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PSYCHO-ANALYSIS AND LITERARY CRITICISM ¹

THE purpose of this paper is by no means to attack psycho-analysis, but only to contribute to the solution of some frontier problems between psycho-analysis and literary criticism. One of these I consider a pseudo-problem. I am referring to the use which some critics make of psycho-analysis to infer the pathology of a poet from his work. When this is all that is done, and when it is made quite clear that the result is intended as a contribution not to literary criticism but to pathology or pathological biography, I have, of course, nothing, good or bad, to say to it. Unfortunately, however, we sometimes meet with a real confusion in which the proposition 'This poem is an inevitable outcome, and an illuminating witness, of the poet's repressions' is somehow treated as an answer to the proposition 'This poem is rubbish'. The critic has allowed himself to be diverted from the genuinely critical question 'Why, and how, should we read this?' to the purely historical question 'Why did he write it?'—and that, too, in a sense which makes the word 'why' mean not 'with what intention?' but 'impelled by what causes?' He is asking not for the Final Cause, which would still have some literary importance, but for the Efficient, which has none. With misunderstandings of this kind we need not concern ourselves.

I am going to deal with two Freudian positions, of which one will be found in the twenty-third of the *Introductory Lectures*.² At the end of that lecture all art is traced to the fantasies—that is, the day-dreams or waking wish-fulfilments—of the artist. The artist wants 'honour, power, riches, fame and the love of women', but being unable to get these in the real world, he has to do the best he can by imagining or pretending that he has got them. So far, according to Freud, he does not differ from the rest of us. What makes him an artist is the curious faculty he possesses of 'elaborating his day-dreams so that they lose that personal note which grates upon strange ears, and become enjoyable to others'. As we others also like a good wish-fulfilment dream, we are now ready to pay for the privilege of sharing his. Thus, for the artist, as Freud says, there is a path through fantasy back to reality: by publishing

¹ A paper read to a literary society at Westfield College, and elsewhere.

² Freud, *Introductory Lectures*: translated by Joan Riviere (Allen and Unwin. London, 4th impression 1933), pp. 314, 315.

his mere dreams of 'honour, power, riches, fame, and the love of women' he acquires 'honour, power, riches, fame, and the love of women' in reality.

You will notice that this is a theory about readers as well as about writers. If Freud had been content to say that all works of art could be causally traced to Fantasy in the artist, he would be merely stating an efficient cause which we might find it difficult to disprove. But he makes it clear that we enjoy the product *as a fantasy*—that reading, as well as writing, is wish-fulfilment. Indeed it is obvious that he believes all imagining or day-dreaming to be of a single kind—that kind in which the dreamer pretends that he is a famous man, or a millionaire, or an irresistible lady-killer, while in reality he is no such thing. This is what I disbelieve. I want to introduce an addition or emendation, and it is one for which Freud has given me the example.

In an earlier lecture (the sixth),¹ after telling us that a psycho-analytic explanation can usually be found for the tunes that we whistle when we seem to be thinking about nothing in particular, Freud adds the following: 'I must, however, make this reservation, that I do not maintain this in the case of really musical people, of whom I happen to have had no experience'. This is both honest and penetrating, and leads me to hope that the professor would not have resisted the suggestion that a similar limiting clause would improve his theory of imagination. At any rate that is what I feel that the theory needs. It is true enough, if we do not apply it to imaginative people.

I am ready to admit that there may be human beings whose day-dreams always run in the channels which Freud describes: but surely, for most of us, there has been a fairly clear distinction between two kinds of day-dreams ever since we can remember. With the sort which he acknowledges—the dreams of success, fame, love, and the like—I confess that I am lamentably familiar. I have had dozens of them. But I cannot recall a period when I did not know another kind. The earliest of these which now comes back to me is what might be called the Snug Town. I can see that little town still, with its river and bridge and shipping, the cheeses and barrels piled on the quays, the high-pitched roofs and the bright green shutters. I am vaguer about the inhabitants, but I think they were anthropomorphized Mice—'dressed mice' as

¹ Freud, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

I would have called them then, with woollen comforters and wide trousers like Dutchmen, and pipes in their mouths. Obviously most of the images came out of books and the whole thing is quite commonplace. But the point is that I myself was not a feature in it. I daresay that after the dream had taken full possession of me I may have wished, and wished intensely, that I might find this town in reality and go to it. But that was because I had first imagined the town and judged it to be simply delightful, almost adorable, in its own right. My only reason for wishing to go to it was its adorableness: there was no idea that I was to become a great man there, or marry a mouse-princess, or make my fortune out of the local trade in cheeses. And all this time, of course, I was having concurrently the sort of dreams that Freud allows—dreams in which I said clever things, scored off my governess, fought battles, and generally forced the world to acknowledge what a remarkable person I was.

You will have divined that this part of my paper is great fun to write. Who could not go on for hours in the same vein? I wish I had time to tell you of all the other constructions—the unknown room in the house which one was always hoping to discover, the chessmen coming alive as in *Alice*, the garden which was partly in the West and partly in the past—but I reflect that these will hardly interest you as much as they interest me. You would rather write your own ones.

I assume, in fact, that most of you have experienced the same sort of thing, and if you have you will understand me when I say that the two kinds of imagining are really distinguished by their mere taste. We can, if we are challenged, show differences in the content by pointing out that the self is absent from the one and present as hero in the other: but for our own guidance we hardly need to do so. Surely the peculiar ‘tang’ of the merely personal wish-fulfilment is immediately recognizable—its extreme surface realism, its deliberately prosaic temper, and above all its *nagging* character, the stealthy insistence with which it recurs again and again like an anxiety? Surely this is utterly different from the unpredictable ecstasy, the apparent ‘otherness’ and externality, of disinterested imagination?

It is worth while, I think, to emphasize the ‘realism’ of the mere wish-fulfilment dream, and to draw the literary consequence that a liberal use of the marvellous, the mythical, and the fantastical in

a story is, as far as it goes, an argument *against* the charge of wish-fulfilment. The Freudian fantasy exists to give us the nearest substitute it can for real gratification: naturally it makes itself as lifelike as possible. It has to be unreal as regards the main issue—for we are not really famous men, millionaires, or Don Juans—and to make up for this it will be scrupulously ‘real’ everywhere else. Does not all experience confirm this? A man who is really hungry does not dream of honey-dew and elfin bread, but of steak and kidney puddings: a man really lustful does not dream of Titania or Helen, but of real, prosaic, flesh and blood. Other things being equal, a story in which the hero meets Titania and is entertained with fairies’ food is much less likely to be a fantasy than ‘a nice love-story’ of which the scene is London, the dialogue idiomatic, and the episodes probable. But this is by the way.

I do not wish to deny that both sorts of day-dream may become the source of literature. I think it probable, for example, that the novels of Charlotte Brontë began as wish-fulfilment dreams, while certain possibly disinterested imaginations about King Julius and the rest, which she shared with her sisters, attempted to express themselves in verse and failed to overcome technical incompetence. Trollope has told us in his *Autobiography*¹ that his novels grew out of what he calls ‘castle-building’ and makes the character of his early reveries quite clear by adding ‘I myself was of course my own hero’. The wish-fulfilling function explains why, as he tells us, ‘nothing impossible was ever introduced—I never became a king or a duke—I never was a learned man, nor even a philosopher. But I was a very clever person, and beautiful young women used to be fond of me—and altogether I was a very much better fellow than I have ever succeeded in being since’. It is, plainly, a textbook case of the self-regarding day-dream. But Trollope significantly adds: ‘In after years—I have *discarded the hero* of my early dreams and have been able to lay my own identity aside.’

This ‘discarding of the hero’ is Trollope’s account of what Freud calls the ‘elaboration’ that removes the ‘grating personal note’, and I do not suppose that I am in disagreement with psycho-analysis if I say that, even where a work of art originated in a self-regarding reverie, it becomes art by ceasing to be what it was. It is hard to imagine a more radical change than the disappearance of the self who, was, by hypothesis, the *raison d’être* of the original dream.

¹ Chapter III.

The very root from which the dream grew is severed and the dream is planted in a new soil; it is killed as fantasy before it is raised as art. Two other things are worth noting. Trollope's work, which admittedly springs from wish-fulfilment, is work of an unusually solid, realistic, and humdrum kind, which is, on my view, just what we should expect. In the second place, the work is now valued by most readers for just those characters whose fortunes and temperament no one would wish to share, like Bishop Proudie and his wife, or Mr. Crawley and the Archdeacon: whereas the fortunes of the young hero and heroine, where, if anywhere, the last traces of the original self-flattering motive might be expected to survive, are read with indifference.

On these grounds I wish to emend the Freudian theory of literature into something like this. There are two activities of the imagination, one free, and the other enslaved to the wishes of its owner for whom it has to provide imaginary gratifications. Both may be the starting-point for works of art. The former or 'free' activity continues in the works it produces and passes from the status of dream to that of art by a process which may legitimately be called 'elaboration': incoherences are tidied up, banalities removed, private values and associations replaced, proportion, relief, and temperance are introduced. But the other, or servile, kind is not 'elaborated' into a work of art: it is a motive power which starts the activity and is withdrawn when once the engine is running, or a scaffolding which is knocked away when the building is complete. Finally, the characteristic products of free imagination belong to what may be roughly called the fantastic, or mythical, or improbable type of literature: those of fantasy, of the wish-fulfilling imagination, to what may, in a very loose sense, be called the realistic type. I say '*characteristic* products' because the principle doubtless admits of innumerable exceptions.

By this time I imagine that some of you can hardly contain your laughter at what seems to you the spectacle of a man jumping unconsciously out of the frying-pan into the fire. You have been longing for some time to ask me whether I really suppose that in turning from dreams of power and fame and adult love to dreams of secret rooms, and gardens in the past, I have much mended matters; whether I can really be ignorant that all I have done is to exchange dreams that fulfil the comparatively rational and respectable wishes of the Ego for those that fulfil the much darker

wishes of the Id. For of course the psycho-analyst will know what to make of that secret room. The garden in the West is child's play to him; and though I do not know how he will explain my town of the Mice, I have no doubt he will make of it something that pertains to infantile sexuality. This brings me to the second of the two Freudian doctrines which I have proposed to discuss: the doctrine of Symbolism.

The doctrine, as stated in the tenth lecture,¹ is this. When we are analysing a dream, that is, when we are trying to find the latent or unconscious thought of which the dream images are a concealed expression, we find some elements with which nothing in the mind of the dreamer is associated. But it fortunately happens that we can find out what such elements are concealing 'by drawing', as Freud says, 'on our own resources'. 'Our own resources' apparently means the psycho-analytic examination of folk-lore and language. The result of 'drawing on them' is the theory that there are certain things in the real world whose images, when they appear in dreams or stories, bear a constant meaning. That is, whether you or I dream of a house, or read of one in a tale, the latent thought behind the house image is always the same. These images with constant meanings he calls symbols—the words, so to speak, of a universal image-language. He gives us a few specimens. A *House* signifies the human body; *Kings and Queens*, fathers and mothers; *Journeys*, death; *small animals* (here come my poor mice, after all, you see) one's brothers and sisters; *Fruit, Landscapes, Gardens, Blossoms*, the female body or various parts of it.

As I have said, I have no intention of disputing with Freud as regards the matter of fact. This is his special subject and as a layman I have no means of finding out whether he is right or wrong; for the purposes of the present argument I am going to assume that he is right as regards fact. But we must be quite clear what it is that I am granting. I am granting three things: (1) That infantile sexual experience of the sort described by Freud does occur in all human beings; (2) That latent thought on such subjects does utilize the images I have mentioned; and (3) which is going very far indeed—that wherever such images occur in dream, imagination, or literature, the latent thought which Freud mentions is really unconsciously present in the mind of the dreamer, the imaginer, and the writer or reader.

¹ Freud, *op. cit.*, pp. 125 et seq.

I grant all this because if all this were true it would have no literary bearing. All sorts of unconscious thought may be present while we are reading a book—for example, thoughts aroused by the shape of the letters or by the tactual sensations which the paper affords to our fingers—without making our enjoyment other than it seems to be. If latent thought of an erotic character is present in the same irrelevant way whenever I read about a garden, I have, as a critic, no objection. But we reach something much more formidable when Freud says:¹ ‘Does it not begin to dawn upon us that the many fairy tales which begin with the words “once upon a time there were a king and queen” simply mean “once upon a time there were a father and mother”?’ *Simply mean* is the crucial expression. They do not ‘mean’ this *inter alia*: they ‘simply’ mean this, this all that they mean, they mean neither more, nor less, nor other, than this.

But how is the word *mean* to be interpreted? We are certainly not being asked to believe that the teller of the fairy-tale *intends* ‘king’ to be understood as ‘father’, or that the hearer consciously so understands it. I suggest—and let me apologize in advance to all psycho-analysts if I am wrong—that Freud is implicitly making at least the following claims. (1) That the whole of the excitement, pleasure, or interest occasioned by the image, wherever it occurs, is due to the latent erotic thought. (2) That the image, as opposed to the latent thought, effects nothing at all except disguise: or, in other words, that if our inhibitions allowed it to become conscious without shock, the latent thought would give us the same kind and degree of satisfaction as the image now does. It will be seen, of course, that the two claims are really identical: for if the image is anything more than a disguise, if it adds any attractiveness to the latent thought on its own account, then it must follow that the latent thought is not the whole source of the reader’s pleasure.

If this is not what Freud means, I have nothing to say to him. But I am sure that this is what is meant by many of his self-styled followers; and it is certainly this, and this alone, which brings psycho-analytic symbolism into contact with literary values. It is in this that the sting lies. We do not mind being told that when we enjoy Milton’s description of Eden some latent sexual interest is, as a matter of fact, and along with a thousand other things, present in our unconscious. Our quarrel is with the man who says ‘you

¹ Op. cit., p. 134.

know why you're *really* enjoying this?' or 'of course you realize what's behind this?' or 'It *all* comes from so-and-so'. What we resent, in fact, is not so much the suggestion that we are interested in the female body as the suggestion that we have no interest in gardens: not what the wiseacre would force upon us, but what he threatens to take away. If it is true that all our enjoyment of the images, without remainder, can be explained in terms of infantile sexuality, then, I confess, our literary judgements are in ruins. But I do not believe it is true.

My first argument against it is based on the reaction I have just described—the way in which we find our enjoyments disturbed by the psycho-analyst's suggestion. He may reply that such a reaction of resistance is just what he expected to find and confirms his suspicions. But is this really so? If the image of a garden is only a disguise for the female body, and if all the excitement with which I read *Paradise Lost*, Book IV, is really erotic, then surely, when the psycho-analyst has kindly removed the veil and conducted me to the thought which (on his view) I was wanting to think all along, I ought to feel not an anticlimax but a climax—the affective temperature ought to rise, not fall? A man may go to dinner under the illusion that he wants conversation when he really wants alcohol; but this does not mean that he suddenly loses interest in the proceedings when the champagne appears. He is more likely to realize, as he raises his glass, that this *is* what he really wanted—or at least to find the conversation very much better. It is one thing to admit unconscious desires; it is another to admit desires so unconscious that their satisfaction is felt as a disappointment and an irrelevance. What is the sense in attributing even unconscious thirst to a man who feels less at ease after you have given him drink? The psycho-analyst will probably reply that our conscious taste rejects his interpretation because of our inhibitions. He would say that the true parallel is not an ordinary man who wants alcohol without knowing it but a fanatical teetotaler who wants alcohol without knowing it; and that such a man might with apparent physical horror reject the champagne when it arrived. In other words, it would be maintained that though, at some level, we 'really' wanted to think of the female body, yet our conscious self is so shocked at the disclosure of our real interest that enjoyment ceases.

I am sometimes tempted to wonder whether Freudianism is not

a great school of prudery and hypocrisy. The suggestion that we are 'shocked' by such interpretations, or that a disgusted recoil is the cause of our resistance, sounds to me like nonsense. I can speak, of course, only for my own age, sex, and class, and I readily admit that the Viennese ladies who came to consult Freud may have had either chaster or sillier minds than our own: but I can confidently assert that neither I nor anyone I have ever met suffers from such shrinking nausea in the presence of sexual phenomena as the theory seems to demand. I am not speaking of ethics. A man may, of course, have good reason for checking his own thoughts in certain directions or disapproving many of his own actions, but this is something very different from horror. Indeed such a man is likely to look forward with trembling hope to the day when he will become capable of being really shocked, when a light at present inaccessible reveals as essential darkness what still seems to the natural man in him merely ordinary and familiar. To be sure, infantile perversions are in a different category from normal and adult instincts: but I am not sure that even infantile perversions are quite so shocking to us as is claimed. Is not the attitude towards them which Freud assumes something of a public gesture? Does not Freud underrate the extent to which nothing, in private, is really shocking so long as it belongs to ourselves? *Suum cuique bene olet*. . . I have watched with equanimity the decline and fall of one of my own finger-nails at which I would have shuddered in someone else. Again, the feeling with which we reject the psycho-analytic theory of poetry is not one of shock. It is not even a vague disquietude or an unspecified reluctance. It is a quite definite feeling of anticlimax, of frustration. It is not as if we had drawn an embroidered curtain and found earwigs behind it: it is as if we had drawn it expecting to find a whole new wing of the house and found merely a door that led back into the old familiar dining-room. Our feelings would be most unsuitably expressed by the exclamation 'Not that!' They demand rather the disappointed grunt 'Oh! so that's all'.

