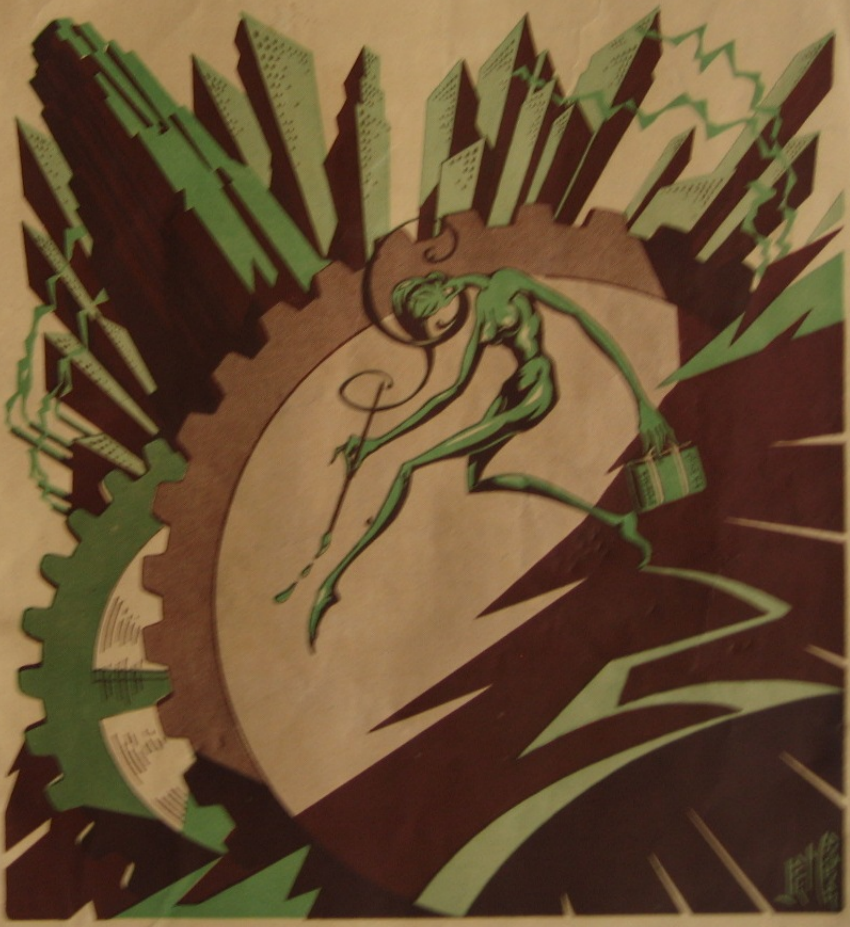
JULY

ONE SHILLING

STREAM



STREAM

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STREAM, published monthly, is a medium of international art expression.

STREAM is universal in outlook, and does not definitely ally itself with any particular art movement of the day: it seeks, in short, only what is vital and genuine in contemporary art, literature, and thought.

STREAM will present, each month, contributions by Australian artists, writers, and critics, many of whom have hitherto remained unrecognised. In the selection of this material, however, it will not consider local colour an essential qualification. . . .

STREAM has no geographical prejudices: by Australian art it means no more than art that is created in Australia: and its evaluation of such works will depend entirely upon the degree of sincerity and vitality that informs them.

The current European scene will be adequately interpreted by translations from the outstanding periodicals of France, Germany, Italy, and Russia. . . .

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Among contributions to the August number will be:

MUSIC AND THE SOCIAL STATE - - - - - - - Arthur Hoerce
¶The well-known contributor to La Revue Musicale *discusses music in its relation to society.*

BAUDELAIRE PSYCHO-ANALYSED - - - - - - - Ernest Harden
¶Dr. Harden dismisses a recent psycho-analytical attack upon Baudelaire.

SOME MODERN MASTERS - - - - - - - - - - Gino Nibbi
¶Signor Nibbi writes of outstanding figures among modern painters, from Cezanne to Chirico.

PIRANDELLO - - - - - - - - - - - - - - Carmelo Puglionisi
¶A note by a distinguished Italian philosopher-critic.

THE UNVEILING OF SYMBOLISM - - - - - - - Bertram Higgins
¶Mr. Higgins discloses the growing connection between a certain recent development of poetry (as represented particularly by T. S. Eliot) and Discursive Writings, for the advance of knowledge; and he discusses the novel issues and the possibilities involved in its continuance.

Stream

Volume 1. JULY, 1931 Number 1.

Summary

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The Editors regret that they have been forced to hold over Signor Puglionisi's article until next issue.

A PROPOS

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Frederic Lefevre, *the Editor-in-Chief of* Les Nouvelles Litteraires, *has published several volumes of interviews with distinguished writers.*

Fritz Hart, *of course, is Fritz Hart.*

Lucien Bonnard *is a European art-critic. His comment on the Melbourne Art Gallery was not written for Australian publication, but has been translated with his permission.*

G. Ribemont-Dessaignes *is one of the most interesting of France's younger prose writers. He is at present editing* Bifur.

Arthur Honneger *is the modern European composer who has lately been collaborating with Jean Cocteau in musical adaptations of Greek drama.*

Sacha Youssevitch, *though of Russian origin, is a native of Australia.*

Adrian Lawlor *will be remembered for his provocative art-show held in Melbourne last year, as well as for his literary work.*

Bertram Higgins, *a native of Melbourne, is a London poet and critic. He was associated with* The Calendar, *to which Lawrence and Huxley contributed.*

Frank Clewlow *has had much experience in theatrical production here and abroad. He is now the Director of 3LO, Melbourne.*

Nettie Palmer *is as well known in Australian literary circles as her husband, Vance Palmer.*

A. R. Chisholm *is Professor of French at the University of Melbourne. He is the author of a remarkable study of Rimbaud, published by the Melbourne University Press.*

Ernest Harden *has written verse in several languages. He is a native of Hungary, and is on the staff of the Melbourne Grammar School.*

H. Alwyn Lee *is co-editor of* Farrago, *the Melbourne University paper.*

Credo

A WRITER'S capital crime is conformity, imitativeness, submission to rules and precepts. A writer's work should be not only the reflection, but the magnified reflection of his personality. The only excuse a man has for writing is to express himself, to reveal to others the world reflected in his individual mirror; his only excuse is to be original. He should say things not yet said, and say them in a form not yet formulated. He should create his own aesthetics, and we should admit as many aesthetics as there are original minds, judging them according to what they are not.

—REMY DE GOURMONT

AN HOUR WITH ALDOUS HUXLEY

FREDERIC LEFEVRE

ALDOUS HUXLEY was born in 1894 at Godalming, in the county of Surrey, near London. His father was the son of Thomas Huxley, Darwin's collaborator, and his mother was a niece of Matthew Arnold, who had his hour of celebrity in the nineteenth century. Such was the milieu in which the spirit of the young novelist developed. He studied first at Eton, but his studies were interrupted, at about the age of seventeen, by an affection of the eyes, which left him blind for three years.

It was during this period that he wrote a novel—very tragic and probably very foolish, he tells us—the writing of which stirred him greatly: the manuscript has been destroyed. When he was somewhat recovered, he went up to Oxford, where, at first, he thought of doing medicine; but the state of his sight was not good enough to permit this. It was at Oxford that he experienced the revelation of French literature, through the Symbolists, Mallarme, Baudelaire, and Laforgue.

Laforgue, Huxley told me, is essentially a young man's writer: for the youthful, he is very significant, and he is one of the great lesser writers. He created an ironic method of a particular kind, a manner of creating a dissonance by introducing science into literature: this dissonance is ironic, and reveals a delicate and far-reaching humour. In *Point Counter Point,* I followed this method to describe a concert, and I think I thus obtained this ironic dissonance.

Meanwhile, I had stayed some months at Grenoble, in 1912. I boarded in a *pension* and took lessons from an old abbe, *bien sympathetique;* I remember his lively remonstrations at my love for Anatole France. . . . My first book, *Chrome Yellow,* was influenced by *La Reine Pedauque,* particularly in the dialogues.

After two months' stay at Grenoble, I returned to Oxford, where I continued my reading: Balzac, whose *Cesar Birotteau* and *Splendeurs et Miseres des Courtisanes* are my two favourite books; Flaubert, whose *Education Sentimentale,* and *Bouvard et Peuchet,* I liked especially; Huysmans, of whom, at that time, I knew only *A Rebours;* and, above all, Stendhal. I never tired of *Le Rouge et le Noir*: everything in that book is said with an unequalled sureness and intensity.

In 1915 I left Oxford, where I had sat under an excellent professor of English literature, Walter Raleigh, the author of remarkable works on Shakespeare and Wordsworth. On account of my sight, I was not mobilised. I worked for some time in an office of the Ministry of Aviation, then for six months I taught at Eton, my first school. It was towards the end of the war, and particularly immediately after the armistice, that I came into contact with living literature, thanks to the *Athenaeum*—a review to which I contributed. I first made the acquaintance of Arnold Bennett: it was at his place that I met Wells, whom I often see to-day, because he is collaborating with my brother in a big work on biology. I think his present writings are much more important than his novels. His *Outline of History* is a remarkable book, and the biology that he is engaged upon at present will be a document of the greatest importance. He grasps ideas, and wishes to propagate them directly, without recourse to fiction. . . .

I then asked Huxley whom he considered the greatest English writer of to-day. He hesitated a moment, and answered in his muffled voice: I loved D. H. Lawrence greatly, and I admire him very much. He is a writer in the great English tradition of revolt—a writer of the family of William Blake. . . . The man had an incomparable emanation of life: even in his last years, when he was frightfully ill, he still possessed an extraordinary radiance. I am at present preparing an edition of his letters; the most interesting date from about fifteen years ago. He was then a teacher in a primary school, and the greater part were addressed to one of his colleagues, a man entirely unknown. . . .

I also like E. M. Forster, who is a great writer. David Garnett is a charming story-teller, and Virginia Woolf exercises a fas-

cination on her readers. She remains always more of a poet than a novelist. In reading her, one experiences the strange but not disagreeable sensation that she is always far distant from the object she describes. She sees it, but never touches it. There is always a transparent film between her and the object. Nor should one forget Kathleen Mansfield, and Frank Swinnerton, who has a considerable talent and does good work.

Suppose we talk a little about yourself now? After the success in France of Chrome Yellow, and Point Counter Point, what are you going to give us?

Madame Salvemini is translating my travel notes on India. I knew a number of important Indian people there who are to-day in prison. . . . India is the most depressing country in the world. . . . I toured the world during the year 1925, and remained five or six months in India. I also visited Burma, Malaya, Java and Japan, and returned across America. I now own a little villa in the south of France, near Toulon, where I spend the greater part of the year. I am very happy there.

What do you think of the happenings in India?

I think that we have begun civilising at the wrong end there. . . . We have created higher learning without founding primary schools. We thought it would be sufficient to enlighten a caste that would later elevate the masses. I do not see that the results have been very happy. Those people who have benefited by Western civilisation are all Chattyryahs or Brahmins: once educated, they remain idle and become dangerous. It is they who wish to take over the government. It was in visiting India that I realised the difference that was possible in the Middle Ages between a villein and a cardinal. India is a country where the superiority of divine right is still accorded the "untouchables," who themselves realise their own unworthiness.

Then the situation is rather grave over there? And in England itself are you not experiencing a terrible crisis of unemployment?

Alas! I recently visited the Durham mining district, and I was struck by the kind of quiet despair of the unemployed: they are not sufficiently bitter. A complete silence reigns everywhere. You have the impression of passing through a city of living-dead. I had known these parts when the mines were working, and my impression then had been of a brutal and violent vitality; a strange contrast. To-day we have two and a half million unemployed, who seem to accept their straitened and dull existence, while the government, on its part, shows an evident determination to do nothing.

And you see no remedy?

There is only one: to find new uses for coal. The time is perhaps not far distant when the oils and spirits produced from coal will be cheaper than the natural products—it has already happened with benzol. Then the mines will be saved.

Meanwhile, idleness has a terrifying psychological effect. One receives the impression that everything is dulled, that a coat of mould is depriving men and things of all power of reaction, of all power of elasticity.

In face of these dangerous symptoms, do English writers remain at the phase of Art for Art's sake, or, on the contrary, do they think they have something to say? For yourself, what is your position? In Point Counter Point you seem to give a sympathetic presentation of Illidge, the red-headed forerunner. . . .

Art for Art's sake is difficult to practice to-day. Many write to say something about the world. Spandrell, one of my heroes, is in some degree a rendering of the story of Baudelaire. . . .

Among all the characters of Point Counter Point, my greatest sympathy is for Mark Rampion, artist-writer, and, whether writer or artist, ever a satirist. He is a man direct, intelligent, passionate, generous, sarcastic, lucid, and full of humour as soon as it is a question of unmasking hypocrisy. Moreover, it is in him that you seem to have taken a personal pleasure. I have been told that he is a representation of Lawrence, of whom you were just speaking.

I often thought of Lawrence while I was writing the book. It was composed in Italy, first near Florence, then at the seaside. It occupied me from the end of 1926 to the middle of the summer of 1928—that is to say, the nightmare extended nearly two years. I felt a relief when it was finished: this book was like a living creature within me, spreading its growths in all directions. I had to insert new chapters constantly. At first I had in my mind only the most important characters. Later it all came to me. I never have a very clear idea at the beginning. When I began *Point Counter Point* I only wanted to sketch a general picture of English society round about 1926, and to amuse myself by presenting similar things considered on different planes—I mean seen in their breadth rather than in their profundity.

Then you do not wait to write until the definitive vision is almost completely realised within you?

No. On the contrary, I correct a great deal: I destroy entire passages, and I begin again. I type always. . . . The book was published in England in autumn, 1928. It obtained a great and immediate success, and sold to 15,000 copies, but it was in America especially that it won a big public. Like *Henry VIII.*, by Francis Hackett, whom I met in Venice, at Lawrence's funeral, it was chosen by the Book of the Month League, and 80,000 copies were called for. There have been German, Swedish, Polish and Danish translations. . . .

I am now finishing a collection of essays on literary and sociological subjects. . . . In England I am considered an immoral writer. The censorship condemned *Point Counter Point*, and prohibited its importation into Ireland.

Apropos, do you know Joyce?

I know him slightly. . . . I greatly admire his talent, but his researches are barren—they end in a cul-de-sac: very interesting, but a cul-de-sac, just the same. This meticulous labour, this unheard-of torture of language, in which each word has four or five meanings, is nothing short of fantastic. It all touches on black magic. The objections that can be made to *surrealisme* apply to Ulysses. To attack art fired with the determination to cut every bridge with the public seems truly paradoxical. It is an untenable position: so much so that, if the surrealists begin to write in earnest, they abandon their theories. On these terms they can do good work: *Nadja*, by Andre Breton, is an example.

. . . . . .

The conversation finished upon more general grounds. We discussed the present state of Europe, and the malaise that weighs on almost every land. Huxley observed that all these terrible national problems, whether they be economic or political, can have none but an international solution.

Anything is better than war, he concluded. Nobody wants war, but nobody can act with sufficient energy to avoid it. I recently attended the English aerial manœuvres, and I was terrified to see that everybody accepted the idea of future war being of such intensity that half the belligerent population would be rapidly destroyed. We do not protest enough against the horrors of war. We want peace, prosperity, and happiness among men—but no government is employing the necessary means to obtain it.

The difficulty of applying a scientific doctrine, whatever it may be, to the problems of life is stupendous. How well I understand Flaubert's bewilderment before the infinity of human stupidness. Economic questions are scientific questions, and should be treated by means proper to science. . . . How can we prevent Canada, which is suffering terribly through a depressed market, from burning its wheat, while millions of Chinamen are dying of hunger?

We must examine these dramatic problems in international conferences, without prejudice, without passion, and in the light of reason and humanity. But in international conferences there is always a country which breaks the convention so as to obtain a temporary advantage. . . .

—Translated from the French
by Frank Quaine.

GUT REACTION—NO. 1

DAVID LOCKHART

HE awoke suddenly. It was still dark, but from the freshness of the breeze that fanned across his face from the window near his head he guessed that it was early morning. He was perturbed. What had awakened him? He listened for a while, gazing intently into the dark interior of his room. But the silence remained unbroken.

He noticed then that his mind had a sort of febrile lucidity that gave him a feeling of wide-awakeness. Some organic disturbance, he decided. Possibly indigestion. Nothing to be immediately worried about. It was not wise to fight against insomnia. There was the danger of contrasuggestion. Resignedly, and for comfort's sake, he turned upon his back.

