tongue, which was a kind of privy language with old-timers in that part of the Hudson Bay Company's shadowy demesnes. On one occasion he was preaching about the flight of Israel from Egypt, and a strange picture he painted of the drowning of the chariotry in the Red Sea. The Egyptian horsemen, he told us, were hampered by female camp-followers, who held them back, clutching at the reins, so as to get glimpses of their wicked beauty in the steep mirrorlike walls of water on either side. When the walls fell together he clapped his hands to give us an impression of the tumultuous sound, and, not being able to find English words to his mind, cried out "*Chimook*! *chimook*! *chimook*! *chimook*!" (the onomatopoeic name for the pastime of ducks-and-drakes in the Cree tongue). One or two of the mean whites in the congregation sniggered audibly, not knowing that a poet was improvising in the pulpit. It is worth while telling you how we found out he was really and truly a saint. He stopped at an outlying ranch one night, and got up earlier than anybody else next morning to look after his horse; the next man out of bed found that he had cleaned out the stable and was grooming his horse. When he

finished he knelt down by the beast's side and said his prayers; ter'ble long prayers, the unseen witness testified, and full of many-j'inted words. The boys called him "the horse-saint" (meaning he was a saint to his horse as a man is so seldom a hero to his valet).

It is not often that these country parsons, shepherds who keep to the sheep-run, leave any written records of their thoughts and feelings. Two sermons a week, year in, year out, are sufficient solace for the *scabies scribendi* of the most scholarly, seeing that the task involves a striving after simplification which would drive most journalists into a lunatic asylum because of brooding over lost lineage and synonyms sacrificed (for a rustical flock would not know that "popular, domestic feline" meant "cat," &c.). It has been said that English scholarship now resides in country rectories, having removed from the banks of Isis or the Cam to places,

> Where loud the blackbird cheers his bride
> In some umbrageous vicarage.

These are the only lines of the secondary Alfred I remember; I may never get another opportunity of quoting them. The best Greek scholar I ever knew held a country living, and once told me that he had toiled for ten years learning how to talk to rustics —and he had got the trick of it at last, for the language of his sermons seemed to me as pithy and pertinent and as unclouded by cleverness as the best Greek prose. He liked to tell the story of Routh, the President of Magdalen, who lived to his hundredth

year, and was the last authority on English theology; how he preached to a village congregation, and began his fourth paragraph with the words: "But you will object to me Irenaeus ——." Sermonising, alas! had killed in him an essayist of artful allusiveness, for he had browsed in every field of the world's literature and had a natural gift for roundabout reminiscence, as well as a keen sense of the humour of personality.

A. K. H. B., however, was a fine essayist as well as a great preacher. He was best known under the disguise of his numerous initials, and probably better known than any other Scottish pastor of his day. He was the Very Rev. A. K. H. Boyd, of St. Andrews, the little, old, grey city, and such was his fame as a preacher that the chance of hearing him drew many visitors to the East Neuk. Born in 1825 at the Manse of Auchinlech, in Ayrshire, he was originally destined for the English Bar; but when he had nearly finished his legal training he gave up the law, and went back to his own country and entered the ministry of the Church of Scotland. It was when he was parish pastor of Irongray, in Galloway, that he began writing his "Recreations of a Country Parson"; the first series came out in *Fraser's Magazine*, and was published in book form in 1859. In 1865 he was preferred to the first charge of St. Andrews, and there he remained to the day of his death in 1899, playing his part without any pushfulness in the life of the Kirk, doing all in his power to add to the beauty and

seemliness of its services, and using his genius for friendship to the glory of God and for the good of all his neighbours. He was chosen as Moderator in 1890—and all his life he was a mediator between churches that are chary at times of rejoicing over all the Christianity they have in common.

There were limits to his toleration. He could not abide the half-educated Englishman who had doubts as to whether a Presbyterian could get to heaven, or the socially-pushing Scot who, though a son of the manse, yet was given to unchurching or vilipending the Church of his fathers. But he thought none the less of the saintly learned Liddon because he told him in a letter: "I pray that the Scotch may have the grace to set in order the things that have been wanting to them ever since John Knox has been in authority —beyond the Tweed." We might as well hear what A. K. H. B. has to say about it himself:

"In either National Church the highest orders are given by the laying-on of the hands of at least three, ordained already by ordained men, and these ordained in long succession back to the first of all. Must the man who presides at an ordination be one permanently set in a higher place, and called a Bishop? Or will it suffice that he be set on high, *prelatus*, for that day and that duty; and called a Moderator? The two Establishments are not in communion: sorrowful to say. And this is all that keeps them apart. As good Archbishop Tait once said to me, 'Could you not have a permanent Moderator of

Presbytery, who would preside at all ordinations? Such a man would be vitally a Bishop; and would satisfy the extremest South of the Tweed.'"

But this reasoning would not have satisfied some of the theological-minded rams in his flock. He was butted by one of them, a fellow of lowly degree but lofty in his intolerance, for getting Dean Stanley to preach in the historic church that was set down *in media civitate* eight centuries ago. "What gart ye bring a Dean to preach in the Toon Kirk on the Sabbath?" asked this hornéd soul in an uplifted voice and with a manner on the verge of menacing. A. K. H. B. gave his reasons: (1) Dean Stanley was one of the greatest men in the great Church of England; (2) he had repeatedly shown himself a warm friend of the Kirk of Scotland; (3) he had for many years been the minister's especially kind friend; (4) it seemed likely that his preaching would interest many people, and that had turned out a shrewd guess, for about three thousand people came to hear him. The other considered these arguments critically, and answered firmly: "I dinna approve ava' o' ye bringin' a Dean to preach in the Toon Kirk." Afterwards he ceased for some time to come to church when A.K.H.B. preached, and a busybody thought fit to inform the minister of this distressing desertion. He thought to himself, did A. K. H. B., that it would be a peculiar thing to minister in a Scottish Kirk after Disestablishment, when the parson would be *under* the parish, not *over* it. And he called to mind how, when a

certain dissenting minister in Ayrshire refused to do something his "managers" (well so-called) proposed, one of them shook a threatening fist, and exclaimed: "We'll starve you, Sir!" Moral—no *pastor ovium* should be dependent on his flock for woollen garments and the daily mutton chop. It is my moral, not A. K. H. B.'s.

But it is in his essays that this good man still lives on earth among his fellow-men. Bishop Wordsworth, of St. Andrews, guessed it would be so when he addressed the following lines to his friend:

Quot fessos homines, quot tristia corda, quot aegros
Quot passim indociles otia longa pati,
Te "recreans," scriptis recreasti, Rustice Pastor,
Nec tot post annos charta diserta silet!—
Non equidem invideo: miror magis; et prece posco,
Haec vita in tantis dum sit agenda malis,
Ut, saliens veluti in deserto jugis aquae fons,
Ingenii exudans sic tua vena fluat!

It is good Latinity and sound criticism. The essays of A. K. H. B. have not the tender imaginativeness of Elia's, which so often remind me of a summer morning, when the sun is still low and the floating gossamers are lines of silvery sheen, criss-crossing in the gleaming air as though to remind us how the whole world is held together by strong, imperceptible, shining bonds of Love undying. They have not the flow of De Quincey's fancifulness bubbling up in crystal-clear phrases under a little rainbow of many-coloured thought—like a fountain that need never cease

flowing—*labitur et labetur in omne volubilis aevum.* The summer lightning of humour that plays about the essays of Mr. E. V. Lucas (the heir of the early-Victorian masters of miniature philosophies) is lacking, and so is the ever-abounding eager egotism—of you know whom! But A. K. H. B. gives us handfuls of sunshine and the fresh odours of earth and of that green and growing sagacity, a lush wisdom, which is the country parson's best gift to himself and his friends. Here is a passage (from his essay on the country parson's life of dignified labour), which is soverain against worry, the worst of town-bred plagues and the hardest to cure in a library:

"This is Monday morning. It is a beautiful sunshine morning early in July. I am sitting on the steps that lead to my door, somewhat tired by the duty of yesterday, but feeling very restful and thankful. Before me here is a little expanse of the brightest grass, too little to be called a lawn, very soft and mossy, and very carefully mown. It is shaded by three noble beeches about two hundred years old. The sunshine around has a green tinge from the reflection of the leaves.... One-half of the front of the house is covered by a climbing rose-tree, so rich now with clustered roses that you see only the white soft masses of fragrance. Crimson roses and fuchsias cover half-way up the remainder of the front wall; and the sides of the flight of steps are green with large-leaved ivy. If ever there was a dwelling embosomed in great trees and evergreens it is here.

Everything grows beautifully: oaks, horse-chestnuts, beeches; laurels, yews, hollies; lilacs and hawthorn trees. Off a little way on the right, graceful in stem, in branches, in the pale bark, in the light-green leaves, I see my especial pet, a fair acacia. This is the true country; not the poor shadow of it which you have near great and smoky towns. That sapphire air is polluted by no factory chimney. Smoke is a beauty here, there is so little of it: rising thin and blue from the cottage; hospitable and friendly-looking from the rare mansion. The town is five miles distant; there is not even a village near. Green fields are all about; hawthorn hedges and rich hedge-rows; great masses of wood everywhere. But this is Scotland: and there is no lack of hills and rocks, of little streams and waterfalls; and two hundred yards off, winding round that churchyard whose white stones you see by glimpses through old oak branches, a large river glides swiftly by."

It is a fine piece of open-air prose without any conceits or literary confetti; art conceals the art of its making. And here is a passage which goes deeper, though not so far as to be beyond the sunlight; as must be said of another in which A. K. H. B. tells of an old man whose wife had committed suicide, how he was troubled by Blair's horrid saying (he thought it was out of the Bible) about suicides: "The common damned shun them":

"I was waiting in a very little cottage by the bedside of a poor man, 'just a labourer,' dying. He was

thirty-five and had four little children. After lying silent for a while, he said he would like to see them, and the poor wife brought them to the bedside. He could speak quite distinctly, though the change came in an hour; and I thought he would say something of parting advice, were it only to bid them be good children and kind to their mother. Yet all he did was just to take each of the three elder children by the hand, and to say *Gude-day*. As for the youngest, a wee thing of two years old, he said to it, 'Will ye give me a bit kiss?' And the mother lifted up the wondering child to do so. 'Say *ta-ta* to your faither,' she said. '*Ta-ta*,' said the little boy, with a loud, cheerful, voice, and then at once ran out of the cottage to play with some companions. Then poor David closed his eyes, and some tears ran down his cheek. But he said no more. We are an undemonstrative race. We have not words to say what we feel; and if we had, we should be *blate* to use them. It was the abundance of that poor friend's heart that choked his utterance, and brought down his last farewell to a greeting with which he might have parted from a neighbour for a few hours. He was weary, weary too; and so *Gude-day* was his only word.

"I remember how touched Stanley was when I told him of a parting I had seen. A lad of twenty, very well known to me, died. He left a widow mother, a sister and two brothers, younger than himself. He had been their main support (only *ætatis* twenty), and he had been full of anxieties as to what should

become of them. His last words were, holding the hand of the brother next himself in years, and looking at the poor sobbing woman, 'Try and do as weel's ye can!' The great Dean said these were grand and all-comprehending words. I heard them. Believe me one knows it. It is thus that homely Scots die."

They see and hear great things, do these country parsons; so that an incidental greatness often marks their works and days; so that the flaming walls o' the world shall not prevail against them. For a light, fantastic essay "Of a Wilful Memory" is hard to beat. Among its precious trifles are the saying of Dr. Chalmers about some Auld-Licht worshippers, a grim gathering, to the effect that: "If these people ever get to Heaven, they will live on the North side of it," and the word of the preacher who ended a sermon on the probable upshot of a graceless life with the tremendous sentence: "And the end of that man is the Ropp, the Rahzor, or the Ruvver."

"Noo, I'm telling you," as the old Far-Western preacher would say half-a-dozen times or more in his shortest sermon. There is no better companion than A. K. H. B. for half an hour before sleeping or for a white night; he sends a restfulness into the very soul.

PART II

VARIA

I. THE REAL HOMER[1]

By Anatole France.

ALONG the hill-side he came, following a path which skirted the sea. His forehead was bare, deeply furrowed and bound with a fillet of red wool. The sea-breeze blew his white locks over his temples. The fleece of a snow-white beard thickly fringed his chin. His tunic and his unshod feet were the colour of the roads which he had trodden for so many years. A roughly made lyre hung at his side. He was known as the Aged One, and also as the Bard. Yet another name was given him by the children to whom he taught poetry and music, and many called him the Blind One, because his eyes, dim with age, were overhung by swollen lids, reddened by the smoke of the hearths beside which he was wont to sit when he sang. But his was no eternal night, and he was said to see things invisible to other men. For three generations he had been wandering ceaselessly to and fro. And now, having sung all day to a King of Ægea, he was returning to his home, the roof of which he could already see smoking in the distance; for now,

[1] From "Clio," translated by Winifred Stephens.

after walking all night without a halt for fear of being overtaken by the heat of the day, in the clear light of the dawn he could see the white Kyme, his birthplace. With his dog at his side, leaning on his crooked staff, he walked with slow steps, his body upright, his head held high, because of the steepness of the way leading down into the narrow valley and because, though aged, he was still vigorous. The sun, rising over the mountains of Asia, shed a rosy light over the fleecy clouds and the hill-sides of the islands that studded the sea. The coast-line glistened. But the hills that stretched away eastward, crowned with mastic and terebinth, still lay in the freshness and the cool shadow of night.

White Kyme, wall-encircled, rose from the edge of the sea. A steep highway, paved with flat stones, led to the gate of the town. This gate had been built in an age beyond man's memory, and it was said to be the work of the gods. Carved upon the lintel were signs which no man understood, yet they were regarded as of good omen. Not far from this gate was the public square, where the benches of the elders shone beneath the trees. Near this square, on the landward side, the Aged One stayed his steps. There was his house. It was low and little, and less beautiful than the neighbouring house, where a famous seer dwelt with his children. Its entrance was half hidden beneath a heap of manure, in which a pig was rooting. This dunghill was smaller than those at the doors of the rich. But behind the house was an orchard, and

stables of unquarried stone, which the Aged One had built with his own hands. The sun was climbing up the wide vault of heaven, the sea wind had fallen. The invisible fire in the air scorched the lungs of men and beasts. For a moment the Aged One paused upon the threshold to wipe the sweat from his brow with the back of his hand. His dog, with watchful eye and hanging tongue, still stood and panted.

The aged Melantho, emerging from the house, appeared on the threshold and spoke a few pleasant words. Her coming had been slow, because a god had sent an evil spirit into her legs, which swelled them and made them heavier than a couple of wine-skins. She was a Carian slave, and in her youth the King had bestowed her on the bard, who was then young and vigorous. And in her new master's bed she had conceived many children. But not one was left in the house. Some were dead, others had gone away to practise the art of song or to steer the plough in distant Achaian cities, for all were richly gifted. And Melantho was left alone in the house with Areta, her daughter-in-law, and Areta's two children.

She went with the master into the great hall with its smoky rafters. In the midst of it, before the domestic altar, lay the hearthstone covered with red embers and melted fat. Out of the hall opened two series of small rooms; a wooden staircase led to the upper chambers, which were the women's quarters. Against the pillars that supported the roof leant the bronze weapons which the Aged One had borne in his

youth, in the days when he followed the kings to the cities to which they drove in their chariots to recapture the daughters of Kyme whom the heroes had carried away. From one of the beams hung the skin of an ox.

The elders of the city, wishful to honour the bard, had sent it to him on the previous day. He rejoiced at the sight of it. As he stood drawing a long breath into a chest which was shrunken with age, he took from beneath his tunic, with a few cloves of garlic remaining from his alfresco supper, the King of Ægea's gift; it was a stone fallen from heaven and precious, for it was of iron, though too small for a lance-tip. He brought with him also a pebble which he had found on the road. On this pebble, when looked at in a certain light, was the form of a man's head. And the Aged One, showing it to Melantho, said:

"Woman, see, on this pebble is the likeness of Pakoros, the blacksmith; not without permission of the gods may a stone thus present the semblance of Pakoros."

The Aged One then roasts a shin of beef—"after the manner of kings, he himself cooked the flesh of beasts"—and has his frugal meal. He then inquires concerning the household work done in his absence.

Then, remembering his goods were but few, he said:

"The heroes kept herds of oxen and heifers in the meadow. They had a goodly number of strong and comely slaves; the doors of their houses were of ivory and brass, and their tables were laden with pitchers of gold. The courage of their hearts assured

them of wealth, which they sometimes kept until old age. In my youth, certes, I was not inferior to them in courage, but I had neither horses nor chariots, nor even armour strong enough to vie with them in battle and to win tripods of gold and women of great beauty. He who fights on foot with poor weapons cannot kill many enemies, because he himself fears death. Wherefore, fighting beneath the town walls, in the ranks, with the serving men, never did I win rich spoil."

The aged Melantho made answer:

"War giveth wealth to men and robs them of it. My father, Kyphos, had a palace and countless herds at Mylata. But armed men despoiled him of all and slew him. I myself was carried away into slavery, but I was never ill-treated because I was young. The chiefs took me to their bed, and never did I lack food. You were my best master and the poorest."

There was neither joy nor sadness in her voice as she spoke.

The Aged One replied:

"Melantho, you cannot complain of me, for I have always treated you kindly. Reproach me not with having failed to win great wealth. Armourers are there, and blacksmiths, who are rich. Those who are skilled in the construction of chariots derive no small advantage from their labours. Seers receive great gifts. But the life of minstrels is hard."

The aged Melantho said:

"The life of many men is hard."

And with heavy step she went out of the house, with her daughter-in-law, to fetch wood from the cellar. It was the hour when the sun's invincible heat prostrates men and beasts, and in the motionless foliage hushes even the song of the birds. The Aged One stretched himself upon a mat, and veiling his face, fell asleep.

As he slumbered he was visited by a succession of dreams, which were neither beautiful nor more unusual than those which he dreamed every day. In these dreams appeared to him the forms of men and of beasts. And, because among them he recognized some whom he had known while they lived on the green earth and who, having lost the light of day, had lain beneath the funeral pile, he concluded that the shades of the dead hover in the air, but that, having lost their vigour, they are nothing but empty shadows. He learned from dreams that there exist likewise shades of animals and of plants which are seen in sleep. He was convinced that the dead, wandering in Hades, themselves form their own image, since none may form it for them, unless it were one of those gods who love to deceive man's feeble intellect. But being no seer, he could not distinguish between false dreams and true; and, weary of seeking to understand the confused visions of the night, he regarded them with indifference as they passed beneath his closed eyelids.

On awakening, he beheld, ranged before him in an attitude of respect, the children of Kyme, whom he

instructed in poetry and music, as his father had instructed him. Among them were his daughter-in-law's two sons. Many of them were blind, for a bard's life was deemed fitting for those who, bereft of sight, could neither work in the fields nor follow heroes to war.

In their hands they bore offerings in payment for the bard's lessons, fruit, cheese, a honeycomb, a sheep's fleece, and they waited for their master's approval before placing them on the domestic altar.

The Aged One, having risen and taken his lyre which hung from a beam in the hall, said kindly:

"Children, it is just that the rich should give much and the poor less. Zeus, our father, hath unequally apportioned wealth among men. But he will punish the child who withholds the tribute due to the divine bard."

The vigilant Melantho came and took the gifts from the altar. And the Aged One, having tuned his lyre, began to teach a song to the children, who with crossed legs were seated on the ground around him.