In general, of course, the fact that a supposed discovery is disappointing does not tend to prove that it is false: but in this question I think it does, for desires and fulfilments and disappointments are what we are discussing. If we are disappointed at finding only sex where we looked for something more, then surely the something more had a value for us? If we are conscious of loss

in exchanging the garden for the female body, then clearly the garden added something more than concealment, something positive, to our pleasure. Let us grant that the body was, in fact, concealed behind the garden: yet since the removal of the garden lowers the value of the experience, it follows that the body gained some of its potency by association with the garden. We have not merely removed a veil, we have removed ornaments. Confronted with what is supposed to be the original (the female body) we still prefer the translation—from which any critic must conclude that the translation had merits of its own. Or perhaps 'prefer' is the wrong word. We really want both. Poetry is not a substitute for sexual satisfaction, nor sexual satisfaction for poetry. But if so, poetical pleasure is not sexual pleasure *simply* in disguise. It is, at worst, sexual pleasure *plus* something else, and we really want the something else for its own sake.

I now wish to direct your attention to a part of the evidence which is sometimes overlooked. The *Romance of the Rose* seems at first an ideal illustration of the Freudian symbolism, for in it we have not only the garden but the rosebud, which 'means' in the second half of the poem exactly what Freud would have it mean. But the trouble is that the whole process here seems to be the wrong way round. The author, and his readers, start with a fully conscious attention to the erotic material and then deliberately express it in the symbols. The symbols do not conceal and are not intended to conceal; they exhibit. The *Romance* may furnish evidence that gardens and rosebuds are excellent symbols for the things Freud has mentioned: but why are any symbols adopted? It becomes clear that humanity has some motive other than concealment for comparing erotic experience to gardens and flowers: that the erotic experience, thus compared, becomes somehow more interesting—that it is borrowing attractiveness from the flowers, not they from it. And this situation is very common. Donne, in elegies which express quite frankly the most ravenous and unidealized appetite, yet finds that he can improve his poem by comparing his mistress to the earth or to a landscape. Burns tells us that his love is like a red, red rose. These phenomena which might, in a confused glance, be taken to support the Freudian view, are really its refutation. If in the *Romance of the Rose* the erotic thought owes much of its poetical charm to the garden, why should the garden in *Paradise Lost* owe all its poetical charm to the

erotic thought? Eroticism on the conscious level seeks not to conceal, but to decorate, itself with images taken from nature. But that which decorates must be, in itself, and for its own sake, pleasing. A necklace of pearls is put round a woman's neck because we think pearls beautiful. If we thought nothing but women beautiful we could not beautify women—we should have no materials with which to do so.

As far as this I think the Freudians are forced to go, and this is enough to save literature. In order to explain the symbols which they themselves insist on we must admit that humanity is interested in many other things besides sex, and that admission is the thin end of the wedge. Once it is allowed that our enjoyment of *Paradise Lost*, Book IV, is a compound of latent erotic interest and real though conscious interest in gardens, then it becomes impossible to say *a priori* in what proportion the two are mixed. And even if it could be shown that the latent erotic interest was as 90 and the interest in gardens as 10, that 10 would still be the subject of literary criticism. For clearly the 10 is what distinguishes one poem from another—the 90 being a monotonous continuum spread under all our reading alike and affording no ground for the distinctions we actually draw between banality and freshness, dullness and charm, ugliness and beauty. For we must remember that a story about a golden dragon plucking the apple of immortality in a garden at the world's end, and a dream about one's pen going through the paper while one scribbles a note, are, in Freudian terms, the same story. But they are not the same as literature.

That is my defence against the psycho-analytic theory of literature taken in its most uncompromising form. A much more civil and humane interpretation of myth and imagery is, of course, advanced by Jung, and one which in the pages of Miss Bodkin and Dr. Tillyard has found some interesting critical expression. Indeed I have slipped into it at times myself. It may be called the doctrine of Primordial Images or Archetypal Patterns.

According to Jung¹ there exists, in addition to the individual unconscious, a collective unconscious which is common to the whole human race and even, in some degree, to the whole animal world. Being thus common, it contains the reactions of mind or

¹ *Contributions to Analytical Psychology*, trans. H. G. and C. F. Baynes (Kegan Paul, London, 1928), 'Mind and the Earth', pp. 27 et seq.

psyche as such to the most universal situations. Being very primitive, it is pre-logical and its reactions are expressed not in thought but in images. Myths, or at any rate the older and greater myths, are such images recovered from the collective unconscious. Their power of moving us—which Jung himself obviously experiences in a very high degree—is explained as follows:

If this supra-individual mind exists, everything that is translated into its picture speech would be depersonalized and, if it became conscious, would appear to us *sub specie aeternitatis*. Not as my sorrow, but as the sorrow of the world; not a personal isolating pain, but a pain without bitterness that unites all humanity. That this can help us needs no proof.¹

You will gather that Jung, when he wrote that sentence, was thinking mainly of collective reactions to painful situations, expressed in tragic myths: to complete his argument we should therefore add a similar explanation about the joyous myths 'Not as my joy, but as the joy of the world, &c.'

The most interesting thing about this theory is the strength of the emotional reaction it awakes in nearly all those who hear it. Before its scientific merits have been considered, some are instantly repelled; they have a sense of being lured by sirens or got at by mystagogues; they feel something between fright and contempt; and they resolve to remain, at all costs, outside the magic circle, to stick to modern, self-conscious, self-explanatory aesthetics. Others, with equal suddenness, are enchanted: every half-conscious expectation which they have formed in the presence of great art seems to be fulfilled, and their hearts are enlisted on the side of the theory before their heads have had time to examine it. Let me confess at once that I belong, by temperament, to the second group, but have, by my training, acquired a certain sympathy with the first. Thanks to my training I can suspend my judgement about the scientific value of Jung's essay on 'Mind and the Earth': but I perceive at once that even if it turns out to be bad science it is excellent poetry.

This brings us to a most important point—to nothing less, if I were qualified to carry it out, than the psycho-analysis of psycho-analysis itself. Such a hyper-analysis ought to be limited as Freud limited his analysis of whistling, no doubt: it would not refer to

¹ Jung, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

'really scientific people', but to the great mass of ordinary people who read psycho-analytic books with avidity and undergo their influence. I do not think we can doubt that for such people psycho-analysis itself satisfies certain very strong emotional needs. I have just stated Jung's theory in the coldest and least evocative language I could find: let us now see it as it actually appears in the essay on 'Mind and the Earth'.

We have to deal with the beginnings and *foundations* of the mind, with *things that from immemorial time have lain buried in the depths . . .* the unexpected question *whether the unconscious also has dreams . . .* are there resultants of *yet deeper and, if possible, more unconscious* processes? . . . altogether *too adventurous . . .* this mind of *venerable age . . .* a rationalist may laugh, but *something deep* is stirred in us . . . those *far-away* backgrounds, those *most ancient* forms . . . inherited from the *dim ages* of the past . . . I have found that an intellectual apprehension of these things in no way detracts from their value; on the contrary, it helps us not only to feel, but to comprehend their *immense significance . . .* not idly did Faust say '*The Mothers! The Mothers! it sounds so strange*'.

Do not for one moment suppose that I am laughing at Jung: but, quite frankly, my unreflective reaction to all this can only be expressed in some such words as 'Isn't this grand?' *Agnosco veteris vestigia flammae!* Something dim and far removed—buried in the depths from immemorial time—stirring beneath the surface—coming to life—coming up at last—well, I know where I am now. I am with Schliemann digging up what he believed to be the very bones of Agamemnon, king of men: I am with Collingwood discovering behind the Arthurian stories some far-off echo of real happenings in the thick darkness of British history: with Asia in the fourth act of *Prometheus* following her dream down, down into the cave of Demogorgon: with Wordsworth, sinking deep and ascending into regions 'to which the heaven of heavens is but a veil': with Alice, finding beneath the curtain the little door which she could not pass, which led to the delectable garden: with my own past self, hoping, as a child, for that forgotten, that undiscovered, room. I am with British Israelites and Baconians and historians of Atlantis, with Renaissance magicians and seekers for the sources of the Nile. In a word, I am enjoying myself immensely; but the point I wish to make is simply this: that Jung's discussion of 'primordial images' itself awakes a primordial image

of the first water; that Miss Bodkin's *Archetypal Patterns*¹ itself exhibits an archetypal pattern of extreme potency.

I trust that you recognize which it is; it might be called the Recovery Pattern, or the Veiled Isis, or the Locked Door, or the Lost-and-Found. The Freudians will explain it in terms of infantile sexual curiosity—indeed I have seen Alice and the curtained door so explained—but that need not bother us. Such curiosity may, in the life of each one of us, have been the earliest embodiment of it, for all I know: but since then we have learned to prefer it in several more exciting and less obvious forms—the thirst which it kindles in us has long outrun ‘those perishing waters’. It is, indeed, an image inevitably embodying certain absolutely universal features of our experience, religious, intellectual, aesthetic, and sexual alike.

The presence of such a primordial image in the psycho-analytic process itself is, I think, the explanation of its popularity—for the same image is aroused by Freudian analysis too. In this respect psycho-analysis heals some of the wounds made by materialism. For the general effect of materialism is to give you, where you expected an indefinite depth of reality, a flat wall only a few inches away. Psycho-analysis offers you some kind of depth back again—lots of things hidden behind the wall. Hence those who have once tasted it feel that they are being robbed of something if we try to take it from them.

The emotional power of Jung's essay is, as far as it goes, a proof that he is quite right in claiming that certain images, in whatever material they are embodied, have a strange power to excite the human mind. Every sentence he writes helps to prove this. At the same time we may be cautious about accepting his explanation, since there are some grounds for suspecting that the argument seems plausible not because of its real cogency but because of the powerful emotions it arouses. Has Jung, in fact, worked us into a state of mind in which almost anything, provided it was dim, remote, long buried, and mysterious, would seem (for the moment) an adequate explanation of the ‘leap in our blood’ which responds to great myth?

Let us look at the matter in cold prose. We want to know why certain images are exciting. Jung replies, ‘because they are

¹ *Archetypal Patterns in Poetry*, Maud Bodkin (London, Oxford University Press, 1934).

ancient, because, in contemplating them, we are doing what our prehistoric ancestors did'. Now the *idea* that we are doing so is certainly exciting, as all ideas of antiquity are. But this idea is not necessarily entertained by the man in the moment of responding to a myth. He may not have read Jung's theory; he may think that what he is contemplating is quite new: he may not raise the question of its age at all. Nevertheless he will respond. If Jung is right, then, it is not the *idea* of following our remote ancestors which produces the response but the mere *fact* of doing so, whether we are conscious of this fact or no. But there is no evidence that the actual reproduction of prehistoric behaviour, apart from the reflection that we are reproducing it, is at all exciting or impressive. We reproduce very ancient modes of behaviour in all our humblest animal operations. We are at one with our pre-Adamic sires when we scratch; and though I have no wish to underrate the pleasures of a good scratch, I think them very unlike those of a good poem. No doubt even scratching may be made poetical if we reflect on the antiquity of the practice: but the pleasure we shall then get will not be the pleasure of scratching (the οἰκεία ἡδονή) but the pleasure of historico-poetical meditation. In the same way, I suggest, Jung has not explained the pleasure of entertaining primordial images, but exhibited the pleasure of meditating on them and of entertaining, in the process, one particular primordial image, which itself needs explanation as much as any of the others. The *idea* that our sorrow is part of the world's sorrow is, in certain moods, moving enough: the mere *fact* that lots of other people have had toothache does not make toothache less painful.

I have no answer to the question Jung has raised. I can only say—indulging once more in the same primordial image—that the mystery of primordial images is deeper, their origin more remote, their cave more hid, their fountain less accessible than those suspect who have yet dug deepest, sounded with the longest cord, or journeyed farthest in the wilderness—for why should I not be allowed to write in this vein as well as everyone else?

C. S. LEWIS

LORD HERBERT OF CHERBURY: A SPIRITUAL QUIXOTE OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

LORD HERBERT OF CHERBURY (1583–1648) is a fair example of the type of earlier seventeenth-century noblemen whose faces are preserved for us in the portraits of Vandyck. In him, as in the seventeenth century itself, the Middle Ages and the modern world were blended: knightly qualities fusing with the new rationalism, Quixotry with Deism. In his fine physique, his martial ardour, and his exaggerated sense of honour, he represents the declining tradition of chivalry; in his writings we find that this choice barbarian was sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought. It is a type in which the old feudal virtues, though still unextinguished, are passing into elegance, sensitiveness, and virtuosity. We may regard his character and career as an indication of certain profound changes then being enacted in the structure of English society, changes in the course of which the feudal nobility found itself in the position of having fewer and fewer outlets for its warlike prowess and its animal spirits. By the end of the century the chivalric tradition was poorly represented by the debauched gallants of Restoration comedy, and by the next century social evolution had turned many 'younger sons' into Will Wimbles. But already before the Civil War the memoirs and biographies abound in references to younger sons and others who are uncomfortably seeking a justification for their own existence. Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle, speaking of her father's times, observes (for example) that 'the Kingdome being in happy peace with all other nations, and itself being governed by a wise king, King James, there was no employment for heroick spirits', and she praises her brothers as 'excellent soldiers and martial discipliners, being practised therein; for though they might have lived upon their own estates very honourably, yet they rather chose to serve in the wars under the States of Holland than to live idly at home in peace'. George Herbert (younger brother of Lord Herbert), in his prose booklet *A Priest to the Temple* (1632), refers critically to the empty lives of noblemen and country gentlemen. Proclaiming that the national sin is idleness, he exhorts every heir to a great estate to study estate management and law, to seek a seat in Parliament, and as a Member to be not only a 'morning-man but at Committees

also'. 'When none of these occasions call him abroad,' Herbert continues, 'every morning that he is at home he must either ride the Great Horse, or exercise some of his military postures. For all gentlemen, that are now weakened and disarmed with sedentary lives, are to know the use of their arms.' As for younger brothers, 'those whom the parson finds loose, and not engaged in some profession by their parents, whose neglect in this point is intolerable, and a shameful wrong both to the Commonwealth and their own House', he advises all such to leave off spending whole days in dressing, complimenting, visiting, and sporting, and instead to study Law, Mathematics, Fortification, and Navigation; or (he concludes in a burst of mild irritation) 'if the young Gallant think these courses dull and phlegmatic'—and the country parson well knows that this is, in fact, what the young gallant will think—what better can he do than emigrate to America, to those 'new Plantations and discoveries which are not only a noble, but also as they may be handled, a religious employment'. One further illustration may perhaps be found in a work written by the Duke of Newcastle, husband of the above-mentioned Duchess, and commander of the royalist forces in the early stages of the Civil War. During his exile in Antwerp this nobleman published, at great cost, a treatise on horsemanship. Its title-page announced that it came from the hand of the 'Thrice-noble, High, and Most-Puissant Prince, William, Marquis and Count of Newcastle'. One of the several frontispieces showed the Duke 'seated within a chariot drawn by centaurs, with a circle of twenty superb horses kneeling and worshipping him'; in another he is seen flying on horseback through the air, attended by eleven steeds rampant. In all this extravagance we may surely see a symbol of the decline of chivalry; there is in it the note of the flamboyant which betokens decadence. Knightly qualities were becoming quixotic in the seventeenth century. We can admit this while recognizing that the Newcastles and the Lord Herberts, not to mention the Falklands or the Verneys, were a loftier race than their successors of the Restoration, or their place-jobbing and fox-hunting descendants of the next century.