Well, here at any rate was an excellent opportunity for untroubled reflection. One must economise life. The economy of life. Ha, how amusing! Invariably he began reflection with such a formula. Something stood over his mind like a schoolmaster demanding an immediate delivery of goods in the abstract form of pure meditation. It was a habit that he had probably got into from reading Marcus Aurelius and the stoics at an early age, and it showed how detached and aloof a mind could become. In such a mood, his meditations would wrap about themselves a sort of sacred and inpenetrable shroud; they rarely directed themselves to personal or practical considerations. This would have been a violation: not to be tolerated. At present, he was amused to discover, there was something in this attitude a little snobbish and exclusive. Yes, it was amusing. And he recalled as an antithesis the case of the litterateur who was said to have done all his thinking in public. That was surely the very apotheosis of the collective ideal of democracy. Socrates fitted the category perfectly. That might even be taken as a definition of the dialectical method. Thinking in public. It was strange how the mere physical presence of people was a stimulus to thought. Was it simply because of the desire to flaunt oneself before one's fellows, or because of a more subtle influence: possibly the establishment of a collective mind by their proximity? There seemed to be some intangible influence at work that was certainly not apprehended by the intellect. Was it by some telepathy, or by some yet unrealised influence of physical presence in which the pituitary gland of the occultists was involved? After all, it was possible that the body contributed as much to the process of thought as the mind. It was a commonplace that the body had a language of its own—the language of sculpture. With civilisation, the focus of expression had become the face—the head. Hence the modern emphasis upon the intellectual, and the tendency towards the over-intellectualisation of life against which D. H. Lawrence fulminated. What would be the result of an entire civilised nation's return to the nude? Waiving aside practical climatic considerations. Firstly, the face would tend to become less the focus of attention. And so far as clothes tended to abstraction from fundamental human nature there would be a return to concrete realities. If one considered a world in which even the faces were veiled, then one could realise what a loss the cult of clothes implied. To us, at present, there was something characterless and uniform about the human nude—like a Norman Lindsay chorus-girl parade, ad nauseam—but this might simply be because of its unfamiliarity, in the same way as all Japanese, or negroes, seemed so much more alike than white people. Just as individual fingerprints had their uniqueness, would it not also be true of the body? Moreover, would there be any contradiction between facial and bodily expression. For instance, would the nude figure of Beethoven give the lie to his face, or would it not just as faithfully render the man's soul-torment, heroic struggles, his nobility and moral grandeur? Yet there was or seemed to be a contradiction in the argument when it was reduced to its ultimate conclusion. If one were to distinguish between the head and the rest of the body, one might just as well assert that one's character were visible in one's big toe. There was no difference in principle between such deductions and tea-cup reading, or, for that matter, the determinism of Lucretius with his universal inference from a grain of sand.

For a while, his mind, spreading out striving tentacles of thought, played with this idea. Then something within him swooned sickeningly before the plunging void opened up by these remote speculations. His fundamental practical sense recoiled. Bah! metaphysical blind-alleyways, it lashed out.

He turned on his side, dragging furiously at the covering in an effort to draw about himself the comforting warmth of sensation. No, there was nothing like the delicious reality of the body. To be drowned in sensation. No, no. Rather, to be realised in sensation.

He stretched himself out luxuriously. It was his body revolting. Revolting against the sterile morass of metaphysics. The body was, must be, the living embodiment of the idea. The very quintessence of the real. The asceticism of Plato in the Phaedo was poisonous. Sheer death-worship. A white leprosy of the spirit. The mind urged incessantly by an insatiable curiosity, became corrosive; tended to turn life into a mere cinema-circus of ideas, poisoning the very root and stem of existence.

He felt the mind's despair, in the face of ultimate metaphysical problems, gnawing like a disease, gradually sapping his vitality. Of late, he had been losing hold on life. Evolution, astro-physics, relativity. . . . Life was falling away from him. The old comfortable certainties were fast dissolving. . . . It was like a creeping, burning sickness rankling his heart and entrails. It was suffocating. . . . He was losing his sense of reality, his identity. . . . God! where in the world. . . .

Violently, he flung the blankets from him: turned towards the window: inhaled rapidly successive draughts of cool morning air. Above the dark silhouette of trees and roof-tops, the tenuous silver-grey announced the imminence of dawn.

—Hail, the dawn! No, one must live. To affirm the body was to affirm life; to return to reality.

His body cried out for a supreme moment of realisation, of affirmation. It came like a flash: to salute the dawn! On the grass, under the tremulous leaves, to offer himself to the virgin caresses of new-born sun, of earth and wind. Away with slavish reticence and the compromises of prudence! Life must affirm itself. Were a million years of evolutionary travailings to find their supreme expression in the bloodless sort of game that modern life was reduced to?

Aglow, he sprang to the floor.

His bed, recoiling, butted against the wall with a metallic clank that startled him a little. Hey, not too much noise, sonny boy! You don't want to bring the whole house down on your head, he told himself.

But his defiance surged back. Bah, you old lackey of prudence! Throwing his arms above his head he stretched himself: yawned: drew in a deep breath: ran his hand vigourously through his tousled hair. He wanted to dance, gambol, run about like a gazelle. . .

The back garden. No one would see him. It was still only half-light. Nobody would be up for hours. And, well, if there were any neighbours about, their early rising would be rewarded by an unrehearsed essay in animated sculpture.

He stripped.

Now he would go carefully down the hallway, past Laura and the children, out through the back vestibule.

As he walked to the door, he caught a glimpse of the black-framed gravure of Debussy, above the book-shelf. It was quite clearly visible. He gazed at it curiously. Out of the composer's colossal head the deep-set eyes smiled wearily—the eyes of a mystical faun. He opened the door quietly and tip-toed down the hallway, feeling that Debussy's mysterious world of fleeting shadows, and vague, exquisite shapes, had materialised about him. Hush! His wife's room led off the vestibule on the left. She was asleep with the children, sunk in a remote, unearthly world. How inexpressibly tragic it was that, so lovely in herself, she never seemed to comprehend, or share with him, the finer lyric ecstacies of art and life. Women, alas, as a whole seemed. . . .

His foot struck something. He tripped, stumbled forward. A crash followed, reverberating through the house. Damn! Damn! The children's meccano tower lay sprawling across the floor. Blast it! He stood stock-still, listening. . . .

A door opened and the light flashed on.

The devil! To hide himself. . . .

—John! What in the world! His wife stood at her door, amazed and frightened.

He tried to cover his confusion behind a simulation of anger:

—These damned toys! What's the meaning of it? . . .

—But, John, are you crazy? Why you nearly frightened the life out of me. And what a condition to be in!

What to tell her. . . . The truth? . . . Of his thoughts and spiritual exaltation? . . . His heart sank. Impossible. Under the cold glare of the electric light, surrounded by tawdry, shoddy furniture, it was quite impossible. Besides. . . . His shuffling, compromising everyday business-man's good sense triumphed. Quick. Invent an explanation. . . .

—Don't disturb yourself, Laura, dear. I was just going to the bathroom. . . . I couldn't sleep. . . . I was hot. . . . Suffocating. His facile lying quickly restored his confidence. . . . I was just going to have a shower.

—O, you're stark, staring mad. You'll catch a death of cold. Why didn't you put on a dressing-gown, at least? Quick, get in under the shower straight away while I get it for you and a clean towel. . . . Why didn't you tell me that you couldn't sleep, and I'd have got you an Aspro. . . . Go on, don't stand there gaping at me like a big fool.

—Yes. Yes. All right, he said petulantly.

In a way, he felt relieved. Turning, a little shamefacedly, he stepped across the vestibule to the bathroom. His wife went to the linen-cupboard. He entered: switched on the light: closed the door behind him.

. . . . . .

God, what an escape! But, damn it all, she would be back in a minute with towel and gown. He looked at himself in the long shaving-mirror. A tall, gawky, forlorn figure. You poor, slavish, cowardly fool, he sneered: he wanted to pummel, bruise himself with his fists, punch that silly-looking nose, inflict pain upon his body: his stupid, cowardly body. Grinding his teeth with a sort of sullen resentment against himself, he stepped under the shower. His hand went up to the tap.

—Here, take a taste of this, you poor hulk of flesh!

The water came down, a shrill, icy shower, chilling him to the bone.

TO (ANY) SOUL

Soul is your name. But on what altar of
The flesh, earth-clinging, is your candle set?
Not prisoner of the hollow bone, to move
In the banal stream of thought your crystal jet?
Nor in the swollen rivers of the heart,
Spurted with blood along the flooded streets,
There, by the village pump, to chart
Eternal purpose to its rhythmic beats?

Nor, as the Greeks imagined, now confess,
An excremental exile, stomach-trussed,—
An Ego steadfast in the gastric stress,
Mingling your music with a faint disgust?
Nor last, companion of the pallid spleen,
Not white, your essence there, but bilious green?

—EDGAR HOLT

THE MODERN SPIRIT FROM THE COMPOSER'S VIEWPOINT

FRITZ HART

AT a time when all the creative arts appear to move in a state of uncertainty —backwards, forwards, sideways—it may not be amiss to take stock of existing conditions so far as the art of creative music is concerned.

We find the Russian Stravinsky banishing emotion from his music, and calling himself a neo-classic; Schoenberg and Hindemith—to say nothing of Alan Berg—variously directing or misdirecting the musical thought of Germany and Austria; several middle-aged Frenchmen doing the same for their country; and some extremely clever young men in England following suit. Since all artistic activity must be of some definite good, there is no need to be alarmed at present developments. If most of such developments shall eventually prove to be of only indirect service to art, let it be remembered that art in the past has frequently benefited more by means indirect than direct.

Very few of the greatest men have invented their own tools. They have taken those most ready to their hands—those most suited to their particular purposes. It is generally the lesser man who invents the means whereby the greater man realises his own conceptions. Most true is this in music. Bach employed the means of his contemporaries magnificently, as did Beethoven and Wagner in turn. Bach, Beethoven, and Wagner each contributed something of supreme importance to the development of musical expression; but none of the three was an inventor of new harmonies to any extent. Most of what the world calls Wagnerian harmony came from Lizst. The latter was a great pianist, an even greater artist, but, as a composer, very definitely of the second or even third rank—in spite of the efforts of a noisy few who would claim for him a place among the immortals.

It is this inventive craze—the production of so many new tools by the man of to-day—that makes some of us wonder to what use such tools will ultimately be put. It is reasonably safe to say that the large majority of the so-called "ultra-modern" works are, in effect, like an exhibition of ironmongery, or rather a demonstration of the qualities and possibilities of tools as tools. This is, of course, not wholly true, but it is at least partly so. Men have found out new methods of combining sounds, and too many have forgotten for what purposes sounds are combined. They are content with the mere combination, so long as the result is unusual.

Now I have no quarrel with strange sounds, nor with any strange methods of making music. But I am anxious to discover the continuity that must surely exist in what may well be called the Apostolic Succession of great composers.

Very easy it is for the extremist of to-day to quote a few instances of critical outbursts aimed during the centuries at Bach, Beethoven, and Wagner. The fact remains that these composers were all popular in their own life-times, and popular for purely musical reasons. Such popularity as is enjoyed by Stravinsky and Schoenberg to-day is of very different order. Stravinsky is popular on account of his sensationalism and somewhat brutal primitive force; while Schoenberg is admired by a somewhat small circle of pure intellectuals. Stravinsky himself, apparently repentant of his sensationalism, now preaches intellectualism and a return to what he declares to be classic ideals. As for Honegger and many others of the same type, they are far lesser and—by the way—much more amusing men. But can we be certain that they are endeavouring to be comic?

The purely logical case against the ultra-moderns is this: during the last thirty years so much new ground has been prospected that it will take at least a couple of hundred years to develop it with any degree of thoroughness. This is the argument based upon facts disclosed by history. From Bach to Richard Strauss the progress was quite literally made step by step. Not until now has there been a distinct cleavage between the music of one generation and the next. Had Bach come to life again in the time of Wagner, it is per-

fectly safe to say that he would most amazingly have enjoyed *Die Meistersingers*. But who can say that Wagner, being permitted to revisit the glimpses of the moon, could have made head or tail of Schoenberg's *Die Gluckliche Hand*? And this work is by no means an extreme example of what the ultra-modern can put forward as music.

And what purely logical arguments can be advanced in favour of "the very latest" in music? There are several, and so we must not be afraid to face them. In the first place, while I believe music to be primarily romantic in its essential nature, I admit that the wholesale romantic wallowing indulged in by many great composers, from Schumann to Richard Strauss, had, by the end of the nineteenth century, somewhat surfeited us: even if we did not realise so at the time. Then there is the question of Form. In spite of a very few, if notable, exceptions, Beethoven and Brahms have really said the final words in the string quartette and symphonic forms. Most musicians refuse to admit that Beethoven himself had realised that he could carry neither quartette nor symphony beyond a certain point on the old lines. Yet it would seem to be true. The magnificent music to be found in his last quartettes does not make them more than extraordinarily fascinating, but, as a whole, incompletely successful, experiments. After writing eight symphonies, he added a Choral Finale to his Ninth, as if conscious that the time had come when he must enlarge the boundaries that had served him, as well as Haydn and Mozart, so faithfully.

Debussy, in his exquisite *Pelleas and Melisande*, uttered a protest against the titanic splendours of Wagner's *Ring*. It was not so much that Debussy himself could not have written another *Ring*, but rather that no composer—after Wagner—could have done so. That particular "job of work" was done—and done stupendously well. It remained for composers to find a new way of making operas.

But because it is at times necessary to break down in order that we may build again, it does not follow that we have to discard the old materials, or to build in such a manner that we are compelled—illogically—to discard practically all that the past has to teach us.

There is very much in modern music that I admire: but I do not consider music to be primarily intellectual, and this is precisely what modern music is in danger of becoming. Music is surely the emotional language, and of all the arts is most capable of expressing the very heart and soul of humanity. Not the humanity of one particular generation, but of all generations. We are too ready to consider the art of a certain era to be more true, more representative of such an era, than of any other. All great art is true of all generations—whether, in music, it be a song by Dowland, a mass by Palestrina, a symphony by Beethoven, or an opera by Wagner. The essential stuff of music is in all of these, even if the manner in which it is presented changes from time to time.

It was Aristotle who declared that art should exhibit a continual slight novelty. This slight novelty was exhibited by all the composers from Bach to Richard Strauss: but since Strauss. . . . ?

A GLANCE AT THE MELBOURNE NATIONAL GALLERY

LUCIEN BONNARD

BEFORE you visit the Gallery, if you meet the critics and journalists of the capital, you will encounter some mature and categorical judgments. You will be told that, like their English cousins, the greater number of cultured Australians have remained with their taste orientated towards the pre-Raphaelites, from which it seldom shifts: and it will be explained that the distractions of colonising enterprise have denied them access to the divine indolence of art. The spirit of Dante Gabriel Rosetti, with the assistance of Burne-Jones and William Morris, has, indeed, corrupted the artistic passion of several generations of Anglo-Saxons: whether in mere decoration, or in painting, they still prefer this rather cold, rhetorical, and calligraphic style—even to the point of mortgaging the blood of future generations. When you have made acquaintance with the Gallery, you will be constrained to repeat this judgment yourself, though it is now superfluous, and perhaps *vieux jeu*.

Even here there are, of course, some who are beginning to stammer the name of Modigliani, and not a few others who find enchantment in the miraculous depth of Cezanne, or marvel at the fantastic interpretations of Van Gogh; but they are lonely men who, though following their own inclinations in art, are forced in this hopelessly mechanical society to adopt a more elementary profession—they are, perhaps, poster-designers, or house-decorators. They are forced by the artistic subjection of this country to seek the dynamism of the other hemisphere. Yet they have few pretensions.

They know that Gauguin spent his life down here at Tahiti, as a sacrifice to an ideal of art which he expressed in documents peremptory, but strangely dazzling and decorative; and that, decisively and without fuss, Matisse has made his entry into the United States with his still-lifes.

(I once showed a water colour by Utrillo to an Australian professor of the fine arts. I knew at once that he did not think much of it: he looked at me as if he wondered at my hardihood, and I felt he was secretly amused. The *epidemia academica* is stubborn even here. Another spent just enough time over it to discover the quivering amaranthine sky, but he was anxious to be done with it.)

