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WITHOUT
PREJUDICE
S. G. DUNN



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Being

A COLLECTION OF ESSAYS
IN PROSE AND VERSE

BY

S. G. DUNN

ALLAHABAD
THE INDIAN PRESS, LTD.

1929

**Printed and published by K. Mitra at
The Indian Press, Ltd., Allahabad.**

EPISTLE DEDICATORY

IN the seventeenth century, when the epistle dedicatory had its vogue, it was the custom to offer whatsoever one had written to a patron, by way of claiming protection against adverse criticism, or disclaiming responsibility for so rash an act as publication. The author supposed, or pretended to hope, that the appearance of a famous name on the first page of his book would reconcile his readers to a favourable reception of his efforts, however ill deserving; or he would allege, with disarming modesty, that only the importunity of friends had persuaded him to commit these worthless trifles to print.

The days of the patron are gone; everybody writes now and nobody apologizes for publishing. What is written, is written; if you like it, you may; meanwhile, let us go on to write something else.

Still, a dedication is a pleasant indulgence; if one has no need of a patron, one has always need of friends, and if one has little else to offer, one may perhaps be permitted to offer even such trifles as these in grateful recognition of the greatest of all

gifts a man can be given. And therefore may I dedicate them to you, not as to a patron, but a pal?

They were written, most of them, after the War, when one was trying to come back to life and find a zest in it again. These I have collected from the Allahabad University, the Jaina Hostel and other kindred magazines. But I have included also an earlier article from the Hibbert Journal (1908) and a sonnet from "The Treasure of the Sea" which was published in 1906. There is little continuity in these undisciplined meditations—hence the title "Without Prejudice"—but there is, I hope, discoverable a thread of consistency connecting the earlier and the later. Let them fare then as they may; whatever their fate and mine,

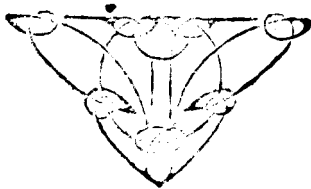
"Here's to you!"

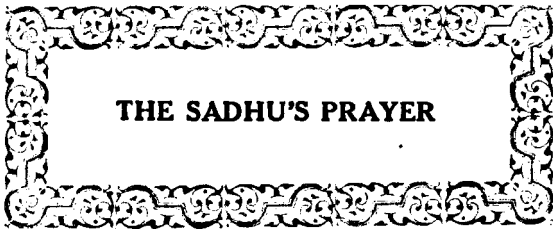


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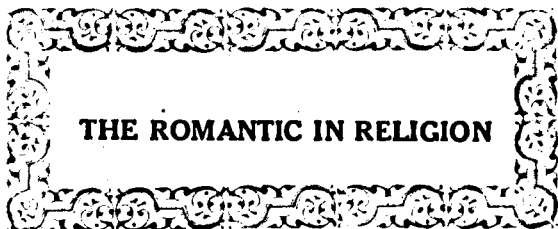




THE SADHU'S PRAYER

(From the United Provinces Pageant, 1910)

O GOD! the Nameless under many names!
O Thou, the Formless, under many forms!
The silent, who art heard in many voices!
Through all the pores of Being take my prayer!
Be favourable to this ancient land,
This motherland of saints and holy men,
This land of hallowed hills and sacred streams,
Of sombre forests and sun-flooded plains;
This glory of the Immemorial East,
Whose dwelling is the splendour of the sun;
Our motherland, our home, our India!
May all her many people live together
Honouring one another, quietly!
Bring her the peace that Kings cannot bequeath,
The happiness that cometh not by wealth!
Each in his own way, yet let each for all
Work, and let work, live and be good to life.
So let the self of each be India's self,
And India each man's creed, and each man's race
Be India, India, India.



THE ROMANTIC IN RELIGION

(From Hibbert Journal, July 1908)

GEORGE GISSING once defined art as " an expression, satisfying and abiding, of the zest of life "; and this definition will serve for religion as well. For the two cannot be separated, the one being an expression in form or colour, and the other an expression in that still more fluid material, action.