In Lord Herbert's time it was still possible to practise a good deal of romantic knight-errantry. A nobleman's son could accompany one of the great sea-captains on the Spanish Main, or he could fight in the Low Countries. Indeed the wars in the Low Countries,

in the first half of the seventeenth century, amounted to a standing social resource for the English aristocracy; they were a normally-recurring fixture in the seventeenth-century season, analogous to Ascot, Cowes, or the twelfth of August in modern high life. This can be seen in the tone in which Herbert refers to them: the English Ambassador at Venice, Sir Dudley Carleton, invites Herbert to accompany him into Savoy, and 'this offer was gladly accepted by me', says Herbert, 'both as I was desirous to see that Court, and that it was in the way to the Low Country, where I meant to see the war the summer ensuing'. It happened that almost at the very moment when Cervantes was smiling Spain's chivalry away, and Europe was reading of how Don Quixote watched his armour in the trough and was dubbed knight by the landlord of the inn, Lord Herbert was being dubbed Knight of the Bath by James I, with a fantastic pomp which would have delighted Don Quixote's heart. He describes the protracted ritual in his *Autobiography* with evident gusto. On the first day he wore the gown of a Religious Order, had his right spur affixed by the Earl of Shrewsbury, and took the oath never to permit any injustice to be done in his presence, and particularly to come to the aid of 'any Ladies or Gentlewomen that shall be wronged in their honour'; the second day, clad in robes of 'crimson taffety' ('in which habit I am painted in my Study'), he rode from St. James's to Whitehall with his Esquires before him. On the third day he donned a gown of purple satin with a silken string of gold and white knotted on the left sleeve; this string, he explains, knights must wear until they have done some famous deed of arms, 'or till some Lady of Honour take it off and fasten it on her sleeve, saying, I will answer he shall prove a good knight'. Herbert, whose make-up included a strong infusion of coxcombry, complacently observes that he had not long worn his string when 'a principal Lady of the Court, and certainly in most men's opinion the handsomest, took mine off, and said she would pledge her honour for mine; I do not name this Lady' (he adds) 'because some passages happened afterwards which oblige me to silence'. Herbert took his oaths with a literal seriousness worthy of the ingenious knight of La Mancha. Staying soon after at the castle of the Grand Constable de Montmorency, he walked abroad in the meadows one evening with a party of French gentles which included the Constable's granddaughter, aged ten or eleven, who was wearing a riband in her

hair. One of the French chevaliers thought fit to snatch this riband and fasten it to his own hatband; the child asked to have it back, and was refused. She then addressed herself to Herbert, who instantly went up to the chevalier, hat in hand, and courteously demanded to have the honour of returning the riband. A rude answer was followed by an undignified chase, and the Frenchman, finding that Herbert could run faster than he could, tried to return the damsel's riband himself—'when I, seizing upon his arm, said to the young lady, It was I that gave it, and if he dare say that I did not constrain him to give it, I will fight with him'. The Frenchman kept silence, and next day Herbert sent him a challenge by his friend Aurelian Townshend. The Constable, however, intervened to prevent bloodshed, and the saucy chevalier was dismissed from the Castle with a reprimand. 'I proceeded in this manner', Herbert solemnly concludes, 'because I thought myself obliged thereunto by the oath taken when I was made Knight of the Bath'.

After this it will surprise no one to learn that Herbert's *Autobiography* is a veritable manual of seventeenth-century duelling. A large part of his narrative, especially of the time spent at the wars in the Low Countries, is taken up with challenges and their sequels; 'no man', he declares, 'understood the use of his weapon better than I did, or hath more dexterously prevailed himself thereof on all occasions'. A strange feature of most of these affairs of honour, however, is that Lord Herbert was almost invariably deprived, by Fate, of the chance of showing his undoubted valour. It happened repeatedly, either that his adversary failed to turn up, or that authority interposed to prevent the fight. The social historian may here find welcome evidence of the efforts then being made to stamp out this survival of older manners; yet it may be remembered that duelling, with its principle of equality in men and weapons, was itself an improvement upon the medieval 'killing affray', in which a gentleman would lead out a body of retainers to satisfy his wounded honour by slaughtering his opponent. That even this kind of barbarism survived in James I's reign can be learnt from this *Autobiography*, where Herbert relates how he was once attacked and nearly killed in Whitehall by a band of five men under Sir John Ayres, who was suffering (in Professor Trevelyan's phrase) from 'Othello's complaint'. Duelling was, however, less universal in England than in France, where the code of honour

was more stringent, and the noblesse far more exclusively devoted to the career of arms. Herbert met one of the most redoubtable of the French chevaliers, M. Balagny, at a ball given by Henry IV. 'I was told that he was one of the gallantest men in the world, as having killed eight or nine men in single fight, and that for this reason the ladies made so much of him'. From Herbert's tone in describing this champion the reader is prepared for the sequel, namely, that Balagny was afterwards worsted by Herbert in a test of courage at the siege of Juliers. Balagny challenged him with the words: 'Monsieur, they say you are one of the bravest of your nation, and I am Balagny. Let us see who will acquit himself best.' They leapt from the trench and ran emulously towards the enemy's position; but when M. Balagny found that they were met by a storm of bullets, he ran back to the trench with equal speed, and in a crouching posture, exclaiming 'By God, it's hot here!'—while Herbert followed 'leisurely and upright'.

One more incident of the wars is worth relating for the light it throws not only upon Herbert's character, but also upon seventeenth-century etiquette between belligerents, which contrasts oddly with the methods of modern warfare. Hearing, in 1614, that the Spanish and Netherland armies would be in the field that year, he offered his services to the Prince of Orange. The Prince not only accepted him, but carried him about everywhere in his coach with the greatest show of honour and affection, 'to the great envy of the English and French Commanders, who expected that honour'. One day, as autumn was approaching, and both the armies were thinking of retiring to winter quarters, a herald arrived from the Spanish lines, bearing a challenge to single combat from a Spanish bravo. No notice was taken of this challenge until Herbert heard of it, whereupon he instantly asked, and obtained, permission to accept it, and another trumpeter was dispatched to the Spanish camp, bearing Herbert's reply. On this supreme occasion, however, destiny failed not to play its wonted part, for almost immediately there came yet another herald, this time from the Spanish General Spinola, announcing that the challenge had been made without his consent, and could by no means be permitted. Nothing daunted, Herbert got leave to go in person to the Spaniards and make a new challenge on his own account. On his arrival he was received with great affability by the Marquis Spinola, who declined to allow the fight, but, instead, invited Herbert to dinner. There

was nothing for it but to accept, and Herbert, instead of acquiring immortal renown, was regaled with the best cuts from Spinola's joint, and with manly and courteous dinner-table conversation. 'What did Sir Francis Vere die of?' inquired Spinola. 'Of having nothing to do', said Herbert. 'And it is enough to kill a General', was Spinola's rejoinder. It was, in fact, killing knight-errantry in England during the seventeenth century.

But Herbert would not be so representative a figure if he had not been something more than a quixotic knight-errant. He was also a student, a moralist, a philosopher, and a rational theologian. He is reputed the father of English deism. He had a large share of that naïve curiosity—the parent of natural science—which led men like Donne and Browne, in their several ways, to ransack heaven and earth for things rare and strange, and which was inducing cultivated gentlemen to turn their houses into museums of shells, coins, cinerary urns, meteorites, pressed plants, and all the paraphernalia of 'virtuosity'. His own scientific interests lay chiefly in the direction of medicine and botany, and in his suggestions for the proper education of a Gentleman at the University he lays down that 'some good sum of philosophy' should be learnt, together with 'some medical philosophy'. It especially becomes a Gentleman to know something of medicine, for by this art he will gain much credit. He himself has studied the subject extensively, and can not only tell you the names of all the best authors of Antidotaries, Pharmacopoeias, and Herbals, but can also boast of having cured several patients who had been abandoned by the doctors as desperate. 'I believe I know the best receipts for almost all diseases', he remarks, and even favours us with a few examples. Infants (and their nurses), for instance, should be dosed with that specific which is appropriate to their particular hereditary disease; if stone is the family complaint, the nurse should take 'posset drinks' of *saxifrage*; if gout, bathe the child's legs with water in which blacksmiths have quenched their iron. A gentleman should also be a good botanist, plants being made for the use of man. Herbert even describes how a gentleman conducts his botanical researches, and here we get a picture, contrasting strangely with the knightly side of his character, of this natural philosopher searching the fields, hedges, and marshes for their several flora, his servants in attendance carrying botanical text-books with coloured illustrations for purposes of identification. Of Lord Herbert's most

celebrated work, *De Veritate* (1625), I have spoken elsewhere, and it is not my present purpose to refer to it in any detail. What I would here emphasize is mainly the very fact, typical of this age of spiritual hybridism, that the man whose mind and character I have briefly sketched should also be the author of work which occupies an honourable niche in the history of English philosophy. Quixote and quack as he was, he yet set himself with more than common zeal to answer Pilate's question—the question of his own age: what is *Truth*? Anticipating Descartes, he found within the mind itself, in our 'common notions' or natural sense of congruence and fitness, the criterion for distinguishing Truth from Error. Probably the most generally interesting aspect of his work was his attempt to find God Himself within the mind and heart of man. His aim, which was also that of some of the best minds of the century, was to construct a rational theology upon a basis of universal consent, and so to rescue religion from the warfare of the creeds. Herbert's emphasis upon the sufficiency of 'natural' religion can be best understood when we remember how many and how conflicting were the voices of contemporary Christendom, all proclaiming their own 'doxies' to be the only genuine orthodoxy. Going behind the creeds and confessions, behind even Christianity itself, he lays down five fundamental propositions of natural religion: (i) the existence of God, (ii) the duty of worshipping Him, (iii) the necessity of piety and virtue as a part of that worship, (iv) the need for repentance, and (v) the existence of a future state of rewards and punishments. These propositions (amongst which no specifically Christian doctrine is included) are, he claims, common notions inscribed by God upon the minds of all men; this he tries to prove in his treatise on the pagan religions, *De Religione Gentilium*, which must be one of the first sympathetic studies of the non-Christian religions. These five articles represent the fundamentals of all religion, and may therefore be used as a basis for religious 'comprehension'. The appearance of this deistic argument at that historical moment is significant. For since the decline of the Graeco-Roman civilization there had been no awakening of the scientific spirit comparable to that which began in the Renaissance, and it was to be expected that the 'new philosophy' would adopt, towards the doctrines of the traditional faith, an attitude similar to that of Greek philosophy towards the Olympian mythology. Orthodoxy did not emerge unscathed from the con-

troversies of the seventeenth century, and when after the Revolution the turmoil began to die down, it was in a rational deism like Herbert's that theology found a temporary resting-place.

I cannot more fitly conclude than by relating the remarkable circumstance which attended the publication of *De Veritate*, since in Herbert's account of it (at the end of the *Autobiography*) the man and the thinker are united, his vanity combining with his religion to produce a crowning effrontery.

One fair day in summer, my casement being opened towards the South, the sun shining clear and no wind stirring, I took my book *De Veritate* in my hand, and kneeling on my knees, devoutly said these words: O thou Eternal God, Author of the light which now shines upon me, and giver of all inward illuminations, I do beseech thee of thy infinite goodness to pardon a greater request than a sinner ought to make; I am not satisfied enough whether I shall publish this book *De Veritate*; if it be for thy glory, I beseech thee give me some sign from heaven; if not I shall suppress it. I had no sooner spoken these words, but a loud though gentle noise came from the heavens (for it was like nothing on earth) which did so comfort and cheer me, that I took my petition as granted, and that I had the sign I demanded, whereupon also I resolved to print my book: this (how strange soever it may seem) I protest before the Eternal God is true, nor am I any way superstitiously deceived herein, since I did not only clearly hear the noise, but in the serenest sky that I ever saw, being without all cloud, did to my thinking see the place from whence it came.

BASIL WILLEY

LEWESDON HILL AND ITS POET

‘I shall send you by this opportunity Luesdon Hill and Louvet but will keep Madame Roland till I have the pleasure of seeing you.’
Aza Pinney to Wordsworth, 20 November 1795.

AZA PINNEY, whose spelling never was his strong point, did Wordsworth a service in sending him ‘*Luesdon Hill*’. The poem, somewhat overshadowed as it is by the illustrious names with which it is linked in Pinney’s letter, was one peculiarly calculated to interest Wordsworth at the moment, for it was of a kind that he had tried himself, and its subject was a hill that lay at no great distance from his door. Pilsdon, on the slope of which Racedown Lodge, in which at the time he was making his home, was situated, and Lewesdon, known in the neighbourhood as the ‘Cow and Calf’, were companion hills, or rather ‘rival heights’. Wordsworth, being what he was, no doubt climbed most days to the top of one or the other of these.

William Crowe, the author of *Lewesdon Hill*, who had for some years been the Rector of Stoke Abbott, the pretty village lying at the foot of Lewesdon, describes himself as climbing before breakfast on a May morning to the top of the ‘friendly mount’ that had weather-fenced his ‘reed-roof’d’ cottage in the village during the winter months, when the wind had come blowing from the North:

Up to thy summit, Lewesdon, to the brow
Of yon proud rising, where the lonely thorn
Bends from the rude South-east, with top cut sheer
By his keen breath, along the narrow track
By which the scanty-pastured sheep ascend
Up to thy furze-clad summit, let me climb;
My morning exercise; and thence look round
Upon the variegated scene, of hills,
And woods, and fruitful vales, and villages
Half-hid in tufted orchards, and the sea
Boundless, and studded thick with many a sail.

He is too much a lover of the country to despise the beauty that can be in the winter:

The pure and spotless form of that sharp time
When January spreads a pall of snow
O’er the dead face of th’undistinguish’d earth.

But at the moment his welcome is for the renewal of beauty that the spring has brought:

How changed is thy appearance, beauteous hill!
 Thou hast put off thy wintry garb, brown heath
 And russet fern, thy seemly-colour'd cloak
 To bide the hoary frosts and dripping rains
 Of chill December, and art gaily robed
 In livery of the spring: upon thy brow
 A cap of flowery hawthorn, and thy neck
 Mantled with new-sprung furze and spangles thick
 Of golden bloom: nor lack thee tufted woods
 Adown thy sides: Tall oaks of lusty green,
 The darker fir, light ash, and the nesh tops
 Of the young hazel join, to form thy skirts
 In many a wavy fold of verdant wreath.

Having described the beauty of the hill, thus 'gorgeously drest-up' for May, he passes on to comment on all in the landscape before him that appeals either to his eye, or to his imagination—a blend of the poet's, the scholar's, and the antiquarian's. There is much to survey, for the prospect is full of interest and suggestion. He begins with what is immediately before his eyes—the vale of Marshwood with its nameless rivulet welling from the side of Lewesdon itself and flowing along

Untainted with the commerce of the world
 until it

. . . falls into the ravenous sea, as pure
 As when it issued from its native hills.

His eye is caught by a ship sailing on the 'phosphor-seeming' waves and looking black in the golden glare of a patch of sunlight—and by the sheer cliffs of Burton, although these are less picturesque in the morning sun than when ablaze at night with the warning to smugglers to keep to the open sea. Gradually he takes a wider survey of the country before him. He notes the suggestion of the movement of life given in the windings of the steep road:

. . . wide-beaten, bare
 With ceaseless tread of men and beasts and track
 Of many indenting wheels, heavy and light,

along the base of Shipton Hill, and the ancient formidable battlements of Eggardon Hill, with the shadow of old fear still resting

upon them. He hails the fields of Corscombe—although they are at the moment concealed by the ridge looking on to Sherborne—for there the dust of Hollis is mingled with the soil. He thinks of the ‘ancient towers and rich domains’ of Sherborne, lying beyond these. Last of all, his eyes rest on the dim bulk of the Tor of Glastonbury, which even as he looks at it is annihilated by sudden treacherous down-sweeping mists—for the fair May morning is one of mingled sunshine and cloud.

There can be no doubt that *Lewesdon Hill*, even if it were mediocre, would have interested Wordsworth at the moment it came to him, because of the attempt it made to express that upon which he looked daily, and which in some measure he tried himself to express. But there can be no doubt also that this poem is of a quality which would have interested him no matter when it had come to him. Although it is poetry of an unassuming kind, and of a kind that had been often tried during the eighteenth century, it is unmistakably poetry. It is the fruit of a moment of vision, such as never came to Wordsworth himself in Dorset, or such as, if it came to him, remained unexpressed—in which Crowe was keenly conscious of the character of the country before him, all the more so because the touch of sternness, or harshness in it, was for a time disguised by the sorcery of Spring. And one of the elements of this vision was his recognition of the ‘Auncientry’ of Dorset, and of what was formidable in that ‘Auncientry’. This must have pleased Wordsworth, who always combined a feeling for the character of places with a feeling not only for the life of the present but for the life that had been in these places in the past. There were other things to please him, too—the vein of meditation, the touches of political and philosophical comment, perhaps the attack on the doctrine of Necessity, with which Wordsworth was himself at the moment wrestling, and certainly, not least of all, the diction, which, although not quite purged of the conventional phrases of the time, is yet the diction of a scholar whose vocabulary has at once been refined by scholarship and vitalized by contact with the life of a country parish. Especially attractive is the way in which the texture of the poem is renewed and refreshed by the judicious use of provincial and even dialectal words.