"Hearken," he said, "to the combat between Patrocles and Sarpedon. This is a beautiful song."

Patiently the Aged one sang the lines over and over until the little singers knew every word. The attentive children he praised, but those who lacked memory or intelligence he struck with the wooden part of his lyre, and they went away to lean weeping against a pillar of the hall. He taught by example, not by precept, because he believed poesy to be of hoary

antiquity and beyond man's judgment. The only counsels that he gave related to manners. He bade them :

" Honour kings and heroes, who are superior to other men. Call heroes by their own name and that of their father, so that these names be not forgotten. When you sit in assemblies gather your tunic about you and let your mien express grace and modesty."

Again he said to them :

" Do not spit in rivers, because rivers are sacred. Make no change, either through weakness of memory or of your own imagining, in the songs I teach you, and when a King shall say unto you : ' These songs are beautiful. From whom did you learn them ? ' you shall answer : ' I learnt them from the Aged One of Kyme, who received them from his father, whom doubtless a god had inspired.' "

II. THE LATEST SAPPHO

NEVER again shall I poke fun at the scholar who works with pick and spade; freely I forgive him for pelting me with potsherds and striving to prove that Oxford now knows more about Athens than Athens knew about herself, sedulously as she practised the heaven-descended maxim. I forgive him as freely as I have forgiven Dr. A. D. Godley, sometime Dean and Tutor of Magdalen College, for "gateing" me at nine o'clock during the most rapturous weeks of an Oxford summer term, thereby causing me to lose the first and fairest of my affinities to a pertinacious person from Balliol. It was, as I well remember, mostly a matter of after-dinner adoration with the Late-Victorian ladies; they had the habit of looking as white and tall and virginal in the moonlight as the altar-candles in an Arthurian legend; they were then at their best, and well they knew it, and favoured youths were expected to present themselves for the holding of hands—cool, benevolent, unquestioning hands that remained unkissed until they were given in an engagement—between 9.15 and 11 p.m., what time they inquired

about the state of your soul and besought you to make stepping-stones of your dead selves to better things in silvery, tense tones projected Moonwards. Absence during these mystical hours was the unpardonable sin, and that was why the Balliol person came out ever so many hand-clasps ahead of me in my sky-blue waistcoat with pearly buttons—he who was *male natus, male vestitus, immoderate doctus*, and could never stand about in a Don's garden as if the same belonged to him. I never knew the person when he was a fresher, but never had the slightest doubt that he was the subject of the famous lines :

> To see a man with nimble feet
> From off a tram alight,
> With cap and gown and gloves and gamp
> Is *not* a pleasant sight.

So now, wittiest of Deans that ever were, you know at last how far your punishment exceeded my peccadillo (I forget what it was), and will duly appreciate, no doubt, my great-souled gift of free forgiveness !

" Why do I give you these boots, Ernest ? " asked the worthy Peer in Sir James Barrie's best play. And why do I forgive the scholar with the potsherds ? Because those who dig in the dust-heaps of Oxyrhynchus in Egypt a few years ago discovered a new poem by Sappho, who is for us, as she was to all that lived in the stormy, Hellenic prime, " the Poetess," the greatest of all poet-women that have been or ever shall be. A new poem of Sappho !—the sight of this announcement caused me to leap out of bed in an

ecstasy of emotion comparable with that which, as the legend tells us, thrust the poetess herself:

> Sappho, with that auriole
> Of ebon hair on calméd brows

(so her English sister-amorist saw her in a vision) over the Leucadian steep into the white-winged sea. I leapt like the little hills in that psalm which is the first piece of Futurist poetry, or like lambkins in a green meadow, as near Heaven as earth can get, or like a wrinkled, yellow skeleton of a last year's leaf in a May zephyr—I leapt "like anything," as the schoolboys say. Sappho herself would have been rather pleased, could she have seen it, and perhaps she did from her place among the singing seraphs (she is the only pagan soul in that circle of burning eyes and crimson voices, having been so advanced *quia multum amavit*), by this upspringing appreciation on the part of a crusty old critic who is over fifty years of age and weighs about fifteen stone, and takes his morning paper, coffee, and three bits of dry toast in bed as a rule. A good deal will be forgiven me for that joyous jump, I am thinking.

It must have been heart-rending to the searchers in the Egyptian sands to read, on the last of fifty-six fragments of papyrus from which barely a dozen whole stanzas can be restored, the subscription: "The First Book of the Lyrics of Sappho, 1,332 lines." Yet, if all those lines, golden honey and blood-red wine commingled and so strangely strained clear, had been recovered, I suppose the man in the club-window

would still have preferred the Parliamentary reports as a theme of conversation, for all that he thinks he had a classical education. Here is the Cambridge scholar's translation:

"The fairest thing in all the world some say is a host of horsemen, and some a host of foot, and some again a navy of ships, but to me 'tis the heart's beloved. And 'tis easy to make this understood by any. When Helen surveyed much mortal beauty she chose for best the destroyer of all the honour of Troy, and thought not so much either of child or parent dear, but was led astray by Love to bestow her heart afar; for woman is ever easy to be bent when she thinks lightly of what is near and dear. Even so you to-day, my Anactoria, remember not, it seems, when she is with you, one of whom I would rather the sweet sound of her footfall and the sight of the brightness of her beaming face than all the chariots and armoured footmen of Lydia. I know that in this world man cannot have the best; yet to pray for a share in what was once shared is better than to forget it. . . ."

Fragments of a second roll containing the Second Book of the Lyrics had also been found; one of them sings of the return home of Hector with his bride Andromache. Portions of poems by Alcaeus were likewise recovered, but such tidings do not stir the heart —for we know as much as we want to know about that fluent poet of fluctuating moods, who is but a pallid and superficial creature in comparison with the mother-in-art, and more than sister of Gongyla and Doricha (the names of these pupils occur provokingly on fragments of unknown context). It is but little, after all, when there might have been so much. Nevertheless,

let us be grateful for a boon beyond expectation, and hope that further search may yet restore to us all the Lesbian's lost lyrics. And to that end let some millionaire give a tithe of his millions to equip the quest fully—for if his miserable money were to give us back the heart of Sappho out of the dust of death he would have earned his immortality, the gates of Heaven's glory would not be closed on his questing soul.

Sappho was "the Poetess" to the Hellenic world (which linked together East and West and North and South, and endured far into the Middle Ages, as we now read history), as Homer was "the Poet," and the modern world does not challenge the justice of the comparison, though this is but the third of her odes which have come down to us from the seventh century B.C. in a form complete enough for criticism. Hers is part of the world's slender store of universal love-poetry; universal, I call it, because it finds its imagery at the foundations of human nature as the miner gets gold-dust on the buried bedrock of a struggling stream that has lost its profundity. In the first stanza of the newly-recovered ode occur images which also entered into the soul's eye of as purely passionate a love-poet as the Lesbian herself—namely, the author of the "Song of Solomon." Read these verses over again, and see in what wondrous wise Love makes Lesbos and land-locked Sharon provinces in his sole principality:

I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots (i. 9).

Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners (v. 10).

Sharon is land-locked, but Lesbos is in the sea; so that the Lesbian, who daily saw the ships fleet in and out of their haven on white wings, had in her heart of memories and tears the most beautiful image of all for the heart's beloved—and that image even was insufficient to express so exquisite a terror. The contrast of these compared passages measures the whole distance between Occidental and Oriental art.

Here and there has arisen a graceless soul to mock at the supremacy of Sappho, for which I at any rate would fight to the last with a pen dipped in vitriol. It has been suggested that she was nothing more than a respectable school-mistress; marching along the cliffs daily, I suppose, at the head of a crocodile of verse-making flappers. Probably she did not die of Phaon's disdain because she could not wreak her heart on him; possibly she never wrote to Philænis as the mystical Donne imagines:

> O cure this loving madness, and restore
> Me to thee, thee my half, my all, my more.
> So may thy cheeks' red outwear scarlet dye,
> And their white, whiteness of the Galaxy;
> So may thy mighty, amazing, beauty move
> Envy in all women, and in all men love.

But she was certainly not a prototype of the Busses and Beales of these diluted days under a sickly sun—no fear!

Here is the best version in English, as I must needs think, of that Sapphic picture of the sweet terror of the presence of the Beloved:

As the Gods thrice happy the man appeareth,
Who thy voice like heavenly music heareth;
Sitting near thee, surely no more he feareth
Sadness or anguish:

Ah! thy laugh delectable, how it trances!
I am silent, scarce can I bear thy glances;
Wild my fond heart beats to behold thy glances;
Madly I languish.

Parched and numb, the tongue to my palate clingeth;
Straightway subtle flame thro' my body springeth;
In my ears a tremulous echo ringeth,
Night cometh o'er me!

Blinded, shaken, nought any more discerning,
Pale as moor-grass, seared by a mighty burning,
At Death's door, and strange to myself with yearning,
What may restore me? [1]

Alas! English craftsmanship can but convey a vague reflection and dim echo of the lucid, eloquent loveliness of the original. How sorry for themselves all Greekless loons would be if only they knew what they have missed—never to have heard that Æolian singing heart through which Love blows like a wind out of the sunset, a crimson tide throughout eternity!

[1] From "The Poems of Sappho." By Percy Osborn, late Demy of Magdalen College, Oxford. Elkin Mathews.

III. GREEK TRAGEDY

[Reflections on the Greek view of Greek plays, written after seeing performances at Bradfield (where I was told that smoking was forbidden in the theatre in the chalk-pit even when the play was over), at Cambridge, and elsewhere.]

I HAVE been haunted of late years by the gentle shade of an Athenian youth, whose brighter manifestations remind me of the vision of an English poetess:

> Bold
> Electric Pindar, quick as fear
> The race-dust in his cheeks, and clear
> Slant startled eyes, that seemed to hear
> The chariot rounding the last goal,
> To hurtle past it in his soul.

More often than not he sits attentive in a corner of my mind; a fair and silent presence whose strait smile is an everlasting rebuke to the hypocrisies of modern existence. Except that he was born at Colonus, and knew Sophocles rather well (the "Attic bee" buzzed about him at times, I gather), I know nothing whatever of the story of his life. But it is certain that he died young, and even if he had lived a little longer, would have remained one of those

gracious creatures whose desire it is to be a poem rather than a poet, and so weave their aspirations and inspirations into the business of the passing hour. He is one of the tall, yellow-haired Greeks of whom so very few are found in modern Greece; indeed, you only meet them in the ancient communities of the hills, and in the colonies beyond the dusk-edged Mediterranean (in Manchester, for example, of all places in the world), where reversions to the ancient all-conquering type occur as the result of a return to the faint sunshine and keen breezes of the North. The true Greeks were Northmen, of course; they came to their land, to possess it, dark forests crossed and many a watch-fire cold. Callisthenes has a curious trick of drooping his head to the left so that his cheek touches the shoulder. There is the mark (a silvery scribbling shaped like a gamma) of a tiny wound in the hollow of his neck, in which, you would say, there still abides a vague suggestion of uneasiness. This small and ghostly pain troubles him at times, pleasantly or unpleasantly. I cannot tell. Perhaps he died of that trifling wound.

When I went to Cambridge to see "Œdipus the Tyrant" played by a company of undergraduates, Callisthenes came to life for the occasion in a most surprising manner. Indeed, while the tragic spectacle was proceeding he seemed to forget at times that I had any special claim to his friendship—a friendship which is a reward given by whatever gods there be to one who, whatever his faults, is still a worshipper at all

the shrines of youth and beauty. He drank in all the secret joyousness of the hour just as the newly-risen moon drinks the light of innumerable stars—and grew so bright and flushed with it all that he became almost a tangible thing. He vanished at the cry of I-ê! in the first chorus (to what futile, fulsome music!) and re-appeared as an ecstatic singer, wise and bewildered, on the stage itself. I was afraid somebody would count the Suppliants and insist on stopping the performance to eject him—because, forsooth, his name was not in the programme, and he had not provided himself with one of the beastly black beards, as realistic as a Welsh Disestablisher's chin-covering, which were worn by too many of the youthful players. But I soon discovered that he was seen of me, unseen of all the rest; so that there was no reason to feel disheartened. During the intervals he disappeared behind the scenes where, as he told me later on, he had several adventures, having to that end resigned for a while his privilege of walking invisibly. It was not until after chapel-time next morning that he came back to me—suddenly appearing with a sound of ghostly laughter by the side of the bathing-pool in the park or pleasance of Christ's College, a place where ghosts could walk comfortably even at noon and in the height of summer. I myself should be afraid to walk there at night, not because ghosts are to be feared (would I knew many more of those wayfarers in a violet hour!) but because the ancient mulberry-tree, planted in 1609, has for me the aspect of a gigantic

tarantula. The laughter of Callisthenes comes from far away beyond the blue hills of Time; it is the sound of amber-beads falling in a silver basin.

Of course I asked him what he thought of the play and of the players, as soon as we were alone together.

CALLISTHENES. It was a pleasing and a perplexing spectacle. But it would have been strange indeed to Sophocles, though he was ready—too ready, the friends of Æschylus said—to hear and receive new doctrine.

I. Child, let praise come first and censure afterwards.

CALLISTHENES. Then must I chiefly praise the actors, afterwards using the red feather in the manner of the attendants at a tyrant's banquet. But would it not be better, O father of a worthy son (here he laughed again) to mingle praise and censure, as honey and sharp wine are mixed in a soul-heartening cup?

I. As you wish, son of a worthy father.

CALLISTHENES. In the first place, Sophocles would not have been displeased at each actor's conception of the part he had to play. He would, I think, have praised this latest-born Œdipus because he never suffered us to forget for a moment that he was a tyrant; that is to say, a king who has won his kingship by the might of his hand and the cunning of his mind, and for that reason is too ready to suspect a friend of plotting against him and too ripe for violence. It is in the tyrant's soul that the tall weed of ὕβρις

with its rank leaves and scarlet flowers, for ever trembling in a wind of fearfulness, grows up most rapidly and most luxuriantly. The actor grasped this part of the intention of the tragedian and never let it go. For all that, he was not by any means the Œdipus begotten by the maker of Colonus on the body of Mnemosyne, mother of the Muses. You have to understand that this tyrant, with the pierced feet, was something more and something less than a man. But I must pass over this point for the time being and speak of the other persons of the drama. And I must needs begin by praising Jocasta seeing that her haggard beauty and voice of a mellow harshness were manifestly immortal, the same yesterday as they were two thousand years ago, the symbols as I well remember them in my lifetime of the everlasting motherhood of the kindly time-furrowed earth that takes into herself again the seed of all that she has produced, according to the saying of Æschylus. She was a mother to me behind the scenes, and cast her green veil about me. Sophocles would have embraced the actor for his interpretation of her sad and consecrated royalty, by comparison with which the arrogant authority of Œdipus is an ephemeral thing. She is more than mere woman, wiser and wearier and more wonderful than any earthly queen. At Athens the spectators had many more tears for her departure into the darkness than for the blind, bleeding eyes of Œdipus and his loathing of the self he had loved too well. Even the base-born Athenian accepted the

sovereignty of her sorrow. I remember seeing one of them, a fellow who knew only enough to call for a barley cake and cry "Yo-heave-ho," blubbering at the sight as he cracked nuts with his big yellow wolf's teeth. Yet those sailor men would only jeer at the Tyrant's agony, rejoicing in Apollo's victory over him and annoying the townsfolk in the upper benches with their loud outcries. They liked Tiresias even less, it is true; their loathing for prophets and priests surpassed even their hatred of tyrants. There was as much evil as good in the heart of the blind old seer, and no pity or true piety at all in his dark and brooding mind. A sycophant of the gods is none the less a sycophant, whom no true man can love or admire, though all must fear him. Doubtless he would have plotted against Olympus, if aught thereby could have been added to his hateful power.

I. Like Habbakuk, he was *capable de tout.*

CALLISTHENES. Half woman and half man, he also was the creature of an age of undying horrors and unspeakable pollutions, when the victory of Olympus seemed as yet incomplete. It was well to bring him into the theatre as a strange and dismal being, a white blot in the sunshine. But, to understand the inhumanity of all these personages, all of them touched with the Titan, you must see them again as we saw them, in the prime of the violet-crowned city—taller than mortals in their buskins, wearing dreadful painted masks, trailing robes of saffron and purple adorned with jewelled chaplets and broidered girdles,

and moving slowly and mysteriously with mighty strides. Moreover, above them was the blue sky, the same which makes the roof of the Palace of the Olympians, and the sun with its golden arrows which slay the powers of darkness by slaying darkness itself. I-ê! I-ê! I also am for Apollo and against thee, O Œdipus, and all the half-Titans and quarter-Titans, of whom a remnant serve in the timeless halls of the penal abyss. I had sooner remain a poor human ghost, warming myself in the moonlight, than be Pluto's cup-bearer, bearing to him the cup adorned with jewels darkly-bright and filled to the brim with the blood and sweat commingled of men who were accursed, each being his own curse.

I. Then one might say that the Sun-god is the protagonist in these stark tragedies.

CALLISTHENES. I-ê! I-ê! The golden-haired Apollo sits triumphant in his blue sky, and the last of his earth-born rivals, blind and broken and in rags, awaits the cry from the depths of the earth!

Terrible things have happened, but whosoever, having paid the two obols for his seat, was troubled for a moment by the nightmare of staring masks and flaring words below could look up, and with eyes athirst drink in the living sunlight. Even so his soul would be purged of darkling fear. Those who arranged the cast of the play at Cambridge forgot the Sun's part. Sitting silent in your dark prison-house of a theatre, how could any of you discern the intention of the dramatist?

I. Here, in the Northern twilight, it is not easy to persuade the Sun to play his part.

CALLISTHENES. I do not blame you for that, nor, on the other hand, must you blame Sophocles because his plays were not written to be presented in a sunless land. But, believe me, a little more joyousness, a little less seriousness, would not be amiss. It was more like Hellas behind the scenes than in front yesternight. The Athenian playgoers (that is to say, all the Athenians) never missed a word or gesture of their actors, though they spoke their lines twice as quickly as yours—so quickly, indeed, that the quarrel between Œdipus and Creon, for example, went like a bout of sword-play. Moreover, it was not necessary for us to hear what the actors said, seeing that they spoke with their hands as well as with their tongues. There was always much talking in the upper benches, and even in the more honourable seats, where I have heard politicians arguing about the Empire or Home Rule for Mitylene even when Agamemnon was taking his bath or at other disastrous moments. But nobody ever talked when the music swept through the air tempestuously. As for eating and drinking and love-making, there was no end to it all day long.

I. Next time I go to see a Greek play I shall take a bag of buns and a jug of beer, having first of all insisted that the lights should be turned up.

CALLISTHENES. And I will sit by your side and cry I-ê! I-ê! when the darkness ceases.

I. But was not play-going a religious function at Athens?

CALLISTHENES. Indeed it was. But you must remember that the Olympians were a gracious and genial race, who loved mortals all the more because they laughed at them. They were the happiest and homeliest kings and queens that ever built a city in the sky and parcelled out mankind into principalities. They were glad to fall in love with mortal boys and maidens; they were glad—oh, so glad—to be loved in return. Only the ugly and ill-tempered were afraid of them. I, even I . . . wonder not that I am well content to sit and warm myself in the moonlight.

IV. A ROMAN SOLDIER

(A picture from the past which is intended to illustrate the sense of duty in small, as well as great, things which made the Roman Commonwealth.)