Art has sometimes been spoken of as the handmaid of religion, but we should rather call it the wife. Never have the two been divorced without disastrous consequences to both of them.

Just as in art there are two schools, so are there two schools in religion. The human mind seems destined to think in antithesis. In religion, as in art, there is the great antithesis of the romantic and the conventional. These two are eternally separated both in religion and in art, and can never understand one another. And yet in their combination lies perfection : that perhaps is why perfection seems so unattainable to most of us !

For the creed of the conventional is the supremacy of rule ; it is definite, dogmatic, categorical in its imperative. It takes account of the individual only in regard to his value as an exponent of rule and method. It is based on an unalterable pessimism, the belief in the hopeless bad taste of the majority of men. In religion it relies on the doctrine of original sin.

But the romantic recognises that no rule can exist without its exceptions. If it could, it would be worthless. The beauty of the world is due to its variations from type, its exceptions to rules ; to the force of its individuals. The individual alone has value. That which is due to itself alone is supreme in art.

There is no doubt on which side of the controversy Science speaks. The study of evolution has shown us how it is the happy variation that survives. Variety is the indispensable element of progress.

Thus it is not surprising that each romantic epoch in art has started with a " return to nature." The two most romantic schools of art that the world has seen have been characterised by a close study of nature and a love for natural forms. The Mycenaean art of Crete, as reborn for our eyes in the wall-paintings of Cnossos and the pottery of Minos' palace, is full of the most realistic renderings of flowers, leaves, and human bodies—the most beautiful things in nature. Modern Japanese art is minute

in its faithful delineation of natural forms—things as they are actually seen by the eye, not as they are conventionally conceived.

Now it is obvious at once that we can only gain this knowledge of nature that is requisite for true art by looking at it. "The light of the body is the eye." But a man may look at a landscape for years and not perceive the elements of beauty in it. Something too is required of the eye that sees. We know now that the whole world of colour and form, light and shade, is constituted by the mind. "The world arises in consciousness"; it is "of imagination all compact." This is not to deny the existence of matter; the thinking part of us could not exist without a brain of some kind or other. The one is just as indispensable as the other; they are the two sides of reality.

The value, then, of matter, of phenomena, lies in their relation to mind. "Their being is to be perceived."

To recognise the value of phenomena, to be open to the subtle influence of matter, to be receptive of all the natural movements around one, to surrender oneself to the mood of the moment, is to live in the true romantic spirit. For such a man the world is full of wonder and freshness; for such a man life does indeed become, each hour of it, a new birth, a veritable renaissance. Each man lives

in a separate world. You may object that all have the same environment in a certain broad way; that certain elemental happenings affect us all; that certain emotions are common to all mankind. But all these are balanced by the differences in inherited structure, in habits and instincts, acquired and inherited, in powers of reaction. Place two men in what we call the same situation, and observe how differently they act. They are different men. True. But it is equally true to say that the situation is not the same. To recognise this, the essentially individual character of each man's world, is the first step on the path to peace. Most men are restless and discontented because they are always trying to get into someone else's world—to live by others' standards or persuade others to live by theirs. That is why people say it is so hard to understand human nature—the thoughts and actions of other men. It is hard, nay, it is impossible—in that way! To understand we must accept.

But, say the conventional, this is dangerous; what will become of morality if all men do as they like? Unless they do, we answer, there can be no morality at all! An action that is not "liked" by its doer may be meritorious, but cannot be called moral. The whole mistake lies in mixing up morality with social expediency.

Society, to maintain itself, frames certain rules

of conduct, and to these its members must conform. This is but reasonable, and the man who breaks the rules of society is a fool if he complains when punished by that society. But he is quite justified in complaining if society, not content with punishment, brands him also as immoral. He may indeed be a martyr in the cause of morality, for not seldom are the rules of society themselves immoral. So quickly do social conditions change that laws cannot always be adjusted fast enough; and so great is the majesty of custom that a law is often upheld long after it has ceased to be necessary for the welfare of the state, or even expedient.