In later years Wordsworth can never have read the poem without a stirring of feeling of a very different and a much deeper kind, for the description of the wreck of the *Halswell* which it contains

might almost have been the description of that wreck in which so much of the joy and hope of his own early manhood was sunk:¹

Methinks I see her, as, by the wintry storm
 Shatter'd and driven along past yonder Isle,
 She strove, her latest hope, by strength or art
 To gain the Port within it, or at worst
 To shun that harbourless and hollow coast
 From Portland eastward to the Promontory,
 Where still St. Alban's high-built chapel stands.
 But art nor strength avail her: on she drives
 In storm and darkness to the fatal coast.

Wordsworth was by no means given to over-praising the poets of his day. It is now regarded as one of the distinctions of *Lewesdon Hill* that it was generously praised by him. But when the poem was sent to him in 1795, he was a man so obscure that his praise or blame could influence little the reputation of any poem. He was a young man, dedicated to poetry, believing in his own powers and of great literary ambition, but with everything still to do.

Crowe, on the other hand, was a man just over middle age, passionately fond of poetry but dedicated rather to scholarship than to creative work, very unassuming in his estimate of himself and of little literary ambition, who already possessed, rather because it had come to him than because he had sought it in any ardent way, a modest share of fame.

He was one of the distinguished 'poor scholars' of the eighteenth century. He was born in 1745, at Midgham, in Berkshire, but his boyhood was spent at Winchester, where his father earned a living as a carpenter. His sweet singing as a chorister in Winchester College Chapel first attracted attention to him, and led to his being admitted to the college in 1758, as a 'poor scholar'. In 1765 he passed on to New College, Oxford, probably making his way there, from Winchester, much as the poor scholar Richard Hooker had made his way to Oxford from Exeter, on foot. In 1767 he was made a Fellow of his college, and later he became a Tutor. He married, while at Oxford, according to Moore, 'a fruitwoman's daughter'. In 1782 he became Rector of Stoke Abbott. For the following five years Lewesdon Hill was his neighbour; during these

¹ This was in Bishop Wordsworth's mind when he wrote of the sinking of the *Abergavenny*: 'On Tuesday, February 5th, the ship struck on the shambles of the Bill of Portland, the south side of the isle, near which the *Halswell East Indiaman* had been wrecked in 1786' (*Memoirs*, i. 288).

years too he may have made the acquaintance of the Pinney family, for John Pinney, the Bristol merchant—the father of John and Aza Pinney, Wordsworth's friends—was just about that time preparing the Lodge on the side of Pilsdon as a country residence. In 1784 Crowe, who had a very fine speaking voice as well as a fine singing one, was elected the Public Orator of Oxford University. He left Stoke Abbott for Alton Barnes in Wiltshire in 1787, and he remained rector of this parish until his death in 1829.

At Oxford he was regarded as something of a 'character'. His politics made him a marked man. He was a very vigorous Whig, 'almost a republican', and quite fearless in the expression of his opinions. The force with which he was wont to express himself more than once laid him open to censure. In 1772 some of the lines of his *Ode to the Lyric Muse*, written to be spoken in The Theatre at the Installation of Lord North as Chancellor, were suppressed by the authorities 'on account of their political sentiments'. He sympathized passionately with the movements in Europe tending towards freedom, and welcomed, in his middle age, the opening stages of the French Revolution, no less eagerly than many of the young poets of his day.

He was marked by something unexpected in his humour and his ways. Once, in the early course of the war with revolutionary France, when predicting disaster from the pulpit, he startled his audience by thundering at them the pun:¹

Saepe sinistra cava praedixit ab ilice Cornix.

And learned as he was, he was not altogether academic in his tastes. Although he was greatly interested, not only in history and literature, but in music and architecture, on which he occasionally gave a course of lectures in New College Hall, he had interests quite unconnected with books or with any of the arts. It is characteristic of him that he was fully as much interested in trees as in books. The carpenter's son was no less an authority on the properties of timber than on the properties of metre. The Public Orator of the University was also the Woodman of the Fellows of New College.

And there was about him a certain detachment of spirit that set him apart. He could take his share in the doings of the University, but he was not quite of it. Nor, though he was ready enough to

¹ Adapted from Virgil's Ninth *Eclogue*.

play his part in the doings of the world, was he ever quite a man of the world.

Even more than these things, the frugality of his ways and the simplicity of his pleasures earned for him the reputation of eccentricity. It was his custom, when the time came for him to deliver a public sermon or oration, to walk from his parish to his college, a habit begun perhaps in the early days of poverty, and retained from choice, when economy was no longer a necessity. Those who were soon to listen to him presenting to his university some of the most distinguished men in Europe, might meet him on the roads near Oxford, covered with dust, a quaint plodding figure, with his coat and bundle slung on a stick—or sitting on a bench outside a village inn, enjoying as whole-heartedly as Parson Adams such cheer as the inn could afford, after his dusty walk, and conning, not like Parson Adams a tattered manuscript of Aeschylus—for books he had in plenty—but the manuscript of the address he was about to deliver. His simplicity laid him open to caricature. But many—Moore among them—thought it, spiced as it was by other qualities, entirely natural and lovable. To Rogers Moore wrote of Crowe: ‘. . . there is something very racy even in his lees’.¹ And there could be no question at all as to the excellence of Crowe’s sermons at St. Mary’s, or of the Latin prose of his orations.

The poetry which is the expression of this personality is of very great interest. It offers to the reader, not the excitement of the greatest poetry, but a pleasure yet excellent of its kind, the ‘Special Pleasure’ which minor poetry can give when, although its note is minor, it is yet poetry. It varies, of course, in quality, but always it is the work of a poet. At times, even when the expression is not quite perfect, as in ‘King Richard in the gray Tower sate’, the reader is conscious that there is true poetical feeling at the heart of the poem, and is inclined rather to be grateful for the beauty of which the poet has made him aware, than to be critical of the imperfection in expression. At its best, this poetry is singularly pleasing. Crowe never urged nor forced his Muse. Because he dealt gently with his inspiration the movement of his work is very graceful. When he soars, his flight, though brief, is effortless.

Lewesdon Hill was first published in 1788, a poem by itself, anonymously, but it was reprinted in the course of the year with the author’s name. A third edition of the poem somewhat enlarged was

¹ *Memoirs, Journal and Correspondence of Thomas Moore*, vol. viii, p. 234.

printed in 1804, along with a number of shorter poems. A fourth edition, containing many additional pieces, appeared in 1827.

There are, in the volumes of 1804 and 1827, some translations from the Greek and Latin poets. These give pleasure, for they are the work of a poet, of one who has an eye for beauty, and who can convey through his translation the impression of beauty which caught at his imagination and set him upon the work. The translations of Lucretius, who was evidently Crowe's favourite among the Latin poets, are especially good. They are always dignified; sometimes they have actual beauty.

The translations form a group by themselves. So do the poems written to be recited in the Theatre at Oxford on formal occasions. These have not the charm or grace of the poems in which the poet followed his mood, but they are not without merit. The *Verses* written for the Installation of the Duke of Portland as Chancellor in 1793 anticipate, in their powerful denunciation of war and the miseries of war, Coleridge's *Fears in Solitude*, written five years later.

The remainder of the verse is varied in kind. There are a few excellent sonnets. Of these the *Sonnet to Petrarch* is the best. There is some elegiac verse, always very quiet, and usually dignified and moving. The poem *On the Death of Captain Cook*, in 1779, anticipates very curiously the rhythm and cadence and cumulative sonorousness of Wordsworth's *Elegiac Stanzas*, written in 1806. It has the true elegiac note. There are many graceful occasional pieces. And there are some songs. The best of these is the one which pleased Moore:

To thy cliffs, rocky Seaton, adieu!
 And adieu to the roar of thy seas!
 And adieu to the Girl whose insensible heart
 Is as hard and as sullen as these!

There is also some good humorous verse and some that is satiric rather than humorous: Crowe's wit can be cutting at times, especially when he turns it scornfully on that religious intolerance whose ungenerousness he did not hesitate to denounce seriously and fervently from the pulpit. Among the best of the pieces in the lighter vein are the lines written "To The Honour of the London Pastrycook who marked "No Popery", on his pies":

Children that feed upon thy Pies
 Grow in religion as in size;

While, often as their mouths they ope,
They chew destruction to the Pope.

The two best pieces of all are semi-critical, or at least bookish in their inspiration. The verses on *The British Theatre*, in 1775, are memorable for their fine tribute to the matchless beauty of *Comus*, and their scornful comment on the Restoration Muse:

How the mask'd Fair, in Charles's reign,
Her lewd and riotous Fancy fed
At Killigrew's debauchful scene,
While hapless Otway pined for Bread.
Thus the sweet Lark shall sing unheard,
And Philomel sit silent by:
While every vile and chattering bird
Torments the grove with ribald cry.

The poem on 'the pruning knife of wit' has a much finer edge than that degenerate

blunted Tool
Scarce fit for Oyster-opening Drab,

with which some of the eighteenth-century critics had mutilated the poetry of the preceding age. It is memorable not only for its wit, but for its momentary soaring when it attempts to express the magnificence and strength of Milton's work:

When Critic Science first was known,
Somewhere upon the Muse's ground
The pruning knife of wit was thrown,
Not that which Aristarchus found:
That had a stout and longer blade,
Would at one stroke cut off a limb;
This knife was delicately made,
Not to dismember, but to trim.
With a short harmless edge a-top
'Twas made like our prize-fighting swords;
Pages and chapters 'twould not lop,
But cut off syllables and words.
Well did it wear; and might have worn
Full many an age, yet ne'er the worse;
Till Bentley's hand its edge did turn
On Milton's adamantine verse.

As Lucretius was his favourite among the Latins, so Milton was evidently by him the most beloved and admired of English poets. Crowe rarely mentions Milton without catching fire. For him

Milton was always ' . . . in doctrina, elatione animi, et materia operis sui ipse princeps'.¹

We are always conscious in reading Crowe's poetry of the formidable scholarship behind it all. Even the humorous verse is saturated with scholarship. His *Inscription, For the Granite Sarco-phagus Brought from Alexandria to The British Museum*, which is the fruit of a moment of ironic insight enabling him to throw a searchlight on his subject not unlike that which Fielding flashed through the scarecrow figure of human 'Greatness' in *Jonathan Wild*, is very light in movement.

This was the tomb of Alexander,
The Macedonian great Commander,
Who dealt about his killing blows
Alike among his friends and foes:
Who went on plundering, burning, stabbing,
Carouzing, catamiting, drabbing,
Kept a Castrato for his punk
And died heroically drunk ;
And if at last he went to hell,
I warrant he deserved it well ;
Whate'er is said by flatt'ring Mitford,
Who thinks he is gone to heav'n, and fit for 't.

But every gibe is documented, substantiated by reference to classical authority, as if Crowe were a student of to-day conscientiously annotating a thesis rather than a poet of two days before yesterday toying with an epigram. The habit of the scholar has become second nature to him. He writes a note with little less pleasure than he writes a poem.

Yet all this is done so effortlessly that it graces rather than weights the work. Indeed, some of his notes are themselves works of art. There are one or two in his edition of Collins that are exquisite.

The quality of Crowe's poetry was instantly recognized in his own day, and its originality, although his best known poem was of a kind that had become hackneyed in the course of the eighteenth century. And Crowe was admired, not only by the casual reader who chanced upon his verse, but by his brother poets, the lesser as well as the greater. Moore, who admired *Lewesdon Hill*, was impressed also by the note of nobility in some of the other verse,

¹ *Oratio Creweiana*, 1800.

unassuming though it was, and Samuel Rogers regretted very much that this unpretending work, although it could not fail to be valued where it was known, was not known half as widely as it deserved to be.

Crowe is now not so much neglected as forgotten. It is curious that a poet so much valued by discriminating and by no means over-lenient judges during his lifetime, and whose verse contains the great preservatives of truth, wit, learning, and beauty, should have had this fate. It may be partly because he was a very reticent poet. It is characteristic of him that he was readiest to unlock his deepest feeling in the languages that are in some measure locked—for he wrote Greek and Latin verse as readily as English. ‘I used to think him’, said Dibden, ‘a fine old Roman in his way.’ The most beautiful of all his poems is the Latin monody he wrote on the death of the son killed at Waterloo. The tradition is that Crowe had planted, at the birth of this son, an elm-tree in the garden of his parsonage at Alton Barnes. After receiving the news of his son’s death, he affixed to this elm some Latin verses consecrating the tree for ever to his son’s memory:

Hanc Ego quam felix annis melioribus Ulmum
Ipse manu sevi, Tibi, dilectissime Fili,
Consecro in aeternum, Gulielme; vocabitur Arbor
Haec Tua, servabitque Tuum per saecula nomen.

Many things characteristic of the man are in this poem—fortitude, his love of his son, his love of his country, his home, his garden, his trees, all carried along on a current of deep and very tender feeling:

Quinetiam assidue hic veniam, lentaeque senectae
De Te, dulce Caput, meditando tempora ducam.

There is as much of the soil of England in this elegy as there is in the Lucy poems. If the pang that there is in this poem had been expressed in English instead of Latin, Crowe surely could never have been forgotten by readers of English poetry.

The reticence which is characteristic of him is not, however, sufficient to account for the oblivion time has scattered on his works. Other poets, of the generation just preceding his, not greatly surpassing him in the quality of their work, and certainly inferior to him in range and humanity, have survived, although they made of reticence almost a religion. It is more likely that Crowe has been forgotten, less because of his reticence or his lack of

assumption, than because he began to write at a time when the early poets of the nineteenth century were beginning to create a new world. The poetry which was just on the borderland of this new world, which indeed anticipated it in some ways, was more readily overshadowed and obscured and swept away by the new poetry than the earlier, which was quite different in type and which was the expression of a different mode of thought. Perhaps it is not too much to say that what was best in Crowe was swept into the new poetry and absorbed by it.

It is good to remember that Crowe would have been quite unmoved by this oblivion. No desire for fame troubled him. He was very much a man by himself, and his estimates of things were not always those of other men. He was the last man on earth to confuse substance with shadow. The reality for him was the texture of life as experienced by him day by day, not the shadow that follows upon life. He was quite sincere in the wish he expressed in the poem *De Seipso Mandatum Auctoris*:

Hoc ubicunque cadet jaceat (modo sede sacrata)
 Magno nec luctu dignum neque funere corpus.
 Nec tumuli sit cura mei, nec carmina posco
 Quae poterunt nomenque meum famamque perennem
 In tumulo servare; quid autem fama juvabit
 Posthuma, terrarum quamvis impleverit orbem?
 Spiritus alta petens coeli de vertice terras
 Despiciet, curasque hominum ridebit inanes.

But poetry being a lovely perverse thing, these lines, with their quiet wooing of oblivion, have become his one perfect memorial.

C. M. MACLEAN

A PROBLEM IN EDITORIAL METHOD

THIS article has its origin in recent criticism of the new edition of Scott's *Abbotsford Journals*. The *Journals* were first published in 1890 by David Douglas, who was a bad editor even if judged by the lax standards of his time. Like other editors Douglas professed to have given a complete and diplomatic text of his original, which Lockhart had often garbled; he stated, however, that he had corrected 'obvious slips of the pen' and had omitted 'some details chiefly of family and domestic interest'.

When, forty-five years later, Mr. J. G. Tait examined a photograph of the manuscript (then and now in the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York), he found that in fact Douglas¹ had not seldom been unable to read Scott's failing hand, which is very hard to read, and when he read it had often misunderstood it and had altered it needlessly or erroneously. Professing to correct Lockhart (just as Gosse in his edition of Gray's Letters professed to correct Mitford), he had in fact often copied Lockhart's faulty text. Douglas, who is said to have been an amiable man, was not a diligent or a scrupulous or even a wholly ingenuous editor.

Mr. Tait approached the publishers of Douglas's edition, which though originally in two handsome volumes had been reprinted from plates in one volume, and was (as it still is) on sale at a popular price. They were unwilling to produce a corrected edition. Mr. Tait did not give up; he pursued his laborious task, and gave the world, in 1939 and 1941, two volumes containing two-thirds of the work. This he did at his own charges² at the low price of 5s. a volume; and he even, in compliance with the Act, paid royalties (in respect of vol. 1; the copyright expired in 1940) to the original publishers.

Before he published his edition Mr. Tait had in two pamphlets³ castigated Douglas's errors. These castigations he repeated in the introductions to his two volumes, in which he further cited, in footnotes, some of Douglas's errors.