AS yet he could not open his eyes. But the sense of smell and that of hearing were already awakened, and suddenly he surmised that he lay in the presence of that mighty, marching ocean beyond the Pillars of Hercules. He could hear the hoarse incessant murmur of the white-crested waves, and the keen freshness of the salt breeze filled his nostrils. How wonderful—to think that he was once more at the world's end, once more a child-adventurer in the furthest West! The old Phoenician navigator, his father's friend, had told him strange tales of these world-encircling seas. How, for example, vessels venturing too far out from the rock-bound coasts are caught and drawn under by a gigantic hand reaching up out of the deeps. Let a curled and ringleted old Barbarian, plaited to the knee, tremble at such tales; true or not, they could not frighten a Roman boy. His Greek tutor, a fellow with a flickering smile and a fluttering hand, had sneered at

them as false and foolish legends. There were no giants, he said, in the dim halls of Poseidon, an all-powerful deity and not unfriendly to sailors. . . . Why was there lead on his eyelids? Never had waking been such a weary business. Presently—let the spell of the sleep-god be broken first—he would leap up open-eyed and look westward and cry in a loud voice, "Sea! Sea!" like Xenophon's Ten Thousand when they came to the end of their wanderings in unknown lands. In the past the Greeks had been good fighters; at Cunaxa and on many another battlefield, on the sea and before fenced cities, they had earned their pay. But, after all, the world had never seen better soldiers than the Roman legionaries. If only they could be more skilfully led—if only they had a leader like Hannibal. Hannibal! Somebody was beating on a shield with a sword! Hannibal! It was the signal for joining battle again, foot to foot, breast to breast, hand to hand. Twenty paces more and he could strike at the dark, smiling, bearded face above the slanting spears. Then the victory would be Rome's after all—for every veteran who had fought in Asia or Africa knew that the life of a pulse-eating horde was the life of its leader. Hannibal! Hannibal! Hannibal!

The remembered name, the name of evil omen, the dreadful name, rang in the wounded Centurion's consciousness like the clangour of steel on bronze. The forlorn hope had failed; no need to open his eyes to know that he lay helpless on the stricken field

of Cannæ, where the fate of Rome had been finally decided. The burning pain in his side, where he had received the thrust of the Iberian's slender, gleaming sword (a serpent's tongue of steel—so swiftly it glanced in and out), was as nothing compared with the pang in his soul as he considered the fall of the great and glorious city, half on earth, and half in the sky, which he had loved so well. Not until that day of disaster irredeemable (for there were no Romans left alive for Rome's redemption) had he known the height and depth of his love for Rome—Roma benigna! Roma perennis! Surely the old Latin gods, the strong, silent influences of the green country-side and the quiet hearths would never permit their habitations to be wasted by the scum of the earth, men so bestial that they did not trouble to dig latrine-trenches at a distance from their winter camps. Yet a few thousands of the veterans that fell at the Trebbia or on the misty shores of Trasimenus would be worth more to Rome in her death-agony than the favour of all the gods, old and new, visible or invisible. A-a-h! To have lived for the last fight of all, or not to have lived to see the sun rise a second time on the battlefield of Cannæ! But why should he see it? He would await the coming of Death, howsoever slow his noiseless footsteps, in the darkness of a sorrow uncomforted by dreaming.

For all that, when the first sunbeam, soft and thrilling as a girl's hand ("Where thou art Caius, I am Caia"), touched his cheek, his eyes opened and

daylight came on him like a flood. And with it was once again renewed that strange illusion of the return of adventurous boyhood and its sense of wonderment, of the hoarse murmuring of the Atlantic and the salt savour of landward breezes. He would have laughed, only he lacked the strength, when the way in which two of his senses had been beguiled was revealed to a mind that now had the help of a third as counsellor-in-chief. The sea, it is true, was not far away; somewhere in the blind circuit of the horizon could be seen the blue, many-wrinkled, flat metallic lustre of Mediterranean waters at rest in the sunrise. But what had seemed to him the salt savour of Ocean's breathing was the smell of blood newly shed—the blood of eighty thousand Romans and twenty thousand of their enemies. And what had seemed the far-off uproar of Ocean's white-crested waves was a vast confusion of miserable voices—the moans and cries of hundreds of mortally-wounded men for whom, as for him, Death was slow in coming. A night and a day would pass before the smell of the shambles vanished, but the moans and cries of dying men athirst would have ceased when the sun had climbed to his noon. That much was known to every veteran who had fought in pitched battles and gone forth in the morning with spade and mattock to bury the dead lest the land should be poisoned and the deities of kindly earth offended. There would be no spade-work that morning on the few acres of Cannæ cumbered sky-high with staring corpses. It was not

the custom of Hannibal's bestial soldiery, the scum of all the earth, to spend time and labour in giving graves to their enemies or even to their own comrades. Moreover, now that the sun was up, he and his army would be marching Romeward. A leader of beasts having the appearance and gait of men and more than half beast himself (the country recruits had all believed the story that he was a centaur), there was no denying that he was a great general, greater than Pyrrhus or Alexander, or any living Roman. Hannibal—being Hannibal—should be on the road to Rome now.

Very slowly, with clenched hands and staring eyes the Centurion twisted his body round so that he could look westward past the mound of carcases in which his legs were entangled. He had not the strength to extricate himself from that mountain of death, which marked the limit of Rome's last struggle. Westward lay the Roman camp, where the red flag had fluttered from the spear in front of Varro's tent the morning before: a well-provided camp, now certainly occupied by the Barbarians, who would have found it more comfortable than their own pestilential lair. In the west columns of smoke, some of them the merest threads, rose into the middle height of heaven: also he fancied he could hear the busy hum of a hungry, victorious host as the first of their two daily meals was preparing. There was no beating of gongs, no blaring of trumpets, no clashing of cymbals, nothing of the clamour of a half-Oriental army about to begin

a forced march. Good! they would rest there for a day, perhaps longer. Evidently Hannibal did not know the shameful truth about Rome's mouldering walls, as useless for defence as that which Romulus built of mud—and killed his brother for leaping over it! The predominant school of military strategists at Rome who insisted that the city had no need of fortifications as long as the army was strong enough—that the very lack of fortifications put a keener edge on the legionary's sword—always ended their discourses with a reference to the wall of Romulus and the fate of Remus. Time, time, time—that was Rome's most urgent need. There were those at home who knew how to make the most of the briefest respite. Fabius Maximus, who all but trapped the scum in Campania, and Marcus Marcellus, with the statue's face, and Lucius Æmilius Paullus, the plunderer of Illyria, if he had escaped from the shambles, and even Varro, who surely must have escaped! Varro would be useful indeed; his big untiring politician's voice trumpeting at every street corner would keep the mob hard at work carrying stones and tree trunks (taken from the houses and gardens of patricians—trust the demagogues for that!) to eke out the fortifications. An experienced leader might easily have made Varro's mistake in planning the order of battle. It had seemed a sensible idea to mass the whole strength of the Roman battle in a gigantic column, so as to break through the centre of Hannibal's army by sheer weight. Epaminondas and Philip of Macedon, and

other great captains, had worked out the same plan victoriously. But Varro, who was perhaps thinking that Hannibal had found some more elephants, forgot that small bodies of foot-soldiers move more swiftly than huge columns, and that squadrons of Numidian horse move much more swiftly, and that when the hammer-head of his column drew near the river the centre of the Punic army would have vanished, leaving the monstrous mass enveloped on both flanks by Hannibal's reinforced wings and the Numidians thundering on the rear. But how could he have guessed so much? There were many scrolls in his library, but none to tell him what was to be in Hannibal's mind on the day of Cannæ.

For a while, having forgiven his leader, the dying Centurion rested in a new feeling of hopefulness. There was yet hope for the Rome he had loved so long and so silently—Roma benigna, Roma perennis, who must be worshipped in works and deeds, and even then has nothing to give, no word of thanks to say. He closed his eyes again; a breeze new-born stirred in his scanty hair; the wind of the wings of Death was about him; there was not long to wait for the last adventure. "Faithful to the Senate, obedient to his Imperator"—peacefully he pondered the soldier's oath, so often heard, so often uttered.

He was aroused by a whisper in his very ear.

"Help! help!" were its toneless words. Looking in the direction whence it came, he saw two living eyes in a dead face that formed part of the mountain

of death; a grey and haggard face, childlike and yet as old as Time, within a foot of the elbow of his right arm.

"Friend," he whispered in reply, "there is no help to be had. Let us see who can die first, you or I."

There was a long silence. Then the Face, which was like a sculpture built into a wall, spoke again. This time in clear small tones like water-drops falling one by one into a tiny pool.

"There is work to be done—without delay. You must do it. Your right arm is free, and can reach that which lies at my left side. The pillagers must not have it. They will be here soon, having breakfasted. Dig a little hole down there, and bury it."

The voice ceased, having uttered its message; the unshut mouth remained a cypher of breathless silence. For a while the eyes opened and closed like machinery. Then all semblance of life was extinguished in the gaunt young face; which yet remained a living sculpture of agonised anxiety built into a blank wall of meaningless death.

Slowly, at the cost of many a repetition of the first pang of the Iberian's sword-thrust, the Centurion obeyed his orders. The moment his fingers touched the concealed treasure he knew what it was. He fingered the Thing carefully, even prayerfully; in his mind's eye he saw it winging its way on high, radiantly, victoriously, the mark of all eyes near and far. Then, withdrawing his hand (leaving the treasure still hidden), he leaned forward and, working

with torn finger-tips, scrabbled a small hole in the harsh soil. The earth was full of tiny green beetles. They ran away, all in the same direction, quickly, but with a certain deliberation—as if according to orders. There was a certain consolation for the Centurion turned gravedigger in this spectacle of the disciplined disappearance of such small creatures. It is the little things that count for most with the old soldiers. The hole was soon finished; reaching backwards he grasped the treasure, thrust it hastily in and covered it up, carefully replacing the sand and wisps of yellow-green grass.

A few minutes later three half-naked negroes began to pull down the mountain of dead men in search of spoil, rings and bracelets and so forth. An Iberian officer over ten men came with them carrying a whip of knotted wire in one hand and a half-bushel basket in the other. The Centurion lived long enough to see them depart without finding the buried silver eagle which had been broken from the staff of a standard. He died happily enough; for fate, relenting at the last, had given him work to do for Rome and a small victory over Rome's enemy. It is the little things that count for most with the old soldiers.

V. ON DREAMS

By the Viscountess Grey of Fallodon.

TO those who have the power of dreaming, life is the richer for the gift. We do not speak of that type of dream where time is passed, as it might be, at a railway station, where hurry and confusion and jostling find place; where people are two and the same persons at once, and all is a crazy drama of involved absurdity. This dream has no place here. It is of dreams of a far different nature that we would write—such dreams as, crossing the hemp and homespun woof of life, enrich it with rarer dyes; or confirm, to our spirit's solace, a belief in an unseen world.

There are those people whose dreams are the panorama of the landscape of their own lives. They have dreams that in a language of symbols, fantastic, poetic, or otherwise, are a running commentary on what they themselves are thinking or enacting at the time. And to these dreamers there comes an ever-increasing power of comprehension. They are the interpreters of their own dreams. But these will tell you that their dreams are, as a rule, synchronous,

and rarely prophetic. Such dreams may share the definition Hartley Coleridge gave of experience: "The light of a lantern set in the stern of a boat, illumining the path we leave behind us."

There are the dreams of aerial movement, when we float, barely with the exertion of volition, light as thistledown before the wind; dreams in which our happy bodies forget all care; when we are propelled and sustained as by that breeze "that bears the blue butterfly more rapidly than its wings." And there are those dreams of reunion, when the Shining Ones of Beulah are in our sight; when, with a joy that has but its semblance here, we spend long hours in some silent communion; when we feel that all our thoughts, and hopes, and longings are at length made known, at last are understood and cherished; when craft, and interference, and cruelty, and corruption are for ever entombed in the sea; and time ceases because everything is believed, and forgiven, with shining eyes that tell it as we dream.

Life, we may see, metes out the same measure in different form. Joy, for instance, may be divided and handed round among many, as solidly as any plum-cake. Happy folk these, and the character of their countenance attests it. But such who meet joy otherwise, who find it, let us say, in dreams, ask these if they have wherewith to make complaint or lamentation! Many are there who have knowledge, yet no experience of this inner life. These, like Heathcliffe in "Wuthering Heights," are conscious

of some spiritual alienation; while they notice the teasing of the fir-bough on the pane, they hear no moorland voice beyond it; and these would give the world to feel that little icy fist grip theirs in the falling snow.

Then there are the dreams of dream-scenery. Where else are the hills so full and rounded, the grass so deep and green? Where else shall you find trees so lofty, such plenitude of leaves?—

> "The nectarine and curious peach
> Themselves into my hand do reach:
> Stumbling on melons as I pass
> Ensnared in flowers, I fall on grass."

The sense of abundance in these lines brings, in some measure, dream-scenery before us. And having had one such dream, remembered vividly on waking, or unfolding with a growing rapture of conviction through the day—having had one such dream, you may confront the petty ills of life unheeding. You may have to order the dinner, or to fasten your boots; you may have to consult "Bradshaw," or even dwell with untoward friends; but there all the while, as through some great open window, is the dream-scenery, yours for the looking.

It is well if we discover early how impossible it is to tell our dreams. We have dreamed perhaps some marvellous narrative, with incidentally colossal effects. The lights still cross and recross the arena of our mind; we still find the grandeur, the amazing subtlety, the precision of the whole. But how are

we to put it into words? It is to try to build a three-decker with some matches and a piece of string.

A child once dreamed that it was wandering in a great country. The sun was setting, and every blade of grass was yellow in the flooding light. Yet the child was unhappy because every one it had known was dead; and in its dream it knew it was the only creature living. At last, lying down at full length upon a grave, it cried so long and so utterly that it awoke. "What an abnormal child!" you may exclaim. "How unnatural!" Yet that child climbed trees, played cricket, and hated lessons as heartily as any other through the day. We are mistaken if we believe all children have not this inner life. Some have, but they rarely tell it.

The vividness of dream-scenery is matched, perhaps, by the poignancy of dream-tears, those dreams in which we hold no mastery over our sorrow; when we stand before an overwhelming sense of woe; when we seem to face something for the first time that we have nevertheless known since beyond the beginning of eternity. And it is in these dreams that we exert every fibre of our being to attain some object, only to realise we have, perhaps, brushed an acorn from the path.

In the Norse legend the god Thor must exert his utmost strength to drain a goblet; and he finds he has lowered the wine a hair's-breadth in the bowl. Yet this goblet, if you remember, was a magic goblet, and communicated with the depths of the sea. So

we, in our dreams, often treat of slender issues: yet the foundations of the world seem involved.

Then there are the dreams of mystery. In these our minds are oppressed with the weight of some responsibility it lies with us alone to sustain. We circumvent and negotiate indefinitely the power of some malignant and advancing force. These are the dreams in which the world is in collusion against us, when people whisper behind doors out of earshot, or blank their faces suddenly when we appear. They hurry by with a manner of grave import, the nature of which we only nervously suspect. And we waken, teased with apprehension, vaguely combating a nameless fear.

There are the dreams of excelling, dreams of our own paramount success. When our words flow with the rivers, one with them in volume and resource; from the dark, rock-set pools of indignation to the far-reaching current of argument that brooks no let or hindrance in its course.

How great are we in these dreams, how the world stands and gazes at us! So strong has been the truth —or the illusion—that it is strange to find it fade into the light of common day. There is almost a physical effort needed of readjustment, a putting ourselves once again into that landscape in which we are walking all the time. It is as if Perseus were asked to lay his winged sandals by, and take to the highroad.

Let us think for a moment of that poetry we read

or write in our dreams: the music we hear, the fields we see, the laughter, the delight. Who shall take this from us—this light that never was on sea or land? Yet, "joy and woe are woven fine, a clothing for the soul divine," and nowhere so closely as in our dreams are these two blended.

There are moments when it seems that we understand everything, when we feel we know even as we are known.

But it is in our dreams—

> "Shall any gazer see with mortal eyes,
> Or any searcher know by mortal mind?
> Veil after veil may lift, but there shall be
> Veil after veil behind."

VI. THE GREATEST POETRY

(A meditation on the nature of the songs that survive Empires.)

WHAT do we ask of the poet? Deepest emotion and far-reaching thought; light and delight from within; stars and flowers abounding; the world of the heart's desire; the world also of human experience; glimpses through magic casements of other-worldly wonders as remote and inaccessible as the moon; the wit of our own age and the wisdom of all the ages; love and death, the pathos and the pang; a patterned ecstasy of musical speech; the purging sense of world-sorrow suggested in Virgil's *Sunt lacrimae rerum*; and, above and before all else, a sweet and comely usefulness for the needs of mankind. All this, and more to boot, we have from the poem that is part of the eternal verity, and we hear in it the sovereign language of the spirit of man, the quintessence of all human experience, even as out of shattered roses is distilled the attar of roses.

In proportion as it satisfies our spiritual needs—*i.e.* according to the degree of its usefulness—we rate

poetry as great, greater, greatest of all. There is an order of precedence among poets, long established and now sanctioned by the applicable adage *Securus judicat orbis terrarum*; and it is one of the functions of the true critic to maintain this order, explaining the why and how thereof, in order that men may learn to know the best and value it aright, knowing it to be the vials of man's most profound emotion and most searching experience. The greatest poets do not always write the greatest poetry; even the architectural masterpieces of Homer, Virgil, and Dante contain long passages, linking together episodes of poetic intensity, which are rather prosody than poetry —so that you feel, if you dare not say so, that the poet has merely been able to "carry on" poetically. But, because more of the content of their poems reaches to humanity's "giant heart of memories and tears" than is the case with others (Hesiod, Lucan, and Ariosto, shall we say?) we give them the loftiest places in the hierarchy of singers and makers. And yet we must remember that the greatest poetry of all is not their peculiar prerogative—that it is often made by inconsiderable versifiers, writers whose names are forgotten or were never even known. Gold is found wherever you can find it, said a famous professor of metallurgy, and the same must be said of the golden poetry which rings true and is beautiful and is surely mankind's most excelling treasure. And always, if you look into the matter carefully, you find that the gold of this sublimation of experience and emotion

is so fashioned as to be for the use of man—to hearten and console, to awake a cleansing wonderment, to arouse pity, to consecrate loving, to lift us out of the oubliette of self towards that City of the Soul which gleams beyond the blue haze of all ephemeral happiness.

Usefulness, then, is the characteristic of the greatest poetry, that which is vital to us all. Let me try to make this clear by similitudes, one impersonal and the other personal. The chief beauty of the old furniture, for which collectors now pay such huge prices, is its perfect suitability to the purpose which brought it into being. A Jacobean oak table was intended to be used as a table to support laden dishes and brimming tankards, and the frieze-clad elbows of lusty trencher-men—not to straddle about on doddering legs in a crowded drawing-room and act as a pedestal for a silly pot as useless as itself. The Jacobean table is true and so beautiful; the other is an ugly waste of wood.