The famous bequest by a Melbourne citizen named Felton has endowed the city with a gallery of ancient and modern art which is really considerable. (What a destiny philanthropists have! They yearn for immortality, and yet their names are buried beneath the very institutions they found: no one knows anything about them—though sometimes you accidentally run into the base of a modest monument, on the top of which appears the philanthropist's sculptured head, looking as though he were suffering from influenza!)

We enter the Gallery at the side of the Museum, behind the imposing Public Library. The collection is distributed through four long salons. There are marbles everywhere, memorials to scientists, statues of the mythological virtues; and a group by a fantastical sculptor of a cock-fight, which is of particular interest to visitors: for, as we know, they are mostly fond of sport. There is also a head of Minerva, and two small bronzes by Rodin.

An octagonal room contains a few Old Masters. The eye is immediately caught and held by a treacherous face: plainly a Goya. It is one of the many ladies with fans whom he painted in their prosperous maturity. The flesh is rather livid—Goya was accustomed to take his revenge in this way—the clothing slashed and full, the eye still feline. The fire of a white Bengal match illumines its surface, and the lady, who looks as if she has just come from an adventure, has an ambiguous smile, a document of the happy *intimite* of her time.

Opposite the Goya we see a portrait of a Doge by Tintoretto, which cost £14,000: it is an ordinary Tintoretto, and one of the least happy. But it was the name that was paid for.

There is more to interest us in a succulent portrait by Titian, which hangs beside it: a monk whose dark gown is plunged in shadow,

and whose head emerges above a dense twilight, which we recognise as one of Titian's stupendous devices.

The Old Masters here have been chosen at random. A tiny *Madonna and Child* by Jan van Eyck is like some shining interior in an illuminated manuscript: even the glass vessel in the shadow has a golden-yellow light, and stands out, lighted by reflection. It abounds in red and golden-yellow, which are like the spiritual ingredients of a craft still in its infancy. There is a Flemish triptych by an unknown artist of the early sixteenth century where the ingenuousness of the chromatic relations is manifest, and therefore the space-suggestion which the artist has attempted is not successful—even with a perspective of pavement right up to the top of the frame: there are banqueting scenes in the open air: a mingling of men and polite almond-eyed ladies with muslin turbans. This too has a flavour of the miniaturist period, just as Hans Memlinc often shows: he is represented here with a *Pieta*, polished, meticulous and cold. Next we see a *Baptism of Christ* by Palmessana, the incurable scholar of the portentous Quattrocentists. Beside this is a portrait of the Countess of Southampton as a goddess among clouds, by Van Dyck. One could scarcely distinguish this Van Dyck from those conventional, shadowy and impeccable altar-pieces, characteristic of the seventeenth century at its most stereotyped.

Among the other Flemings we have still to notice a Ruisdael: *The Millwheel*, a small genre-piece, oleographic and delicate—but we do not see here the Ruisdael of sparkling skies: there are also two inn scenes by David Teniers, superficial, it is true, but not less persuasive than an interior by Jan Steen which ends the little series.

And of the late Venetians we find two views by Canaletto: one of the Roman Forum, and the other of the Grand Canal, both mannerised, and not to be compared with the power of that transparent and limpid vista in the Uffizi. This painter's technique is almost always too obvious: it is particularly so here. Though he has distributed a diffused light on the perspective of the houses, all the rest is drawn in a careful penumbra, ingenuously graduated like a frivolous watercolour pattern, and the volumes following the measured rigour of the chiaroscuro leap out suddenly at a firm brush-stroke. The people, the roofs, the gondolas, are all rigourously in focus. In this way the plastic idyll is made complete.

But in Guardi there is a very different strength: who does not remember that *Piazza San Marco* in the Gallery at Vienna, all whirling with light and wind, powerful, vigourous and modern? Guardi spreads colour as though it were uninterrupted material, labile and fused, kindling masses, colour and flashes of light. There is a little thing of his here that looks like a small study for a vast panoramic construction: the material holds together compactly, and the lagoon, with the tongues of land and the bastions, are cleanly rendered, as though by an indirect and almost impressionistic prodigy of colour.

The monotonous, sentimental muddle of English painting caters for the majority in this curious assembly: it overruns all the walls.

Naturally, we do not speak of a few masters like Raeburn, Romney, and Gainsborough—clear-cut and evident personalities who knew, at least, how to attempt originality in a country long given over to practical affairs, and therefore quite barren of traditions.

There are plenty of watercolours after Sargent. And among the insipid brood of sky-blue tones, two watercolours by Daumier. How did that chained-up devil get here? *Les Pieces a Conviction* and *Les Deux Avocat*: character drawings, incisive and without prejudice, yet with a sharp sense of satire that mocks the observer. (I am sorry for it, but there are too many of us in Daumier's work: indeed, we are nearly all there, and the discomfiture of finding oneself in that cynical and desolate humanity is often aroused by the artist's disturbing title, which lets one down like a puncture: one feels this before the clerk, the advocate, the butcher, or the collector. *A propos*, if you glance at the work of Rouault, you get the impression that he has intensified the satire of Daumier by giving it an unsuspected plastic quality: but Rouault is a Franciscan, and perhaps could not conceive so explicit and concise a ferocity. If you read the touching preface in his book that is dedicated to his artistic work, you will discover a writer who is amongst the most acute and most humane of men).

Among the more modern is Frank Brangwyn, the most typical of the *pompiers*. (He is now printing etchings in which his artistic qualities are often more veiled.)

Naturally, the pre-Raphaelites are here, even—think of it!—copies of the *Prosperpine*, and *Ecce Ancilla Domini* of Rossetti!

In the midst of the stupid dilettantism of twentieth century English painting has been introduced a self-portrait by Antonio Mancine, and a few horrible portraits by William Orpen: this man's talent, if it does not rest, will run the risk of getting into every gallery on earth!

In a corner is a little collection of French pictures: some Fantin-Latours, with the usual careful vases of flowers, a small sacred subject by Delacroix, which is quite undistinguished, and resembles a sketch of the Venetian school; and a Watteau of a little scene in a park. Then Daumier again, in a small oil painting of Don Quixote seated before a Bible.

(One ought rather to see Daumier at the height of his powers in his dæmonic illustrations of this famous work: the oft-repeated motif of Don Quixote galloping into the fray upon Rosinante, rendered with turbid encrustations of colour that give the pictures an air of sinister enchantment. Really, Daumier is always poor in colour, perhaps because he is in a hurry to individualise his characters: his colours are only exasperated tones of light and dark shadows.)

Then Corot's light mist scattered over the shores of a lake, and two portentous Courbets: the work of this painter is always surprising. He seems to have derived from no one. . . . Puvis de Chavannes, with a *Winter*, stylised and very weak, nothing but rose and ultramarine. If we consider Puvis de Chavannes for a moment, it occurs to us that it is on him as foundation that Maurice Denis has constructed all his painting, spacious, intensive and liturgic. . . .

There is a Millet that looks like a seventeenth century Flemish work of the least distinguished kind.

And three Manets. One has nothing against them. They are authentic Manets of his last period. It comes into our minds that the artist in his late years, perhaps a prey to some inexpressible velleity of regret, set himself in pursuit of another phantom. We are far from the *Olympia*, or the *Balcony*, or that picnic in the meadow, and much of his charm has gone. However, these three little pictures: a still life, a corner on board ship, and his house at Rueuil, bear witness to a vitality which remained controlled and disconcerting.

There are a few impressionists. Monet: a sou'-wester foaming against a reef, all blare and explosiveness, and two men who jump back as if they were leaping out of the picture. Sisley: an impressionist by force of will, who has done his best here in a country scene full of hot reverberations against a sky loaded with colour. Pissarro: the swarming Boulevard de Montmarte, flooded with fog, but solid and fresh, and one of the quietest resting-places of art in the Gallery. . . .

When all is said and done, it must be admitted that the choice of this tedious mass of ballast—which, excluding a few old pictures of quality and two or three modern ones, is quite crushing—is due to a critical spirit that is on the whole deficient and harmful. Australia, of course, is isolated from the art-centres of the world, and insofar as the Gallery Committee insists upon well-known academic names, for the sake of bringing local art students into contact with their work, we agree with its policy. . . . Or rather, we will say that such considerations must inevitably be an important point with the Committee.

But they are not fully aware that even in London—artistically the most conservative place in the world—the great art of the last thirty years has demolished, and is continuing to demolish, artistic reputations that seemed established forever. Even the metaphysical De Chirico has made his entrance there: a good Cezanne costs as much as a Titian: and the influence of the Duveen brothers is destined to be restricted to that of simple antiquarians, for modern art (French art, be it understood), united now in harmony with the daring of modern architecture, has definitely gained a footing.

And so in Melbourne, a place teeming with modern activities, we may predict the growth of a more original taste among the Gallery directors—as soon as the delicate and childish art of the pre-Raphaelites, and of their disciples and living epigoni, be finally discredited. . . .

—Translated by *LEON ZYLBERSTEIN*

QUEST OF A HERO

GEORGES RIBEMONT-DESSAIGNES

—Bobo, said Irene to Major Alexander Borath, I want you to show me one of your heroes.

—You're crazy, said the Major, striking the leather of his boots. Heroes. . . . Heroes. . . .

He did not conclude his thought. The last reflections of the setting sun on his yellow leather boots seemed to him to be a look of the Divinity. But woman, he mused, is also a ray of the Divine; heroism as well. It is dangerous, though, to identify effects having the same origin, principally because if a woman carries on her the traces of perfection, she is also a chattel, a possession, and such a possession, that, when one is robbed of it, one is in turn robbed of the greater part of oneself, leaving one stripped and empty: that which has reference to the ineluctable ends of life is thus an infinite nuisance. Such, at least, was the opinion of Major Alexander Borath, whom his mistress called Bobo.

—I want to see a hero, Irene repeated.

—Heroes are not always what you think them to be, said Alexander.

—I want to see one, Bobo.

—Heroism. . . . Where do you think heroism is to be found? . . . It is everywhere; sometimes very near one. I, all things considered, am also a hero.

He indicated the cluster of ribboned decorations covering his breast.

—You. That's different, though, said Irene.

She reflected that the man whose body one knows, with all its necessities, is neither a hero nor a great man. One is inclined to forget that His Majesty, M. le President, His Holiness even, have physical obligations: that they must shave, wash their feet, and soil their collars. Love is a beautiful thing, Irene told herself. And Major Borath, doubtless, a man of importance. But love with Bobo brought with it considerations made under certain conditions that were destructive at the same time of one's conception of the greatness of love and the greatness of man. These vanish beyond the horizon. The craving for the absolute discovers only baseness.

For Irene, the greatness of heroism was one of the springs of love. The beauty of the universe was a function of love. But it was not a question of those devastating passions in which tempests dilate the pupils, and in which body and soul fight like wild beasts. Irene could not erase the rouge of her lips or the black of her eyebrows, where the dramas of her heart had left their imprint.

—Bobo, I want to see a hero.

. . . . . .

Major Borath took her to the hospital. When they entered the corridor a cadaverous odour greeted them and her nostrils trembled. She did not doubt that the object of her desire was within reach; but, at the same time, it seemed to her that, with diabolical malice, he was about to raise himself on to a cornice and transform himself into a being inherent of all that she most detested on earth.

—What a smell! she said, putting her small handkerchief to her nose. Tell me, Bobo, there are no heroes here, are there?

A man was lying on a bed, his legs doubled up under the covering, while his head and arms stuck out over the sides. His eyes seemed to bulge from his head, and a hoarse breath, divided into two streams by an enormous yellow tooth that pointed heavenwards, issued from his bleeding lips.

—What's wrong with him? Irene asked her lover.

—He's one of the men you wanted to see.

—That man? He's not a hero, surely?

Irene's small face shrivelled up like a chrysanthemum. She stepped closer, to the side of the dying man. An odour of decay given off by diseased bodies enveloped her like a fog. Filled with revulsion, she inclined her head towards the sufferer attempting to discover, in this heap of muscle-contorted bones, a trace of her ideal. She could find none; but, before she could step back, the man was seized with dying convulsions, and one of his clutching hands fastened upon Irene's light dress. The hero remained attached to the living by a corner of material.

—Good heavens, what's wrong with him? asked Irene, who was overcome with disgust.

—He's dead, said Borath. Come along!

She could not free herself. The hand of the dead man, hooked to her dress, had sunken into her: she felt the contact of it upon her thigh. Thrown back, the head fixed her with immobile eyes, and with that expression which the living find so disturbing, because they think it is directly intended for them.

—He's staring at me, said Irene. It's annoying, Bobo. Let's go.

Outside, she made a scene, accusing him of having deceived her. She wanted to see a hero and he had found only a hideous dying man to show her.

—I wish I could have nursed him, poor fellow, she added.

She was musing upon the gaping wounds she could have dressed; of her hands full of blood and suppurations. Of the odour of dead flesh incrusted beneath her pink fingernails. She was musing on her role, not in its baseness, but in its greatness: the greatness of a woman who nurses a man shattered by war.

She said again to Alexander Borath:

—But, look here, there are so many heroes like these. What I want you to show me, Bobo, is a real hero. Not a dead man.

—You're a beauty, said the Major. Not a dead man. It's easy to say. After all, there's not so much difference between a live and a dead one.

—I want to see a hero, Bobo. A real live hero.

. . . . . .

On a dull morning, Alexander Borath drove his mistress out to a plateau along a road bordered with walnut trees. There was a sound of distant gunfire. When she alighted from the automobile, Irene was astonished to find the grass under foot so green, and to see, in the sad, limpid, autumn air, such delightful trees, decked with golden foliage.

—Isn't the country pretty, she said. Then she added: But I like the sea-side better. Why have you brought me here, Bobo?

—We fought here, yesterday. Those damned bitches made a small break in our lines such as a bit of straw might make in your stocking, said the elegant Major. . . . Then he changed his tone: The swine, they think they can do anything they like. The bloody swine. It looks as though we got them, however. Anyway, I'll show you over.

—Really, said Irene, you fought here? Impossible, Bobo. Why, look at the butterflies!

As they advanced over the plateau they discovered, at the bottom of a declivity hollowed out by shells, some soldiers at work, heads bent to the ground.

—We have slaughtered the swine, said Alexander Borath, and driven them back beyond the plateau. I believe it was rather a tough job, but our advance is apparent enough. The men you see over there are cleaning up. I don't know whether we'll find what you're looking for.

—We'll see a hero then, dear?

—I tell you, I don't know. But we're sure to make some interesting discovery.

Irene gave a pout of disappointment. The object of her desire was departing further into the distance. Nevertheless, she advanced towards the searchers, and was not long in discovering the nature of the work on foot. Veritable searchers! The stretcher-bearers had already removed the wounded, and now the new service, created by the Minister of War, General Rossignol, known as the Army Corpse-Chewers, had cleared the field of its dead.

—You see, Borath explained, what with the furious methods of those devils, our men know what they're in for. There are more and more dead every day. Enough and to spare. It's a tremendous job to get rid of them. And the work of statistics. . . . And the hospital work. . . . And the by-products. . . . I'll explain that to you. . . .

—Please, Bobo, don't! exclaimed Irene, with a gesture of abhorrence

—Yes, yes. . . . Let us continue. . . . I was saying . . . they have created a new section, the Army Corpse-Chewers. It has been in operation around about here. But there still remains a heap of debris. There are so many poor stiffs who get knocked to pieces. That's why we employ this gang of rag-and-bone merchants. You see, my pet, it's the last war. And when we advance over certain areas it's necessary to have them put ship-shape. If we were fighting real enemies like the Cocodrils or the Salangares that I fought in Africa and the Indies. . . . But the Reds. . . . To bloody hell with them!

—Bobo!

—Oh, you understand, when I'm speaking of these mongrels. . . . Still, they're worth something. They putrefy. Then we gather it up, put it into sacks, and carry it away in army waggons. . . .

—But, Bobo, won't I see any heroes, then?

—I'm afraid we've arrived too late. To tell you the truth, you don't know how difficult it is to find a live hero in this cursed war. They're all dead. Maybe you'll find a small fragment of one. . . .

—Let's go back, said the young woman drily. I'm beginning to feel hungry.

Irene was furious. She lit a cigarette and was silent. Alexander led the way. However, they had to pass two men of the Rag-and-Bone service who were talking excitedly and waving their arms about. Near a ditch, behind some bushes hung with a gossamer of dew, they came across two corpses closely interlocked. They had apparently been adversaries who fought to the last extremity in a tooth-and-claw battle. Already wounded in the general conflict, they had covered one another with knife-cuts; then teeth and nails had followed, tearing away ears or nose, gouging out the eyes. One of them, whose shattered jaw hung sinisterly, protruded a scarlet tongue, quite stiff, like one of those menacing inflorescences of tropical forests. The other had an eye hanging out of its socket, like a loose coat-button about to fall, while he held between his teeth a bit of flesh belonging to his adversary.