¹ Or, as tradition reports, the amanuensis he employed but did not mention.

² As the imprint reveals.

³ *The Missing tenth of Sir Walter Scott's Journal*, published 1936, and a second pamphlet printed for private circulation 1938.

The *Times Literary Supplement* for 14 June 1941 contained a long, able, and on the whole unfavourable review of Mr. Tait's performance. The reviewer urged that Mr. Tait ought to have been content with his original exposure, and should not have pursued his predecessor with damnable iteration (the quotation is mine not the reviewer's) in introductions and in footnotes. This he suggested was not only unfair to the reader, but unjust—and even ungenerous—to the reputation of a dead man; for Douglas is not alive to defend himself.

This, I submit, was harsh. I agree that the introductions are strictly otiose, though it may be pleaded that the pamphlets which they repeat are obscure and inaccessible. But it is proper to distinguish between introductions and footnotes. The introductions can be skipped by any reader to whom they are already familiar or whom they do not interest. The footnotes are not so easily ignored. But they are very brief, and hardly any of them are couched in terms of invective. The reviewer even thought that Mr. Tait had done more harm than good: his edition would make against the chances of a new edition for the general reader, without apparatus and with (for choice) some necessary commentary (which Mr. Tait has supplied on a very modest scale). This may be true, but again it is overstated. When Mr. Tait has completed his labours there is no reason why his text and footnotes (which do no harm) should not be reprinted (from plates, or photographically) to form an edition in one volume for the general reader.

The review was supported, in the same issue, by a 'middle' (I suspected by the same hand), which generalized the theme, urging that the errors or follies of former editors should, once detected and established, be forgotten. This thesis I accept in general; but it needs some qualification. Incidentally, I thought the article aggravated the injustice done to Mr. Tait, whose excess of vengeance—taken under extreme provocation—was thus requited by a double frown from the Thunderer.

I was personally implicated in this clash of principles. The *Times* article took Mr. Tait's book as the main text of its sermon; but the writer mentioned also my exercises in Trollopian criticism published in those columns and in the *Review of English Studies*. My work had been of a different kind from Mr. Tait's, consisting not of the correction of error by reference to author's manuscript but of conjectural emendations in modern reprints of Trollope,

which I did not verify—either because I was at the time too ill to consult the manuscripts, or because the manuscripts are in America, or because they have not (so far as I know) survived, or from a mixture of these reasons. My withers were anyhow unwrung; for the writer conceded that it is permissible to publish such guesses ‘in a learned review or a polemical tract’. He went on to say, however, that it is not permissible to perpetuate such corrections (verified or not) in a ‘reading edition’; and his language, as I pointed out,¹ was such as to give readers the impression that I had been guilty of such perpetuation.

The technique of editorial method as applied to English texts has not long emerged from the rudimentary stage. It has made very rapid progress in this century; but it has still, I think, a good deal to learn from the technique of classical criticism, which has been brought to a high polish by the industry and talent, amounting not seldom to genius, of many generations of scholars. Unhappily the exponents of modern editorial practice, being increasingly the product of the Schools of English, and innocent of classical learning in its higher branches, are increasingly ill-qualified to apply the lessons of the past, to fight the Battle of the Books on equal terms. In the comparison of variant texts, and in what may be called stemmatology, the veterans—notably Dr. Greg—and some of their apt pupils—notably Mr. Peter Alexander—have done brilliant work. But these researches have not been very extensively or very successfully pursued beyond the seventeenth century. In emendatory criticism the eighteenth-century Shakespearians burned their fingers badly; and the modern school of Anglo-American editors fights shy of conjectural emendation, though many texts cry aloud for the surgeon’s knife.

The errors of ancient manuscripts must often be discarded, or the wood will be hidden by the trees.² But the readings of these manuscripts cannot be discarded without caution, for you never know where they came from. Even when it has been proved that a manuscript is a copy of an extant manuscript, the later one cannot be thrown away; for there is always more than a possibility that a manuscript B, copied from A, may have been corrected or ‘contaminated’ (perhaps by the *διορθωτής* or ‘corrector of the

¹ *T.L.S.* 5 July 1941.

² Mr. T. W. Allen’s great edition of the *Iliad* is an imposing mass of variants; but only the trained forester can hope to tread its mazes.

press' as we should now call him) by reference to a third manuscript C; and C may be a lost manuscript. Moreover, the errors of a manuscript are of value as showing its character, and gross errors of a certain kind may establish the antiquity and even the trustworthiness of the scribe who committed them; for a man who wrote nonsense may not have been asleep, he may have been copying with scrupulous though ignorant fidelity.

Let me illustrate these principles from the case of Plato. Once Bekker had collated nearly all the extant manuscripts and published his edition recording their variants, it might be said that this need not be done again, nor even revised except in so far as Bekker's collations might be found erroneous. That is broadly true; but some scholars must always have recourse to Bekker's apparatus, not only because it contains good emendations by Renaissance scholars, but also because it contains readings which, however they got into the inferior manuscripts, are or may be ancient and important. For most purposes an eclectic apparatus like that of Burnet (in the Oxford edition), which relies on a handful of manuscripts from which, or from the originals of which, all other extant manuscripts are held to derive, gives as accurate a picture as Bekker's; it of course gives a much clearer and prettier picture. But the rejected manuscripts must sometimes be taken out of the discard.

Again, the errors of a manuscript are an important part of its story. Thus Burnet was able to show that the errors of the Vienna MS. F, which he rescued from the oblivion of Bekker's apparatus, were such as to prove two things: (1) that this manuscript is descended (perhaps not immediately) from an original written in uncials and therefore of great antiquity; (2) that the scribe was unsophisticated, and copied what he thought lay before him without trying to make sense.¹

Now it is not enough to state and illustrate such a thesis as this in a preface; the student should have the evidence *sub oculis* as he reads. Accordingly the general practice of classical editors is to give *all* the variants, not merely orthographical, of the manu-

¹ Another example of evidence from error. I once worked through Burnet's apparatus to the *Republic*, and found that his manuscripts (ADMF) are innocent of minuscule corruption. This proves them to be, if not faithful copies of uncial manuscripts, faithful copies of faithful copies of such originals. I reported my findings to Burnet, who thought them important. I do not know that this kind of negative evidence has been much used.

scripts on which they base their texts. The major errors of these manuscripts must be recorded in every edition purporting to be critical; not merely because there is an element of uncertainty in almost all corrections however probable, but also because each generation of students is entitled to know how far its texts depend on conjecture¹ and how far on a reliable tradition. This important fact must be learned by every student of every author; for the ancient authors exhibit every degree of uncertainty, between such authors as Herodotus or Horace, whose texts are substantially sound, and such as Aeschylus or Catullus, whose texts are corrupt or doubtful on every page.

The same is not true of the unhappy conjectures of modern editors, which should be forgotten as soon as it is generally agreed that they are unhappy; unless indeed they have obtained such currency as to be liable to be quoted, or assumed as the true text, in other books.² This is, or was, true of Pope's notorious *south* for *sound* in *Twelfth Night*.

The case of modern authors is very different. Most first editions, being overseen by their authors, are in little need of correction. If the holograph has survived and is legible, any errors of the press can be corrected with certainty; and once the error has been detected, and its detection published, it may and should be forgotten. Only a few of these errors deserve preservation because they have acquired some currency or notoriety. It may, however, be a question how publication of errors is best effected; and this I discuss below.

A clear case for the recording (I do not say in perpetuity) of the errors of a former editor is that where an incorrect or garbled text has been used as evidence. I recently pointed out that the first edition of Trollope's *Autobiography* is the sole authority in *O.E.D.* for the word *editored*. Now *editored* is a ghost, the manuscript has *edited*. Until the *O.E.D.* is superseded, therefore, any critical edition of the *Autobiography* ought not merely to print *edited* but to record the genesis of *editored*. Douglas occasionally omitted whole sentences from the *Journals*, and I think Mr. Tait was right to

¹ Until the editions of Clark and Wright, few readers of Shakespeare had any means of knowing to what extent they were relying on a modernized, regularized, and (in a minor degree) emended text.

² The *Variorum* edition is usually in practice an *Omnium* (or near-*Omnium*) edition. Happily the law of copyright has almost put an end to these monstrous compilations.

record this in his footnotes, however often he may have mentioned it elsewhere; for a passage so doctored might well mislead a biographer, and so give currency to false impressions. When I edited Jane Austen's letters I spared my predecessor and my readers as much as possible. Thus I seldom recorded the textual errors (which were not serious) of Lord Brabourne's edition. Occasionally he suppressed a sentence. I did not specify his suppressions, but contented myself with a note (to each letter so treated): 'a few lines unpublished' or the like. *Verb. sap.* But I am not sure that I was right. A few of these lines were omitted¹ because Lord Brabourne thought them (in 1884) indelicate. This is not unimportant, for the view has been taken that Jane Austen was the embodiment of nineteenth-century prudishness—which is very far from being true. More impressive examples could easily be multiplied. The expurgated texts of Pepys and Greville give an imperfect picture of the men and their times; and complete editions ought surely to indicate the passages which were withheld from the nineteenth-century historians.²

To complete the picture I add a qualification which is hardly relevant to my theme. It should be remembered that appeal from print to manuscript is not always valid. There is an intermediate stage, for authors make changes when they read their proofs, and proofs are commonly destroyed. The editor of a doubtful passage, which has no counterpart, or no identical counterpart, in the manuscript, must use his wits. Again, the printer's copy, even if holograph, may contain *lapsus calami*; if it is not holograph but a copy (e.g. by one of Wordsworth's ladies, or the lady who habitually copies the present writer's scrawls), or has been typed by a stenographer, it has less than the author's full authority.

The outstanding examples of English texts which should be handled with respect for tradition, however erroneous, are the translation of the Bible, and Shakespeare. The lesson of the Revised Version of sixty years ago is before our eyes. The Revisers

¹ e.g. in Letter of 12 May 1801 the words 'I am proud to say that I have a very good eye at an Adultrous, for . . . I fixed upon the right one' are suppressed.

² For the same reason the date or dates of the publication of posthumous books should be given in *every* edition. If Pepys's or Boswell's journals are reprinted (it might happen) with an indication of the dates of composition only, the innocent reader might well suppose that the former was known to Hume and the latter to Macaulay.

were, in the opinion of the best scholars even of their own time, needlessly cautious and timid, and put many readings in the margin which they knew ought to be in the text. But the world has not forgiven them for their innovations, and they are condemned hardly less for their courage in restoring the text,¹ where the Authorized Version had a false text, and in correcting the errors of the Authorized Version, where it mistranslated a true text, than for their pedantries and indiscretions in tampering with the English of the Authorized Version when no change was needed. Of our own poet it may be said that there are two Shakespeares. There is the Shakespeare whose plays were acted in his time and published in or before 1623; and there is the Shakespeare who for three centuries has been acted, read, quoted, and unconsciously assimilated by the mass of Englishmen, in a form more or less accommodated to the spirit and conventions of each age, and more or less altered—for better or worse—by the ingenuity of successive editors. There is still need for an edition of the first Shakespeare. This would jettison all evidence of quartos and folios which can be shown to be irrelevant, as derived solely from an earlier print; all modernizations or adaptations; and all conjectures deemed improbable, whatever their subsequent currency. But such a Scholar's Shakespeare would not be the whole of Shakespeare; it would often signally fail to give us the Shakespeare which Garrick or Irving mouthed, which Lamb or Coleridge quoted, which Everyman and Everywoman saw, and read, and dreamed.

An extreme example of error hallowed by use and piety is furnished by a famous passage in the New Testament, which has in recent years been upset by a sensational discovery.² It is now known that the words

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

contain a misreading and a compensatory interpolation. The

¹ I once heard a famous writer (a clergyman) in a public lecture scold the Revisers for iconoclasm in tampering with 'the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail' (*Eccles.* xii. 5). The original word, he admitted, does not mean *desire*, it means the *caperberry*, which is different, and not only verbally different, for the connotation is not fully brought out by *desire*. But then, the lecturer said, *desire* is so much more beautiful. That is eminently truth, but it is not precisely translation.

² The discovery was made by Mr. T. C. Skeat of the British Museum, who

phrase 'how they grow' is a (very slight) misreading of words which mean 'that they card not'. Once the mistake had been made, the words following, 'neither do they spin', lost their grammatical connexion; and 'they toil not' was inserted to restore grammar and—as we shall see—symmetry. The true text is therefore:

Consider the lilies of the field, that they card not, neither do they spin; and yet, &c.

Of the two errors the interpolation is the more serious; 'how they grow' is in itself unobjectionable, though it violates the correspondence of the passage with its parallel

Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, &c.

On the other hand 'they toil not' is bad in itself. For 'they card not neither do they spin' gives the two major operations which convert the fruits of the earth into raiment, as 'they sow not neither do they reap' gives those which convert the fruits of the earth into food. Now 'toil' is a general term, not distinguished from 'spin' and not proper to the manufacture of cloth.

Thus the passage in its traditional form is both awkward and redundant. Yet who, without positive evidence, would have dared to impugn its beauty? And what future editor will dare to discard without comment a reading sanctioned by centuries of familiar reverence?

I have for many years been collecting materials for a new edition of Johnson's letters, and have not abandoned hope of completing my task.¹ I have given much thought to the problem of compression. Hill's edition is in two substantial volumes. My text will be much bulkier than his, both because there are many new letters to add to his 1,000-odd, and because it seems proper to include the letters which, because he had printed them in his *Life*, Hill omitted from his edition of the *Letters*. Moreover, my apparatus will be far

noticed that in Codex Sinaiticus, Matthew vi. 28, the word *αὐξάνει*, is an erasure, and was able to detect the original reading *ὀξέει* (i.e. *ξάλει*—the difference between *ε* and *αι* is merely one of spelling).

¹ It was in 1926 that *Essays and Studies* (at the instance of Robert Arundell Hudson, *quem honoris causa nomino*) published my proposals for a new edition.

more complicated. For the letters to Mrs. Thrale Hill relied on Mrs. Piozzi's print of 1788. I shall have to supply her omissions, which are chiefly of proper names, from a variety of sources, which it may be instructive to summarize.

- I. The originals if I have seen them ; distinguishing :
 - (1) words which can be read without doubt, despite Mrs. Piozzi's use of scissors, ink, salts of lemon, and pieces of paper pasted over the suppressenda ;
 - (2) words which can be restored with more or less of certainty from their length and from traces of ascenders or descenders (the absence or presence of a stroke makes it certain that a name concealed as P—— is not *Pratt*, since the tops of the *t*'s must show above the erasure, but may be *Percy*, since a descender does show below).
- II. Samuel Lysons' copy, with supplements based on access to the originals ; he was the editor of 1788. But he is not *always* right.
- III. Malone's copy, with supplements based on knowledge of the persons. He is generally right.
- IV. Baretti's copy (known to Hill), with supplements based on knowledge, which, however, was distorted by passion. He is often wrong.
- V. Mrs. Piozzi's copy, with occasional supplements made many years later and not always right.
- VI. Guessing.

Much cry for very little wool ; but I shall be scolded if I do not give the evidence.

How then shall it be divulged ? *The Times* writer has his solution ready : let me publish all this in a learned journal.¹ That is very well. But I see two objections. The space and patience of even *The Times Literary Supplement*, and the patience of its readers, are not inexhaustible ;² the resources of more technical journals are limited. Moreover it is difficult to make such publication intelligible (let alone readable) without prolixity. A classical editor, pent within the narrow bounds of the Clarendon Press rules (*quorum pars magna fui*), or of stereotype plates restricting afterthoughts (*στερεπὰ γὰρ ἀνάγκη*), has been accustomed to clear the decks with a full explanation in the *Classical Review*. But his problem is not

¹ A distinction is indeed implied, in his article, between critical editions and 'reading' editions for the general public. But in practice this distinction is often not helpful ; there will not be two new editions of Johnson's letters in our time.

² I hasten to add that the *T.L.S.* has shown extraordinary hospitality to my Johnsonian and Trollopian emendations.

mine. An editor of Plato's *Republic* deals with an audience which has the text by heart. He has but to quote a word or two, and he might be Habakkuk Mucklewrath preaching to the Covenanters. At the worst he knows that the reader has the text at hand and can consult it in a moment if he is told to look at 535*a*. But if I cite a passage from Trollope, I count on no such familiarity. I must either give full text and context, or I must ask my reader to arm himself with a *named* text; and both he and I must count the lines, for modern prose texts are equipped with no standard numeration which finds the place in any edition the world over.