Or, let us look on an aged toiling woman who has perhaps lost her last serviceable little bit of prettiness, and consider what the sight of her might mean to a poet reading the secrets of the commonplace. He might compare her with the white marmoreal image of a Greek goddess or some Elizabethan word-picture, warm and enraptured, of a Rosaline "soft in touch and sweet in view." He might then make a poem of contrasts—indeed, it has often been done—railing at destiny which had slain the beauty that might have

been, that perhaps had been long ago. Or, again, he might see her as a still-living symbol of the service and self-sacrifice of women, finding in her wrinkles the signs of a thousand wounds received in a sacred warfare, and admiring the poor chapped hands as ministering angels in disguise. He might see in her coming decrepitude nothing that was common or mean, but only the survival of a beautiful, all-engrossing passion, as Cowper did in a like instance:

> Such feebleness of limbs thou prov'st,
> That now at every step you mov'st
> Upheld by two; yet still thou lov'st.

And so, understanding in her an undying eagerness for the endless martyrdom of ministering to the petty urgent everyday needs of husband and children, he might hail her as sister to Theresa of the Flaming Heart:

> O thou undaunted daughter of desires!
> By all thy dower of lights and fires;
> By all the eagle in thee, all the dove;
> By all thy lives and deaths of love.

In the first way he might achieve a poem; only in the second, by pointing the path through truth to a beauty transcending all the lust of the eye, could he write the greatest poetry of all.

It is in the elemental and eternal necessities of human life—in the marrow of what is called the commonplace—that the greatest poetry arises in the presence of the common needs of our common

humanity. This is the poetry that stands between Love and Death, holding a hand of each. It cries out of the dust, it speaks from old walls of the habitations of men, it lives on the lips of little children and unlettered toilers. It rebukes the might of empires with a simple song, and out of its sincerity lifts away the burden of Nineveh from bowed shoulders. It is the work of famous poets in their historic singing-robes, and of unnamed souls whose beads were the dropping of tears unrecked of. We feel it is there when Homer tells us how the fair and joyous Nausicaa, playing on the ringing sea-beach (in the intervals between looking after the family washing) did not like to talk of her marriage to her dear father. It is the source of Virgil's tenderness, an autumnal consecration, which caused him to be accepted as a Christian by anticipation throughout the Middle Ages. It is frequent in the old ballads and folk-songs—the strange spiritual heirlooms which all of a sudden bring tears into our eyes and caused the heart of Sidney to leap within him. Shakespeare is our greatest master of it; next to him Wordsworth. The masters of fantasy—from the nameless author of "Thomas the Rhymer" to Mr. W. B. Yeats—have it not, though they appeal to a strange and abiding nostalgia for, it may be, the mysterious green jungle from which man emerged upright. Mr. Kipling is a master to-day: his "Barrack-room Ballads" are worth all the cleverest *bergerie* of the Georgians. And it cries from the dust in an epitaph inscribed on

a husband's grave in a dove-haunted Kentish churchyard:

> I coo and pine and ne'er shall be at rest
> Till I come to thee, dearest, sweetest, and best.

and in that wonderful lyric on the wall of Burford Church, in Oxfordshire, which concludes:

> Love made me Poet
> And this I writt,
> My harte did do yt
> And not my wit.

But there, burning in the cold stone, is the best prescription for the greatest poetry, most serviceable to the soul of man, which teaches us that Love is the only thing that matters and that Death then matters not at all.

VII. CONCERNING TOYS

You used to take toys, not books, to bed with you. Meditate with me, then, for half-an-hour on the Way of Childhood.

ALL "the places where the street goes upstairs" (to quote a child's ingenious definition of the modern multiple-shop) run toy bazaars every Christmas-tide, and children of all ages like visiting them. Like the lady dramatists, they dote on a crowded stage; a scene which suggests several schools let out and stirred up together is very much to their mind. Moreover, they take pleasure in the sight of a multiplicity of objects, as R. L. S. remembered when he made a child exclaim:

> The world is so full of a number of things,
> I think we should all be as happy as kings.

This reminds me of a five-year-old girl's explanation of kingship to a younger brother: "Everybody knows what a king is. A king has a crown and a poker fing and a round fing, and a king sits on a big chair all day and looks ever so wise, and a king has lots and lots and lots of fings." Quantity certainly

counts for more than quality with children; they are enamoured of number for number's sake. That is the reason why, if you give them the choice, they will always prefer six pennies to a sixpence, even when they are old enough to know that they are not making a better bargain. I have often tried the experiment and have kept a record of the results (there's scientific thoroughness for you, Sir or Madam !), and so far the rule has held good about eight times out of nine. Apart from the excitement of seeing gigantic Teddy-bears, or practical camels, or animals entering an ark by an escalator, or whatever else the special attraction may be, it is the chance of gratifying their gregariousness directly and indirectly (psychologically, no doubt, the zest in a number of things is a secondary emotion), which has made the toy bazaar a popular institution. The kitten escapes from the vanity bag when, for example, an honorary niece says to her honorary uncle in a patronising voice: "What a pack of little weeny kids! They must have come in prams. They look like all my paper-babies come to life. I don't know what their mothers can be thinking of to bring them into a squeezy crowd —they'll be squeezed back into paper-babies again. P'r'aps Aunts bringed them. Look at that naughty little boy in gaiters—he's tookened a toy!" This young lady was not as old as the majority of the children present, but she always sets up to be a rather elderly person, fairly on into her 'teens, when there are toddlers about. A very narrow but very strong

character—she keeps a large kindergarten of babies cut out of magazines and picture-papers and thereby indulges her taste for domineering. She never really noticed any of the toys; her conversation was a stream of comments on the bad behaviour of the other children and the bad management of the "Aunts" who had brought them to the toy bazaar in perambulators. She regards Aunts as belonging to an inferior branch of the maternal profession, just as solicitors are lower than barristers in the legal hierarchy.

But what does the modern child really think of the modern toy?—that is the question which worries and wearies me at the present moment. The shopkeepers answer it categorically in favour of the toy; they declare that the small child wants an ugly toy and the big child wants a scientific toy. If sales are a satisfactory criterion, then we must accept the verdict of these worthy tradesmen and face the discomfortable fact that childhood is one of the mutable matters, not a past state of the soul which presents itself *sub specie æternitatis* at all times and in all places. But are we bound to believe in the modernity of the modern child because the hideous and complicated toys are freely bought and sold? After all, the children do not buy these things for themselves; they are acquired under the compulsion of some grown-up purse-bearer even when freedom of choice is apparently permitted. In toy bazaars, as elsewhere, a child thinks it advisable to appease the huge half-

deities who can say " Don't " whenever an Olympian inconsistency, arising out of the theory that might is right, prompts the hateful prohibition. " If I pretend to like this beastly toy," thinks the child, feeling the pull of authority's ball-and-chain, " perhaps they will let me play with the taps in the bath-room or build a log cabin like Leather Stocking's with their silly old books." So that objects described as " quaint " or " useful " or " interesting," or even " instructive " in the Olympian lingo are accepted on the *do ut des* principle. It is dreadful to think that a well-meaning parent (I'm in the business myself) is looked upon as a species of Mumbo-Jumbo, but the idealism which ignores the solid, stolid fact should be avoided at all costs. Children are in a sense noble savages; they would be nobler in their Neolithic civilisation if grown-up people did not expect them to behave as if they were angelical exiles from a heaven but half-forgotten. I remember the painful perplexities of my own childhood clearly enough to know that free shopping is out of the question, if it is ever so remotely supervised by a grown-up escort. Even if the money is your very own, bouncing merrily in your own pocket or reposing peacefully in your own purse, you cannot spend it as you would like when the cold incredulous eyes of the half-deities are contemplating your doings with a bitterly-resented benevolence. If children were allowed to do their own shopping, I am afraid the toy-shop people would be unpleasantly surprised. They would, I am sure, sell very few of

their "Hitchy Koos" and "Kwacky Jacks" and other hideous, flat, flabby dolls; very few of their irritating games in painted boxes; very few of their elaborate models of scientific apparatus. What alarums and excursions there would be among the directors of the toy bazaars, what endless correspondence between merchants and manufacturers, what a rush to the libraries for books dealing with the psychology of childhood! And what a different appearance the toy counters would have next Christmas season! probably a complete apparatus for making and baking mud-pies would be the toy of the season, and the shop assistants would say: "Sir (or madam) you will find our special brand of mud is the muddiest on the market. It sticks beautifully; it won't wash off for a whole week."

The present mania for costly and complicated toys is condemned by all authorities on the Way of Childhood, that mystical path which we shall never tread again, unless, perhaps, we live to be very old and sick-tired of other people's wisdom. I have just been re-reading two very charming books, which should help to purge the toy-shops of monstrosities and scientific abominations, if parents would only read them faithfully. The first of these books is a very clever, yet sincere and unsentimental, reconstruction of the writer's life as a child in a country parsonage. It is in a subtle sense a living picture of the mind of a Neolithic woman seen through the blue mists of time. "The randomness of Childhood," says Professor

Gilbert Murray, who has never forgotten his own boyhood, " is well represented here ; also its sense of a mysterious life in lifeless things, its terrors and heartlessness ; and the eternal mockery of the poor ' grown-ups ' in the background, vexing their hearts with love and care for the children, and succeeding only in becoming a well-recognised nuisance, useful as a protection against still greater calamities, though always checking and marring the current of true life." [1] Fear had many ambuscades in this little girl's existence ; no doubt the nameless and formless terrors, each definitely lurking in a definite lair, were phantoms of those real workers of evil in the Neolithic darkness which are named in Mr. Kipling's hymn to Tyr, who bought a knife for his tribe at the cost of an eye :

Shepherd of the Twilight is dismayed at the Blade,
Feet-in-the-Night have run !
Dog-without-a-Master goes away (Hai, Tyr, aie !),
Devil-in-the-Dusk has run !

Her wayward feet were encumbered with a network of taboos and necessary observances—the stuff of which religion (*religio* = binding back, many times over when the ecclesiastical clove-hitches are devised) is chiefly wrought, though the glittering threads of a beautiful Personality may be everywhere caught up and in, later on. Why add to the terrors of a mere baby's life by purchasing the soft nightmare-toys

[1] " A Childhood. By Joan Arden. With a Preface by Professor Gilbert Murray. Cambridge : Bowes & Bowes.

which are expressly designed (out on such irony!) to be taken to bed? If children could only tell their parents all about the dreadful joy of possessing such objects, all these monstrosities would be thrown away in the dust-bin. It is clear that the child in Miss Arden's little book looked upon grown-up people as half-deities, whose precise relationship to the race of children was but dimly understood. Some were benevolent, others malignant; but one and all were at times tyrannical, unjust, and unreasonable in their words and actions. The truth is that the child looks upon its elders, towering above them and wearing put-on expressions, with something of the fearful and far-off interest with which the spectators of Greek tragedies watched the tall, masked, striding figures as they enacted the downfall of some legendary family in which the blood of the Titans, barbarous and gigantic, produced abnormal passions and sins unspeakable. We are an incredible race in the eyes of children; they may admire or even love us, but they cannot treat us as friends and familiars. On the subject of toys Miss Arden is not very explicit; living in the country as she did, she found toys growing at every turn, here a flower and there a kitten, and had no great need of the kind sold in shops. But she remembers (as I and you remember) that those toys only were indispensable which could be used as symbols of living creatures. She and her sister and brother had whole families of small china beasts, which were used as follows:

"These animals never went out of doors, except occasionally to church in our pockets to enliven an afternoon service; but Bertrand and I played an endless game with them on the nursery table. We built houses for each family out of a few bricks and bits of wood; there were regiments of British soldiers in barracks in the town to guard them, and a railway ran over the bridge to another land—the windowsill. Once there was an earthquake when this bridge was crowded with people, and many animals had to lie on their backs in a hospital while their legs were cemented on. All the space round the table was the sea; boats would come alongside, take up some adventurous animals and go exploring. After many dangers, and with the animals toppling about the bottom of the boat owing to the swinging motion, they would be stranded on a distant bit of land—the chest of drawers against the wall. The streets were given names, and we drew plans of the towns. All this had to be swept into boxes when the nursery was cleaned, but it grew up again."

This clearing-up is one of the unpardonable crimes of the Titanic grown-ups—who do not, it is well known, ever think of tidying-up their own work-boxes and study-tables, at any rate not every day before going to bed. Sometimes, by a refinement of cruelty, the clearing-up process has to be carried out by the children themselves. I myself had to undertake that disgusting task, and the creaking couplet

which was cantillated by my mother's deputy every blessed evening at six o'clock punctually:

> Putting away, putting away,
> Is part of the play, ev-er-y day!

still twingles in my mind at times, breeding that horrid kind of irritation which may be described as pins-and-needles in the soul! Ugh! How the grown-ups worried me, and how glad I was to get away to school! There, at any rate, one was bossed and bullied by one's own fellow-creatures, who never said, whatever they did, that it was all done for your good. Miss Arden, like all of us, was glad to escape out of the terror-haunted straitened paths of a childhood which most people would think happy and adventurous to a degree. She turned her back on it all without repining. "A sister who was with me looked back. I felt somehow annoyed, because I thought I was expected to look back too, and though I looked, what did it matter?"

Mrs. Nesbit, whose stories for children are read and liked by children (so that no grown-up criticism can touch her) works out the indictment of the modern toy with convincing completeness. Listen to what she says about the contents of the modern toy-shop:

"You find a vast mass and litter and jumble of incredible futilities—things made to sell, things made by people who have forgotten what it is like to be a child. Mechanical toys of all sorts, stupid toys, toys

that will only do one thing, and that thing vulgar and foolish. And, worst outrage of all, ugly toys, monstrosities, deformities, lead devils, grinning hump-backed clowns, 'comic' dogs and cats, hideous misshapen pigs, incredible negroes, intolerable golliwogs. All such things the natural child, with a child's decent detestation of deformity, will thrust from it with screams of fear and hatred, till the materialistic mother or nurse explains that the horror is not really, as the child knows it to be, horrible and unnatural, but 'funny.' Thus do we outrage the child's inborn sense of beauty, which is also the sense of health and fitness, and teach it that deformity is not shocking, not pitiable even, but just 'funny.' All these ugly toys are impossible as aids to clean imagination."[1]

She also takes up her parable against the "character doll," which can only be one thing, whereas the old-fashioned doll with her honest, expressionless face and placid, unwinking eyes (almost always they were blue) could be a princess or a dairymaid, Boadicea or Joan of Arc, a fairy grandmother, or Cinderella, or the cruel step-mother. She will have nothing to say to clock-work animals; which are too mechanical to be loved, too knobbly to be comfortable bedfellows, and are only to be tolerated—by boys—because their whizzing works can be extracted after a time (when the grown-ups who are always jawing about destruc-

[1] "Wings and the Child." By E. Nisbet. Hodder & Stoughton.

tiveness have forgotten their existence) and used in the construction of real machines. Mrs. Nesbit has smashed the modern toy into smithereens; she has spillikinised the hateful thing. It is, as she proves out of a vast experience of the ways of children, a check on imaginativeness. Moreover, she has invented new kinds of play which children really like; the building of her magic cities, in which *everything* can be turned to account, is more intriguing than the war-games of Mr. H. G. Wells. She also advocates leaving a corner of the nursery untouched and untidied. Let the grown-ups obey her behest, for in such corners poets and men of action take root and grow like hardy perennials.

VIII. MAN'S FIRST FRIENDS

ALL the legends insist that the dog was man's first friend. The lovers of cats, it is true, have argued that he is a mere upstart and plebeian in comparison with their favourite "refraining her illimitable scorn with majestical taciturnity" in the presence of dogs and human beings alike. It *is* rather a puzzling problem—this haunting of our houses by a member of the fierce and intractable order of the *Felidae*, a race without the gift of gregariousness in any shape or form. One theory is that cats came to us from Egypt, where they were treated as household goddesses in far-off ages, and that their patrician and patronising manner—a silent rebuke to the brisk stupidity of two-legged mortals—is the outcome of the consciousness that they are deities in exile. As a cat-worshipper myself, I have an uneasy feeling that cats are *in*, but not *of*, modern civilization; that, so far from the householder owning them, they merely condescend for a while to own his house. It seems to me that Benedicta, my blue Persian, does not really regard me as a reasoning animal, like herself, but looks on me as a kind of animated tree, among whose

accommodating branches a pleasant resting-place may sometimes be found. And why does this deposed goddess, who so hates to wet her soft silent feet, lose all her self-possession and half her dignity when she smells fish? That is a puzzle which no scientist has solved as yet.

Cats, as I think, came to live with us when we gave up the romantic life of hunters and trappers and took to grain-growing and living in houses with mouse-attracting granaries. That, I have been told, was the theory of the great Charles Darwin. But, peering back through the mists of pre-history, we can see beyond a shadow of doubt that the dog was first the follower, and then the helpful companion, of man in his hunting expeditions. The wild dog—as to whose heredity nothing is definitely known—must have originally pursued the pursuing hunter in the hopes of getting a share of his kill; he was to man in the beginning what the jackal is to the lion, an uninvited but tolerated guest. And man, for his part, soon discovered the dog's keen sense of smell and the possibility of using him to track down game in an age when every hunter had to be his own gamekeeper. So he got a permanent job, as a sort of super-nose on four legs, and not only received his share of the slain quarry, but was also given a place inside the man's cave or tent (in the Indian tepee, by an unalterable tradition, the dog's quarters are just inside the door-flap) and a daily meal when the world was frozen up in winter time. Valued at first for the *odora canum*

vis—the keen scenting gift that makes him such a useful servant—he presently found a place in the heart of his master; because his presence mitigated the lonesomeness of the vast primaeval wilderness, and also, no doubt, because he sometimes saved the man's life by yapping at a ferocious wild beast's heels and diverting its attack. Moreover, he was the protector of the man's woman and the pet of her children, who also discovered that "puppies are a great comfort," to quote the quaint saying of my own little daughter. And so Mr. Rudyard Kipling is yet again a faithful revealer of forgotten things when he writes in one of his legendary tales: "and the *Woman* said: 'His name is not Wild Dog any more, but the First Friend, because he will be our friend for always and always and always.'" And, when men became herdsmen and shepherds, instead of being hunters and trappers, dependent for a living on the haphazard spoils of the chase, the dog further endeared himself by helping his master to guide and guard his flocks and herds.

It is not surprising, then, that men—excepting the backward races, "half devil and half child," who never reached the stage of taming animals and treating them as friends—became a race of dog-lovers. The Aryan peoples even admitted dogs to their after-death paradises, their happy hunting-grounds beyond the brink of evening; they believed that the dog was the companion and guardian of man's disembodied spirit on the long journey into the hereafter, which to

the newly-arrived was as trackless and mysterious as it seemed to T. B. Aldrich's shade when asked what and whence he was :—

> " I do not know," the shade replied,
> " I only died last night."

And so we find very ancient evidence for believing that the fascination of the dog's loving loyalty was as keenly felt thousands of years ago as it is to-day when the French poet, Francis Jammes, could write thus in an ecstasy of forgetfulness :—

> Servant that loved me with a love intense,
> As saints love God, my great exemplar be !
> The mystery of your deep intelligence
> Dwells in a guiltless, great eternity.

As early as 1400 B.C. the *Vendidad*, the sacred book of Persia, laid down a code of laws regulating the punishment of those who ill-treated this companion and friend of man in time and in eternity—such an offence being regarded as even worse than killing a man. And in the *Mahabharata* (600 B.C.) we find the hero refusing Indra's offer to take him direct to Heaven on condition that he left his dog behind.