—Ah! said Major Borath, you wanted to see a hero. . . . Well, here's one!

—Which one? asked Irene.

—That depends on the uniform, I suppose. It goes without saying that the hero is the one belonging to our army, and not that swine of a Red. . . . Are you happy now?

—I wish I could have seen them fighting!

Irene shook her head. She was profoundly disappointed and could not distinguish, in this melee of limbs covered with khaki and dry blood, which was which. How to distinguish between the hero and the swine? Besides, both had ghastly faces smashed into shapeless pulp that filled her with horror. There was nothing here evocative of love or beauty. What obscenity! Was she, then, in error? Must she be stripped of every illusion upon the subject of what she had believed to be the very summit of love? A hero, then, was not the most thrilling of men, but, instead, a wild beast! She retained a secret hope, however, for she knew well enough that blood and death, as the necessary decorations of heroism, could not be abolished. And, in spite of the nauseating bitterness of the deception, she saw, revealing itself in the far-off future, the image of her desire, winged and helmeted, scion of noble blood, so suave and sleek to caress, intoxicating to every sense, an image whose deadly thrill opened the heavenly gates in a flood of light and voluptuousness.

The lightness of her step and the sparkle of her humour returned with this comforting dream. She turned to her lover:

—Come along, Bobo. You don't know anything about it. But I'm not angry with you. Come along, old thing.

She took him by the arm and dragged him along. But she halted after a few steps; her small shoes were spotted with blood. Arching a foot, she lifted it lightly to show him.

—Look, Bobo. How pretty it is, the red on the brown leather. It couldn't be better if I had done it purposely. Two fashionable colours, as well!

Without a cloud showing anywhere on her happy face, she stepped into the automobile. Major Borath followed her, listening vaguely to the sound of the distant firing and whistling *Le Madelon,* an old song of the last war.

—Translated from the French by
Frank Quaine

BUSINESS MEN AT PLAY

He Who in primal Sunday shade
Demobilised Heaven's team of thralls
And stood at ease in the midst of His hoard
Of plants and puling animals—

He hath decreed that golf is just!
For lo, that precedent releases
These tweeded Jasons from six days
Of galleying after golden fleeces.

O Moorgate ledgers and pale clerks,
Forget the reckless gains foregone!
Communiques of tape-machines,
Soft with your *code napoleon!*

Only Augean red-kneed grooms
Whose clubs are brooms and Sabbath's a fable
Shall toil till morning's punctual vans
Convey the stallions back to stable

Who now, freed from the bridling bit
Of civic show and thug's routine,
Whinny in pairs round tiny holes—
Still practising upon the "green."

Their peace-pact limbs, fraternal smiles
Jostle in rich forgetfulness
Of Commerce red in mind and maw
And Monday's fratricidal mess

When (at 6.10) the dun cloud lifts
On typists barracking from afar—
Whilst I whose envy, drunk, submerges
Anger, in a cocktail-bar,

Sobering, admire the cat
Whose *savoir-faire* can never fail—
Who, when striped trousers creased to pat,
Malodorously raised her tail.

—BERTRAM HIGGINS

THE CONFRONTATION

"O you who deem repose your right!"
The Voice rose. Whirring and warm,
Darting a rootless tongue of light,
Like the puff of sand that starts a storm

It turned the drift of the cool dews;
—Rearing in the heart's deep lull,
"Once more the lock shall lift," it whispered,
"Flush with the flood, an ancient hull!

"Outside, the tips of trees dilate,
(Open your senses and lean down)
And seeds stir, like a third estate. . . .
Insurgence in a scene of brown!

"Here where the bald boughs, lunging, clear
The air for unborn green—
Under those locking antlers, here
Where the sap discards its screen

"The forest tingling with its heirs
Feels, like an extreme-unction, small
Festivals in its scars commingling
With the huge innocence of that Fall!

"You whose compunction seeks a sign—
Whose one pure sigh demands its meed,
—Mild theorist of the condign,
Whose million smiles shall salve this deed

"When in the Invisible Mender's suture,
Arachnid of the rankling edges,
Incongruous Hope binds past and future
With a dissolving gut of pledges?

"Do you think to, by not harming,
Attach me? Am I of female nature?
Bond of your deasil arm
My homeland's the discarded date!

"I am the Sun-spot whose charred roses
Leaven his prime—I am that Juno
Fostering for war on the low clime
The cretins of the noon!

"Before the fire and flood, before
The smoking flax, the rain of tongues—
Before the blue blood on the axe,
Sole Redeemer! had sprung,

"Before the Manichee—entire,
Total I burned! I am the Light
Exiled from the light, in whom
The glimmer vests, after the fire.

"To climb, to crest the incessant soul! . . .
Throned! but a throne that reels towards dawn,
Collapsing on the crystal mole
Where the bled crescent dips its horn.

"O moon, pure as your reflex power
Hid in the smothering glass,
Eternally from the dark tower
I see the murdered princes pass

"Through the crass veins of their seducers—
Jerked metabolically, bandied
Where the diurnal well-being sluices
From the fermenting crimes of Man.

". . . Waif of the storm-encrusted villa,
The infra-red commands the door!
Crawl, clutch at the sill—
Lift up your roots against the floor!

"The heart was calm, the last word said. . . .
An octave higher than the ears
My voice still plucks the conquering head,
The head trepanned with fiery fears.

"For I felt all—the fang, the lash,
And heard the stifled shout, and saw
The twisted wire behind the flash
Blackening as the smile blew out."

—BERTRAM HIGGINS

LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER

SACHA YOUSSEVITCH

SOME years ago Havelock Ellis, discussing the extraordinary effect that obscene words in literature have upon the mind of the reader—particularly of the Anglo-Saxon reader—observed: "The book may be by a great philosopher and contain his deepest philosophy, but, let an obscene word appear in it, and that word will draw every reader's attention."

Here, certainly, is the explanation of much of the critical hysteria that *Lady Chatterley's Lover* has evoked. Because of the four or five proscribed monosyllables that appear in it, this truly great book has been relegated to the literary underworld: its sale is prohibited in English-speaking countries: it has become a commodity upon the vilest of all markets—the pornographic: the healthiest sex book ever written finds itself thrust between *Fanny Hill* and *Justine*! So much for the sexual outlook of the day. . . .

Why, then, did so sensitive an artist and so passionate a prophet as Lawrence deliver himself into the hands of the smuthounds by the use of these few forbidden words? He has answered the question himself: "If I use the taboo words, there is a reason. We shall never free the phallic reality from the 'uplift' taint till we give it its own phallic language, and use the obscene words." And he refused a tempting offer from an English publisher for an expurgated edition, because he found it was impossible to eliminate these words: "I might as well try to clip my own nose into shape with scissors. The book bleeds."

Lawrence realised that sex, as Leonard Huxley puts it, is the last of the great taboos: "The words that shock us so much at first don't shock at all after a while. Is this because the mind is depraved by habit? Not a bit. It is that the words merely shocked the eye; they never shocked the mind at all. . . . We are to-day, as human beings, evolved and cultured far beyond the taboos which are inherent in our culture. . . . Culture and civilisation have taught us to separate the word from the deed. . . . The great necessity is that we should act according to our thoughts, and think according to our acts. . . . We have to . . . balance up the consciousness of the act, and the act itself. Get the two in harmony. . . . It means having a proper reverence for sex. . . . It means being able to use the so-called obscene words, because these are a natural part of the mind's consciousness of the body. Obscenity only comes in when the mind despises and fears the body, and the body hates and resists the mind."

In *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Lawrence has actually succeeded in transvaluating these words: the cloacal associations that repel us when we first encounter them are gradually stripped away, and by the time we finish the book the little words have acquired an entirely new significance—a significance almost lyrical, and entirely purged of the obscene. Only a writer of genius could have done this: the achievement, from a purely technical standpoint, is comparable with that of Joyce in his word-mutations and neologistic mintages.

. . . . . .

The theme of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is simple. Constance Chatterley is a healthy, countrified English girl who has an "æsthetically unconventional upbringing" which includes a continental education and a tentative love-affair with a fellow student. But, like every healthy English girl, Constance regards the physical side of the affair as "a sort of primitive reversion." She prefers talking to love-making. . . . "Love was only a minor accompaniment . . . a sordid subjection."

Towards the end of the war, she marries Clifford Chatterley, a clever young man, for whom sex is equally unimportant. Marriage to him implies an intimacy that is beyond sex, which is "merely an accident, or an adjunct, one of the curious, obsolete, organic processes which persisted in its own clumsiness, but was not really necessary."

A month after their marriage, Clifford goes to the front—and returns next year, crippled, the lower half of his body paralysed for ever. He succeeds to the baronetcy, and, with his wife, takes possession of the family seat, in the Midlands, where he devotes himself to writing stories. . . . Constance, a prey to vague discontent, has an affair with one of his literary friends, who, for a while, affords her some emotional satisfaction, till, one night, in a moment of revelation, she turns from him in disgust. Life resolves itself once more into a succession of dreary days. "Nothingness! To accept the great nothingness of life seemed to be the one end of living."

Men have no glamour for her: life has lost all its values. The malaise is not an individual one: "All the great words, it seemed to Connie, were cancelled for her generation; love, joy, happiness, home . . . husband, all these great dynamic words were half-dead now, and dying from day to day. Home was a place you lived in, love was a thing you didn't fool yourself about, joy was a word you applied to a good Charleston, happiness was a term of hypocrisy used to bluff other people, a husband was a man you lived with and kept going in spirits. As for sex, the last of the great words, it was just a cocktail term for an excitement that backed you for a while, then left you more raggy than ever. . . . Love, sex, all that sort of stuff, just water-ices! Lick it up and forget it. . . . Sex and a cocktail: they both lasted about as long, had the same effect, and amounted to about the same thing." The one thing that remains is maternity: she plays with the idea briefly, but whom could she accept as a father? "It was not a question of love; it was a question of *a man*." She demands someone worthy of fatherhood: and the world seems empty of such men. . . .

This is the mood that dominates her, when, one day, brooding over her arid way of life, she goes down to the gamekeeper's cottage with a message from Sir Clifford. She comes upon the keeper as he is washing himself in his yard, naked to the waist, and unaware of her approach. She retires hastily, but the incident, trivial enough objectively, comes to her as a visionary experience. She feels aware of the gamekeeper's loneliness, and of a curious sense of beauty: "Not the stuff of beauty, not even the body of beauty, but a lambency, the warm, white flame of a single life. . . ." But her mind ridicules this emotional response, attempts to argue it away. "A man washing himself in a backyard! No doubt with evil-smelling yellow soap!"

And yet the ferment remains. . . . She delivers the message, notices a certain quality of distinction in the man, even discusses him with her husband. . . . Sir Clifford dismisses him briefly. "He disliked any suggestion of a really exceptional human being. People must be more or less at his level, or below it," and, listening to her husband's remarks: "Connie felt again the tightness, niggardliness of the men of her generation. They were so tight, so scared of life!"

That night Connie does something that she has not done for a long time: she looks at herself naked in her mirror. . . . Her body, she feels, is becoming meaningless, dull and opaque, so much insignificant substance. . . . "She was old, old at twenty-seven, with no gleam and sparkle in the flesh. Old through neglect and denial. . . ." And she conceives a sudden hatred for the intellectuality of her husband, and his circle. "The mental life! Suddenly she hated it with a rushing fury, the swindle!"

So, gradually, her discontent increases, and with it, her aversion from Clifford. He had only appealed to her in a mental way that is meaningless to her now. Meanwhile she has encountered the gamekeeper occasionally, and been puzzled by his mocking, half-insolent air. . . . And then, one night, impulsively, almost unconsciously, she becomes his lover. Next day she goes to the wood again: "It was a grey, still afternoon, with the dark-green dogs'-mercury spreading under the hazel copse, and all the trees making a silent effort to open their buds. To-day she could almost feel it in her own body, the huge heave of the sap in the massive trees, upwards, up, up to the bud-tips, there to push into little flamey oak-leaves, bronze as blood. It was like a tide running turgid upward, and spreading on the sky."

They meet often, and Constance attains a new conception of physical values. "Beauty! What beauty! a sudden little flame of new awareness went through her. How was it possible, this beauty here, where she had previously only been repelled?" And finally she discovers that even her shame has died: "Shame, which is fear: the deep organic shame, the old, old physical fear which crouches in the bodily roots of us, and can only be chased away by the sensual fire. . . . She felt, now, she had come to the real bedrock of her nature, and was essentially shameless. . . . She felt a triumph, almost a vainglory. So! That was how it was! That was life. . . ."

Constance goes to Venice for a holiday, and returns to London, pregnant: her lover,

who has been dismissed, is waiting for her. Sir Clifford, to whom she confesses the affair, refuses to divorce her, and she goes up to Scotland to await her baby. . . . The gamekeeper obtains work on a farm, and writes her the long letter that concludes the book. In this letter, Lawrence gives a final expression of his bitterness towards industrialism—a bitterness that recurs throughout most of the gamekeeper's speeches: "We've got this great industrial population, and they've got to be fed, so the damn show has to be kept going somehow. . . . The young ones get mad because they've no money to spend. Their whole life depends on spending money, and now they've got none to spend. That's our civilisation and our education. . . . If you could only tell them that living and spending isn't the same thing. . . . They ought to learn to be naked and handsome, and to sing in a mass and dance the old group dances, and carve the stools they sit on, and embroider their own emblems. . . . And that's the only way to solve the industrial problem. . . . They should be alive and frisky, and acknowledge the great god Pan. He's the only god for the masses, forever. . . . But the colliers aren't pagan, far from it. They're a sad lot, a deadened lot of men: dead to their women, dead to life. The young ones scoot about on motor-bikes with girls, and jazz when they get a chance. But they're very dead. And it needs money. Money poisons you when you've got it, and starves you when you haven't. . . ."

And the final note is one of glowing chastity, "like a snowdrop of forked white fire." It is not the troubled chastity of denial, but a pause of peace, an interlude of realised passion. "Now is the time to be chaste; it is so good to be chaste, like a river of cool water in my soul. . . . It is like fresh water and rain. How can men want wearisomely to philander? What a misery to be like Don Juan . . . impotent and unable to be chaste in the cool between-whiles, as by a river. . . ."

. . . . . .

In outline essentially banal, this story is transfigured by Lawrence into a moving work of art, informed with that amazing, vital quality so peculiarly his own. And here he gives definitive expression to his tortuous theories of sex. . . . It took Lawrence many years to clarify the attitude that he had intuitively reached in *Sons and Lovers*: he stumbled for years through the chaos of Freudian pseudo-psychology, and in an attempt to schematise his intuitions came dangerously near disintegration.

His actual position has been curiously misunderstood. Dr. Joseph Collins, for example, has gravely denounced him as an avatar of homosexuality: the more usual condemnation is that he preached a return to pure paganism, to a brutalised and undiscerning sensuality. Yet he is closer to the mystic than to the pagan.

That harmonious relation with the spiritual universe which William James posited as the aim of religious aspiration, is, for Lawrence, the aim of sex: Lady Chatterley differs from St. Teresa only in that she attains this spiritual unification from the immediate source—from sex itself—rather than from a sublimation of it. Sex is the supreme unifier, the real escape from the nightmare-nothingness with which the man of thought is so often confronted: the overpowering sense of isolation such as Lawrence suggests in *Sons and Lovers*.

"Where was he?—one tiny upright speck of flesh, less than an ear of wheat lost in the field. . . . On every side the immense dark silence seemed pressing him, so tiny a spark, into extinction. . . . Night, in which everything was lost, went reaching out, beyond stars and sun. Stars and sun, a few bright grains, went spinning round for terror. . . . So much, and himself, infinitesimal, at the core a nothingness, and yet not nothing."

But through sex there is possible an intimate communion with these stars, in themselves so aloof and terrifying: "Just as he was, so it seemed the vigourous, wintry stars were strong also with life. . . . It was as if he, and the stars, and the dark herbage were licked up in an immense tongue of flame. . . . Everything rushed along in living beside him." It is necessary to realise sex, completely and honestly. But Lawrence found the modern sexual consciousness malconditioned and incapable of this realisation. The fault, he decided, was in the overdevelopment of the intellectual life, a direct result of idealist thought. . . . "We have to get back, a long way, before the idealistic conceptions began, before Plato, before the tragic idea of life arose. . . . For the gospel of salvation through the Ideals and escape from the body coincided with the tragic conception of human life."