It follows that an edition is often the most convenient and least expensive medium for the publication of textual minutiae. This, I agree, is unfortunate; but there are compensations. From this nettle, danger, I pluck this flower, edification. The intensive study of textual particulars is often tedious and barren, and I would not seem to rate it too high. But it does furnish for some ardent minds a discipline hardly to be found elsewhere. It teaches the reader not to be easily satisfied. A classical student, painfully plodding through a page of Pindar, may seem to have little to show for his labour; perhaps he has not added a word to his vocabulary. But he can say that he has weighed the grammatical relations of every word, the quantity of every syllable, the value of every allusion, the credibility of every variant; and if he has done his work aright, the lovely lines will be the fresher, not the staler, for his application. When English speakers study the classics of their own tongue there is of course no occasion for this intensive verbal cultivation.¹ Yet our poets abound in passages grammatically obscure; and there was a time when the average reader or student was content to believe that he apprehended the meaning without too nicely inquiring into syntactical relations. I trust that I am flogging a dead horse.

I am even bold to suggest that the General Reader, that fetish of the scholar's worship, who reclines, a Turk on his divan, sipping

¹ In one respect English Literature, up to 1800 and even later, demands greater, not less, vigilance in the reader. Shakespeare is again and again misread from sheer ignorance that the meaning or the colour of a word has shifted. In later authors this trap is less dangerous but better hidden. The most famous example is perhaps Johnson's application to *Lycidas* of the term *disgusting*. It has been pointed out that Johnson did not mean what we should mean if we used the word; but how many of Johnson's (or alternatively of Milton's) detractors know it?

the cup of letters with consummate indolence and yet—it is always assumed—with the nicest discrimination, will take no harm if an occasional pedantry is forced on his notice. It will not hurt him to be told that the printed word is fallible, or that the humble drudges who minister to his pleasure have been at some pains to get it right.

R. W. CHAPMAN

STYLE

'STYLE is the man' is a saying we often hear; and like other such, it is true, but not all the truth. For style is the manner, as distinct from the matter; and although for persuasion and for attraction the manner is more important than the matter, yet it is the matter that matters in the long run. If a pleasing and beautiful style covers no real and notable thought, it is forgotten; but if the thought is there, that remains. And such is the nature of man, that the sincerity and truth of the inward being makes itself clear through the words, although the manner of putting it into words be not the same in all speakers. Every strong character has his own manner, or at least, there is something in the speaker's character that stamps it upon many and various kinds of words, so that with the strongest characters we cannot mistake who the speaker is. Bach and Handel in music, Dante and Pindar and Aeschylus in letters, are unmistakable even in a short phrase, and that although there may be infinite variety in the ornaments; for Bach at least was a master of every kind of musical style, light or weighty, gay dance or solemn dirge.

It is one of our happiest tasks to understand style, to examine how each master uses words for the desired effect. The very simplest words have often the most profound effect on our feelings. When Lucretius says of the dead—

Morte obita quorum tellus amplectitur ossa,

he gives us a feeling of perfect peace, and earth is seen as the protecting mother with her child in her arms. This is even simpler than Shakespeare's

After life's fitful fever he sleeps well:

and to compare the two helps us to understand the genius of the two languages. Both sentences depend as much on the sound as the sense: the Latin upon its long open vowels, the *o* prevailing and contrasted with *a*, which leads to the expressive verb which is in itself a picture; and the English upon its fretting fitful *f*'s leading to the two long monosyllables at the end, each able to be prolonged at will, the one by its vowel, the other by its liquid, fading away into the air. Without the sound, these verses are mere statements of fact; they must be spoken, and spoken with care. And

the crowning effect is got in Latin by a long word, in English by two words of one syllable. So when you come to more elaborate style, and compare Cicero with Burke, you see that Cicero moves the feelings by resounding torrents of long words, Burke by short ones. I do not mean that Burke cannot use the resounding period, he does it to perfection, but this is because Latin style, and Cicero in particular, have been adopted whole into English and transformed the shape of the language; yet the national genius has not been changed, and we still feel most profoundly what is said in our native style. So Burke himself, when he is moved, as in the sentence: 'Our constitution is like our island, which uses and restrains the subject sea: in *vain* the *waves* roar.' The national genius has been shown, and preserved for ever, happily for us, in the sounds and cadences of our liturgy and the English Bible, and those cadences which move us in literature will be found to echo these.

We have erred and strayed from thy ways *like lost sheep*:

Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord; and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of *this night*.

We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the *last trump*.

Think how the effect would be made almost trivial if we said, 'at the last trumpet'.

Not less in the lay writers of that great age the cadences of feeling are heard. Pliny's *Natural History* has no more style than the Stores Catalogue; but hear what Philemon Holland makes of the Dog-star (ii. 40):

Who knoweth not, that when the Dogge starre ariseth, the heat of the Sun is fiery and burning? the effects of which starre are felt exceeding much upon the earth. The seas at his rising do rage and take on, the wines in cellars are troubled, pooles also and standing waters doe stirre and move.

Listen to the quick rising rhythm at first, then the falling rhythm with those long single syllables at the end.

So Greek has its own way, singing like a lark, dancing along like a dryad, yet capable of the most solemn resounding majesty; and the great men have each his own manner. With Homer, it is the

cumulative effect which makes a style always noble and always beautiful; but he too can paint a picture in the simplest words—

παρ ποταμὸν κελάδοντα, παρὰ ῥοδανὸν δονακῆα—

hear the sound of the vowels, *a-o* ending in a prolonged *ea*:

where the rustling reed-bed quivers, where the rushing river rolls.

And contrast the lamentable drawled vowel¹ *η* where Priam speaks to Achilles of his dead son,

*μή πώ μ' ἐς θρόνον ἴζε, διοτρεφές, ὄφρα κεν Ἔκτωρ
κῆται ἐνὶ κλισίησιν ἀκηδής:*

or his first words to Achilles, simple as a child's, with a rounder modulation of the vowels and the liquids—

μνήσαι πατρός σοῖο, θεοῖς ἐπιείκελ' Ἀχιλλεῦ.

Hear also the words of Oedipus to his daughters,

*ὦ τέκνα,
οὐκ ἔστ' ἔθ' ὑμῖν τῆιδ' ἐν ἡμέραι πατήρ:*

and when he goes on, disclosing at the last the deep love and gratitude which he had felt for their care throughout his troubles,

*ὄλωλε γὰρ δὴ πάντα τὰμά, κούκέτι
τὴν δυσπόνητον ἕξετ' ἀμφ' ἐμοὶ τροφήν·
σκληρὰν μὲν οἶδα, παῖδες· ἀλλ' ἐν γὰρ μόνον
τὰ πάντα λύει ταῦτ' ἔπος μοχθήματα·
τὸ γὰρ φιλεῖν οὐκ ἔστιν ἐξ ὅτου πλέον,
ἢ τοῦδε τάνδρος ἔσχεθ'.*

So in the simplest of everyday language the poet puts the truth, that love is the greatest of all things. So Dante, in language of almost equal simplicity, sums up the dream which began in the filth and horrors of Malebolge, and ends in the most magnificent vision of all the poets—

*All' alta fantasia qui mancò possa:
ma già volgeva il mio disiro e il velle,
sì come rota ch'egualmente è mossa,
l'amor che move il sole e l'altre stelle.*

To understand these things is necessary if we would translate from one language into another. We can show learners why one turn is good and another bad, and they will learn how to express the same thought or feeling in very different ways, according to what is natural to the speaker of each language. When we turn

¹ Greek *η* has the sound of French *é*, the bleat of a sheep.

from the greatest to the competent literary man, we find a diversity of manners which may often be reproduced in another language; but besides that, we find manner degraded into mannerism, and it is essential to point this out. Mannerisms must be brushed away. Some of them are pretty, some are only startling, and a mannerism is often affected, simply to startle, as Carlyle's, or to titillate a jaded taste, as those of the 'modernists' in every age, or to show off. Such mannerisms are insincere, and insincerity is the worst vice of writers, as truth is their best virtue. To illustrate this, I have taken the simple tale of Mr. Jingle and his dog, and put it into something like a few well-known styles:

Ah—you should keep dogs—fine animals—sagacious creatures—dog of my own once—pointer—surprising instinct—out shooting one day—entering enclosure—whistled—dog stopt—whistled again—Ponto—no go—stock still—called him—Ponto, Ponto—wouldn't move—dog transfixed—staring at a board—looked up—saw an inscription—Gamekeeper has orders to shoot all dogs found in the enclosure—wouldn't pass it—wonderful dog—valuable dog that—very. *Pickwick Papers*.

Let us take Gibbon first: everyone can see that he has a style. And it is not an ignoble style, not a mere affectation; it is dignified, sonorous, and shows an invariable sense of order, like the great nation which he describes. Where it fails to be admirable is in its monotony; good style must vary along with its matter. Even in his autobiography (p. 105) where he describes his one love-affair, he cannot put off the pose, although a real feeling shines through it.

I hesitate (he says) from the apprehension of ridicule, when I approach the delicate subject of my early love. By this word I do not mean the polite attention, the gallantry, without hope or design, which has originated in the spirit of chivalry, and is interwoven with the texture of French manners. I understand by this passion the union of desire, friendship, and tenderness, which is inflamed by a single female, which prefers her to the rest of her sex, and which seeks her possession as the supreme or the sole happiness of our being. I need not blush at recollecting the object of my choice; and though my love was disappointed of success, I am rather proud that I was once capable of feeling such a pure and exalted sentiment.

He proceeds to describe the lady; and then goes on:

but on my return to England I soon discovered that my father would not hear of this strange alliance, and that without his consent

I was myself destitute and helpless. After a painful struggle, I yielded to my fate; I sighed as a lover, I obeyed as a son.

Gibbon's trick is a balancing of sections, usually three, sometimes two, sometimes a combination of both in one group. The sections are of like shape and often have like sound, the groups of words answering to each other; and he has a liking for words of Latin derivation. But he tells his story in a straightforward way. And now let Gibbon tell the story of Ponto.

The attachment of the canine race to the human is inspired by the united influence of hope and of fear. The iron tube, at once deadly and mysterious, which the master carries tucked under his arm, is the object of their fondest devotion; it is at once the memorial of past triumphs and the symbol of triumphs to come. To abandon that sacred ensign in the hour of danger is esteemed no less impious than ignominious; and these motives, which derive their strength from the imagination, are enforced by fears and hopes of a more substantial kind. Regular food, occasional dogs' biscuits, and a comfortable kennel, alleviate the hardships of the venatorial life; whilst on the other hand, it is impossible for cowardice or disobedience to escape the severest punishment. The beaters are authorized to chastise with blows, the keepers have a right to punish with death; and it is an inflexible maxim of cynegetical discipline that a good dog should fear his master far more than the rabbits or partridges which he puts up.

But while the moral qualities of the canine race are thus remarkable, their intellectual abilities are so in no less a degree. This will appear from the following narrative, which combines a surprising singularity with unimpeachable veracity.

Arms in my hands, and fury in my looks, I had set forth on the bloody quest, taking with me a hound of the Molossian breed, whose courage was equalled by his skill. Whether he aimed at the head or the heart of the animal, the wound was alike certain and mortal; neither the huge bulk of the elephant nor the scaly hide of the rhinoceros could defend them from his stroke. Fired with the spirit of the chase, I entered the forest, and noting as I thought the pointed horns of a bison, I emitted that shrill whistling sound which was wont to bring the Molossian to my side like a lightning flash: but no Molossian came. Thrice I called on him by name, thrice I stood in silent suspense, until awed by the majestic aspect of my adversary, I turned, not to flee, but to seek a strategic support; yet when I emerged from the arboreal shades, I saw my hound standing as if turned to stone, his eyes fixed on a tablet which hung from a superincumbent bough. Upon this was inscribed, in the noble capi-

tals which we owe to the inventive genius of the Phoenicians, the minatory legend—

GAMEKEEPER HAS ORDERS TO SHOOT
ALL DOGS FOUND IN THE ENCLOSURE.

This salutary warning the intelligent quadruped had observed, and drawing the necessary conclusion, he had left my summons unanswered: he sighed as a dog, he disobeyed as a candidate for continued existence. Thus the power of intellect prevailed alike over the fear of punishment, and the habit of subordination; I could not but admit the propriety of his ratiocination, while I admired and wondered at the profundity of his erudition.

Another well-known stylist is Thomas Carlyle, who burst into the prim and polished literary world of a hundred years ago with a rough uncouth jargon such as they had never heard before. He was in fact intoxicated with the draughts of knowledge which he swilled with such gusto, his ears full of the language of the Bible and the denunciations of the Scottish pulpit. With this language he played like a mischievous urchin, and there is no doubt that this was the real joy of his life. For the passion of his life was anything but joy; he believed himself to be a kind of prophet, born to denounce the wickedness of the world, to break down idols, and to set up true gods, which he was sure no one would ever worship before the abomination of desolation should come. With all this, he has real genius; not only great intellectual ability, but the artist's power of seeing visions and describing them. Most of his preaching is dead; but many of his heroes live, and his descriptions of the French Revolution are like scenes shown amid thunder and lightning.

Let Carlyle then resume his prophet's robe, and try to convert Ponto the dog from the error of his ways.

And yet let no meanest cur lay flattering unction to his soul. Lewis was a ruler—art not thou also one? His broad France, look at it from the fixed stars, is no wider than thy stony kennel, where thou too didst faithfully or didst unfaithfully. Thy day of trial will come, will bring something, nay something great, momentous, indispensable; so much cannot be doubted; yet still the question were: Specially *what*? To enter, or not to enter, that is the question; which shall decide eternally whether thou have thy part with sheep or goats. Simple thy task: ever to follow hard on thy master's heel, to run this

way, that way, to range ahead and put up his game, one ear pricked forward, one back, that no faintest whistle of summons fall unperceived. So they went forth on that ominous morning, teeming with great issues. The master, indomitable, unterrifiable, bursts his way through the fence, into the thicket, is lost to view. Wilt thou follow? Wilt thou do the dog's immemorial part? or wilt thou fail in his hour of need? Hear'st not the crackling underwood, the sounds of struggle, grunts, moans, man's courage against the dinosaurian violence of the Beast? Hear'st not the shrill whistle, the urgent call? In his extremity he forgets not thy name; so much does thy master love thee—and thou? Alas, thou hearest! or having ears, thou hearest not, for thou standest petrifact, immovable, every hardest hair bristling on that unhappy occiput, which beyond a peradventure never yet encased so fragose and sentiferous a problem. Has dog for long generations rested on mere formulas which were grown hollow by course of time, does no Reality any more exist, but only Phantoms of realities? He stood—he went not in: singular but undeniable, miraculous or not. But to gauge and measure this immeasurable Thing, and what is called *account for it*, and reduce it to a dead-logic formula, attempt not!

✓Yet he did attempt, the indomitable, the unterrifiable, the pea-green Incorruptible, to *account for* his dog's unhithertoknown superfluity of disregardfulness. Out he came from the covert, as pea from popgun, shot into the dog's sphere of vision: yet the dog—eyes had he, but he saw not, neither gave he tongue, his gaze fixed on the threatening board. What is this placard of enormous size? What say those threatening capitals, threatening indeed no less than Capital Punishments? 'GAMEKEEPER HAS ORDERS TO SHOOT ALL DOGS FOUND IN THE ENCLOSURE.' And it was for this that his master had spent laborious days—teaching his dog to read! Alas for canine ingratitude! Himself, the master had put into that unrelentful paw the steel now to be set to his own throat. And thou, poor weak sinner! Thou hast failed in loyalty to the Immensities and the Eternities, thy hole is dug deep in Malebolge, the devil has thee fast.

Macaulay also has a style: and whereas Carlyle has left hardly a trace of his oddities upon the language, Macaulay's style has corrupted two whole generations, who have imitated his faults and not his virtues. Macaulay's famous *History* came like a blaze of sunlight over the world. Since he wrote largely from contemporary documents, and not from other men's histories, he saw clear pictures, and he had the art to describe them clearly. Moreover, his vision was clearer than his imagination or his reasoning,

and thus he became absolutely certain that he was right and everybody else wrong, and he drove home this conviction by saying one thing after another as if a matter of fact, without any qualification or hint of connexion. Was it Thackeray who said, 'I wish I could be as sure of anything as Macaulay is of everything!'