Modern literature is full of heartfelt tributes to this first friend of mankind, and a charming choice of them is presented in " The First Friend " (Allen & Unwin) by Miss Lucy Menzies, which is described as an anthology of the friendship of Man and Dog. It is a charming bed-side book for dog-lovers. Again and again we find the moderns attributing a spark of

the divine to the dog and hoping that the Indian's wish, as set forth in Pope's *Essay on Man* :—

> He asks no angel's wing, no seraph's fire,
> But thinks, admitted to that equal sky,
> His faithful dog will bear him company—

will be fulfilled, and that man will not be bereft of his most faithful friend when translated beyond these sublunary bounds. George Eliot tells a young girl friend that " a dog is a better friend than a Christian," and Burns, who probably got his idea that man is the dog's god from Bacon's *Essay on Atheisme*, says the very same thing. Southey when mourning the death of a favourite spaniel, thus concludes his meditations :—

> There is another world
> For all that live and move—a better one !

Swinburne's tribute to his dog is perhaps the most famous of these poetic promises of immortality :—

> If aught of blameless life on earth may claim
> Life higher than death, though death's dark wave rise high
> Such life as this among us never came
> To die.

It is admitted, however, that the dog has his faults, and it is an interesting speculation as to how far these are due to his age-long association with man. Addison, for example, says that the dog, though he has been man's constant companion for many thousands of years has only acquired one of his master's vices,

i.e. the disposition to take the top-dog's side, so to speak.

"Tie a saucepan to a dog's tail," writes that perfect type of the man of the world in literature, "and another dog will fall on him. Put a man in prison for debt, and another will lodge a detainer against him." As a matter of fact, all animals with the habit of gregariousness have the ugly habit of attacking the wounded or diseased of their own species; it is rooted in the ancient necessity of keeping the herd or pack free from the weaklings that would weaken its resistance-power against its ubiquitous enemies. The dog, a gregarious animal by origin, did not need to learn this principle of self-preservation from man. Yet it has often been asserted that the snobbish insolence of tyrannical persons, lackeys and jacks-in-office, is reflected in the behaviour of dogs. When Lear, wretched and forsaken, fancies that his own dogs have deserted him and gone over to the side of those who have dishonoured ancient majesty in his person :—

> The little dogs and all:
> Tray, Blanch and Sweetheart; see, they bark at me!

the last pang is added to his bitter anguish.

It may be that a dog, so sedulously observant of his master's passing moods, takes on a colour of his insolence or obsequiousness, yet it must be admitted that he is singularly free from the greater faults of human nature. He never turns traitor to his master,

his deity; and he can rise to self-sacrifice, as a hundred tales certify us. And, as I myself have good reason to know, there is a golden vein of sportsmanship in dog nature. I have owned, and been owned by, many dogs in my time; and, as regards all the sporting types, I have been convinced that they enjoy sport for sport's sake, being absolutely free from the desire for applause (though liking a word of well-earned commendation) or for tangible rewards which so often infect human beings with the "win, tie or wrangle spirit" in the playing of games. The dearest and nearest of all these sporting companions was a little brown-and-white spaniel who was first-rate at the job of retrieving land game, and when she went with me to the far west, learnt to bring wild-fowl out of reed-fringed swamps and alkaline lakes (the water thereof "bitter as a dying man's sweat," to use an old trapper's amazing simile!) and even to "set" at the ruffed grouse known as prairie chicken on the Great Plains. She was a very feminine creature outside her vocation; almost to be defined in R. L. Stevenson's phrase: "That mass of curtseying affectations, the female dog." Her hauteur with a stranger mongrel was one of the most comical sights in the world—though it probably became most undignified familiarity when the eye of her deity no longer restrained her. She would always insist on carrying her puppies to my bedroom—a rare eccentricity in bitches, though common enough with cats. At the great age of twelve for one of her breed she was

badly kicked by a wild western pony, and nothing could be done for her. But even when she was at the last gasp, she would pull herself up by the wall and feebly wag her tail and whine faintly if I took a gun out of the rack. Indeed she lived up to the Beth-Gelert standard of being " a lamb at home and a lion in the chase," and the look in her amber eyes of loving confidence when I was about to shoot her—it had to be done, and the deed could not be trusted to a hireling—remains with me as a most piteous thing.

In recent years many attempts have been made to plumb the psychology of dogs instead of merely imputing to them the virtues and reasoning powers of man—a habit of those whom Theodore Roosevelt called " Nature fakers," which has been extended even to wild animals. Now I come to think of it more deeply, certain lines of my own on the spirituality of animals :—

> With men are laid the voiceless slaves of man,
> Runes of a wasted purpose writ in clay :
> Poor dwindled souls that lost the upward way
> In memory's morning when the world began.

are open to the same objection since they suggest that animals are merely beings in an early-arrested state of development, not creatures that may have followed a path of evolution to its particular end.

Dogs are still capable, I should say, of a further advance along their special by-way of mental progress. In Mr. E. H. Richardson's " British War Dogs " we are shown what intelligence and initiative even dogs

were capable of in the discharge of war-like duties. Their highly sensitive noses enabled them to detect gas long before men guessed it was about. Mr. Richardson tells us that an Australian officer said that one of the sights that most impressed him at the front was a little Welsh terrier on its way with a message. "The little creature," he said, "was running along, hopping, jumping, and plunging (the ground was absolutely water-logged), and with the most obvious concentration of purpose." He could not imagine what it was doing until he could see the message-carrier on its neck. As the dog sped past he noticed the earnest expression on its face. These little messenger dogs were not in the least afraid of the worst barrage shell-fire. In his immortal diary Captain Scott, speaking of the "Huskies" or sledging dogs, which are not so very far removed from their wolfish ancestry (the dog-train with its strict order of precedence was always a puzzling affair to myself when travelling in Northern Canada), says that hunger and fear are the only realities in dog life. "A dog," he writes later on, "must be either eating, asleep or *interested*. His cagerness to snatch at interest, to chain his attention to something is almost pathetic. ... The dog is almost human in its demand for living interest, yet fatally less than human in its inability to foresee." There is universal truth in this passage; I have long been convinced that dogs have a past, but no future. The evidence of men of action is more valuable in this matter in dog nature, I am

convinced, than all the charming reflections of famous men of letters, such as M. Maurice Maeterlinck and M. Anatole France. Still, there is much subtle truth in the latter's attempt to construct the inner life of Riquet, M. Bergeret's little dog, who combines an extreme egotism with a most obsequious faith in his master's omnipotence. Here is a truly doggish reflection: "To eat is good. To have eaten is better. For the enemy who lieth in wait to take your food is quick and crafty." My grave, old, hideous, soft-hearted bull-dog loves to be bullied by our two babies (aged six and five), and is on terms of friendly neutrality with Benedicta of the pat with a sting in it. But the aboriginal dog—wary, hasty, morose—awakes in him when he devours his meal, always a sort of passover.... Yes, the definite book on the nature of the dog has yet to be written, and perhaps this go-as-you-please dissertation suggests a few vistas of philosophic investigation, to be watched between waking and sleeping.

IX. CHRISTMAS CAROLS

WHEN the time draws near the birth of Christ, even in London we hear echoes of the merriment of that long-lost "Merrie England," where—*O sancta simplicitas*!—men and women were all as little children during the twelve days' reign of the Christ-Child. These lines from Naogeorgus, turned into English by Barnaby Googe, help us to understand the meaning of the ancient festival:

Three Masses every priest doth sing upon that solemne day,
With offrings unto every one, that so the more may play,
This done, a woodden child in clowtes is on the aultar set,
About the which both boyes and gyrles do daunce and trymly jet
And Carrols sing in prayse of Christ, and for to help them heare,
The organs aunswere every verse with sweete and solemne cheare,
The priests doe rore aloud; and round about the parentes stand
To see the sport, and with their voyce do helpe them and their hands.

In the old days, when the Church was the nation and the nation was the Church, joylessness was the " roten sinne " which the happy saints feared most of all; laughter was as high in the order of spiritual things as all tears save the tears of ecstasy; all kinds of dancing and all the children's games that set themselves to song were forms of praise acceptable to " God i' trinyte "; and all the nation's churches were national playgrounds at certain seasons of the year, but more especially during the high feast of Christ's Nativity. We who so often keep our religion in a mental ticket-pocket, and look upon Christ as a species of superhuman parson, find it difficult indeed to enter into the feelings of our forefathers, for whom the doll-baby on the altar was a still-breathing reality (at any moment the Queen-Mother in her blue robes and starry crown might descend from her lofty window to dandle Him!) and its quaint, inalienable smile a perpetual provocation to childish merriment. They never presumed, as we do, to say what is, and what is not, an offering worthy of " The Ancient of Days an hour or two old "; they fearlessly gave everything and anything so long as the heart went with it joyously. There was once a poor acrobat whose skill and earnings were so small that he could not afford the tiniest candle as a gift to the Christ-Child. He had but one talent; he could stand on his head as long as the spectators pleased. He entered a church on Christmas morning and proceeded to stand on his head before the high altar (where the effigy of the Child lay

smiling in its sleep) until the *Missa est* had been uttered. It was the best he could do, poor man. And having given of his best, he had his reward; for the Queen-Mother, enthroned in her lofty window, put it into the heart of each member of the congregation to throw a coin into his cap as he passed humbly out. What would happen to-day if some poor juggler of the small suburban music-halls were to enter a church on Christmas Day and give his turn before the High Altar?

The child-like simplicities of the Middle Ages are beyond us, and that is why we cannot make new Christmas carols or even sing the old ones as they ought to be sung. Both words and music defy imitation in an age when the old, unquestioning belief in every detail of the Gospel narrative is regarded as superstition, and the characteristic qualities of the folk-singer's artless artistry—his love of simple, direct statement, his dislike of ornament and circumlocution, his hatred of sentimentality, and his courage in using the obvious phrase of words or music when it best suits his purpose—cannot be assumed even by a genius like Maeterlinck. Even if a modern writer has the mediæval mind (as Coventry Patmore had, as Evelyn Underhill has) the difference between *simplesse* and *simplicité*, is necessarily ignored the moment emotion has to be translated into a latter-day language. The late H. R. Bramley, sometime Precentor of Lincoln, defined the carol as "a kind of popular song appropriated to some special season

of the ecclesiastical year," and I have never succeeded in finding a better definition. But is there any living maker of carols who would dare to use twentieth century colloquialisms (the slang of to-day which will be the polite diction of to-morrow) in order that the people may accept it as a popular song? Inevitably he attempts to imitate the vernacular of a far-off century, and since he was born too late to think in that medium no power of mimicry will enable him to produce anything more than a Wardour-street antique.

The mere fact that he looks upon himself as an "artist," and, as such, somehow set apart from the rest of his fellow-creatures, is enough to account for his failure to imitate the inimitable. It means that he is in, but not of, the life about him, and is as much subject to professional conventions as a doctor or a lawyer.

Here are a few excerpts from authentic folk-carols which could never have been written by a modern artist in words.

The first quotation is from "The Bitter Withy" (given in Mr. Cecil Sharp's delightful collection of English folk-carols), which tells how the youthful Christ caused three well-born lads to be drowned because they refused to play ball with Him on the score of his ignoble birth:

> Then up Lincull and down Lincull
> These young lords' mothers ran,
> Saying Mary mild, fetch home your child,
> For ours He has drowned all.

So Mary mild fetched home her child
And laid him across her knee;
With a handful of green withy twigs
She gave him slashes three.

It was with the laudable idea of lifting the Saviour above the contempt of mediæval lords and ladies for a mere mechanical person, the servitor of a carpenter's bench and certainly not the son of an highly-placed mother (in the Middle Ages the mother's status determined whether the child was his own man or his master's chattel), that He and also His disciples are invariably knighted in the older romances. We read of "Sir Christ," of "Sir Peter," and even of "Sir Judas." In England, however, where the noble was never really regarded as of finer clay than the common folk, his brothers-at-arms on many a stricken field, and the prosperous peasant could be described as a "gentleman in ore," this form of the antique snobbery is seldom apparent. But there is a suggestion of it in the last stanza of "The Ten Joys of Mary," another charming carol in Mr. Sharp's little anthology:

The next great joy that Mary had,
It was the joy of ten,
To see her own son Jesus
Bring up ten gentlemen;
Bring up ten gentlemen, good man,
How happy you may be;
O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
And Christ to eternity.

The "Cherry Tree Carol," which is the stock instance of the Mediæval *naïveté* in its mode, is so well known that quotation is unnecessary. The theme is directly founded on an incident in the Coventry Miracles (Piece XV.), which is supposed to occur when Joseph and Mary are on the road to "Bedlem" to be taxed. When Mary asks her "swete husband" to gather her some of the cherries, he replies as a villein of the earlier Middle Ages might have replied when he was still darkly brooding over his master's exercise of the *Jus primae noctis*, that odious prerogative.

Yo'desyr to ffulfylle I schall assay sekyrly :—
Ow ! to plucke yow of these cheries it is a werk wylde !
Ffor the tre is so hy', it wol not be lyghtly
Y' for lete hy' pluk yow cheryes, be gott yow with childe.

In the legend in one of the Apocryphal Gospels (Pseudo-Matthew, xx.) Joseph's refusal is excused by the immediate necessity of replenishing the water-skins. The touch of not unnatural resentment in the miracle play and in the carol was introduced later on, and gives the date of either's origin. Another glimpse of the mediæval world, which looked on the harrying of the Jews as a duty at Christmastide, is given in the first stanza of a well-known "New Year's Carol" :

Awake ! Awake ! ye drowsy souls
And hear what I shall tell ;
Remember Christ, the Lamb of God,
Redeemed our souls from hell.
He's crowned with thorns, spit on with scorn,
The Jews have hid themselves.
So God send you all a joyful New Year.

But it is the note of the antique merriment, reduplicated at a season of the year when Heaven more especially rejoices in the joyousness of mankind, that is most clearly heard in these surprising songs. As in the first stanza of " The Holly and the Ivy " :

> The holly and the ivy,
> When they are both full grown,
> Of all the trees that are in the wood,
> The holly bears the crown.
> The rising of the sun
> And the running of the deer,
> The playing of the organ,
> Sweet singing in the choir.

The old carol-makers did not forget that the scarlet berries in the holly represent the drops of blood on a thorn-crowned brow, that its bitter bark symbolises the bitterness of the one undying death. But, well knowing that Pain is " Love's mystery, close next of kin to joy and heart's delight," they made this sense of symbolism a means of sanctifying all the pleasures of a season of universal goodwill—when, as one legend affirms, even the eternal flames of Hell die down into their ashes for a day and a night, and a cool breeze, full of odours of incense and echoes of the seraphic singing, was a flooding-in of solace through all the subterranean torture-chambers. As the mind of the Middle Ages made Christ a very human child, so it imputed humanity to the Devil himself, who, after all, was in a sense Heaven's servitor, seeing that he kept the fires of Purgatory burning brightly. The

fact that we have disestablished the "puir Devil" and damped down his furnaces is one of the reasons why the mediæval philosophy of things ephemeral and things eternal is beyond us, above us as well as below us. If only the joyousness of the ancient faith could be renewed in us! If it could, then we should see, among other strange happenings, all the successors of the poor acrobat I mentioned crowding into our churches on Christmas morning to make an offering of their divers gifts to the ever-smiling Babe. As in an ancient carol of Béarn, delightfully Englished by Mr. R. L. Gales, Pierrot and his company present their entertainment before the manger-throne:

Waken, little Pierrot;
With the shepherds thou must go;
Put a feather in thy cap;
Sure to-night is some good hap.

Jean Marie, take thy guitar;
Antoine, blow a loud fanfare;
Christophe, take thy violin,
Help to swell the joyful din.

Good dog, with the paper frill,
Gui-gui, go and dance with skill;
Like the ox and the grey ass,
Thou shalt see what comes to pass.

It would be very easy to enlarge this mosaic of quotations. But enough has been said to show how difficult and dangerous is the task of a modern poet who tries to write a Christmas carol. Excepting the author of "The Everlasting Mercy" (who is not

afraid of the colloquialisms of the highways and by-ways of modern life), I can think of nobody who could, even if he would, make a carol in such a fashion that it would have the crowd-compelling appeal of a popular song. And if the words could be written, who could make the right kind of music for them? "A skilled musician," says Mr. Cecil Sharp, to whose authority I bow in such matters, "saturated in the literature of his country's folk-music, might, conceivably, make a folk-song without betraying himself; but it seems impossible that he could imitate a popular carol and escape detection."

X. POETRY AND POLITICS

EVER since a rhyme to "cuccu" was discovered the Muse has had a vote in this country. In point of fact, she has often been a plural voter on a gigantic scale, sometimes exercising as much influence at a national crisis as all the serried forces of orthodoxy or heterodoxy (my doxy or your doxy). The three streams of English political poetry have their silvery sources in that commodious but uncomfortable century, when instead of saying: "What Lancashire thinks to-day England thinks to-morrow," or something of the sort, people would quote the complimentary couplet:

> When Oxford draws its knife,
> England's soon at strife—

which serves to remind us that mediæval Universities, at home or abroad, were invariably storm-centres of national sentiment. Here be as many historical pint-pots filled from the earlier reaches of these peculiar rivers. The Robin Hood ballads were the first refreshing rhymes of Radicalism; as you may see from the *ave atque vale* thereof:

Christ have mercy on his soul,
That died upon the Rood!
For he was a good outlaw
And did poor men much good.

For the Tory, who will have it that the country is going, going, gone to the dogs (here the Chestertonian hammer falls!) a quaint macaronic stave written in 1388 will surely suffice:

Sing I would, but alas!
descendunt prospera grata;
England sometime was
regnorum gemma vocata.

Of manhood the flower
ibi quondam floruit omnis;
Now gone is that honour,
traduntur talia somnis.

Truly, this seems to me pleasant drinking; the Latin words chink against the pewter like chunks of ice. But if the political pessimist wants undiluted English let him cool his angry coppers with Chaucer's lamentation:

Truth is put down, reason is holden fable;
Virtue hath now no dominacioun,
Pitee exyled, no man is merciable.
Though covetyse is blent discretioun
The world hath made a permutacioun
Fro right to wrong, fro trouthe to ficklenesse,
That al is loste, for lacke of steadfastnesse.

For all who, like myself, would sooner learn to think Imperially than take a side in the "great game" of

party politics, a few lines from the famous "Libel" or little Manual of English Statesmanship published in the reign of Henry VI. should be more acceptable than a cup of cocoa or even a glass of rum and milk (a "blessed tipple," according to a Yorkshireman I once met on Morecambe Pier):

> The true process of English policy
> Of utterward to keep this realm in rest
> Of our England that no man may deny
> Men say of sooth this is the best,
> Who saileth north, south, east, and west,
> Cherish merchandise, keep the admiralty,
> That we be masters of the narrow sea.

It was no Jingo who played on that zylophone, but a lover of peace who knew that peace must be earned by works rather than words.

It is not easy to name an English poet of the further or nearer past who has altogether refrained from politics. Shakespeare, indeed, is the mightiest tributary of the third of the streams of political thought made poetical (as far as may be) which I have enumerated; he overflows with that inborn *σωφροσύνη*, which is the essence of true statesmanship. In his history of English patriotism Mr. Wingfield-Stratford reminds us that he puts into the mouth of Ulysses words that actually express Burke's sense of the Commonwealth's undying divinity:

> There is a mystery (with whom relation
> Durst never meddle) in the soul of state;
> Which hath an operation more divine
> Than breath or pen can give expression to.