With the rise of idealism in philosophic thought, and its subsequent development in Christianity, the subjugation of the body became complete. "Buddha, Plato, Jesus, they were all three utter pessimists as regards life, teaching that the only happiness lay in abstracting oneself from life, the daily, yearly, seasonal life of birth and death and fruition, and in living in the 'immutable' or eternal spirit . . . such abstraction is neither bliss nor liberation, but nullity. . . . And the great saviours and teachers only cut us off from life." Lady Chatterley, after her love-awareness is complete, surprises her husband by affirming the body: "I believe the life of the body is a greater reality than the life of the mind: when the body is really awakened to life. But so many people . . . have only got minds tacked on to their physical corpses." Clifford looks at her in wonder, and says: "The life of the body is just the life of the animals." "And that's better than the life of professorial corpses," she replies. "But it's not true! The human body is only just coming to real life. . . ."

Puritanism, the modern echo of asceticism, is not the only evil against which Lawrence wars. "In contrast to the puritan hush! hush! which produces the sexual moron, we have the modern jazzy and highbrow young person who has gone one better, and won't be hushed in any respect. . . . From fearing the body, and denying its existence, the advanced go to the other extreme and treat it as a sort of toy to be played with, a slightly nasty toy, but still you can get some fun out of it. . . ." This is the attitude that one discovers in most of Aldous Huxley's characters, who, as Bertrand Russell has pointed out, have dissociated sex from serious emotion and view it, like St. Paul, as a mere physiological outlet. Lawrence realised that between the "stale grey puritan" and the "smart jazzy person" and the "low, uncultured person with a dirty mind, who looks for dirt," *Lady Chatterley's Lover* had "very little space to turn in"; and his final message is addressed to all of them:

"Keep your perversions if you like them—your perversion of puritanism, your perversion of smart licentiousness, your perversion of a dirty mind. But I stick to my book and my position: *Life is only bearable when the mind and body are in harmony, and there is a natural balance between them, and each has a natural respect for the other.*"

. . . . . .

In his insistence on the essential nobility of sex, in his creation of a sexual æsthetic that is consonant with life, in his protest against the over-assessment of thought, D. H. Lawrence has contributed much to the forces of sexual emancipation. Yet it will be as an artist, and not as a psychologist, that he will be remembered. Profound as were many of his intuitions, and sincere as was his uncompromising exposition of them, his work, as a whole, lacks that sceptical detachment which is so necessary to scientific rationalisation. The empiric method, in the hands of a patient and competent observer like Havelock Ellis, or the method of critical scrutiny such as Bertrand Russell has recently employed, must prove far more valid: the scientist, rather than the intuitionist, will achieve the ultimate liberation of sex.

As an artist, Lawrence brought a new vigour into the novel. His style, strangely unequal—for he was always distrustful of his artistic qualities—reaches at its best a degree of luminant and sensitive expression that is unique in English literature. He has enriched the language of description by effecting verbal externalisations of his immediate emotional responses: he wrote, in short, with his whole body rather than with his brain alone. His presentation of a landscape, for example, is no bloodless, pre-Raphaelite mosaic of trees and flowers and sky, but a vivid, subjective apprehension of life in its very quintessence: it is as though the sap of every living thing is rising within him, and flowering inevitably in his prose.

"It was really a lovely day, the first dandelions making suns, the first daisies so white. . . . Yellow celandines now were in crowds, flat open, pressed back in urgency, and the yellow glitter of themselves. It was the yellow, the powerful yellow of early summer. And primroses were broad, and full of pale abandon, thick clustered primroses no longer shy. The lush, dark green of hyacinths was a sea, with buds rising like pale corn, while in the riding the forget-me-nots were fluffing up, and there were bits of blue bird's-egg-shell under a bush. Everywhere, the bud-knots and the leap of life!"

And in the passages wherein he has attempted to verbalise a pure sensation, he achieves, at times, a lyricism that is amazingly evocative: "Rippling, rippling, rippling, like a flapping overlapping of soft flames, running to points of brilliance, exquisite, exquisite, and melting her. . . . It was like bells rippling up and up to a culmination . . . till she was one perfect concentric fluid of feeling."

Here is emotion transmuted to words—a magical expression of the inexpressible. . . .

▼

NEGROID

(urban)

Under the sick and shapeless moon
The cullud man
began
to croon:

"Ma baby
Will may be
not be so lonesome
so-o-o-o-n."

(primitive)

Oh! I remember it all
—the squat huts and the holy fire in the cleared place
as the first moon of all moons rose over the edge of the world
—the hunched circle that moaned and swayed
—and the drumming the dull insistent drumming
I was afraid . . .
The drummer that played to the pulse of lust
Till the brass-bright eyes died out to dust
Till the mind was dead and the night shut out
From the night-dark mind of the drunken rout
Till all was silent for all had died
And I knew that the good great god had lied
For I knew that the good great god had died.
. . . . . .
and still the drum-pulse
till it filled the world and the horror beyond the world
with a nothingness, utter and complete
like the little death of love.

—*H. ALWYN LEE*

THE FUTURE OF THE THEATRE

FRANK D. CLEWLOW

THE theatre is dead! Why?
Because it has ceased to be theatrical.

If the first statement be true, then it is for the reason set out. Is it true? We hear it often enough; we have been hearing it regularly for the last twenty-five years; but some semblance of a theatre is still with us. Is it a theatre as other countries understand it, as Shakespeare understood it, as even Macready, or Barry Sullivan, or Kean, or Buckstone understood it? Unhesitatingly, no!

I fancy that I hear a fervent "Thank God!" from some young enthusiast who is busily engaged in the work of building the theatre of ideas. Let me say to him: "Turn your energies towards learning the real business of the theatre—to entertain, not to preach; to amuse and exalt, not to depress! Learn to be theatrical, and the ideas will take care of themselves!"

When the early theatrical movements came into being in England, they played Ibsen, Sudermann, early Shaw, early Galsworthy, and a little Barrie, and other light work. What an improvement that marked, in many ways, upon the standard of the period! What a change from *The Royal Divorce* and regular yearly visits from Martin Harvey in *The Only Way*, Fred Terry in *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, Lewis Waller, Wilson Barrett, and the rest of the popular actor-managers! And yet it was still *good theatre*. It demanded of one a little more in return, a clearer understanding of what intelligent entertainment could be, a little more human interest. And it was still theatrical. It justified Shaw's contention that the growing popularity of his plays was due to the fact that he used all the old tricks thinly veiled by new treatment. And it proved that such material could be dramatically effective.

Then new schools of writers arose, of which the Manchester group may be taken as a good example. Gloom was considered to be an essential ingredient in the dramatic fare of the day. Audiences saw themselves and their friends in situations which were the commonplaces of their daily lives. The touch of tinsel and sawdust was gone; from being twopence-coloured the theatre was becoming penny-plain; and diminishing patronage soon told its tale.

The inherent weakness of these plays was due to their lack of light and shade. They failed to conform to the rule that the graph of the emotional line of a play should rise and fall, should have its peaks and its depths, and should not, as in such cases, reveal a graph that is a straight line. But straight line plays were becoming the fashion.

In spurts, however, attempts were made to bolster up the current theatrical revival by new methods of staging, of lighting, and even of acting. Shakespeare was played in modern dress. And this was called "exciting experiment"!—why, no one, save those who used this stimulating phrase, can tell us. Did not Garrick always play in modern dress? Private clubs staged plays banned by a mediæval censor, and made successes for the prurient, but not successes for the theatre. The very climbing of the attic steps became an aphrodisiac in itself; and if the police could only be persuaded to step in success could be spelled out in larger letters. By such means was that fine play, *Maya*, made a success in England; whereas it had long been a real success of the theatre on the Continent, where its marvellous characterisation and wonderfully moving development had attracted audiences who knew a play when they saw it.

Nevertheless, through all these years, there were pioneers at work. They were sincere in their attempts to do something for the theatre, but they had lost the vision of what the theatre should be. On the other hand, the commercial managers who were feeling the competition of the rapidly-improving cinema endeavoured to meet it by reducing the intelligence factor in their entertainments; and the decline in public taste during the war period gave them an added excuse to lower the standard further. However, some of the repertory theatres survived—with a very limited clientele—which brought the word "highbrow" as a derisive epithet into common use.

Then the talkie burst forth on a wondering world. The managers threw up their hands and cried "Kamerad!" once more. There was now nothing between the straight-line play and the spicy society comedy which was a little more risky than the last, or the alliteratively titled bedroom farce.

Another nail in the coffin of this slowly-dying theatre was the rapid development and popularisation of broadcasting. How the managers railed against such entertainment in the home! Their artists were not allowed to appear before the microphone, lest broadcasting might lower their box-office attractiveness. Plays were withheld from the medium, and everything else was done to impede the progress of this latest competitor. The mistake was soon realised, but never completely rectified. Broadcasts of performances were permitted, however; and, strangely enough, receipts increased—if it were a *good* play that was made available in this way. But the commercial managers have yet to understand the real significance of such an unexpected result.

We have been mournful long enough.

Is the theatre dead? Far from it.

The theatre lives in its so-called competitors, though it may have been driven from its own home.

What better theatre could be seen than Chaplin in *City Lights*? Has the art of pantomime ceased to be good theatre because so few actors are capable of it? And would not Shakespeare have welcomed broadcasting as a means of reaching a larger audience, who, attracted by the magic of his word, would have soon sought the attraction of the living actor?

These competitors can never replace the theatre proper, but they will be used in its service as soon as our producers realise that everything theatrical is the business of the theatre. Broadcast plays and the more subtle and intelligent talkies command a larger audience than the legitimate drama. Then why does not the theatre use them? There are hundreds of small towns and villages where the drama cannot penetrate; but wireless can reach them, and so can a tin can with six reels of film. Why do not our managers see that fine work goes to them in these ways?

The drawback to the production of fine plays has always been a monetary one. But I believe that these daughter arts offer a means of overcoming the difficulty. We have read of the "radio city" that is to be built in New York. It will contain huge theatres and concert halls to which audiences will be admitted. It will broadcast and make talkies of its productions at the same time. If this project matures, the receipts from the filming of a good play should enable other good plays to be produced free from the financial worry which at present attends experiment. Its broadcast would prove its finest advertisement. And if, after considering such a project, a critic should express the fear that the promotion of these activities would eventually result in the disappearance of the theatre as it now is, we would say in reply: The theatre, with its three dimensional actors, cannot be replaced by a voice or a two-dimensional shadow so long as it does its work as well as its off-shoots. That intangible, inexpressible something, which both actor and audience feel during a performance —that quick, mutual response, one to the other, which accompanies fine work on the stage—will always have an attraction for alert theatre-goers. And, by seeing that good work is presented to potential audiences by the cinema and the broadcasting stations, managers will increase this alertness, and attract more and more intelligence to their box-offices.

Unfortunately, our producers have been so long occupied in giving the people what they wished them to want that they cannot fulfil the present demand for better work. This state of affairs can easily be rectified. Any community may soon have the theatre it desires by effecting a minute increase in the rates; and the present managers might be employed as ticket sellers, or in some other department suitably fitting their talents.

It will, I fear, be a long time before we reach this stage; but the day is surely coming; and then we may see huge theatres with thousands of cheap seats where the masterpieces of our own and other ages will be played and broadcast, a talkie made during the performance, and the films sent far and wide to places where the production itself cannot be accommodated. The actor would have to broaden his method because of the larger audience; authors would find that a more sweeping emotional line would be called for; and the straight line play would cease to exist. The greater capacity of the auditoriums would enable managers to lower their prices and place the entertainments within the reach of all—in short, the theatre would become popular again.

Is this what we are making for? I think it is.

Let us be theatrical again, disdaining nothing that may add to the effectiveness of what we have to offer. Let us not underrate the intelligence of our audiences; let us realise that however fine and literary a play may be, it must still be actable and dramatic —and we need not fear the future. Let us demand something more from our actors than the ability to wear clothes and speak stage English; let us not fear to laugh and to cry with them; and in the theatre of the future we shall be able, in our thousands, to find renewed enjoyment in the most popular and most easily understood of all the arts.

The theatre is dead! Long live the theatre!

▼

cocaine . . .

fog
creeps through the attic
of my brain
where dreams
like broken toys
lie scattered

once . . . things mattered . . .

life was a scintillant socratic
dialogue
an equipoise
between cold thought and candentbright desire

life has become a dull insistent noise
an old man mumbling by a burntout fire

once . . . things mattered . . .

there was god and the devil and sin
chance and design
the wicked and the just
insinuant music and wine
laughter and faces and lust
and wonder
and strife

once . . . these things mattered . . .

now brain and body rust
like an empty petrol tin

and life
is a slapstick mummer with a battered
tophat and a mirthless grin

—pandolph golding

PHOEBUS APOLLO IN A BILLYCOCK

ADRIAN LAWLOR

"*C*OULD you 'blige me with a light, sir?"

The fluting, high-necked voice belonged to a lean-featured gent in a billycock hat, whose trouser-bottoms of faded but indelibly striped vicuna were crumpled forlornly upon the recalcitrant tags of a pair of elastic-sided boots. His eye, running me over as I fumbled for my matchbox, rested for a moment on the title of the unopened book on my knee.

"Beddoes, eh!" he exclaimed; and, giving me an immediate glance (to reassure himself, I thought as to my qualifications for *that* sort of reading), he sat down beside me, puffing at a blackened calabash and blinking with the air of one who is about to speak winged words.

Half an hour earlier, emerging from the Public Library with a volume by the all-but-forgotten Beddoes under my arm, I had made with what haste was possible through streets insufferable with the din of bells and biting wheels and barking klaxons toward the Treasury Gardens, exclaiming to myself as I reached my favourite bocage—exclaiming for at least the nine-hundredth time—that there is nothing in all Melbourne so charming as this green-cloistered place. The clamorous pell-mell of Flinders Street was hushed to a deep, dull, thousand-drowsing sound, and spent its rumour uselessly upon me—*that* was merely the music of one world amidst many. Here the young earth was alive with the exquisite ardour of October; the air translucent with fire and dew and dense with the jonquil-scented spring; the illimitable blue depth above, triumphant and serene, drenched with dewy light. And as I gazed upon the ever-living beauty of the world my mind slipped insensibly into a gulf of reverie, and soon I was telling myself sententiously that everything that could be imagined, and even everything that could not be imagined, was possible to the soul in a moment of such enchantment. The surface-action of our human experience, I said, is tangled with many a difficult knot, for which we have a sufficient variety of names—"coincidence," "chance," "accident," and what not; but it is a question whether life is quite as fortuitous in its circumstances as we are in the habit, in our superior, slipshod way, of assuming. Phœbus Apollo himself may be incarnate, for all I know, in the person of this seedy-looking creature now approaching me. . . .

What occult agency was at work here?—for it was here that my gentleman interrupted. Mark how these apparently haphazard ruminations had exactly prepared my mind for his arrival, so that we were able at our first and possibly last meeting to plunge without shame, scruple or apology into a discussion whose identical centre was revealed to each in the first words exchanged: revealed inevitably, as though we had been converging upon it in an hour's talk.

"I am a poet," he said presently, giving me a quaint sideways bow; "and in any century but this I should have been a major poet. Like Beddoes, I am born out of my due time. It is my fate, sir, to have written sufficient verse to fill a dozen folios—verse which, but for the accident of my too-late arrival, must have struck immediate recognition. For, vulgar opinion to the contrary, the spirit of man does *not* advance. These are, to say the least of it, pinching times. The world becomes continually smaller, and we shrink with it. Upon my soul, I sometimes feel that the world is best compared to a seed that somebody should have planted last season . . . and forgot." He paused to admire the simile, and proceeded in a heightened voice: "It is undignified, sir, and mendacious as well, to argue, as a man had the effrontery to argue with me only this morning, that your Hinklers and Kingsford Smiths are great men, in the sense in which Magellan, for instance, was great. Magellan was a giant man: these are only spirited mechanics.—You follow me?"

"On patriotic, if not sentimental grounds, I should disagree with you," I told him. "When I was in France—of course I was very young—I would have told you that my battalion was composed exclusively of heroes, each one of them as admirable as any of Homer's vaunted and particular pets."