And this pistol-shot style, bang bang bang, with its absolute certainty of detail, leaving the scraps of picture, like a jigsaw puzzle, for you to fit together, is the easiest thing in the world to imitate; so everyone did imitate it, and does so still, and it is a maxim amongst the pundits of school and university that the word 'for' must never be used in English. *Nam, enim, namque, γάρ*, might as well not exist in Greek or Latin for all the good they do to the English translator: such words are 'not English style'. I need hardly say that this is wrong. Macaulay himself has a great many reasoned sentences, and indications of time, manner, cause, and effect, but they are obscured by the pistol-pops. And even the pistol-pops can be grouped. The connexion of thought is there, for Macaulay was no fool; but the expression is at fault. And the remarkable thing is, that long sentences are quite as easy to take in as these short ones are, bit by bit, while the general thread is so well kept in a good sentence, that the whole is easy to take in, so long as you keep your attention upon it. It is not the length of a sentence, or a period, that matters, it is the length of the parts; and our best writers, who always feel their writings as speech, and do speak them, at least in their minds, never make their parts too long to speak in a breath, nor too complicated to be understood as they come. I have found this by reading aloud, as I used to do to my boys every Sunday evening. It is easy to know when boys are attending: the look of intelligent attention, for one thing, is quite different from the look of blank innocence which may cover all the mischief in heaven or earth; and there are always involuntary movements or murmurs or laughs, if they are attending, which come at the right places, and these are quite different in sound from the artificial movements or laughs which deceive the inexperienced man, but mean only, 'he expects a laugh here, so let him have it'. In reading aloud, then, I find that the attention and the appreciation do not slacken for the length of a sentence. The long roll of Milton or North or Philemon Holland is as clear as the pistol-pops; that noble prayer of St. Chrysostom in the morning

service is all one sentence, and as clear as daylight; but the long sentences of Dickens, and still more those of modern novelists, are often difficult to understand just because they are difficult to read, and they are difficult to read because the parts cannot be spoken in one breath. The reaction of this vice upon writing has spoilt many translations of the classics. I have found in the course of my duties as critic that translators habitually make Cicero and Demosthenes say things which no speaker would have said, because they would not pass over to the audience. They write in a library, and their sentences would not pass muster on a platform. No good speaker, for example, would ever begin by saying, 'I hold no brief, gentlemen, I have not come here, gentlemen, this evening', because he would lay himself open to the retort—"Then how did you get here at all at all?"

As an extreme specimen of the long sentence which is not difficult to follow, I would cite the Preamble to the Appeals Act of 1533, the explanation and justification of the Reformation, which was not a despotic act of Henry VIII, but a demand from a united House of Commons for relief from intolerable exactions (Froude, *Hist. of England*, i. 428):

Whereas by divers sundry old authentic histories and chronicles, it is manifestly declared and expressed, that this realm of England is an empire, and so hath been accepted in the world; governed by one supreme head and King, having the dignity and royal estate of the imperial crown of the same; unto whom a body politic compact of all sorts and degrees of people, divided in terms by means of spirituality and temporality, be bound and ought to bear, next to God, a natural and humble obedience; he being also institute and furnished, by the goodness and sufferance of Almighty God, with plenary, whole, and entire power, pre-eminence, and authority, prerogative and jurisdiction, to render and yield justice and final determination to all manner of people resident or subject within this his realm, without restraint or provocation to any foreign prince or potentate of the world: the body spiritual whereof having power, when any cause of the law divine happened to come in question, or of spiritual learning, [such cause being] declared, interpreted, and shewed by that part of the body politic called the spirituality, now usually called the English church; (which also hath been reported and also found of that sort, that both for knowledge, integrity, and sufficiency of numbers, it hath always been thought to be, and is also at this hour, sufficient and meet of itself, without the intervening of any exterior person or persons, to declare and determine all such doubts, and to administer all such offices and

duties, as to the administration of their rooms spiritual doth appertain:;) and the laws temporal, for trial of property of lands and goods, and for the conservation of the people of this realm in unity and peace, having been and yet being administered, adjudged, and executed by sundry judges and administrators of the said body politic called the temporality: and seeing that both these authorities and jurisdictions do conjoin together for the due administration of justice the one to help the other: and *whereas* the King's most noble progenitors, and the nobility and commons of the said realm at divers and sundry Parliaments, as well in the time of King Edward I, Edward III, Richard II, Henry IV, and other noble Kings of this realm, made sundry ordinances, laws, and provisions for the conservation of the prerogatives, liberties, and preëminences of the imperial crown of this realm, and of the jurisdiction spiritual and temporal of the same, to keep it from the annoyance as well of the See of Rome as from the authority of other foreign potentates attempting the diminution or violation thereof, as often as from time to time any such annoyance or attempt might be known or espied: and notwithstanding the said good statutes and ordinances, and since the making thereof, divers inconveniences and dangers not provided for plainly by the said statutes, have risen and sprung by reason of appeals sued out of this realm to the See of Rome, in causes testamentary, causes of matrimony and divorce, right of tithes, oblations, and obventions, not only to the great inquietation, vexation, trouble, costs, and charges of the King's Highness, and many of his subjects and residents in this his realm: but also the delay and let of the speedy determination of the said causes, for so much as parties appealing to the said Court of Rome most commonly do the same for the delay of justice; and forasmuch as the great distance of way is so far out of this realm, so that the necessary proofs, nor the true knowledge of the causes, can neither there be so well known, nor the witnesses so well examined there, as within this realm, so that the parties grieved by means of the said appeals be most times without remedy; in consideration hereof, all testamentary and matrimonial causes, and all suits for tithes, oblations, and obventions, shall henceforth be judged in the spiritual and temporal courts within the realm, without regard to any process of foreign jurisdiction, or any inhibition, excommunication, or interdict:

Persons procuring processes, inhibitions, appeals, or citations from the Court of Rome, as well as their factours, comporters, counsellors, aiders, and abettors, all and every of them shall incur the penalties of praemunire; and in all such causes as have hitherto admitted of appeal to Rome, the appeals shall be from the Archdeacon's court to the Bishop's court, from the Bishop's court to that of the Archbishop, and no further. (24 Henry VIII, cap. 12.)

That noble sentence is the antithesis to Macaulay; and let Macaulay now tread the stage.

Dogs are a remarkable race. Their appearance is attractive. Their minds are sagacious. Those who keep dogs do not regret it. This is the verdict of experience. The general experience is borne out by my own. I myself once kept a dog. He was of that species which is called Pointer, a name drawn from their habit of pointing out the presence of game. This is indeed a surprising instinct, but more surprising still was the special incident which fell within my experience.

One day I went on a shooting expedition. My dog Ponto went with me. We came to an enclosure. I entered. Ponto remained without. I whistled once, whistled again. Nor was this all. There was more. The name of Ponto escaped my lips. The dog Ponto gave no sign. Again and again I called, Ponto, Ponto, without result. I turned back to see what was wrong. I found the dog as it were petrified. He was staring at a board. This board was affixed to one of the trees. Upon this board I perceived a notice. The rubric ran—'GAMEKEEPERS HAVE ORDERS TO SHOOT ALL DOGS FOUND IN THE ENCLOSURE'. This board Ponto refused to pass. I was amazed at the dog's intelligence. I did not know that the dog could read. I was at a loss to understand how the dog had learnt his letters. I recognised the dog's value. I entered him at the grammar school. He had a brilliant career. His moral record was equally satisfactory. He won an open scholarship in epigraphy.

I now come to the novelist, much admired by the elect, as a master of his craft, Henry James. And indeed he is a master, in so far that he sees deep into human motives, and shows them in action; but to find the story, and to see the actions, you have to disentangle them from a perfect fog of words, involved sentences, parentheses, aposiopeses, all buzzing about and dropping in as they feel disposed. But do not make any mistake about it: Henry James sees his persons and his story, both are there, and sometimes they are quite amusing; but his method of presenting them is confusing; and without keen attention, very difficult to keep up in this fog of words, you will miss both. I should call his style one of the worst ever devised, but in saying so I draw down on myself the contempt and dislike of the sophisticated critic. Be that as it may, *Jacobus ad partes vocandus*; and he shall tell us *The Enchanted Copsé*. You should note the order of his narrative. He assumes that you know it all before you begin, which is true enough now, but not true in his other novels; there events, and bits of talk, and bits of character, just drop in one by one piecemeal.

THE ENCHANTED COPSE

By HENRY JAMES

It might almost perhaps have been one of those strangely if artistically and impressively carved figures of stone, basalt one would say or granite, for the colour varied from gray-brown to a reddish as of gingerbread, which one may come upon in the forests of Mexico, where the Aztecs used to, so at least I gather from history, congregate about their rock-hewn altars to propitiate some polysyllabic deity; for he stood as if petrified by some superhuman power, immovable as the Matterhorn, like a person without an alternative, immersed in immobility up to the chin. The bristling hard hairs that stood up on his narrow forehead pointed as it were upwards as postulating one might conceive a sort of power from above which had caused this sudden denial of all previous reciprocities and obediences, when he would come at a call unregarding any extraneous temptations or constraints; and yet his eyes, or rather his eye, the companion orb having been put out by a chance shot from a friend's gun, who I need hardly say was never again solicited to join our peregrinations, was fixed in a stony stare on some object not visible to me, situated no doubt on one of the contradictious architectural overarchings of the boughs. And to further confuse the ratiocinating movements of Supposition, his tail stuck out in a straight line with his body but in a direction diametrically opposed to his gaze, the member which gave a name to his useful and intelligent breed, as pointing stiff at something, it may be his master, while his thoughts, for they are thoughtful beyond the lot of fourfooted creatures, pointed ahead to the game which his master sought.

I had called him by name, and whistled more than once, thrice in fact if it is important to indicate all the minutiae, so that no reader may ever for one moment hesitate as to what psychological process was taking, one may say, place in the, shall we call them minds, of the various characters and personalities whose actions and reactions compose the subject-, as one might call it, matter of what may not improperly be described as the novelist's immortal work. Yet to this threefold invitation there was no response; and I, who had set forth with Ponto to discover, if discovery were possible, something to, if the means were well adjusted to the end, shoot, had entered the wood, and imagining the possible or even probable presence of something fit for that purpose, had called him to share in my search and provided it were not a fox in my triumph and the preparation for the anticipated dinner. Such a contradiction of all habits and predilections as that this so sagacious, if I may say so, creature should so far from coming not come, but stand petrified gazing at something hidden from me and undisclosed, was too much for my hitherto fixed resolution to shoot something, and I myself retraced my steps, and came out of the shadow of the trees, then at the word 'one', turned

about face, and raised my eyes to the region, where from a calculation of the angle of the sagacious creature's gaze I inferred that as likely to be situated, which had so remarkably and inexplicably attracted his attention. What this was I didn't know, and as he turned his eye me-wards for a moment and then back to his point of gaze, I knew he knew I didn't know, but it was literally as if the reckoning sat there between us, and all the terms we had ever made with felt differences, intensities of separation and opposition, had now been superseded by the need for fresh ones in forms of contact and exchange, forms of pretended intercourse, to be improvised in the presence of new truths. With an effort I was able to gradually and carefully although undissuadably and progressively bring my adequately focussed if I may say so eyes to bear on the point, and this proved to be no other than one of those publications or indications by which the owners of property discourage those whose natural and inborn tendencies lead them to confuse as conterminate the wholly disterminate considerations which our Roman not exactly forefathers but morally something of the sort distinguished by the surely too brief and inadequately refined disyllables *meum* and *tuum*. 'GAMEKEEPER'—thus it began, omitting no doubt for purposes of economy and not to calculatedly and intentionally affront the definite article, or it may be the indefinite, who can tell where all is uncertain,—'HAS ORDERS'—yet from whom was not said, the composer perhaps concealing by this parsimony of information an inferior or non-existent right to give any orders whatsoever—'TO SHOOT'—not as one might expect game of any kind, not even foxes, as perhaps might be looked for from a conscientious objector to hunting, for shooting need not imply hunting, not those who love war as a pacifist might have done, but—'ALL DOGS'—surely a superfluity of supererogance, but stay, there is a qualification which if rightly understood and placed in the balance may or indeed should or must relieve somewhat our too-early aroused apprehensions, 'FOUND IN THE ENCLOSURE', so that as it would manifestly appear it is no crime to *be* in the enclosure or even to *hunt* there, but the crime as so often in human life is to be found out. Now Ponto was 'out', but not yet 'found', and indeed here the crime is to be 'found in', a notable variation on the ordinary course of things. Be that as it may, and it would not 'do' to summarily and without further deliberation finally conclude that all these thoughts had passed through the mind of Ponto, yet one thing is abundantly clear, Ponto could read: an act not usually within the canine accomplishment, which leads me to the reason why I have written all this, namely to say you should keep dogs, they are fine creatures of surprising instinct, and I once had one myself.

In case any one should think that this is too much of a good thing, I may say that in Gibbon, Carlyle, James, and even Macau-

lay, I have used generally phrases and sentences from their published works, although I admit that the framework is not theirs. Let those who know these authors judge whether the echo is fair, or whether it rather conforms to Swift's definition of the Parrot Style: that which repeats another man's words, but in such a droll husky voice that you might think them his own.

If you want a model for the plain style, which tells a story just as it happened, and has nothing else in view but to make you see exactly what the author saw, there are two: Dryden and Defoe. Dryden's Prefaces to his various works deal chiefly with literary criticism; and although they lean too much on the French formal doctrine of the stage, which was founded on Aristotle but modified by misunderstanding, yet they are full of good sense and highly interesting in themselves. It is the style, however, which I wish to commend: that is plain, clear, strong, and quite without affectations of any sort.

Defoe, on the other hand, tells his story as something which happened before his eyes, noted down as it seems bit by bit just as he saw it. The reader cannot help believing it to be true. He did see many things, for he was always travelling about England, notebook in hand; but he could make what he only read seem as true as if he had seen it, and such are the stories in his account of the Great Plague. That he could do the same for what he only imagined, we all know from Robinson Crusoe.

This is the only style I ever recommend: to say exactly what you see, or what you mean, as clearly and simply as you can. Then, if you are expressing a real feeling of your own, that feeling will certainly appear to be as true as it is.

W. H. D. ROUSE

AT THE HEART OF THE NINETIES

THERE are few literary periods to which labels have been more firmly affixed than to the Nineties. To-day, no doubt, it is unnecessary to insist that not all the books of the Nineties were yellow and that not all Yellow Books were naughty. At a distance of fifty years it is realized that in the Nineties, as in other periods, there was, both in art and in literature, more than one approach, more than one 'movement', more than one 'special group'. Of a particular group in this period it has been written: 'Aubrey Beardsley was its draughtsman; Oscar Wilde its dramatist; Arthur Symons its critic; Lionel Johnson, Ernest Dowson, Arthur Symons its characteristic poets. Max Beerbohm and John Davidson were of its company; Hubert Crackanthorpe contributed to its short stories. . . .' This, of course, is the group familiarly associated with the Nineties, but why should it have a monopoly of interest to the literary historian?

One of the most significant events of the early Nineties was the death of Tennyson. It was an occasion for no ordinary tribute:

We could indeed scarcely think of England without Tennyson any more than without Queen Victoria herself. . . . Now, however, the great mountain that overtopped all lesser heights and towered aloft in lonely grandeur is withdrawn into the shades of a night that has no ending and will never again flush crimson at the approach of dawn. . . . We can but bow the head reverently before such a glorious manifestation of genius, and thank the powers above for permitting it to have been made to us in all its divine completeness.

This was the comment not of a popular magazine, but of the most eminent and most sedate critical journal of the time, and it illustrates an important element in the background of the Nineties. Of the nineteenth century and of the reign of Victoria another decade remained to be fulfilled, but the truly Victorian epoch was ended. What remained was *fin de siècle*.

The one certainty [wrote Arthur Symons] is that society is the enemy of man and that formal art is the enemy of the artist. . . . Art begins when a man wishes to immortalise the most vivid moment he has lived . . . and the making of one's life is after all the first duty and privilege of every man.

Here, we may be tempted to feel, we are at the heart of the Nineties. But it is a period, not a 'movement', that is to be examined, and

the period offers something more to the student than the immortalization of vivid moments. 'I belong to the Beardsley period', wrote Max Beerbohm in a famous sentence; but there were mute and inglorious readers in the Nineties who did not trouble to associate themselves with any period—had they been pressed, they might have claimed to belong to the Trilby period or the Zenda period. And just as Max once looked back to the delights of the year 1880, so we might now look back to the year 1894 and inquire what was being read and enjoyed by the common reader as well as by the professed critic of letters.

Among the poets Swinburne was still writing and *Astrophel* appeared in 1894. But there were younger singers: Francis Thompson and Richard Le Gallienne had been recently discovered; John Davidson had been hailed as 'a man who might do anything', but the public was warned by the elder critics that he was not a greater poet than Rossetti and similarly that William Watson was not greater than Tennyson. Yeats, too, was establishing himself. *The Land of Heart's Desire* belongs to the year 1894, but the more popular playwrights were Henry Arthur Jones, A. W. Pinero, and Oscar Wilde; the Barrie successes were just beginning.