This is one of the pivotal ideas of Shakespeare's philosophy of life; so much so, indeed, that in nearly all his plays the state itself is really a protagonist as the sea is in "L'homme qui rit" or Egdon Heath in "The Return of the Native." It were a task worthy of any man of letters to trace the historical course of each stream of applied poetry from its mediæval source down to this year of grace (or disgrace, if you will have it so). In the earliest Tudor times, when the political economy of the ancient countryside was being transformed by the making of huge sheep-runs, the plaint of the peasant deprived of his holding "all by a law" (the true Englishman has always distrusted lawyers) is reduced to mournful numbers. Consider, for example, Crowley's version of the poor bedesman's indictment of the *nouveaux riches*, wool-growers to a man, who received the Abbey lands from Henry VIII. for services rendered:

"Alas, Sir," quoth the poor man,
"We are all turned out,
And lie and die in corners
Here, there and about.
Men of great riches
Have bought our dwelling place,
And when we crave of them
They turn away their face."

Some sort of a land-song has always been audible in the English underworld, and the best in that minor key of unpossession and unemployment has always been the work of unlettered men.

It is refreshing to turn from some modern attempts to the political verse of Milton and Marvell. Milton was Cromwell translated into terms of the literature that lives for ever; England was to him only another name for the only Liberty that should be ensued. Well he knows that the despotism of a majority is worse than that of any single-headed tyrant, and his abiding distrust of the mere multitude is thus expressed in one of his sonnets:

> They bawl for freedom in their senseless mood,
> And still revolt when truth would set them free.
> Licence they mean when they cry "Liberty";
> For who loves that must first be wise and good.

He could see no health in Cavaliers, but for all that I must write him down (with Cromwell) as among the greatest of all the Tory Democrats. His virtues were his own, his faults those of an age of crowd-compelling personages, very narrow but very strong. In one respect at least the Puritan mind, as revealed in Milton and Marvell, is more like than unlike the latter-day Imperialist's. The first Puritans were all hero-worshippers; they rejoiced in the strong man as heartily as Carlyle did or Kipling does. The ruling idea that strength of purpose is a divine thing, that the hero is always "a man sent from God" and according to preordainment, was the ultimate inspiration of Marvell's "Horatian Ode," which is to my mind the greatest political poem in our language, or, indeed, in any language. Every line of it

has the mass and momentum of such epigrams as Lucan's tribute to Caesar :

Nil actum credens dum quid superesset agendum.

and the whole has the stark magnificence, the architectural grandeur of an ancient castle ; for example, of Rochester Castle as you first see it from the train when journeying down into Kent. [Everybody knows the wonderful stanzas on the death of Charles I., but how many remember half-a-dozen lines of the rest ? Some years ago, by way of a jest, I sent the Ode (with the familiar stanzas cut out) to a popular periodical that made a point of criticising rejected contributions. It was sent back with the helpful observation : " You have ideas, but your work is too crude as yet for a high-class magazine."] The Englishman's distrust of the Celt in politics is indicated in the epithet " parti-coloured," applied to the " Caledonian " and :

And now the Irish are ashamed
To see themselves in one year tamed :
  So much one man can do
  That does both act and know.
They can affirm his praises best,
And have, though overcome, confest
  How good he is, how just
  And fit for highest trust.

Marvell's political satires are too ferocious for our gentler tastes ; such lines as

Still within her mind the footman runs

would be regarded as an outrageous foul in the political prize-ring of these latter days. But we can all appreciate the bitter humour of his cartoon of the Dutch fishing their country bit by bit out of the muddy shallows. And the force and accuracy and honest zest with which he handles his scourge, standing well over the victim, have never been equalled, much less surpassed. The versifiers of the *Anti-Jacobin*, who created the existing convention of political satire, merely flicked their opponents with a tassel'd vanity-cane. Such elegant trifling as:

> Reason, Philosophy, fiddledum, diddledum,
> Peace and Fraternity, higgledy, piggledy,
> Higgledy piggledy, fiddledum diddledum

or even Canning's careful dissection of the philosophic cosmopolite:

> A friend of every country but his own,

never caused the demi-semi-Rousseau to wriggle uneasily in his seat like a schoolboy awaiting his turn for a caning. Ebenezer Elliot was the last of the political *poets* in any of the three modes, and there are times when his hatred of the poor man's oppressor becomes little more than the sense of a cosmical grievance.

Before introducing the best modern maker of political lampoons in an age when Juvenal on a bookstall is as unthinkable as Gilray on a hoarding, let me present a miniature anthology of the other political poets or versifying politicians:

(1) But this mad Amaleke
Like to Amamelek
He regardeth lordes
No more than pot shordes
He is in such elacion
Of his exaltacion
And the supportacion
Of our soveraine lorde
That God to recorde
He ruleth at will
Without reason or skyll
Howbeit they be prymordyell
Of his wretched originall
And his base progeny
And his gresy genealogy
He came of the sanke roiall
That was cast out of a bouchers stall

John Skelton on Cardinal Wolsey.

(2) In the holy tongue of Chanaan
I plac'd my chiefest pleasure:
Till I prickt my foote
With an Hebrew roote,
Then I bled beyond all measure.
Boldly I preach, hate a crosse, hate a surplice,
Miters, copes, and rochets
Come heare me pray nine times a day,
And fill your heads with crochets.

Specimen stanza from "The Distracted Puritane" by Bishop Corbet.

(3) Their liberty and property's so dear,
They scorn their laws or governors to fear;
So bugbear'd with the name of slavery,
They can't submit to their own liberty.

Restraint from ill is freedom to the wise!
But Englishmen do all restraint despise.
Slaves to the liquor, drudges to the pots;
The mob are statesmen, and their statesmen sots.

Their governors, they count such dang'rous things,
That 'tis their custom to affront their kings:
So jealous of the power their kings possess'd,
They suffer neither power nor kings to rest.
The bad with force they eagerly subdue;
The good with constant clamours they pursue,
And did King Jesus reign, they'd murmur too.
A discontented nation, and by far
Harder to rule in times of peace than war:
Easily set together by the ears,
And full of causeless jealousies and fears:
Apt to revolt, and willing to rebel,
And never are contented when they're well.
No government could ever please them long,
Could tie their hands, or rectify their tongue.
In this, to ancient Israel well compared,
Eternal murmurs are among them heard.

Lines from Daniel Defoe's "Character of Englishmen."

(4) Here lies Fred,
Who was alive and is dead.
Had it been his father,
I had much rather:
Had it been his brother,
Still better than another:
Had it been his sister
No one would have missed her:
Had it been the whole generation,
So much better for the nation;

But since 'tis only Fred,
Who was alive and is dead,
Why there's no more to be said.

Epitaph on Prince Frederick by an anonymous writer.

(5) When lawless mobs insult the court,
That man shall be my toast,
If breaking windows be the sport,
Who bravely breaks the most.

But oh! for him my fancy culls
The choicest flowers she bears,
Who constitutionally pulls
Your house about your ears.

Such civil broils are my delight,
Though some folks can't endure 'em,
Who say the mob are mad outright,
And that a rope must cure 'em.

A rope! I wish we patriots had
Such strings for all who need 'em,—
What! hang a man for going mad?
Then farewell British freedom.

From "The Modern Patriot" by William Cowper.

(6)

The wrinkled, blear-ey'd, good, old granny,
In this same cot, illum'd by many a cranny,
Had finish'd apple dumplings for her pot;

In tempting row the naked dumplings lay,
When lo! the monarch, in his usual way,
Like lightning spoke, "What's this? what's this?
What? what?"

Then taking up a dumpling in his hand,
His eyes with admiration did expand—
And oft did majesty the dumpling grapple:
"'Tis monstrous, monstrous hard, indeed," he cry'd:
"What makes it, pray, so hard?"—The dame reply'd,
Low curt'sying, "Please your majesty, the apple."

"Very astonishing, indeed!—strange thing!"
(Turning the dumpling round, rejoin'd the king),
'Tis most extraordinary then, all this is—
It beats Pinetti's conjuring all to pieces—
Strange I should never of a dumpling dream—
But, goody, tell me where, where, where's the seam?"

"Sir, there's no seam," quoth she; "I never knew
That folks did apple dumplings *sew*"—
"No! cry'd the staring monarch with a grin,
"How, how the devil got the apple in?"

On which the dame the curious scheme reveal'd
By which the apple lay so sly conceal'd,
Which made the Solomon of Britain start;
Who to the Palace with full speed repair'd,
And queen and princesses so beauteous scar'd,
All with the wonders of the dumpling art!

From "King George and the Apple Dumplings" by Peter Pindar (Wolcot).

(7) He went to teach at Tunis—
Where as Consul he was settled—
Amongst other things,
'That the people are kings!'
Whereat the Dey was nettled.

The Moors being rather stupid,
And in temper somewhat mulish,
Understood not a word
Of the Doctrine they heard,
And thought the Consul foolish.

He formed a *Club of Brothers*,
And moved some resolutions—
"Ho! Ho! (says the Dey),
So this is the way
That the French make *Revolutions*."

The Dey then gave his orders
In Arabic and Persian—
"Let no more be said—
But bring me his head!—
These *Clubs* are my aversion."

The Consul quoted Wicquefort,
And Puffendorf and Grotius:
And proved from Vattel
Exceedingly well,
Such a deed would be quite atrocious.

'Twould have moved a Christian's bowels
To hear the doubts he stated;
But the Moors they did
As they were bid,
And strangled him while he prated.

His head with a sharp-edged sabre
They severed from his shoulders,
And stuck it on high,
Where it caught the eye,
To the wonder of all beholders.

From "The Anti-Jacobin"—an admirably vivacious piece which describes the taking off of Jean Bon St. André who presumed to teach the principles of the French Revolution when acting as Consul at Tunis.

(8)

When a man hath no freedom to fight for at home,
Let him combat for that of his neighbours;
Let him think of the glories of Greece and of Rome,
And get knock'd on the head for his labours.

To do good to mankind is the chivalrous plan,
And is always as nobly requited;
Then battle for freedom wherever you can,
And, if not shot or hang'd, you'll get knighted.

Stanzas by Byron.

(9) There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming:
We may not live to see the day,
But earth shall glisten in the ray
Of the good time coming.
Cannon-balls may aid the truth,
But thought's a weapon stronger;
We'll win our battle by its aid;—
Wait a little longer.

There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming:

The pen shall supersede the sword,
And Right, not Might, shall be the lord
In the good time coming.
Worth, not Birth, shall rule mankind,
And be acknowledged stronger;
The proper impulse has been given;—
Wait a little longer.

There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming:
War in all men's eyes shall be
A monster of iniquity
In the good time coming:
Nations shall not quarrel then,
To prove which is the stronger;
Nor slaughter men for glory's sake;—
Wait a little longer.

There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming:
Hateful rivalries of creed
Shall not make their martyrs bleed
In the good time coming.
Religion shall be shorn of pride,
And flourish all the stronger;
And Charity shall trim her lamp;—
Wait a little longer.

There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming:
And a poor man's family
Shall not be his misery
In the good time coming.
Every child shall be a help,
To make his right arm stronger;
The happier he the more he has;—
Wait a little longer.

By Charles Mackay.

(10)

'Twould binifit your sowls,
To see the butthered rowls,
The sugar-tongs and sangwidges and craim galyore,
And the muffins and the crumpets,
And the band of harps and thrumpets,
To celebrate the sworry upon Shannon shore.

Sure the Imperor of Bohay
Would be proud to dthrink the tay
That Misthress Biddy Rooney for O'Brine did pour;
And, since the days of Strongbow,
There never was such Congo—
Mitchil dthrank six quarts of it—by Shannon shore.

But Clarndon and Corry
Connellan beheld this sworry
With rage and imulation in their black hearts' core;
And they hired a gang of ruffins
To interrupt the muffins,
And the fragrance of the Congo on the Shannon shore.

When full of tay and cake,
O'Brine began to spake,
But juice a one could hear him, for a sudden roar
Of a ragamuffin rout
Began to yell and shout,
And frighten the propriety of Shannon shore.

As Smith O'Brine harangued,
They batthered and they banged:
Tim Doolan's doors and windies, down they tore;
They smashed the lovely windies
(Hung with muslin from the Indies),
Purshuing of their shindies upon Shannon shore.

From Thackeray's "Battle of Limerick."

To-day the newspapers are full of political verse, some of it neatly topical but nearly all ephemeral. Political lampoons are like the pebbles children pick up on the sea-shore; gleaming and wonderful jewels, when the sun shines on their wet surfaces, but dry and dull and disappointing next morning. A story I heard long ago in New York (from Mr. District-Attorney Jerome, a protagonist in the never-ending war against Tammany Hall) makes an appropriate parable. The keeper of a drug store was haled before a Commission of Inquiry into the finances of that corrupt municipality to explain why he had been paid for 500 lbs. of sponges, whereas the consignment weighed only a fifth of that amount. The sponge merchant winked at the Chairman and observed in a far-away voice: "Did ye weigh them dry?" Like the sponges he had sold wet, political lampoons must be humid to be humorous; they must have sucked up the brackish rhetoric of the day's oratory. Only Mr. Ian Colvin, among the modern lampoonists, has the *saeva indignatio*, the dour belief in his principles, which enables the author of such work to survive the passing hour. Here, in conclusion, are two of his best satirical pieces. The first hails a dialectical victory over Mr. Harold Cox by the great dramatist who has put Schopenhauer on the cinematograph, so to speak:—

Hail, Shaw, victorious! whose mighty blows
Have made a desperate end of all thy foes,
Thou who, when sorely pressed, made deadly use
Of the logician's weapon of abuse,

And fairly dusted the unhappy Cox
With clinch and epigram and paradox;
Who in swift march o'er each position borne
On thy high horse of rhetoric and scorn
Trampled beneath an unimpeded hoof
Not proof alone, but even the means of proof;
And now upon thy lonely throne dost sit,
Unchallenged, a monopolist of wit,
The skull of Chesterton a footstool made
And Belloc's hide a canopy and shade,
Alone, an intellectual Tamburlane,
A living proof, if proof were not in vain,
That there is no equality in brain.

The second is a vitriolic indictment of the Mob in power:—

The storied past is great with thy decrees
Who slaughtered Socrates;
Who with an instinct sure both Phocion slew
And raised his statue too;
Who jeered at Pontius Pilate's second thought,
When God and thief were brought;
Who mocked and spurned and thrust the God aside,
And for Barabbas cried.

Thus through all time—who smote that head of grace,
Put Cromwell in its place;
Then turned from Cromwell to a sty of sin
And fondled Nellie Gwynne;
Whose altar-steps with the bright blood were wet
Of Marie Antoinette;
Who held her head by its red Austrian hair
Before King Robespierre,

Then saw his visage, broken-jawed and green,
Beneath the guillotine,

Put all the People's Tribunes in the cart
And worshipped Bonaparte!

Henceforth their only aim must be thy food,
Thy sole beatitude,
Their only task to fill thy belly full,
And this their only rule.
Let all else perish that our fathers won
And let time's hour-glass run,
Heedless of danger to our Throne and State
Till thundering at the gate,
Attila from without, or from within
Sulla, to purge our sin,
With sword and fire and hunger and the awe
Of vindicated law!

XI. LUNATICS' TESTAMENTS

THE quaint old folk-song of "The Maid in Bedlam" which begins:—

> One morning very early, one morning in the Spring,
> I heard a maid in Bedlam who mournfully did sing,
> Her tears they trickled down her face, while mournfully sang she,
> "I love my love, I love my love, because my love loves me"

is still sung by country children to remind us that there is a deep wisdom sometimes in the sayings of those who are cut off from the workaday world by mental affliction. It often happens that the dweller in a Bethlehem is a poet, though his or her soul, alas! too often presents the aspect of a white, broken-winged Psyche, no longer able to fly, but crawling helplessly, hopelessly in the garden of fragrant remembrances. Christopher Smart's magnificent "Song to David" is perhaps the only large and complete poem ever written by a lunatic (who may yet have been sitting in the spirit in the seraphic circle of Dante's heavenly choir, while men scoffed at his loss

of serviceable wits !), and, since only a very few stanzas are given in "The Golden Treasury" and other popular anthologies, here is a far more liberal selection :—

O Thou that sit'st upon a throne
With harp of high majestic tone,
To praise the King of Kings ;
And voice of heaven-ascending swell,
Which, while its deeper notes excel,
Clear as a clarion rings :

To bless each valley, grove, and coast,
And charm the cherubs to the post
Of gratitude in throngs ;
To keep the days on Zion's mount,
And send the year to his account
With dances and with songs :

O servant of God's holiest charge,
The minister of praise at large,
Which thou mayst now receive ;
From thy blest mansion hail and hear,
From topmost eminence appear
To thee this wreath I weave.

His muse, bright angel of his verse,
Gives balm for all the thorns that pierce,
For all the pangs that rage ;
Blest light, still gaining on the gloom,
The more than Michal of his bloom,
The Abishag of his age.

He sang of God—the mighty source
Of all things—the stupendous force
On which all strength depends ;

From Whose right arm, beneath Whose eyes,
All period, power, and enterprise
  Commences, reigns, and ends.

. . . . . .

The world—the clustering spheres He made,
The glorious light, the soothing shade,
  Dale, champaign, grove, and hill;
The multitudinous abyss,
Where secrecy remains in bliss,
  And wisdom hides her skill.

Trees, plants, and flowers—of virtuous root;
Gem yielding blossom, yielding fruit,
  Choice gums and precious balm;
Bless ye the nosegay in the vale,
And with the sweetness of the gale
  Enrich the thankful psalm.

Of fowl—e'en every beak and wing
Which cheer the winter, hail the spring,
  That live in peace, or prey;
They that make music, or that mock,
The quail, the brave domestic cock,
  The raven, swan, and jay.

Of fishes—every size and shape
Which Nature frames of light escape,
  Devouring man to shun:
The shells are in the wealthy deep,
The shoals upon the surface leap,
  And love the glancing sun.

. . . . . .

Tell them, I AM, Jehovah said
To Moses; while Earth heard in dread,
  And smitten to the heart,

At once above, beneath, around,
All Nature, without voice or sound,
  Replied: O Lord, THOU ART.

. . . . . .

For Adoration, all the ranks
Of angels yield eternal thanks,
  And David in the midst;
With God's good poor, which, last and least
In man's esteem, Thou to Thy feast,
  O blessed Bridegroom, bid'st.

. . . . . .

Rich almonds colour to the prime
For Adoration; tendrils climb,
  And fruit-trees pledge their gems;
And Iris[1] with her gorgeous vest
Builds for her eggs her cunning nest,
  And bell-flowers bow their stems.

. . . . . .

The laurels with the winter strive;
The crocus burnishes alive
  Upon the snow-clad earth.
For Adoration, myrtles stay
To keep the garden from dismay,
  And bless the sight from dearth.

. . . . . .

For Adoration, all the paths
Of grace are open, all the baths
  Of purity refresh;
And all the rays of glory beam
To deck the man of God's esteem,
  Who triumphs o'er the flesh.

[1] The humming-bird.

For Adoration, in the dome
Of Christ the sparrows find a home;
  And on his olives perch:
The swallow also dwells with thee,
O man of God's humility,
  Within his Saviour's church.

Sweet is the dew that falls betimes,
And drops upon the leafy limes;
  Sweet Hermon's fragrant air:
Sweet is the lily's silver bell,
And sweet the wakeful tapers smell
  That watch for early prayer.

Sweet the young nurse with love intense,
Which smiles o'er sleeping innocence;
  Sweet when the lost arrive;
Sweet the musician's ardour beats,
While his vague mind's in quest of sweets,
  The choicest flowers to hive.