The gent bowed again. "On both patriotic and sentimental grounds I must agree with you. But the Greek hero has this advantage over your Australian 'digger': he never punched a tram ticket or pushed a clerk's pen or walked the floor of an emporium or came into contact in any conceivable way with the actual world we inhabit. He couldn't. He was only a glorious gesture of the imagination. He was only Ideal Heroism—which brings me, alas, back to my point. How is it possible to write poetry, or—what is for a poet the same thing—to achieve serenity and a long view of the world, when the spiritual equilibrium of that world is being continually upset by fools who are merely clever enough to know that if they cease for an instant to be clever they must die and remain dead for ever and ever; and who must in consequence do their puerile utmost to pull down, overset, or blow up whatever was standing square in the world before they entered it. Ideal heroism! Where does that come in, nowadays?"

"*That* was blown to bits, over in France—nobody's fault, really," I assured him.

But the lean-featured gent pointed upward. "Why, sir, surely it is incumbent on God himself to suffer the pangs of an outraged conscience?"

"There you are!" I exclaimed, "you *do* belong to the twentieth century after all." But the Johnsonian "Why, sir——" had reminded me of something else; and I remarked that social progress seems to consist almost entirely in the acquisition and acknowledgment of manners and ideas which were once thought rude: the very word "clever," I said, was for Dr. Johnson a vulgar word.

I had not so far discovered anything in his mind to tally with his claim to the title of Poet; but his next utterance so completely begged the question at issue and showed him doubling back on his tracks with such an easy-shifting stride that I was left in no doubt as to his possession of at least the psychological temper of a poet.

"A vulgar word. That it no longer is; but I fancy we are making a somewhat vulgar use of it. There is in what's called cleverness an absolute dichotomy in kind: on the one hand, a superficial smartness—very necessary for those who aspire to write for the weekly press; on the other, a spiritual desire that will seek catharsis at the price even of the emotion that feeds it. We are not afraid of our emotions any longer—men once were. All's grist that comes to the clever man's mill. Let us therefore be anti-human, heartless, and clever as machines. One asks—I do, at least—why it is that the name and office of 'poet' has come to have a meaning which is all but the antithesis of what it was for our fathers, and *their* fathers, and all the recorded generations of mankind before them. One searches in one's mind for some acceptable—for some reassuring—reason for the fiendish cleverness which nowadays must inform every piece of considered writing—from the poem whose object is to recreate the universe down to the 'alert, immediate article' whose even more ambitious object is to snuff that poem with derision. And there is but one conclusion, a far from reassuring one: our cleverness is designed to conceal—what is nevertheless only too clearly evident—the panic and vertiginous horror which takes possession of each one of us in this enlightened century when we sit down with a pen to address ourselves to a universe which we suspect of being as empty as it is unfathomable. Passion and faith have kept the world young until now; but we—the poor anæmic *epigoni* of a dying world—we have neither faith nor passion. We are enlightened instead. We have enlisted—willing volunteers, too!—in a great army of darkness. Yes, sir, we are enlightened. We are clever. What else can we be? Wherever sublimity and heroics are out of favour, as in our present age, the intellect monopolises the whole field of art and expresses itself in the only terms it knows—the terms of cleverness. Ask any smart young contemporary, what is Shakespeare's most significant work, and he'll refer you at once to a play that used to be shunned, along with *Titus* and other apocryphal stuff, as a mere inexplicable lapse on the part of an otherwise decent fellow: a play in which Shakespeare makes a blister of himself to ease the back of the world. He'll refer you, sir, to *Troilus and Cressida*, which is (as much as poetry *can* be) an expression of the pure, unimpeded intellect. Away with the big drum, says the poet; away with romance, charity, sweetness-and-light and the music that 'gives delight and hurts not': I'll say in this place and for this once, what I *think*. And as Shakespeare was the cleverest, as well as the greatest, writer that ever lived—(all great artists are clever, of course: examine

the connective tissue of any successful poem, and you'll see what I mean)—his *Troilus* is as cruel as anything that even the twentieth-century mind has produced. What else could it be? It is a record of what the most enigmatical mind in the world *thought*, merely, and in no sense an expression of that mind's vision, which was creative, personal transcendant."

But "Shakespeare" was evidently, for this surprising gent who wore elastic-sided boots, an adventure—consolatory as well as stimulating—in self-sublimation: Here, "but for the accident of my too-late arrival," goes another William Shakespeare. . . . For from this point the operations of his intelligence began to elude me, his eloquence becoming rather too shrill and dithyrambic for me to follow as carefully as I could have wished, for it seemed to contain much substance. References to "roots of mind sucking deep through thick cloacal mud," and "the whole tragic gamut of the Zarathustrian philosophy," although remembered, do not seem to have arisen in any coherent or logical context; and soon, becoming increasingly excited by his own rodomontade, he had ascended in spirals of panegyric until he was away above my head, raving of the "starry voluptuousness that spurs the poet on to make escalade of heaven," and demonstrating—he climbed on to the seat to do it—how the poet "tips the floor of heaven end-on under a plunging foot and gathers all the blooms and baubles of beauty as they come—whish! —rioting into his arms. . . ."

People were pausing along the pathway, sniggering, or viewing us with the nasty suspicion that is ever waiting to attach itself to the poets. I was afraid I'd have to leave him, which would have been a pity; for seldom in a modern city, where every promise of individuality is threatened with penalties, is one confronted by a character of significant, or even notable, eccentricity. Besides, I was very curious, as a lover of poetry, to hear some of his own composition, if that were possible; and I though it best (having Mrs. M's bar-parlour in view) to suggest that a glass of ale would . . .

"Thank you, sir. With much pleasure!"

"Observe that girl," I said, as we made toward Spring Street. "Or at least observe her ankles."

"What can I know of her beauty if I have not seen her face?"

"But her ankles! How rarely one sees them as shapely as——"

"I have seen such. Those are ankles, I have said; and if her leg be one with that perfection, why should not her breast and so her face and its inhabiting spirit be thus adorable? Yet always when I saw her face, her ankle lost its meaning."

"But if you go about to anatomise the charm of a girl," I protested, "you'll soon learn that your only perfect woman is a work of art, like that statue of consistent plaster we have just passed. Loving that, I am not what I am when I kiss flesh."

"No. She hath no viscera. I should want to kiss her myself if she had, perdie. But will *you*, now, observe this young woman we are approaching. Bitterness. . . . Ah!—

The seizing moment twists its bitterness
Into the lips—

That, sir, is what *she* gives me as she passes. I must make a note of that phrase."

And he fished and fumbled for his notebook amongst pockets bulging with papers until we reached Mrs. M's familiar parlour.

"The individual line—" he spoke to himself as he wrote, as if repeating some remembered thesis—"the individual line must be judged not merely as conforming or not conforming to the given metric structure of the verse, but in relation to the gesture of which it is the vehicle. . . ."

"And what will you drink?"

"Richmond lager, thank you."

He took my arm, inflated his chest and spoke impressively. "A Leibnitz, a Darwin, an Einstein—these are formidable powers; but what is the sum of those powers beside the awful clairvoyance of a poet's spiritual desire?—Your very good health, sir: your health!"

"You would feel, then, that poets are invincible, and that——"

"Every poet, sir, is familiar with the dreadful joy of that thought. A wonder we are not all crazy under the pressure of it!"

"I suspect," I said, "that a poet is invincible only so long as he shall continue to baffle criticism: a nice problem for those of the gods that dabble in the mathematics of the spirit; for be assured it was all calculated to a fraction when the universe was planned."

"Poetry," said the gent, twisting his eye into mine, "is the action of the spirit in Eternity. It is only true to say that Shakespeare——"

"It is only true to say that Shakespeare is exhausted," I interrupted. "It has taken us three centuries to exhaust him, and three modern centuries at that. But exhausted he is. After Nietzsche, his morality is irrelevant; after Dostoievski, even his psychology is obliterated."

"But his poetry, his poetry—exhausted! Nothing on earth will ever exhaust it. It is the summation of a world—incredible, even appalling, as the expression of a single mind."

"True. But that world is already sunken beneath Atlantean surges. Time flows over it. It is mere history. Hamlet's to-morrow is our forgotten yesterday. His problems are absurd and unreal to us."

The gent drained his glass, muzzling his retort while I nodded again to the Hebe; for argument is thirsty work.

"On your own admission," he said, "the significance of a poet can be gauged by the temporal area he occupies. And Shakespeare is still active in the world——"

I laughed.—"Some sort of Shakespearean ghost still struts and frets every evening from eight to eleven, it must be admitted. People will suffer even a barn-stormer's performances than have no Shakespeare at all. . . . But if you consider," I said, handing him his glass again, "that your significant poet—Marlowe, Donne, Blake—is often nothing but a species of androgynous puzzle to his contemporaries, and that his public may be two or three centuries late in arriving, you'll have to agree that Shakespeare has had a very good innings. Fortunately, others abide our question. There will be poets, so long as we retain the faculty of wonder. Even in the twentieth century, when we're stuffed with wonders, we are glad to honour the man who can give us a definition of life in terms of ecstacy."

With that we drank again; and the *entente cordiale* was resumed.

So far, I had heard none of his verse; and I was by this time fully determined that I should.—"Yourself," I said politely, "you are a poet. Would it be asking more than one deserves . . . or would it give *you* any pleasure to repeat some of your own—"

"Much pleasure, sir!—D'you know, I find no books more enthralling than those old books of travel: Marco Polo, Purchas, Hakluyt, and that sort. Lately, I have been reading Pigafetta's Journal of the voyage of Magellan, and I find I have succumbed to the temptation to build a blank-verse epic around it. A most glorious theme! But—I warn you—no excuse here for the grammatico-psychological *excrementum* that one has come to look for in poetry, in this demoralised aftermath of a world. Strict! traditional. Even Milton would—"

I raised my glass. "Here's to Milton," I said:

"A Puritan stiff and starched was he—
Sackcloth and ashes from neck to knee."

"No doubt. But *he* would have approved of my diction in this poem, at any rate.—Sir, you must regard me, not (like Milton) as a fixed and magnitudinous star, dwelling apart; but as a constellation of variable and bewildering entities—spiritual nuclei—each having its own peculiar complex and cluster of associations. I could, you see, have written this epic in any one of our modern deracinant modes, or in any one of half-a-dozen languages. I preferred the style of the seventeenth century English. And I want you, while testing its rhythmic constituents by your own emotional logic, to remember that I have used some solicitude and concentration in making it what it is.—By your leave, then!—"

And for upwards of an hour he read on, in his mellifluent, high-necked voice, undeterred by the mingled resentment and facetiousness of the other drinkers in the bar and apparently oblivious of their presence.—

Beside the darkling Gaudalquivir, where
Faint water-lanterns glimmer with the tide,
One Ferdinand Magellan sets his foot
The first of times upon a Spanish quay.
An instant welcome lives for him within
The heart of young Barbosa, waiting there
To greet him.—
Welcome to Seville, Senor!

I am Duarte Barbosa, the son
Of him who was your father's friend when both
Were young in Portugal. He bade me bring
You to his house, so soon as you were set.
Pray go you with me; and welcome again!

Magellan laughed, voicing the sudden warmth
Within his veins.—
My best of thanks, Senor!

Familiarity of old report
Hath sometime versed me in your history.
Your reputation lives in Portugal.
You are a mariner, and you have quelled
The vexing capes of Africa, and crossed
The smouldering vast of the Arabian seas.
I do remember one that spoke of you
In Malabar, and he surcharged your name
With fairest credit, making your worth secure
With great authorities in India.
Here is my hand—we should be friends, we two:
I'll tell thee why, anon. . .

(Why drag in Milton! I thought: is this not the accent of Shakespeare himself? . . .)

. . . The aspect of the place confirms
The hope that brought me here. How is your father?

O lately he is somewhat given to the moon:
Feeds present sorrow with the disused past—
A habit grown in him since God divorced
My mother's life from his—Peace to her soul!
He lives in Tras los Montes and the summers
Of his youth, whose unripe grapes were sweeter far
Than any wine that smacks his palate now.
You come from Portugal, out of the past
That was his prime—for he remembers you,
Or what you were before you carried steel.
You will be welcome, Senor Fordinand!
There is much store of love laid up for you
Already in his heart. Come you with me! . . .

But in our present age blank-verse heroics are as much out of fashion as elastic-sided boots. I was not surprised, then, when one of a group of three worried-looking jobbers, who were trying to discuss business with their whisky, gave me an aggressive nudge and said:

"Here! This may be all right for you jokers, but it's no good to us. Tell your spruiker friend to shut up—who the hell is he, anyway?"

"This gentlemen is asking who you are," I said.

My lean-featured acquaintance gravely lifted his billycock hat and revealed a bald and unusually high-domed forehead.

"Like himself, I am a son of the common or aboriginal Adam. My name, if that will help him, I have pleasure in introducing to his notice."

And inverting his hat he displayed, upon its soiled lining-band, the "crested and prevailing name" — WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

Even the three merchants, for whom he was merely a man with a troublesome gift of the gab, were too taken aback to offer any comment. As for myself, I was so bewildered that it was some little time before I could gather my wits sufficiently together to be aware that he was no longer reading his poem, but had plunged again into a flood of impromptu eloquence; and soon the bar-parlour was floating in mid-air and the whole perilous universe had become one bubble of sprightly, sinuous and iridescent talk.

LES RUES ME CHANTENT.

Les rues sont toutes bordées de maisons,
Où nichent bien des tristesses et peu de joie;
Et mille murs d'airain séparent tous ces endroits,
Où ne pénètrent ni coeur, ni raison.

Ici n'habitent que des nains égoïstes,
Des Pygmées qui jettent des ombres géantes,
Des nabots qui miment la manière galante,
Des Bayards trapus à l'âme de fumistes.

Parfois arrive que le soleil levant
Dans cet empire des ténèbres égare ses rayons.
Que de "Hou," que de fronts tracés de sillons;
Une foule d'aveugles qui marche en titubant.

Leurs cris effarés remplissent toutes les rues,
Et, pour qui son voisin fut un mécréant,
Il le supplie: "Aide moi à sortir du néant.
N'oublie que nous sommes tous frères en Jésus."

Quand ainsi leur plaît, ils sont tous des frères.
En lui, qui est mort pour nous sur la croix,
Les gens sans-coeur prêchent l'amour et la foi.

Les rues, où je passe, me chantent cet air.

ERNEST HARDEN.

THE STREETS SING TO ME

Gaunt houses flank the roadways, long and straight,
Wherein is little joy, and much of gloom:
For through the walls of bronze that bound each room,
Nor heart nor reason ever penetrate.

And none but selfish dwarfs live in these parts,
Pygmies casting giant shadows on the roads,
Mannequins who mimic gallant modes,
Bayards of stunted limbs and clownish hearts.

It sometimes happens that the sun, at morn,
Spreads its rays across these shadowed places;
How many cries! How many furrowed faces—
A crowd of blind men, staggering, forlorn.

The streets are filled with their affrighted cries,
And he who deemed his neighbour infidel,
Implores him now: "O, save me from this hell,
Forget not, all are brothers in Christ's eyes."

Thus, when it suits them, all are brothers there,
And like the lowly man of Nazareth,
These heartless people preach of love and faith.

The streets I pass through sing to me this air.

—Translated by *C. ALTSON PEARL*

FROM THE SOUND FILM TO REAL MUSIC

ARTHUR HONNEGER

THE cinema has never been silent. At the very beginning, accompanying music was introduced to mask the irritating noise of imperfect projection apparatus. Later, this music served as an anæsthetic to dull the auditory sense, and so permit a concentration upon the image—an image projected in darkness, and isolated, like a dream. From being a mere anæsthetic, music rapidly became a complement: the melodic theme was adapted, more or less successfully, to the images. All the classics were cut to pieces and applied haphazard to the continuity of the film, ranging from the sentimental to the heroic, from Beethoven to the aria of *Paillasse*.

Then the sound cinema was born.

Technical discoveries made it possible to definitely affix the music to the edge of the film, instead of abandoning it to the whim of the conductor. But the same errors continued, and every day we witness this indecent spectacle, a veritable violation of artistic personality: for a few francs rights of reproduction may be acquired, permitting one to stir in an infamous salad four bars of one musician with thirteen of another, the whole concocted at random by anybody at all. With distorted and mutilated works a musical harlequin is created, monstrous and absurd.

That such practices should have been permitted in our time will stagger our descendants.