But it is the novel of 1894 which provides the most impressive panorama, and a panorama so varied in its composition that some kind of analysis is inevitable. To say that the novels of the middle Nineties were realistic, or that they were romantic, or that they were sociological, or that they were sentimental, would be absurd; yet they were all these, and more.

Meredith was still writing in his grand and baffling manner. By virtue of his greatness and of his seniority he received, as Tennyson had received, reverence as well as praise from the critics and *Lord Ormont and his Aminta* was greeted as a further expression of its author's 'romantic sanity and health'. Hardy, too, was still a novelist in 1894, and his volume *Life's Little Ironies*, written, as someone said, to justify the ways of men to God, was a characteristic presentation of a series of human misfits and misfortunes. More gloomy and lacking the lightness of the ironist's touch was Gissing's *In the Year of Jubilee*. Here indeed was 'realism', which by this time, was not only accepted, but had received an authoritative sanction. Had not Zola been an honoured guest in England in 1893? Had he not received the solid tribute of a Guildhall luncheon?

But the 'realism' of Gissing had little of excitement or melodrama such as might captivate or shock the feelings of the reading public. Gissing's men and women offered nothing of the glamour of crime and passion; they were just mean and drab and unfortunate; they were thwarted and frustrated, but they were not tragic heroes. Still less had they the compensating element of comedy or farce such as Gissing admired in his master, Dickens.

More closely allied to the French school of 'realists' was George Moore's *Esther Waters*, also published in 1894. Here was a story of a servant-girl which led to open war between the author and the circulating libraries. 'The healthy school', George Moore had written, 'is played out in England; all that could be said has been said; the successors of Dickens, Thackeray and George Eliot have no ideal, and consequently no language.' But if the 'healthy school' of writers in the year 1894 had no language, they at least had their public. It was the year of the publication of *The Jungle Book*, of *Trilby*, of *The Prisoner of Zenda*, of *The Diary of a Nobody*.

Further, Hall Caine was in his prime. And if it should seem unnecessary, or improper, in 1942, to make serious reference to *The Manxman*, let it be remembered that the late Sir Edmund Gosse described it as a contribution to literature for which the most fastidious critic would give in exchange 'a wilderness of that deciduous trash which publishers call fiction', and that another distinguished critic, still living, wrote: 'But this is amazing. If he can only keep this up, he will have written one of the finest novels of his time.'

Another rising novelist was E. F. Benson. *Dodo* had appeared in 1893 and in the next year was followed by *The Rubicon*. *Dodo* is still remembered, largely because of its alleged portraiture. *The Rubicon* is entirely, and quite properly, forgotten. Its theme was similar to that of *Dodo*, and to the reader of to-day it seems a dull novel, competently written, but not distinguished either in style or in the delineation of character. It was, on the whole, well received and its original two-volume form quickly gave place to a cheap edition. But many reviewers found grave fault with it. *The Standard*, in particular, condemned it as 'sensual, earthly, and unwholesome'. *The Rubicon*, if it appeared to-day, might provoke a variety of unfavourable comment, but it is difficult to imagine that it would be banished from drawing-room tables as 'unwhole-

some'. *Dodo* and *The Rubicon* had for their main theme feminine heartlessness. This was also the theme of another novel of 1894.

A Yellow Aster, by 'Iota', is as deeply forgotten as hundreds of other books of the period. Perhaps it deserves to be forgotten. But the readers of 1894, even the most critical readers, took a different view. The title suggests something akin to *The Green Carnation*, which was also published in 1894; but, in fact, there is not much in common between the two books. *A Yellow Aster* has little or no satirical interest, though it is in one sense a conservative protest against the invasion of unwomanly intellectuality into the domain of the home and of the nursery.

Henry and Grace Waring lived at Waring Park, but their way of life was very different from that normally followed at a country house. Henry, at the age of 26, had been a Senior Wrangler who 'ate, drank and slept mathematics' as well as being 'possessed of other devouring passions for certain of the minor sciences'. But he was not wholly a recluse. He propounded problems in the press and in consequence of an item in what would now be called his 'fan mail', he was one day moved to present himself at a manor-house in Kent and to ask for Miss Grace Selwyn.

In three months from that day the two came down the path hand in hand and stepped out together on life's journey; and six months later through the death of a cousin, Waring Park fell to them and made up for the loss of the Fellowship.

Together the Warings engaged in the archaeological and sociological studies which interested them. Surprisingly, they had two children—Dacre and Gwen; they determined that these two should be preserved from the common pitfalls of English education:

On no account whatever is either to be sent to school or allowed to hold intercourse with other children . . . cricket, football and every other boyish sport is to be carefully excluded from the curriculum and all Christian teaching is to be utterly tabooed. . . . The facts of the Old Testament are to be imparted to them with other ancient history and they are to be well instructed in the natural sciences . . . at an age of more or less discretion the Bible and any other existing evidences of Christianity obtainable are to be formally presented to them . . . [they] may then receive these or reject them according to their particular turn of mind; but in no case are they to be biased.

The results were not happy: Dacre was soon given up as hopeless and allowed to follow a Philistine path through Eton and

Sandhurst; Gwen was noted by her parents as having abilities that were 'most gratifying', but as neither father nor mother could offer her any kind of normal affection or companionship, she grew up hard, brilliant, bitter, and beautiful—so beautiful that when she went out into the wider world, the ball-rooms of London were littered with broken hearts. At length came Sir Humphrey Strange as suitor. For some reason Gwen could not say 'No':

Don't you know I am going to accept you—I, who don't know what love means—I, who am, I believe, sexless, don't you think it's rather degrading to give all you offer me for nothing?

But Sir Humphrey was ready to take her, as he said, with open eyes and the marriage was duly and ceremoniously performed. In the course of the honeymoon Gwen recalled her earlier suitors:

My lovers? They weren't lovers at all; they were explorers, experimental philosophers. They had the same strong yearning for me that a botanist has for a blue chrysanthemum or a yellow aster. If a man could succeed in getting this thing, he would go mad over it . . . but do you think he would love it like an ordinary sweet red rose . . . ?
'Die Zeit bringt Rosen' was Humphrey's hopeful reply.

But Humphrey had much to endure before that happy time came. When Gwen discovered that she was pregnant, she was filled with morbid shame:

Talk of the shame of women who have children out of the pale of marriage, it's nothing to the shame of those who have children and don't love.

A separation follows. Gwen goes home to her mother; Humphrey undertakes an expedition for the relief of a missionary in a fever-stricken tract of Africa. Gwen learns, at her mother's death-bed, what the love of parent and child ought to be; her own child is born and with it the capacity of loving. One morning she wrote a telegram. It was to her husband and very simple in its wording:

Will you come? [it said], we want you, baby and I.

Such, in crude and imperfect outline, is the story of *A Yellow Aster*, with its 90,000 words spaced out in large type to fill the three volumes demanded by the circulating libraries of 1894. Even so, the three volumes were barely filled, the third containing at the end a 'trailer' chapter of another new novel. The one remarkable fact about *A Yellow Aster* was its success. To *The Weekly Sun* it

was 'unmistakeably the book of the hour'; to *The Daily Telegraph*, it was 'a rare novel of superb quality'. A Saul, it maintained, had arisen among the fictional prophets. The more cautious critics were similarly enthusiastic: *The Speaker* declared it to be 'no ordinary novel'; *The Spectator* found in it 'art of rare and remarkable excellence'; even *The Athenaeum* gave it 'the warmest of welcomes' and could find no fault in the book save in its punctuation. Yet *A Yellow Aster*, like many of its latter-day analogues, has vanished without a trace; save in the subterranean files of the newspaper room of a great library, it has no memorial; research is necessary even to discover its author's name.

Many of the popular novels of 1894 were to some extent concerned with the problems of contemporary society. But there were other writers who won a longer spell of popularity by virtue of their romantic or sentimental appeal. It was in the year 1894 that Anthony Hope Hawkins of the Middle Temple retired from active work at the Bar and that Anthony Hope the novelist came into his own. *The Prisoner of Zenda* may be dismissed by literary historians as melodramatic farce or as a pretty costume-piece. But it is neither of these. It is an unpretentious, but genuine, work of art. Its author was modest enough about its main theme:

The root idea [he says] is merely a variant on the old and widespread theme of 'mistaken identity'. It is indeed astonishing how many stories, novels and plays may be reduced on analysis to this ancient plot and this elementary situation . . . in some shape, and in varying degrees, it pervades English comedy from Shakespeare's day to our own. In itself it is no more than a starting-point for the characters, emotions, and incidents which it is the writer's real business to develop, but it opens a fruitful field to an imagination which can see and work out its dramatic possibilities and the ways in which it can be varied. I think that the two variants which struck the popular fancy in my little book were royalty and red hair; the former is always a safe card to play and its combination with the latter had a touch of novelty.

In 1894, as at other times, royalty was indeed a safe card for the romantic writer to play. Rudolf Rassendyl, an English gentleman, agreed to impersonate the king not because it was an elevation, but because it was an adventure; he played the part not as a superb joke—though he could see the humour of it—but with the high seriousness of the Romantic. *The Prisoner of Zenda* is a work of invention and fancy; it is not a work of fantasy. It is easy, even

for the most sluggish reader, to visualize Rudolf Rassendyl on the throne of Ruritania. The picture may be at times exciting, but it is never disturbing. In much the same way the inventions of Conan Doyle had gone straight to the heart of the reading public two years before. Like the adventure of Rudolf Rassendyl, every adventure of Sherlock Holmes had a large and skilful measure of verisimilitude. No. 221B Baker Street acquired the same actuality as the Cathedral of Strelsau; Dr. Watson, like Colonel Sapt, took his place in the living gallery of English fiction. Neither story was fundamentally imaginative. But Conan Doyle presented the common reader of the Nineties with Mystery, as Anthony Hope presented him with Romance, in its most agreeable setting. *The Prisoner of Zenda*, as a contemporary critic wrote, brought joy to all lovers of Dumas, 'a race that still thrives in spite of many adverse circumstances'. The same race very naturally thrived on the works of Stanley Weyman, whose *Under the Red Robe* was one of the novels of 1894.

Dumas and Thackeray were the literary godparents of another outstanding triumph of the year—the story of Trilby. Here was gaiety and romance and sentiment *in excelsis*, the Quartier Latin and the vie de Bohème presented to the English readers of 1894 exactly as they loved to picture it. There was nothing drab or 'realistic' in the presentation and Svengali provided the appropriate element of melodrama. Du Maurier himself knew that his second novel was inferior to *Peter Ibbetson*, but the public took *Trilby* to its heart and the book has been described as 'the first of the modern best-sellers'. Its dramatization added fresh fuel to the flame of its popularity.

Into this medley of realism and romance, of sociology and sentiment came the first number of *The Yellow Book* in April 1894. It had certain physical qualities that were novel and arresting. It was a quarto bound in yellow cloth; it had a curious design of masked faces on its cover; it was decently printed. The letterpress, as it was modestly called, contained little that was either revolutionary or shocking; there were poems by A. C. Benson, Edmund Gosse, William Watson, and John Davidson; there were short stories by Henry James and George Egerton; there were articles by Arthur Waugh and George Saintsbury. Some of the contributors strayed further than these from conventional paths, but the chief cause of stumbling was undoubtedly the work of the art-editor, Aubrey

Beardsley. The other artists who contributed to the first volume included Sir Frederick Leighton, Will Rothenstein ('a modern of the moderns'), Walter Sickert, and Joseph Pennell; but it was Beardsley's work that adorned the cover of *The Yellow Book* and so tended to upset the balance of critical comment.

There seems to be a peculiar tendency in Mr. Beardsley's mind to the representation of types without intellect and without morals. . . . There is distinctly a sort of corruption in Mr. Beardsley's art so far as its human element is concerned, but not at all in its artistic qualities, which show the perfection of discipline, of self-control, and of thoughtful deliberation at the very moment of invention.

This was written not by an outraged commentator in an old-fashioned journal, but by P. G. Hamerton in the second volume of *The Yellow Book* itself. But in little else of the early *Yellow Books* could solid evidence be found of 'a distinct sort of corruption'. Arthur Symons's *Stella Maris* caused some offence as an example of 'poetic art employed to celebrate common fornication', but it is hard to see why 'decadence' should have been thought to characterize *The Yellow Book* as a whole. *Reticence in Literature* was the title of Arthur Waugh's article, in which it was maintained that 'without dignity, without self-restraint, without the morality of art, literature has never survived'. It is true that this was answered by Hubert Crackanthorpe in the second volume of *The Yellow Book*, but it was a reasoned, not a fanatical, reply:

Theoretically, Art is non-moral. She is not interested in any ethical code of any age or any nation, except in so far as the breach or observance of that code may furnish her with material on which to work. But unfortunately, in this complex world of ours, we cannot satisfactorily pursue one interest—no, not even the interest of Art, at the expense of all others. . . .

The truth is . . . that a man is not an artist, simply because he writes about heredity or the *demi-monde*, that to call a spade a spade requires no extraordinary literary gift, and that the essential is contained in the frank, fearless acceptance by every man of his entire artistic temperament, with its qualities and flaws.

Of certain popular favourites of 1894 it was natural that *The Yellow Book* should be critical:

Sometimes, for brief intervals [wrote 'The Yellow Dwarf'] one forgets how elementally imbecile our Anglo-Saxon Public is; and then things like the success of *Trilby* come to make us remember it, and put on mourning.

The sentimentality of *Tribby* may certainly have had a sickly quality, but it is well to remember that the literary editor of *The Yellow Book* was the author of *The Cardinal's Snuff-Box* and *My Friend Prospero*. Henry Harland's short stories were a feature of the early *Yellow Books* and several of them were variations of the *Tribby* motif in a minor key, played with a more delicate touch. The same sentiment is there, but it is presented with a stricter sense of artistic discipline. On the whole, the first volume of *The Yellow Book* presents rather a curious combination of the sedate and the experimental. The older literary journals treated it rather as they would have treated an undergraduate magazine; to them it seemed an impudent, rather than a shocking, production and some of its articles were merely 'silly'. Prominent among these was one by a young writer who raised his voice against the sacrosanctities of Victorian England. It was called 'A Defence of Cosmetics' and was a delicious piece of fun, deliberately flippant in opinion and deliberately affected in style:

The Victorian era [wrote Max Beerbohm] comes to its end and the day of sancta simplicitas is quite ended. The old signs are here and the portents to warn the seer of life that we are ripe for a new epoch of artifice. Are not men rattling the dice-box and ladies dipping their fingers in the rouge-pot . . . ?

The 'new woman' of the Nineties, he maintains, will have no chance:

Swiftly they have sped on since then from horror to horror. The invasion of the tennis-courts and of the golf-links, the seizure of the tricycle and of the typewriter, were but steps preliminary in that campaign which is to end with the final victorious occupation of St. Stephen's. But stay! The horrific pioneers of modern womanhood who gad hither and thither and, confounding wisdom with the device on her shield, shriek for the unbecoming, are doomed. Though they spin their tricycle-treadles so amazingly fast, they are too late. Though they scream victory, none follow them. Artifice, that fair exile, has returned.

Such was the wistful longing of Max for the elegant sophistication of an earlier epoch. It was not wholly alien from the feeling of Du Maurier for the Quartier Latin of the middle of the century; but the sentiment was salted, rather than sugared—and Max had his tongue in his cheek. In these early contributions of his to *The Yellow Book*, with their care for the *mot juste*, their conscious but disciplined affectation, their polish and urbanity, we may recog-

nize the authentic flavour of the Nineties. Closely akin to them is the exquisite satire of *The Autobiography of a Boy*, by G. S. Street, also a product of the year 1894:

One or two ambitions he did, however, confide to his intimates. He desired to be regarded as a man to whom no chaste woman should be allowed to speak, an aim he would mention wistfully, in a manner inexpressibly touching, for he never achieved it. I did indeed persuade a friend of his and mine to cut him in the park one crowded afternoon; but his joy, which was as unrestrained as his proud nature permitted, was short-lived, for she was cruelly forgetful, and asked him to dinner next day.

Here, perhaps, is a fitting epitaph for the 'naughtiness' of the Nineties. Literary wild oats are sown in every generation, and it is unfortunate that the Nineties should have come to be regarded as a decade in which they were sown in exceptional abundance. It was a decade of much brilliance and some novelty. Many of its novelties have by now become *vieux jeux* and some of its brilliance has suffered the tarnish of time. But the fertile and varied output of such a year as 1894 remains as an impressive token of literary vitality. A survey of the Nineties should certainly reveal the Beardsley period, the aesthetic movement, the rise of realistic fiction, and the revolt against Victorian convention; but it should also reveal a varied picture of gaiety, humour, satire, and romance. For, in 1894, the art of letters was practised not only for the sake of art, but for the sake of enjoyment.

S. C. ROBERTS

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