Sweeter in all the strains of love
The language of thy turtle dove
  Pair'd to thy swelling chord;
Sweeter with every grace endued
The glory of thy gratitude
  Respired unto the Lord.

Strong is the horse upon his speed;
Strong in pursuit the rapid glede,
  Which makes at once his game;
Strong the tall ostrich on the ground;
Strong through the turbulent profound
  Shoots xiphias to his aim.

Strong is the lion—like a coal
His eyeball—like a bastion's mole
  His chest against the foes;
Strong the gier-eagle on his sail,
Strong against tide the enormous whale
  Emerges as he goes.

But stronger still, in earth and air,
And in the sea, the man of prayer;
  And far beneath the tide;
And in the seat to faith assign'd,
Where ask is have, where seek is find,
  Where knock is open wide.

. . . . . .

Glorious the sun in mid career;
Glorious the assembled fires appear;
  Glorious the comet's train;
Glorious the trumpet and alarm;
Glorious the Almighty's stretch'd-out arm;
  Glorious the enraptured main;

Glorious the northern lights astream;
Glorious the song, when God's the theme;
  Glorious the thunder's roar;
Glorious hosanna from the den;
Glorious the catholic amen;
  Glorious the martyr's gore:

Glorious—more glorious is the crown
Of him that brought salvation down,
  By meekness call'd thy Son;
Thou that stupendous truth believed,
And now the matchless deed's achieved,
  Determined, dared, and done

There is nothing to match this noble piece of architectural verse in the little-known book of the crazed singers and makers. But I recall the following lyric by a French victim of hallucinations interned at Charenton :—

Cléo, verse ton cœur dans mon cœur,
J'en serai le meilleur vainqueur,
Ton plus tendre amant, je le jure,
Sur mon âme mon amour dure
Autant qu'un éternel printemps.
Célèbrons nos joyeux vingt ans
Au ciel brillant de la jeunesse,
O ma tendre Cléo ! ma charmante maïtresse !

Compare with this pleasing little poem an elegy on the death of her bulfinch by one of the late Dr. Forbes Winslow's female patients :—

Whene'er thou saw'st me shut within
My room, thou cheerily would'st sing
And all thy art employ ;
At thy loved voice, so sweet and clear,
All care would quickly disappear,
My sadness turn to joy ;
And all the troubles of my lot
Be dissipated and forgot

Wise people do, I know, believe
That birds, when they have ceased to breathe,
Will never more revive ;
But—though I cannot tell you why—
I hope, though Goldie chanced to die,
To see him yet alive !
May there not be, if Heaven please,
In Paradise both birds and trees ?

Now and again in a vast army of doggerel lines, which are a lunatic's idea of poetry and often suggest the work of certain *vers-libristes*, one finds a scrap of shrewd wisdom, having the appearance of a proverb. Such, for example, is the following aphorism from a tedious chronicle of his works and days by another prisoner at the Charenton which is a thousand times more tragical than Chillon with its grief-worn stones :

> Il faut toujours avoir soin
> De ne pas danser devant le buffet.

When there was a dance for the staff and the harmless patients at Charenton, there was a rule that enraptured waltzers should not gyrate into the place where refreshments could be procured lest crockery should be broken, and other ill consequences be incurred. The lines, therefore, inculcate restraint in your rhythmic ecstasy *à deux*; the idea, in fact, is the "Nothing too Much" of the Greek proverbial warning, which no modern writers can live up to as the Greeks did. After all, this is a rather sterile field of gleaning. So let me quote in conclusion, as most suitable for reading in bed, these passages from the Lunatic's Will by a very sane person, Mr. Williston Fish, who is a Chicago lawyer.

Item :

"My right to live being but a life estate, is not at my disposal, but, these things excepted, all else in the world I now proceed to devise and bequeath. I give to good fathers and mothers in trust for their children

all good little words of praise and encouragement, all quaint pet names and endearments, and I charge the said parents to use them generously as the needs of the children require. I leave the children for the term of their childhood the flowers, fields, blossoms, and woods, with the right to play among them freely, warning them at the same time against thistles and thorns. I devise to the children the banks, the brooks, and the golden sands beneath the waters thereof, and the white clouds that float high over the giant trees, and I leave to the children long, long days to be merry in, and the night, and the moon and the train of the Milky Way to wonder at.

Item:

I devise to the boys jointly all the useful idle fields, all the pleasant waters where one may swim, all the streams where one may fish, or where, when grim winter comes, one may skate, to have and to hold the same for the period of their boyhood. The meadows, with the clover, blossoms, and butterflies thereof, the woods and their appurtenances, squirrels, birds, echoes, and strange noises, all the distant places which may be visited, together with the adventures there found. I give to the said boys each his own place by the fireside at night, with all the pictures that may be seen in the burning wood, to enjoy without let or hindrance and without any encumbrances or cares.

Item :

To all lovers I devise their imaginary world with whatever they may need, as stars, sky, red roses by the wall, the bloom of the hawthorn, the sweet strains of music, and aught else they may desire. To young men all boisterous and inspiring sports and rivalry, and I give them disdain of weakness and undaunted confidence in their own strength. I give them power to make lasting friendships possessing companions, and to them exclusively I give all merry songs and brave choruses.

Item :

And to those who are no longer children or youths or lovers, I leave memory, and bequeath them the volumes of the poems of Burns, Shakespeare, and other poets, if there be others, to live over their old days again without tithe.

Item :

To the loved ones with snowy crowns I bequeath happiness in old age, and the love and gratitude of their children until they fall asleep."

XII. EPIGRAMS

THERE are thousands of epigrams, both ancient and modern, and nearly all of the latter-day examples such as :—

> I do not like thee, Dr. Fell;
> The reason why I cannot tell.
> But this I know, and know full well:
> I do not like thee, Dr. Fell—

prove, on investigation, to be derived from Greek or Roman models.

Every scribbler has tried to make an epigram, and I am a scribbler—and, looking through a box of old papers the other day, two presentable efforts of my own presented themselves. One was an arrow shot at the inventor of the form of literary gossip known as " birrelling " :—

> To jest at history is Birrell's whim,
> And history shall make a jest of him;

and I am glad to remember, after all these years, that it did not hurt him at all, but merely kindled that wise, whimsical smile of kindly toleration familiar to his innumerable friends. I have been told by a critical friend that the idea of the couplet was to be

found "in some classical author." But a long and careful search has failed to reveal its whereabouts; so that I am inclined to think that he was hypercritical, after all. Another of my efforts was a stingless specimen sent on a post-card to a girl I had seen in tears :—

> Thy tearful glances kindle me;
> Fire's a fatal thing at sea;

which, as I was afterwards told, is an exact translation of an old Italian conceit. That shows you !—it is as hard to invent an original epigram as to discover a joke which is not a variation of one of Noah's fifteen funny things.

The American humorist who produced a little book of spoof epigrams, such as :—

> Jones eats his lettuces undressed.
> You ask his reason? 'Tis confessed
> That's the way Jones likes them best,

thought himself "some Columbus"; but I am assured that the same sort of mouse-trap jest, to catch the dullard who pretends to a sense of humour he does not possess, was known to Scholasticus, that mediæval George Robey. Indeed, you have to go back to the Greek Anthology to find a brand-new witticism in verse—for example, the quaint anecdote of Callisthenes, the athlete, who went in for the long-distance race at the Olympic Games and came in seventh, though there were only five other entries. Because his trainer ran the whole course with him, wearing

his great-coat and shouting: "Keep it up, old chap," and finished a yard ahead of his pupil. The only time (before this time) I tried to tell that two-thousand-year-old jest an intelligent proof-reader, with a knowledge of arithmetic, changed "five" into "six."

If the spoof epigram is not absolutely a modern invention, yet the present age has its own epigrammatic novelties none the less. New both in form and matter are the pithy personality-sketches, each in the compass of a quatrain, which so happily hit off the Members of the Balliol Common-room in the heyday of the College's renown—*Consule Planco*; that is, when Jowett was Master. First in the series comes the Autocrat himself:—

> First come I—my name is Jowett;
> There's no Knowledge but I know it.
> I am Master of this College;
> What I know not is not knowledge.

There are several variations of this pleasant epigram which so vividly recalls to me the small, spruce figure of the "Jowler," as Vice-Chancellor in the middle Eighties, following his poker-bearer along the sunlit Broad and looking bright as a new pin with his rosy cherubic face and soft silvery hair. He always returned your salute with old-world elaboration.

Not quite so well known is the miniature of R. L. Nettleship, the Lecturer on Philosophy, who had doubts as to whether there was any certainty for the human mind:—

Simply, so to say, you know,
I am Nettleship, or so.
You are gated after Hall.
That's all—I mean, that's nearly all.

He certainly was a sufficiently vague person, not altogether convinced of his own existence. The others have been clean forgotten even in Oxford, but the following specimen ought surely to have been remembered :—

I am Huxley, bland and merry,
Fond of jokes and laughter, very.
If I laughed at what was witty,
I should laugh less—'twere a pity !

What would Meleager or Martial have thought of these novelties—not very much, I fear. And Lear's nonsense verses, though they are surely epigrams, might have baffled the Greeks and Romans completely.

It is the " they " in these curious trifles which gives the sting. Take one of the best of them :—

There was an old man of Thermopylae,
Who never did anything properly.
They said : " If you choose
To boil eggs in your shoes,
You shall not remain in Thermopylae."

" They " stands for conventional public opinion ; it is the equivalent of the leader-writer's phrase : " All right-thinking people." The Limerick is really a charming Celtic verse-form, and I once determined to

lift it up out of its present lowly position by composing a series of solemn poetical specimens. The only example ever written was as follows :—

Sweet heart, like a rose in the night,
Your petals are folded from sight.
When day dawns in gold
They are seen to unfold,
Sweetheart, like a rose after night.

Milton changed the sonnet into a trumpet, and why should not somebody make of the Limerick a miniature trombone ?

The old idea of an epigram was a brief poem which gave you a picture for remembrance, firm and decisive as a medal struck with a single blow of the die. Dr. A. J. Butler's translations of the Greek miniatures in this mode are the best ; they were praised according to their deserts by Walter Pater forty years ago. One of the briefest and most beautiful (two lines attributed to Plato) is thus Englished by this ripe scholar, who was helped in his task by the sunshine of Egypt and its atmosphere of the far, fair past :—

I held my soul upon my lips
In that long kiss divine ;
It came, poor thing, in hope to pass
And blend with thine.

Perhaps the one absolutely perfect translation of a Greek epigram is Mr. F. A. Wright's version of Plato's immortal lines to Aster :—

Thou gazest on the stars:
Would I might be,
O star of mine, the skies
With myriad eyes
To gaze on thee.

Here nothing is put in, or left out, or altered, unnecessarily; the rhymes give an equivalent for the exquisite vowel modulations -a-e-o- of the Greek and the emphasis produced by the use of "myriad" is justified by the English predilection for epithets. I am inclined to think, however, that Ben Jonson's "Drink to me only with thine eyes," which is probably an adaptation of Philostratus, is the best model for a translator of the wondrous miniatures of the Palatine Anthology. The vital necessity is to get the spirit of each piece. Here are three very free adaptations of my own, each of which, as it happens, was composed in bed to alleviate the persistent worries of a sleepless night.

LOVE AND LUCRE

(1) Danaë in her brazen tower
Married an immortal shower.
If you would your Love enfold
Be, like Zeus, a shower of gold.

(2) Love inflicts a twofold curse—
A heart on fire, an empty purse.
Would I could from passion fly,
And live at peace in poverty.

(3) "Your money *or* your life," they still would say
Who rode and robbed upon the King's highway.
Love's ukase uttered in a still sweet voice—
"Your money *and* your life"—leaves no such choice.

The vivid exactitude and sad earnestness of these tiny Greek epigrams, as old and fresh as the ever-recurring wild flowers, can never be surpassed. I can, however, think of four two-line English epigrams which, each in its own way, are as fine as the ancient models. One of them is an epitaph barely decipherable on a grey stone in a Kentish churchyard surrounded by trees where the doves coo-coo-coo all the year around :—

I coo and pine and ne'er shall be at rest
Till I am with you, dearest, sweetest and best.

They have been together this many a year! Then there is the couplet which could formerly be read on the signboard of an old Kidderminster inn :—

A soldier's fortune I tell you plain
Is a wooden leg or a golden chain.

It cannot be beaten for soldierly plainness and brevity. The other two are by Herrick; and Swinburne said the first, to which I know no parallel in literature, was one of the most unexpected jewels in our language :—

She by the river sat, and watching there
She wept and made it deeper by a tear.

The second is very little known, yet it is also unique :—

When the rain raineth and the goose winketh
Little wots the gosling what the goose thinketh.

I don't believe you could select four epigrams from any modern language which could beat this set for range and depth, for simple and subtle wisdom.

A neglected treasure of epigrams has been recently explored by Dr. F. P. Barnard, who has made a special study of the forgotten epigrammatists of the Fifteenth, Sixteenth, and Seventeenth centuries, who wrote in Latin or French. Some of them are derived from ancient models; others are progenitors of epigrams supposed to be very modern indeed. An example of the former, which tells us how a philosopher thought out a plan for rendering "the pestilence that walketh in darkness" innocuous, is really an amplified version of a merry jest by Lucian :—

A flea-bitten fool made this foolish remark
As he blew out the light: "They can't see in the dark."

There must be as many versions of this infantile jest (which crops up constantly in comic papers in some changed form) as there are of the Dr. Fell epigram. In a pre-war musical comedy I remember a scrap of dialogue, which earned its laugh, that was based on this fifteenth-century epigram :—

Fitz-Toper gets drunk twice a day,
MacSoaker once. Of these two sots
Which is the worse? The last I say.
The first is sober 'tween his pots.

Here is a long forgotten prescription for curing love :—

> For love much fasting is a rapid cure ;
> Or deadening time, though slow, is yet more sure.
> If neither quench the flame, there is no hope,
> One only remedy remains—a rope

Here is a piece of literary criticism which has been modernized in many ways :—

> As precious stones will columns tall exceed
> In quality, not quantity indeed ;
> So poesy by skill, not bulk, is classed,
> Oft epic is by epigram surpassed.

Dr. Barnard's little book, " A Fardel of Epigrams " (Milford) contains many clever and correct translations and also traces the history of a number of epigrams. It is an excellent bed-side book for those interested in these immortal trifles.

XIII. APHORISMS

ENGLISH literature is singularly sterile in clear-cut prose thoughts or what are called *Pensées* by the French, who so well understand the art of crystallising their experience of life in aphorisms. Bacon is a model, it is true, of pithy yet picturesque sayings, but we have no insular equivalents of Pascal, Vauvenargues, and La Rochefoucauld. The late Frederic Harrison once urged George Eliot to write a volume of her own thoughts, but her "Theophrastus Such" is not a success. The truth is that English, with its many auxiliary monosyllables, does not readily adapt itself to the weighty conciseness of Latin or the vivid exactness of Greek or the elegant precision of French. We run to a magnificent verbosity even when we try to remember that brevity is the soul of wit, and Lord Morley satirized our spendthrift use of words when he said: "Carlyle finally compressed his Gospel of Silence into thirty handsome octavos." The following collection of aphorisms contains much that is derived from alien literature, and it is the hasty result of a quest which, to speak plainly, seemed to me a rather tedious business. "We don't bother about making these damned *Pensées*," the late W. E. Henley said to me, "which is as much a waste of time as carving cherry-stones. As for So-and-so" (I leave out the name, for it is that of a living author, who is no worse than he ought not to be) "collecting his thoughts, as he threatens, a cat might as well collect

the sparks from its back when its fur is stroked in frosty weather."

OUR life is frittered away by detail. Simplify! Simplify!

Thoreau.

Things are in the saddle and ride mankind.

Emerson.

A CREED

I. Mistrust the certainties of human knowledge, but believe in Nature.

II. Be subservient to no man.

III. Nourish not vain hopes, be content to have laboured and to have been loved.

IV. Hate flattery.

V. Be true to your friendships.

VI. Be generous, be grateful.

VII. Shun indolence and vain regrets.

VIII. Cultivate a faith rather than a creed.

Men should be careful lest they cause women to weep, for God counts their tears.

The Talmud.

Treat the woman tenderly, tenderly.
Out of a crookéd rib God made her slenderly, slenderly.
Straight and strong he did not make her;
Let Love be kind, or else ye'll break her.

Old Rhyme.

This hath no ende
My derest Friende.

Inscription from a posy ring.

(1) Raise the stone and thou shalt find Me, cleave the wood, and there am I.
(2) If ye kept not that which is small, who will give you that which is great?
(3) This world is a bridge, pass over it, build not on it.

Traditional sayings of Jesus Christ.

By night the atheist half-believes a God.

Young.

He needs no other rosary whose thread of life is strung with the beads of love and thought.

Persian proverb.

Poetry, the language of the gods.

Rogers.

A poor man watched a thousand years before the gates of Paradise; then, while he snatched one little nap, they opened and shut.

Persian anecdote.

The dogs bark but the caravan moves on.

Bedouin saying.

All kinds of wood burn silently, except thorns: For they are constantly crying: "We also are wood."

Persian saying.

Say what is true and what is pleasant. Do not say what is pleasant and not true, nor what is true and not pleasant.

Eastern saying.

Credulity is better than unbelief.

Thibetan saying.

Every man is right in what he affirms, wrong in what he denies.

Hegel.

Be faithful. Be brave. Be fortunate.

Queen Elizabeth on knighting Varney in "Kenilworth."

Take my word for it, if you had seen but one day of war, you would pray to Almighty God you might never see such a thing again.

Wellington.

He that does a base thing in zeal for a friend burns the golden thread that ties their hearts together.

Jeremy Taylor.

God weigheth more with how much love a man worketh than how much he doeth. He doeth much that loveth much.

Thomas à Kempis.

I have often thought what a melancholy world this would be without children, and what an inhuman world without the aged.

S. T. Coleridge.

The good of ancient things let others state;
I think it lucky I was born so late.

Sydney Smith.

A fool can ask more questions than a wise man can answer, but a wise man cannot ask more questions than he will find a fool ready to answer.

Whateley.

Men will wrangle for religion; write for it; fight for it; die for it; anything but—live for it.

Colton.

Truth gains more even by the errors of one who, with due study and preparation, thinks for himself, than by the true opinions of those who only hold them because they do not suffer themselves to think.

J. S. Mill.

I never repent of behaving as if my enmities were transient and my friendships eternal.

Cicero.

Custom makes dotards of us all.

Carlyle.

Men show their character in nothing more than in what they think laughable.

Goethe.

It is better to suffer wrong than to do it; and happier to be sometimes cheated than not to trust.

Johnson.

My friends have come to me unsought. The great God gave them me.

Emerson.

The fault-finder will find faults even in Paradise.

Thoreau.

He who trusts everybody is a fool; he who trusts nobody is a greater fool.

Pope Pius II.

There are many echoes in the world, and but few voices.

Goethe.

I always hated to give advice, especially when there is a prospect of its being taken.

Hawthorne.

Human nature takes advice only by a supreme effort of intelligence.

Beatrice Harraden.

It is not the oath that makes us believe the man, but the man the oath.

Æschylus.

The principles of true politics are those of morality enlarged, and I neither now do, nor ever will, admit of any other.

Burke.

That which is morally wrong cannot be politically right.