Let us imagine a collector cutting the figures and scenes that appeal to him from the works of different painters and sticking them together in whatever way pleases him to make a new picture. It would be no more extraordinary!

Moreover, this practice is ineffective. Cinegraphic montage is founded on a principle differing entirely from musical composition. The latter appertains to *continuity* and requires a logical development. Cinema montage is a matter of *contrasts* and *oppositions*. It has its "rhetorical" images, comparisons, metaphors, etc. . . . (The only point it has in common with literature besides the manner of telling the story.) And in order to realise exactly the rhythm of the film it must, from moment to moment, take up and then abandon the musical theme, which is ridiculous.

Let us take, as a clear example, this banal story. Suppose a film has to represent, on the one hand, a shipwreck, and by contrast, the anguish of relatives vainly awaiting the return of the sailors. If the opposition of these two cinegraphic themes occur six times, the music is going to alternate six times between the Overture to the *Flying Dutchman* and the *Symphonie Pathetique!*

By all the evidence, we must create music adapted to the film. It will be the musician's business to give to his work a general theme. He will create leit-motifs that will be recalled whenever it is expedient. For the oppositions he will utilise the inexhaustible resources that musical technique allows, particularly the superimposition of themes. In the example we have just taken a rhythmic bass indicates the raging elements, and is combined with a melody emphasising fear and sadness. Furthermore, this is more exact —the facts opposed in the film being concomitant. Thus music corrects, as far as possible, the necessarily conventional character of the film.

Music completes the image.

. . . . . .

That is the whole of the sound film. I do not wish as yet to give an opinion on the talking film. One must observe, wait, and reflect. It is the creator, and not the theoretician, who will decide the matter. If this method produces masterpieces it will require no justification.

It is possible that the talking film will not surpass the limits of the silent cinema. It seems, at first glance, to err against the very essence of the cinema—which is to be, above all, a sensitive art, addressing itself directly to the individual without the medium of the intellect. Immediately we appeal to perception, immediately we make it necessary to understand, in place of merely seeing and hearing, everything changes its meaning: the dream is ended, the sensuous magic of the cinema is lost. If then, the human voice can intervene usefully, and move us, it is in the cry of emotion, in everything that does not need to be understood, but simply to be felt. It is the tone of the voice which touches us. Now in this case it only occurs as a sound, and belongs then to the sound film, and not to the talking film.

It is necessary in the sound film that music—and the sounds that from now on are only an element of it—should be added to the image so as to reinforce it, to complete it, to give it all its meaning. And here we encounter the big problem.

It is a question of co-ordinating two montages of different nature, and with different laws: more exactly, one of which has its precise laws, while the other is still seeking them.

The cinema, like music, is concerned with rhythm. What counts essentially in the cinema is the order of succession of images, and the speed of this succession. The art of montage is to cut the necessary and adequate number of images and to determine the order of succession whose ensemble gives to the work a unified and beautiful visual rhythm. Similarly, music is an ordered succession of sounds.

In both cases it is the instinct, the sensibility, of the artist that achieves this profound order.

But, having found this interior order, we must translate it into exact facts by precise methods. To do this, music has had at its disposal a mathematical basis and inviolable rules with which the creator is obliged to conform. Cinema montage, on the contrary, has not yet defined these laws and these fixed relations. Suppose we wish to make one impression twice as important as another. It will not be sufficient to present two hundred images of the one and a hundred of the other. The differing nature of these images —lighting, subject, actors, etc.—will give them a different apparent *duration* that defies mathematical precision. Here we may say that the laws of cinema montage are, and will remain, more supple than those of music. It will be necessary, first of all, for the cinegrapher and the musician to do their preliminary cutting together: but when it comes to montage the cinegrapher will require the greater flexibility in order to adapt his shots to the necessary development of the melodic line.

I know well that certain cinegraphers will protest, saying that the suppression of a single image endangers the unity and the perfect expression of the rhythm. I will answer them that in all arts we often find ourselves obliged to wrestle with rules that are, nevertheless, indispensable. A musician may have a beat too many: he must show his ingenuity in overcoming this difficulty; at every moment he has to devise a means of balancing values in relation to one another, while conforming to the rules of rhythm. The difficulty which is imposed upon the musician, and which he is forced to resolve, can be much more easily overcome by the cinegrapher.

The sound cinema is still inarticulate. For the moment, music and sound confine themselves to producing a slightly more effective emphasis of the action than the orchestra achieved. The sound cinema will not be itself until it has realised a union between the visual and musical expression of the same fact, and with such intimacy that these expressions will be mutually qualifying and complementary. This synthesis will give birth to a curious art, addressing itself at the same time and in equal degree to two senses; and of which, up to the present, we have only had a brief glimpse—in *Hallelujah*, and especially in the films of Ruttman, and in *Mickey Mouse*. *In Mickey, it is certainly the musical rhythm itself that gives birth to the images.* Here, already, music has assumed as great an importance as the cinema, yet *Mickey*, none the less, is still, and more than ever, cinema: it is sound cinema.

. . . . . .

And this brings us to a still more curious consideration.

Doubtless, some day, music will inspire films, which, after all, is more logical than films being inspired by books—granted that there is more relationship between music and the cinema than between literature and the cinema.

Already, evidently, it is possible to adapt, cinegraphically, musical themes with a literary basis. For example, a recent film of M. Cocteau might well be an illustration of the *Symphonie fantastique*. But here again it is literature intervening through the medium of music.

Still, we can well imagine a fugue for four voices finding its expression in a *pure film*, made of simple corresponding visual impressions.

Let us go further. The sound film can very well realise music, and complete it in giving it a real meaning, for music is actually the art which has the least real meaning: the work, springing from the heart and brain of the artist, never reaches the understanding of the audience unchanged. It is modified by each interpretation—that is to say, by every member of the audience. Only the meaning given it by the author—which is the true meaning—is ignored .

The literary work is composed of words which have a precise meaning, and the relation between these words and this meaning is the object of an education common to all: the result is a common minimum of comprehension, which leaves a margin of intelligent interpretation and of finesse, but which is sufficient to prevent the work being totally denatured. It is not the same in music: for only a very small number of individuals do sounds possess a precise meaning.

For most men imagination and memory are, above all, visual. Musicians alone possess an imagination and memory more auditory than visual: for them music can, to some extent, be received just as it was created; but for most people it is limited to arousing images or impressions that differ in each case. *Music has no real, concrete expression perceptible in an identical manner to the totality of its hearers. The sound cinema will, perhaps, endow it with one.*

Some day, perhaps, we will be able to define the constant and unrecognised relation between auditory and visual rhythms with sufficient precision to enable us to give an exactly corresponding visual impression to every musical impression. Then the musician will be able to bring to the intelligence of the listener, for whom everything is translated into images, not those images that the listener's fantasy arouses from within, but the concrete images of his own work, fixed with precision and unity.

The same artistic sentiment is capable of different expression, according to the nature of the artist's talent; be it music or speech, graphic or choreographic art, it will be a question of the same reality in one of its aspects. *There exist perfect organic relations between these different expressions of the same things: these relations are interchangeable, and if we knew them we would be able to substitute one for the other.*

This knowledge is undiscovered, or lost. The relations remain, although they have no medium of expression. Before the discovery of radio, Hertzian waves existed. Every one of our words and our thoughts had an echo throughout the sensible universe. All that was lacking was the apparatus necessary to render these permanent phenomena perceptible to our dull senses. Similarly, we are only lacking instruments to reveal and exactly reproduce the verbal or musical expression of a graphic expression, and vice versa. The sound film is perhaps the first of these instruments.

Music, no longer misunderstood or massacred, can become itself and enter into reality. Like the cinema, and with it, music can become a true force with an internal unity, no longer subjected to anarchic individual modifications, but applying itself with all its vigour to an enraptured crowd.

—Authorised translation from *Plans* by Frank Quaine.

COMMENT ON BOOKS

AN AMERICAN CRITIC

IN one of those diagnostic games played by modern psychologists, you are given a long series of words, to each of which you instantly respond, naming the first idea that comes up in your mind. Given "woman," you say Eve, or frailty, or cook, as the case may be. Given "critic," you say Matthew Arnold, or Longinus, or Clive Bell. . . . Given "American critic," would you probably say Mencken? It is more than ten years since H. L. Mencken exercised his particularly useful function as a literary critic, establishing certain reputations which were then very insecure—Dreiser, Sherwood Anderson, even Conrad. Since then, Mencken has more or less left literature to take care of itself, his criticism being concerned with phases of life that he had begun to analyse in his early essay, *Puritanism as a Literary Force*. It is by his careful studies of public bodies and movements in America that he has become known simply as the Critic of America. Meanwhile, a number of purely literary critics have appeared in that country —writers such as Professors Paul Elmer More and Irving Babbitt, with their banner of Humanism and their claim of apostolic succession from Sophocles through Dante to Matthew Arnold, and so onwards. . . . Of them it can only be remarked for the moment that, as they draw near the present time, their interest in creative literature becomes ever thinner and fainter. Whatever critical zeal they possess has been exhausted up-stream, and is not strong enough to swing them over the shallow and difficult estuary of the present. To estimate contemporary art is always a dangerous thing. The task has been left to others, and with a kind of sober joy has been recently accepted by Edmund Wilson.

Axel's Castle by Edmund Wilson is a book of literary studies with a unifying theme. Confronted with the more deeply powerful literary work of to-day, which he finds in Yeats, Proust, Joyce, Eliot, Valery, and Gertrude Stein, this patient, learned, and single-minded critic has been able to assign to these writers a common origin. This he discovers to be the Symbolist movement originating in France towards 1870. His book is thus described as a study in the imaginative literature of the period 1870-1930. That these recent writers so widely divergent in nationality and in their choice of thematic material—Yeats in his Galway tower, caught "in the cold snows of a dream"; Proust presenting the last complexities of French society about 1900; Eliot catching the sinister notes of a post-war metropolis—should, after all, have roots somewhere, is obvious: and that these roots should be in common is not so astonishing. How else may one account for their appeal to the reading and writing world to-day? Mr. Wilson's thesis, then, after the first moment of surprise at seeing, say, Joyce and Yeats in the same galley, does not seem paradoxical: we were ready, after all, to accept it: we had awaited something like it. What we hardly expected is the thoroughness of the demonstration, the toughness of the logic, the fine perspective of detail.

The most challenging part of the book is its title. *Axel's Castle* is taken, of course, from Villiers de l'Isle Adam's *Axel*, a dramatic poem in prose, published in 1890. Axel was a young man, idealist in temperament and attitude, who determined to choose dreams rather than action. The phrases used to describe him, his "admirable, virile beauty," his "paleness almost radiant," recall something that at first seems far away. *Il apparut beau, elegant, correct comme le genie*: that is Baudelaire's astonishing description of Poe when, towards the close of his life, he gave readings of *Eureka*, the American's cosmogonic poem. Axel, a young man of the nineteenth century, inhabits an ancient castle in the Black Forest. In the

Napoleonic wars an enormous treasure had for safety been hidden in this castle, but Axel has no clue to its whereabouts. He repulses the vulgarian cousin who wants him to search for it systematically. Moreover, when a beautiful young woman finds the clue and reveals the treasure, he refuses to enjoy the life it opens before them.

They are holding the whole world in their hands; they have love, youth, social position, power, the supernatural backing of the Rosicrucian spirits, and three hundred and fifty million talers' worth of treasure—"all the dreams to realise."

Axel refuses to realise them: why spoil such dreams by the contrast of reality? He at once chooses a dramatic death. It is in such a manner, declares Mr. Wilson, that these significant modern Symbolists have acted.

It was characteristic of the Romantics to seek experience for its own sake—love, travel, politics—to try the possibilities of life; the Symbolists, though they also hate formulas, though they also discard conventions, carry on their experimentation in the field of literature alone. . . . The Symbolist will end by shifting the field of literature altogether, as his spokesman, Axel, had shifted the arena of life, from an objective to a subjective world, from an experience shared with society to an experience savoured in solitude.

And it is these Axels, the solitaries, who are read to-day, while the socially-minded writers such as H. G. Wells, for instance, are unable to hold us. Wells propounds the Great State, or a Modern Utopia: modern man turns from his airy sanities to salute the shadowed dwellers in Axel's Castle. Therein we see them move, without meeting. There is the prematurely middle-aged, the prematurely *gerontion*, T. S. Eliot, discovering in the nightingale's "jug, jug" something we are unfit to hear. There we behold Marcel Proust in his sound-proof room from which he issues, as he declares in letters to his friends, hardly once a month, and never by daylight; in his asthma he suffers and spins, spins his vast web of remembrance. Again and again Proust expends himself, like Axel, in anticipations. Will he go to Venice, that place of enchantment? Why break the enchantment? Will his rendezvous with the delicious Mme. de Stermaria be kept? We half know it will not; something will prevent it: but we have shared with him the more terrible pleasure of longing, as in Nietzsche's line:

Unruhiges Gluck im Stehen und Spahen
und Warten!

The stress is on *Gluck*, the fleeting joy, not to be forgotten, whatever follows. . . . There are other chambers of the castle. In one of them a half-blinded alchemist, James Joyce, endlessly labours over the transmutation of words.

For all its ancient Gothic solidity, this castle is doomed in the end, which is perhaps near at hand, to be rifled and undermined. "I believe, therefore," writes Mr. Wilson, "that the time is at hand when these writers, who have largely dominated the literary world of the decade 1920-1930, will no longer serve us as guides. Axel's world of the private imagination in isolation from the life of society seems to have been exploited and explored as far as is possible for the present. Who can imagine this sort of thing being carried further than Valery and Proust have carried it?" It is the virtue of this critic that in the very moment of devout exposition he can admit the fact of transition. His belief in art as an ever-developing and contemporary force is such that he can face the supercession of what is contemporary to-day by something expressive of later decades. Art is a challenge to life, ever varied and renewed as life itself changes. Mr. Wilson has made it possible for us to grasp in its coherence the challenge issued to-day from Axel's Castle. By his intellectual sincerity and zeal he has even begun to make America seem what Baudelaire would never have believed it could become—a home fit for Poe's heroes.

—*NETTIE PALMER*

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ROUND THE FRENCH BOOK SHOPS

IT is perhaps better to devote this opening article to a particular section of French literary activity, and we shall therefore begin with some notes on a genre that has become immensely popular in France in the last few years—biography. This popularity is not at all astonishing, for one of France's best contributions to culture is her fidelity to the humanistic ideal, and man and his ideas have always played a more important part in French literature than things. That is a fact which has been expressed in an excellent epigram by the German, Friedrich Sieburg, in his recent book on France (*Dieu est-il francais?*—Paris, Grasset): he writes about the French, he says, because (among other reasons) they "have order in their heads, but railway-stations full of disorder." The teeming activity inside those orderly heads is surely superior to any mere mechanical perfection. Man *is* the measure of all things, though we are now going through a hard school in order to re-learn that forgotten dictum.

Biography has been pushed so far in France of late that it has given rise to numerous subdivisions and variations. An interesting one was that of the "romanticised biographies" which received such a powerful impetus from Andre Maurois' life of Shelley: *Ariel*. One after another, great men's lives were turned into novels, but, although the *roman des grandes existences* which thus became a vogue provided the reader with much entertaining matter, it also went a long way towards the dissemination of false ideas, and it produced only a few really outstanding books, such as F. Porche's *Vie douloureuse de Charles Baudelaire* and Carre's *Vie aventureuse de Rimbaud* (Paris, Plon). Fortunately, however, the French mind is not given to pseudo-romanticism, and there has been an inevitable reaction. We owe one form of this reaction to the Librairie Stock, which recently published an extraordinarily useful book by J. G. Proud'homme: *Vingt chefs-d'oeuvre juges par leurs contemporains*. This gives us a fascinating insight into the contemporary judgment of several of the greatest events in the history of culture, by providing us with the actual text of contemporary criticisms of works such as *Le Cid*, *Manon Lescaut*, *Le Barbier de Seville*, etc. It is most heartening to find, when reading these criticisms, how unerringly as a rule the man of genius picks out for praise the work of another man of genius. Of *Manon Lescaut*, for instance, that forgotten mediocrity Mathieu Marais can find nothing better to say than "This ex-Benedictine (Prevost) is a madman who has just produced an abominable book," whereas Voltaire and Montesquieu are loud and unhesitating in their praise. So, too, at a moment when Flaubert was actually being prosecuted for his *Madame Bovary*, Lamartine, Michelet and Hugo are spontaneously generous in their sympathy. It is to be hoped that this will be the beginning of a series of publications taking in other masterpieces: we badly need easily accessible evidence of this kind on such things as Baudelaire's *Fleurs du Mal*, if only to vindicate the eternal superiority of true genius.

And, sure enough, the same publishers are meeting our anticipated demand, for they have just launched a series which promises to be very good: *Great men's lives by those who have seen them*. The first volume is devoted to Stendhal, and edited by P. Jourda, who has collected for us all the available contemporary documents which can show us what those who actually knew him thought of the author of *Le Rouge et le Noir*. Some of them, to be sure—his relatives in particular—did not think much of him, but that was quite natural in the early stages of his career, when the future writer was showing himself to be a mighty poor professional soldier. . . . The second volume (by R. Escholier) is devoted to Victor Hugo, and other volumes are promised on Moliere, Robespierre, Napoleon, etc.

That is an excellent corrective to the abuse of romanticised biography, but another reaction takes the form of a series of *Chronicles of imaginary personages*, published by Plon (Paris). Here romance is justified, for the series is confined to the lives of those great people who have been created by the imagination of other great men and who have become more than mere imaginary people to us. Maurice Barres long ago anticipated this move, when he married his *Ennemi des Lois* to the daughter of a personage created by Paul Bourget, and now M. Francis de Miomandre has given us a fascinating history (the second volume of Plon's new series) of a Shakespearean hero: *La Vie du sage Prospero*. No one could be better fitted than Francis de Miomandre to write the history of Prospero, for Prospero was master of his own destiny and at the same time master of Ariel, that is to say, a philosopher and a man of fantasy, and that would serve as a formula to describe Francis de Miomandre. His book is much more than a mere amplification of Shakespeare's details: it is a philosophy extracted from the *Tempest*, a

philosophy which has all the marks of the real tempests of life upon it, but which rises above them to a region of serenity. Is not that the final avatar of all true philosophers?

And finally we must single out for praise the literary biographies which are being put at our disposal by the Editions Kra (Paris), in their series entitled *Les Documentaires*. They gave us a very good life of Jules Verne in 1928, by M. Allotte de la Fuye, reminding us opportunely that it would be ungrateful to forget the creator of Phineas Fogg, and their latest (this year) is a biography of Jules Romains by Madeleine Israel. It must require a lot of courage to undertake the biography of a living author, unless one sacrifices one's rights of criticism; but this book comes at an appropriate moment, when Romains' ten-year-old book, *Donogoo-Tonka*, re-cast as a play, is experiencing such success in Paris, and Madeleine Israel sacrifices none of her rights. Her book is not only a scholarly and careful biography of Jules Romains, but the second part of it is invaluable to the reader who has experienced difficulty with certain of his more complex books. Romains, with his literary and scientific training (he is an ex-student of the Ecole Normale Superieure), is apt to baffle us at times with his universal interests, but his biographer follows him with an ease which does honour to her own erudition, though she does not succeed in removing our impression that Jules Romains' imaginative work smells a little too much of the student's lamp. But perhaps the impression is wrong.

—A. R. CHISHOLM.

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VULGARITY ANATOMIZED

FOR Mr. Huxley, the question of *Vulgarity in Literature* is apparently one about which all the ends of the world are come. In his essay of fifty-nine pages he make an illuminating analysis of some very vital aspects of life and letters; enunciates his æsthetic credo; and reveals, moreover, his particular orientation to the universe of matter and spirit.

He is concerned with a far more subtle and fundamental aspect of the term vulgarity than its etymological significance implies. "There is," writes Huxley, "a vulgarity in the sphere of morals, a vulgarity of the emotions and the intellect, a vulgarity even of the spirit." Thus by the individual reaction to the vulgar is one's entire metaphysic revealed. The extremes of "sensitivity" to the vulgar would thus be represented in a Villiers de l'Isle Adam (*As to living: Our servants will do that for us*) at one pole, and, I suggest, Rabelais at the other. For Rabelais, Villiers, protesting the vast superiority of the inviolable and exquisite world of his mind, would have been as vulgar, in the conventional sense, as some meretricious *nouveau riche*. The converse is also true. (It occurs to me that a Rabelais would not be possible without people of Villiers' particular kind of sensibility. For Rabelais' mock-solemn coprology must have given him a sadistic pleasure at the expense of the Villiers of his day. A similar sadism is to be found occasionally in Huxley himself. See, for example, *Antic Hay*.)

Huxley's analysis of this Villiers-like shrinking from the biological realities of life is not altogether satisfactory. The Christian or Buddhist convention of considering such realities vulgar arose, he says, from "the metaphysical doctrine which distinguishes in the universe two principles, mind and matter, and which attributes to mind an immeasurable superiority." But I am disinclined, on psychological grounds, to think that such doctrines, with their Manichean correlatives, make much headway in this world unless they happen to fall in a field already prepared for them. And this more or less Marxian view finds substantiation in the psycho-analytical theories of Alfred Adler. Satisfaction with the intellectual just as with the physical life is related to efficient exercise of function. Or, in Pater's admirable expression: *The supreme demand of the intellect is to feel itself alive*. Whence it follows that an arrestment or inhibition of the efficient growth of either the body or the mind sets in motion a compensatory mechanism, bringing about a transvaluation of values. The dissatisfaction with either the one or the other is associated with atrophy of function.* But this does not explain the

*An application of this principle to the economic struggle and revolt is to be found in "The New Generation," a collection of studies by eminent psychological, ethical and medical authorities, edited by Bertrand Russell.

æsthetic repugnance to the ugly or obscene, which, I suggest, is related to adequate biological adjustment or life-adaptation.

Huxley finds in the classical writers a quality akin to that of Villiers: "Manicheans, the classical writers confined themselves to the study of man as a creature of pure reason and discarnate passions. Now the body particularises, and separates, the mind unites. By the very act of imposing limitations, the classicists were enabled to achieve a certain universality of statement impossible to those who attempt the particularities and incompleteness of actual corporeal life. But what they gained in universality they lost in vivacity and immediate truth."

Then he declares his credo as a *soi-disant* neo-classicist: "Literature is also philosophy, is also science. In terms of beauty it enunciates truths. The beauty-truths of the best classical works possess a certain algebraic universality of significance. Naturalistic works contain the more detailed beauty-truths of particular observation. These beauty-truths of art are truly scientific."

In his analysis of modern literature, Huxley sets forth the only really adequate formulæ I have yet encountered for laying bare the generally admitted deficiencies of the Victorians, and other practitioners of literary vulgarity.

Thus, (i): "It is vulgar, in literature, to make a display of emotions that you do not naturally have, but think you ought to have." And, (ii): "It is also vulgar (and this is the more common case) to have emotions, but to express them with so many, too many protestings, that you seem to have no natural feelings, but to be merely fabricating them by a process of literary forgery."

Poe, and Swinburne to a lesser degree, serve to illustrate vulgarity in poetry because they protested their "poeticalness" by an appeal to too-facilely musical rhymes and metres. Among novelists, Rolland, Balzac and Dickens provide apposite examples. In *Colas Brugnon*, Romain Rolland confessedly took a moral holiday after the ten years' toil of writing his great modern epic, *Jean Christophre*: but Huxley does not spare him: *"Colas Brugnon* is loud with protestations of positively Rabelaisian jollity. *Malgre tout* a pacifist can be a good fellow and enjoy his bottle of Burgundy as well as another fellow. . . . The fellow doth protest too much, is what we say to ourselves when we have to put up with one of these manifestations of Jocular Christianity." Huxley's *mal apropos* sneer is directed at Rolland's effusive wartime pamphlets with their expressions of universal good-will.

Balzac's pretentions to a first-hand knowledge of mystic experience in *Seraphita* (Swedenborgian mysticism was then the fashion) betrays him similarly. Rolland and Balzac thus fall into category (i).

The case of Dickens is somewhat different. It comes under (ii): "Mentally drowned by the sticky overflowings of his heart, Dickens was incapable, when moved of re-creating in terms of art, the reality which had moved him—was even, it would seem, unable to perceive reality. Little Nell's sufferings and death distressed him as, in real life, they would disturb any normally constituted man; for the suffering and death of children raise the problem of evil in its most unanswerable form. It was Dickens' business as a writer to recreate in terms of his art this distressing reality."

The unerring vision of Dostoievski provides a direct contrast to this perverse voluntary blindness or enforced unawareness of Dickens, and explains why Dostoievski was vastly superior as an artist.

Finally, the author of *Point Counter Point* makes plain his attitude to his own novels: "Other things being equal, the work of art which 'says' more about the universe will be better than the work of art which says less. . . . Why is *The Rosary* a less admirable novel than *The Brothers Karamazov*? Because the amount of experience of all kinds understood, *felt into*, as the Germans would say, and artistically recreated by Mrs. Barclay is small in comparison with that which Dostoievski feelingly comprehended and knew so consummately well how to recreate in terms of the novelist's art."

—N. E. SEELIGSON

LA LIGNE GÉNÉRALE

C. ALTSON PEARL

THE Canberra Academy.—IT IS sometimes asserted by critics of this fair land that, artistically, the Commonwealth is an arid and barbarous place: that, in all matters of art, Australians suffer from arrested development: and that in the literary scene, particularly, their tastes are even sub-moronic. This last statement, at least, I hasten to dismiss as pure doodlepop. For actually there exists a group of Australian litterateurs whose critical faculty is quite extraordinary: I question, indeed, whether any literary academy in the world can rival them in point of discrimination. Within the last few years, for example, they have selected for their attention such representative works as Joyce's *Dubliners*: Huneker's *Painted Veils*: Hemingway's *Farewell to Arms*: Norman Lindsay's *Redheap*: Radclyffe Hall's *Well of Loneliness*: Kuprin's *Yama*: Delteil's *On the River Amour*: Glaeser's *Class 1902*: Pierre Louys' *Aphrodite*: Curnonsky's *Deux Nocturnes*, and Aldington's *Dream in the Luxembourg*: all of them first-rate books—a few, in fact, recognised masterpieces. . . .

What, you ask—aglow with simple Australian pride—is the name of this august body? The Australian Literature Society? No. . . . The Immortals of the Federal Customs Department!

. . . . . .

Definition.—MESALLIANCE — French for a love-match.

. . . . . .

Wanted—a female clown!—IT IS a dismal fact, the discovery of which has saddened many a well-meaning host, that no woman, when the fire of *ethyl alcohol* warms her arteries, ever displays the slightest gift for clownery. In nearly all men, at about the tenth cocktail, the playboy is predominant: dignity and inhibition disappear: there is a delightful regression to the frolicsome spirit of the nursery. At this stage, I have seen a Supreme Court Judge attempting to balance a black olive on his nose, and I have actually assisted a bank manager to ignite a deacon's shirt-tails. But woman, under like conditions, reveals no such comic genius. Subjected to a bombardment of Martinis, she becomes, perhaps, sentimental, or frankly amorous, or quarrelsome, or noisy, and finally, disgusting—but never for a moment humorous.

After sober meditation upon this unhappy circumstance, I am led to the explanation that women are congenitally lacking in a capacity for clowning. There have, of course, been women wits, but has there ever been a woman humourist? Women have written some excellent novels, but has any woman ever created a great comic character? Or is there, in the literature of the world, a female Falstaff, a female Don Quixote, a female Pantagruel, a female Tyl Eulenspiegel?

. . . . . .

Note at 4 a.m.—WHEN man apostrophises a dancing star, woman remembers she has left the light on in the kitchen.

. . . . . .

This methystic prejudice.—THAT the phrase "under the influence of alcohol" should carry with it a flavour of moral condemnation is surely a foolish hangover from the harsh days of our Puritan forefathers. There can be no valid objection to alcoholic influence, *per se*. In point of fact, man is forever under some sinister influence or other: hormones and chalones play whoopee with him: dyspepsia soaks him in spleen: even a plate of soup, as Nietzsche realised, can modify his whole philosophy. Then why the prejudice against alcohol? Is it, perhaps, that intoxication makes man act ridiculously? But surely a booze-hound, however sadly under the influence of alcohol—directing city traffic in his pyjamas, let us say—is no more ridiculous a spectacle than one soldier eviscerating another, under the influence of adrenalin? Or than a young man in love, rolling his eyes and emitting horrible yowlings, under the influence of his interstitial cells? And if it be objected that the influence of the endocrines is justifiable because it is natural, while that of alcohol is adventitious, what of the puerilities enacted by a Very Worshipful Grand Arch-Joker of the Rechabites, under the influence of a few coloured ribbons? Or the atavistic caperings of an old public school man under the influence of a boat race? Or the gaudy imbecility of an evangelist under the influence of a religious frenzy?

Expression or Communication?—The incessant chatter of the left-bank boys about the sacredness of expression in art, and the opposition of the whiskered academics with their insistence on art as a means of communication, seem to me an equal waste of laryngeal effort. For, in the ultimate, what is expression but communication—an externalisation of something that lay hidden within the artist-mind.

Let us clear our cortices of messianic cant, and seek an honest understanding of the artist and his work. Firstly, he must be released from the meshes of sociology; for the relationship of an artist to his neighbours is merely incidental—perhaps accidental. *The artist plays at self-diversion,* says Cabell. This, though partly true, is an understatement of the facts: it does not express the intensity of the creative urge—of what Ribot terms *the fatality of creation,* and Conrad has described as an *obscure inner necessity* to create. The instinct for artistic creation is, in effect, an aching hunger of the soul, and its satisfaction often involves great mental agony. *It has always wearied me to write,* said Gautier, and he referred to his pen and ink as instruments of torture. Flaubert and Jules de Goncourt killed themselves by a febrile devotion to their work: and Conrad once wrote to a friend who had compared him with Flaubert: *There is one point in which I resemble the great man. It is in the desperate heartbreaking toil and effort of writing, the days of wrestling as with a dumb devil for every line of my creation.*

Artists, indeed, are mental masochists: even the pains of parturition afford them a strange perverse satisfaction: and in the irradiant moment of delivery they are vested with deipotence, and become lords of time and space.

Certainly, there is in every artist, an element of vanity that is gratified by the appreciation of others: but the desire for such appreciation is a secondary one, and only arises when his work is complete. It has very little, if any, part in the actual begetting. No one who has glimpsed, however distantly, the true soul of an artist, can think of interpreting his activity in terms of social recognition. What has firebright ecstasy to do with the yawps or claps of muddleclass criticism, or the borborogyms of myopic pedagogues? If a few rare spirits can share his vision, and find pleasure in it, he gains additional satisfaction: but his relations with society are never more intimate than this, and even if the whole world reject him, his belief in his own validity will be unshaken — for without such unwavering faith in himself, he would never have found the strength to give form to his dreams. And all great artists have had this arrogant self-faith, from Shakespeare with his: *Not marble nor the gilded monument/Of princes shall outlive this powerful rhyme,* to Joyce, who, as a young man, observed to Padraic Colum: *I have written the most perfect lyrics since Shakespeare. . . .*

The artist who evolves a new artform is not endeavouring to mystify the crowd, but to satisfy himself. He is trying to fashion a medium that is sufficiently sensitive to reveal his personal vision: and if he succeed, then, after a time, when others have acquired his idiom, he will have unconsciously *communicated* this vision to them. Thus, as Havelock Ellis has pointed out, the man who is most individual in his art becomes, at length, most typical. *By digging in his own soul,* writes Ellis, *he becomes the discoverer of the soul of his family, of his nation, of the race, of the heart of humanity.*

. . . . . .

Aldous Huxley.—Dickens with an overdose of damiana.

SALOON NOW OPEN

the tired business man says my
todays a roaster

phoo
the fivecolour girl upon the poster
advises him to TRY
A VIOLET RAY MASSAGE
AND
FOAM SHAMPOO

halfstifled by hot towels
in a steamy daze
i woo with careful vowels
a shy reluctant phrase

above the ruins of razed dreams
her lips are scarlet banners
waving in the wind of my desire

a clamant hawker shouts outside
pure epsom salts
two dozen packets for a bob
your money back if youre not satisfied

and i decide

her beauty is a blossomladen tree
scattering little silver petals
on the harsh ways of my life

with exquisite finesse
and grace
the barber dries my face
and then
toujours la politesse
leans forward to suggest
big ben
will make cold meat of all the rest
in the last race

—*pandolph golding*

▼

cul-de-lampe.

fog tangles the night
with veils of silver silence

it weaves a web of ghostliness
about the city's thighs

and hides her blatant harlotries
her belladonna eyes

—jack maughan

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