C. J. Fox.

A Conservative is a man who will not look at the new moon, out of respect for that "ancient institution," the old moon.

Douglas Jerrold.

If a man has reported to you that a certain person speaks ill of you, do not make any defence, but reply: "The man did not know the rest of my faults, or he would not have mentioned these only."

Epictetus.

The sun will set without thy assistance.

The Talmud.

Though God take the sun out of heaven, yet we must have patience.

George Herbert.

The first wonder is the offspring of ignorance; the last is the parent of adoration.

S. T. Coleridge.

Our thoughts are heard in Heaven.

Young.

We must think as though some one could and can gaze into our inmost breast.

Seneca.

Equality is the life of conversation.

Steele.

As we must account for every idle word, so we must for every idle silence.

Benjamin Franklin.

The great art to learn much is to undertake a little at a time.

Locke.

Never drudge. Men are not ruled by logic. Be precise, but not pedantic.

Jowett's advice to pupils.

Patience is a necessary ingredient of genius.

Disraeli.

Very few people are good economists of their Fortune, and still fewer of their Time; and yet, of the two, the latter is the more important.

Chesterfield.

To be poor, and to seem poor, is a certain method never to rise.

Goldsmith.

Wishing of all employments is the worst.

Young.

Desire never fails to generate capacity.

Shelley.

Give me such ease of body as may enable me to be useful, and remove from me all such scruples and perplexities as encumber and obstruct my mind.

Prayer written by Dr. Johnson, and suspended from the wall of a living-room.

To bear is to conquer our Fate.

Campbell.

The world is my country. To do good my religion.

Thomas Paine.

Wise men learn more from fools than fools learn from wise men.

Cato.

Silence in love betrays more woe
Than words, however witty,
The beggar who is dumb you know,
Deserves a double pity.

Sir Walter Raleigh.

Christ leads me through no darker rooms
Than He went through before.
He that unto God's Kingdom comes
Must enter by that door.

Wesley.

The Loss of Gold is much.
The Loss of Time is more.
The Loss of Christ is such a loss
As no man may restore.

Old Rhyme.

Roses smell when Roses thrive,
Here's my work when I'm alive,
Roses smell when shrunk and dead,
Here's my work when I am dead.

Old sampler posy.

O that I were, where I would be,
Then should I be, where I am not,
But where I am, there must I be,
And where I would be, I cannot.

Old sampler posy.

INSCRIPTION ON A SUN DIAL

DIAL. Staie, passenger,
Tell me my name,
Thy nature.

PASSENGER. Thy name is die-all.
I, am a mortal
Creature.

DIAL. Since my name
And thy nature
So agree,
Think on thyself
When thou lookest on me.

MESSAGE OF THE HINDHEAD CROSS

East —Post tenebras lux
South—In luce spes
West —In obitu pax
North—Post obitum pax.

XIV. FABLES WITHOUT A MORAL

LITTLE stories, ancient and modern, in a new setting. They are not intended to be read all at one time, but until you come to one which sets you thinking and may—who knows?—bring on the kind of meditation which lapses imperceptibly into a slumberous dream.

I.—THE DRESDEN FIGURES

YEAR after year they had been standing on the mantelpiece, facing one another, and separated only by an old clock with a bland face and a confidential tick. Every morning, ever since the clock could remember, they had begun the day by saying nasty things to one another. "Handy-pandy, Jack-a-dandy!" she would say in a sneering voice, and he would jeer back: "Blue prunes and yellow prisms." The old clock took no notice of their bickering; he had heard it all hundreds, nay, thousands of times, for the disputants had no originality. One day there was a great change in their lives. The little boy climbed up on a chair and turned them round so that they could not see one another. A week later the old clock missed a tick, so surprised he was at hearing the first words after a long silence.

"O my love," cried the Shepherd, "if I cannot see your face soon, I shall die." "Me, too," murmured the Shepherdess in a plaintive voice.

II.—THE LOST SLIPPER

A Japanese bell-founder was ordered to make a great bell which could be heard on the shining summit of a high hill and should yet possess a tone as mellow and thrilling as the voice of her first lover to a loving maiden. Gold, silver, copper, tin, and even jewels were cast into the furnace, but the metals would not commingle, and the casting was a failure. A second attempt failed, and the bell-founder was preparing to dispatch himself honourably if the third casting were unsuccessful. To prevent this disaster his only daughter leaped into the furnace, though her bosom-friend tried to hold her back, retaining only her tiny silver slipper—so tiny it was that people laughed and cried over it! Now, between the deep and heart-shaking utterances of the bell you can hear a soft plaintive murmur—it is the poor brave child asking for her lost slipper.

III.—THE COMPLETE CRITIC

In the far-off days, when dancing on the point was first practised by the Egyptian dancers, so that an illusion of flying might be created in the minds of the spectators, the ruler of the land was a passionate lover of all the arts. He thought himself the one and only

critic who could really understand and appreciate the best, and at all public entertainments the people had to be content, and indeed were well content, with the second-best. So it befell that the most beautiful and accomplished of all the girl dancers—she who was called "Wave of Nile," or "Wind in a Tree"—was allowed to exhibit her art only privily, in Pharaoh's sole presence. One night, however, Pharaoh looked out into his secret garden and saw her dancing there in the moonlight, holding out her white arms and making genuflexions to the moon. Calling the officer of his guard, he gave this order: "Let the woman's knees be broken."

IV.—THE SERPENT'S PART

The two children had been told the story of the Fall by their nursery governess and were adapting it for a play. "But who'll be the serpent?" asked the boy. "Wish we had a dear little sister," said the girl. "It's orkard only having dollies and woggies and just fings." Decisively: "I'll be the serpent as well as Eve, and when they call 'All out!' and we has to leave the Gardens, you can be the taxi-man as well as Adam." "Want to be the serpent," said the boy, in a tone of discontent. "But you can't," replied the girl. "Serpents is females."

V.—INSIDE HISTORY

"Aye, sir," said the old sailor, "I been in some queer places in my time. The queerest of all was when

I shipped aboard a whaler forty years ago. She was bound for the South Pacific, where, in them days, you might find a right whale or you might not. Anyway, we did find one, and he sunk the boat I was in, and swallered me down—as easy as I swallers this yer tot o' rum. It was warm and peaceable in the whale's belly, and most of the time I was sleeping. But I had to wake up now and then, and the trouble was to find something to do, me not being given to idleness ashore or afloat. I had my jack-knife, and thought one day as I would carve my name—Thomas Shelders—on the big arch of bone overhead. But, looking it over carefully to choose the best place, I reads these letters one by one—J.O.N.A.H. I was that dod-disgusted at the Scriptural bloke getting in afore me that I dropped my knife *point down*, which must have tickled his nibs, for he instantly throwed me up."

VI.—THE BENEVOLENT TICK

A Camel was lamenting the hugeness of his burden. "They have heaped on my back," he complained, "all the treasure of Samarcand, rich praying-carpets and curious metal-work and bags of choice coffee and rolls of embroidered silks, and on the top of it all sits my driver at ease, dreaming about moon-faces and the song of the bulbul and the crimson wine forbidden to him by the Prophet. My back is breaking; I shall presently collapse in the sand and never rise again." Hearing these sad words, a Tick, who was about the size of a sequin, but very much lighter, slipped off the

Camel's back to the ground. "See, my friend!" he said, "I relieve you of my weight, and you will now have an easy journey." "Thank you, Emir Elephant," said the Camel, as he watched the tender-hearted Tick crawling away. "You must have a drink with me on our return."

VII.—THE LAUREL WREATH

The happiest moment Julius Caesar knew in his later victorious years was when the Senate and the People of Rome gave him the right of continually wearing a crown of laurel. Indeed, as he went abroad for the first time wearing his crown of immortal green he felt that he was as fortunate as Sulla himself, whose luck outlasted his life, seeing that he had a fine day for his funeral. Yet, so prone are men to hide their meaner motives even from themselves, the Conqueror of Pompey the Great was not at first aware of the real cause of his happy mood. He did not see the reason—or, perhaps, he would not confess it to himself—until the next morning, when he told his barber to clip the locks on the crown of his head. For it was no longer necessary to keep them of such a length that they could be trained over to hide his baldness.

VIII.—THE GOSSAMER THREAD

When Buddha came to the blackest realms of darkness he found a criminal lying there in fetters, who had no hope whatever of release. "Cannot you

recall a single good deed in your life of wickedness? " asked Buddha. The criminal thought and thought and thought, and at last remembered that he had once refrained from crushing a spider. The Giver of Light smiled, and his smile illuminated the vast antre of eternity in which the wicked are immured. And, hanging down from above, the criminal saw a shining thread of gossamer, such as is spun by a spider, which he grasped frantically, finding to his amazement that it would bear his weight all the way.

IX.—THE UNHAPPY MERMAID

A Fairy, finding a paper-boat on the beach, boldly set out to sea in it. The waves ran, the wind blew; and presently she reached a rock on which sat a beautiful Mermaid. She was weeping, making the sea wetter and more salt than ever, and the little Fairy tried to console her. " What lovely golden curls you have," she said, " and what a pretty comb you have to comb them with! And what bright green eyes you have, and what a pretty looking-glass to look at them in! Whatever can you find to cry about? " Then, between two sobs, the Mermaid replied: " I can't keep my powder dry to-day, silly thing."

X.—THE COSY ARMCHAIR

In the oak-beamed kitchen of an old farmhouse in Somerset was a very cosy armchair, among the cushions of which nestled a tiny mouse. A large black cat entered (whereupon the mouse vanished)

and jumped into the chair purring like a hive of bees. Towser, the bull-terrier, entered, and at his first "wowf" the cat flopped off and gave him her cosy sleeping place. Then t'old Farmer tramped in, turned Towser out, and settled down in the chair to enjoy his bubbly old pipe. Last of all t'old Missus came in, and said: "Do'ee give I thicky chair—'tis my chair I tell 'ee." She was just getting forrard with her knitting when she saw the little mouse on the floor. With a squeal and a jump, most surprising in one of her years and substance, t'old Missus was off the chair and out of the room. "Thicky chair's mine, a'ter all," squeaked the little mouse.

XI.—THE CHILD WITH THE BUCKET

A famous philosopher was walking by the sea and meditating on infinity. He came to a place where a little child, toiling between sunshine and sea-sheen, was striving to save his sand-castle from being overwhelmed by the waves of the incoming tide. The child was trying to bale away the water with his tiny bucket, and finding he could not do it, sat down on the wet, shining sand and wept aloud. "What are you crying for, little boy?" asked the great philosopher. "'Cos I can't catch the sea in my bucket," replied the child between his sobs. It then occurred to the great philosopher that he also might be trying to catch the sea in a bucket when he tried to comprehend infinity with a finite mind. So he hurried back to lunch and indulged in an extra glass of port,

and once more felt confident of his ability to "corner the Absolute."

XII.—THE CAPTIVE PRINCESS

Two lovers were parted by an evil chance, and thirty years passed before they heard of one another again. Then, hearing he had never married and being unmarried herself, she sent him this brief message: "Am I forgotten? If not, would you care to come and see me?" His reply was as follows: "I have seen you every day since you saw me last. You have been my prisoner in a secret prison all the time, and I sometimes laugh to myself to think that you can never, never escape. Your health has not been affected at all by your long imprisonment—your eyes are as glad and clear, your brow as smooth and white, your hair as much like ripe corn, and your limbs as deftly wrought of pearl-and-steel as they were thirty years ago." When the lady received this curious letter she both smiled and wept, gave her Pom a biscuit and her Parrot a lump of sugar, then put on her furs and hurried off to a Scriabin recital. After which she decided to let the matter drop.

XIII.—ONLY THE BEGINNING

The fiery destruction foretold in the Latin hymn beginning:

Dies irae, dies illa,
Solvet saeclum in favilla

had come upon earth at the long last, and a young man and a girl, who had met on a Cornish beach for the first time that day, knew that the end was close at hand. The landward sky was full of ramping, roaring flames; the sea seemed a blood-red frenzy. Escape was impossible, yet the twain pushed a boat out and embarked, the young man plugging away lustily with the heavy oars. In a little while he stopped rowing, and exclaimed: "This is the end of all things." "Kiss me!" said the girl, smiling at him.

XIV.—THE TWO PAINTERS

One of them was a lover of truth and beauty all his days, who never considered his own welfare or prestige, and always set the work above the reward. The other was a super-egoist, whose malicious wit was a provocation to friends and enemies alike. The one was kind, considerate, and humble-minded, eager always to find the merits rather than the demerits of a fellow-artist's picture. The other could not bear to hear of another's successful achievement and would, as Pope wrote of Addison:

View him with scornful, yet with jealous eyes,
And hate for arts that caus'd himself to rise;
Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,
And without sneering, teach the rest to sneer.

While the first was finishing a series of frescoes in a great church, which he had painted for nothing, the other was quarrelling with a sitter and haggling over

the price of the half-completed portrait. And yet—*securus judicat orbis terrarum*—by the general consent of all sound judges the second was the greater artist.

XV.—THE LOST BROOCH

He was a learned young Chinaman, on his way to be examined at Pekin. All the wisdom of Confucius was stored up in his dome-like head, and a mild complacency shone from his large spectacles. His friends knew that he was destined to become a high Mandarin, and one of them, laying plans for his own future, had presented him with a brooch of white jade, as he was carrying his bag of rice aboard the barge at the jetty of his small, native town. As he stood at the side of the moving craft and contemplated the brown waters of the Father of Rivers swirling past, he fingered the brooch unconsciously. It became unfastened, and fell into the water. And he, having the works of the Master at his tongue-tip and so being equal to any emergency, without undue haste pulled out his pen-knife and cut a nick in the gunwale so as to mark the place where the brooch lay in the ooze of the river-bed.

XVI.—THE MAGIC HERB

An old moorland doctor was asked by a wealthy patient to give him a cure for a sick lethargy that made nothing in life seem worth while. The old doctor told him that a certain herb grew on the moors, which

was a soverain remedy for his complaint, and proposed they should set out together next morning to find it. Mile after mile they walked over the wind-swept uplands, and found many a quaint little flower —but never a sprig of the mysterious herb. Finally, they came to a lofty spot, where the last snowdrift lay dazzling-white in the shade of a rock:

> Ethereal and dying in its sleep
> To wake immortal in the brooklet's chime,

and there the sick man quenched his thirst with a handful of snow and exclaimed: "I'd give anything for a home-baked loaf." "We've found the magic herb," said the old doctor, with a many-wrinkled smile.

XVII.—GREEN PEAS AND HORSEFLESH

A quack doctor, accompanied by his apprentice, visited a patient who was suffering from a bilious fever. "No wonder you are sick," said the doctor, sternly, "you have been eating green peas to your dinner." "How did you know?" asked the astonished patient. "I feel it in your pulse, sir—in your pulse," was the reply, and the patient felt such faith in the doctor's cleverness that he speedily recovered. "How did you know about the green peas, master?" asked the pupil as they jogged homewards. "My boy, I saw the shells thrown out into the yard, and drew an inference." A month later the patient, a very hearty eater, had a return of his sickness, and was attended

by the doctor's pupil. The latter saw a saddle hanging up in the kitchen, and accused the patient of eating a horse. He was soundly thwacked, both by the sick man and by his master.

XVIII.—THE WONDERFUL MIRROR

Once upon a time there lived in a place called Matsuyama in a part of Japan remote from the populous towns a young man, accomplished in *Bushido*, who had a beautiful and innocent wife. They had one little daughter. Once the husband journeyed to Yedo, in the train of his chieftain, and he brought back presents, a doll for his little daughter and for his guileless wife a fair mirror of polished silver. The little girl knew all about the doll; she would rock it in her arms and croon songs to it, just as her own mother had sung and cradled her to sleep on her bosom.

To the mother, however, the mirror—the first she had ever seen, for she was born of very simple folk in simple, old-fashioned Matsuyama—was a most wonderful and magical thing. She did not understand the use of it, and one day innocently asked her husband who lived inside it—what was the name of the pretty lady looking out of the gleaming surface like the moon out of a moonlit cloud, and smiling at her so pleasantly. The husband burst out laughing. "Why, how silly you are!" he cried. "It's your own face, of course." Though she did not understand why he called her foolish, she was much ashamed and made haste to put her present away, wrapped up in a

silk scarf, in a box of precious lacquer-work. There she kept the mysterious thing year after year until the time of her last sickness. As she lay a-dying she called her daughter to her, bade her open the box, and gave her the mirror, saying: "When I am dead, look into this bright thing every morning and every evening and you will see me smiling at you. Do not be afraid, do not grieve, do not forget." Then, with a sigh, her gentle, innocent soul departed.

Every morning and evening the girl, who was very like her mother in her fresh, fair youth, looked into the mirror and saw her mother, as she thought, smiling at her. She would talk to the dear image in the mirror, which she prized beyond all her other possessions. At last the father noticed her strange behaviour, and asked her about it; and she told him all, like a dutiful daughter. This time he did not laugh. Nay, he wept many tears, bitter tears, feeling deep in his heart the beauty of such innocence, his wife's and his daughter's, and the piteousness of it all. But he could only feel, not fathom, the meaning of that which he had not known for many a long year.

The four stories that follow are from "Tales of Nasr-ed-Din Khoja" (Nisbet), translated from the Turkish by Mr. Henry D. Barnham, C.M.G., who was for many years H.B.M. Consul-General in the Levant, and knows more about the essential Turk than any other authority, living or dead. The Khoja's tales, which originated about five hundred years ago and have been passed down by word of mouth from generation to generation,

depict, not the black-coated Turk with a Western veneer as we have lately seen him at Angora and at Lausanne, but the primitive yet picturesque inhabitant of the ancient Anatolian homeland—simple-minded and blessedly ignorant, patient and plodding, having a broad sense of humour, good-natured in the main, utterly devoid of snobbishness and sycophancy, a born fighter withal, and apt to see red when his racial and religious passions are released "by superior order." Mr. Barnham's admirable book of translations is, *experto crede*, a joyous bed-side companion.

XIX.—THE HOROSCOPE

A friend asked the Khoja under what star he was born.

He answered, "I remember that mother told me I was born under the sign of the Lamb."

"Nonsense!" said his friend. "The Lamb is not a constellation. You must mean the Ram."

"Well!" answered the Khoja, "it is forty years since mother cast my horoscope. Surely that is time enough for a lamb to grow into a ram."

XX.—TAMERLANE'S TITLE

Tamerlane said to him, "You know, Khoja, that all the Caliphs of the Abbaside line had characteristic titles. One was called 'Moaffik-billah,' another 'Motawakkil al-Allah," another 'Motassem-billah.' If I had been one of them I wonder what would have been mine?"

The Khoja replied at once, " O Lord of the world ! there is no doubt about you. Your title would have been ' Naouz-billah ' " (" God save us from this man ! ").

XXI.—DREAM SPECTACLES

One night he woke his wife in a great state of excitement. " Quick ! " said he—" be quick. Give me my spectacles before I wake up." She handed them to him, but asked why he was so excited.

" I am having a beautiful dream," he answered, " but there are one or two things in it I cannot make out very clearly."

XXII.—PRICE OF A DESPOT

Tamerlane went to the bath with the Khoja and asked him in the course of conversation, " If I had been a slave, I wonder how much I would be worth ? "

" Fifty piastres," answered the Khoja.

" You blockhead," said he angrily, " the cloth round my loins is worth fifty."

" Just so," answered the Khoja coolly. " I estimated your value at the price of that rag."

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