People often wonder at the violent opposition that Christ encountered from those whom we should, no doubt, have called the best men of His time. In all probability they would have acted in the same way themselves. He said and did many dangerous things. If that tradition about His action when they brought up a woman taken in adultery be true (and there seems no reason to doubt it), what have they to say to that? Now, of course, we see how right it was, how absolutely wise, as all He did. But what would they have said then, living in that society, with all their interests bound up with the maintenance of law and order as then established? If they be frank with themselves, I doubt not of their answer!

Then, too, all the teaching about wealth—what dangerous doctrine it is, from the point of view of a society founded on wealth! Christ indeed was no anarchist, nor even, perhaps, a socialist; He attempted no redistribution of materials and opportunities; He started no active revolution. He just went about saying startling things; telling the truth; opening the eyes of the blind.

And the authorities recognised His power and the danger. Society, so far as it is bent on maintaining its existing organisation, has no room for the good genius. It will tolerate the good man who is no genius and the genius who is not a good man, but as soon as a man shows the combination of these qualities it will have none of him. For society, when not evolving higher forms of justice, is necessarily unjust. It is as well to drop all cant and face facts. There is no end to the deception men may practise on themselves in politics. Aristotle could talk with the calm voice of philosophy about the state existing "for the good life," and yet contemplate with equanimity the existence of an enormous slave population working and suffering that the citizens might have leisure for virtuous living.

So now society involves the sacrifice of two-thirds of its members that the rest may enjoy the liberty and luxury a highly organised civilisation can give.

But the good genius sees that there is no reason why one class more than another should sacrifice itself. He sees, too, that the sacrifice is often fruitless, for the rich are really (Christ is quite emphatic about that) more to be pitied than the poor.

As a rule it is the wrong people who are rich, the people who have no capacity for real pleasure; they have "no joy, only amusements; no object in life, only an office; no work, only business." The man who ought to be rich is the man who does not care what he wears or eats, so long as he can lie in the sun and just look at the world. For it does not matter what a man possesses; the rich fool is a fool still, though his riches may secure the publication of his folly and the advertisement of his fashions.

Then, too, the rich man is tied to his possessions. He is fearful of losing them; he becomes the slave of luxurious habits; he would be miserable without his servants. He is always relying on other people; he never lives a man's life at all. Even in the tortures of hell the rich man cannot cast off the habits of a lifetime: "Send Lazarus!" he pleads.

He has all the means of life, but he never really lives at all. "For a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the goods that he possesseth." He is not free to follow impulse; he fears to go out at the call of adventure; he dare not leave all that he has and give himself up to the destinies of God.

Above all, his delicate life has bred in him a fear of suffering, and so he misses the revelation that comes from suffering alone.

But if Christ has pity for the rich man and contempt for his riches, He is no less stern in His denunciation of unequal and idle wealth. In the ideal world it is the beggar who is comforted and sits at Abraham's side at the great feast; it is the rich man who is tormented. He had never done much good with his wealth; he had never thought much of the poor. Probably he had never enjoyed it much himself; his purple and fine linen were, no doubt, the fashion, not the outcome of his own taste. Now when his wealth is gone and he is alone with only the soul he starved, he is in torment.

There is nothing wrong about riches themselves, Christ would say; the danger lies in the attitude of mind towards them. Too often the rich man is not the possessor of his riches, but possessed by them. After all, living is the object of life. It may be a fine thing to become a great lawyer or a famous financier, but what is the use of that, if, to do so, you must give up your life? "What can it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his own life?" (for that is how we should translate the Greek ψυχην). Riches are but the means, not the end; and yet how many people give up the real joys of life to amass wealth or make a position in the world!

“There’s the wind on the heath, brother: if I could only feel that, I would gladly live for ever.” One cannot imagine a rich man saying that!

There is the romantic spirit in all Christ’s treatment of riches, things, possessions. He blessed the woman who came and brake the alabaster box of ointment, very precious, over His feet as He sat in the house of the rich man. The conventional thought it a waste; they looked on the ointment as a valuable thing in itself; they failed to see that it was only the beautiful use of it that justified its existence at all. “It might have been sold and the money given to the poor.” What good would that have done? Christ would have none of these charitable doles, this manufacture of paupers. It is of no use to condemn half the population to poverty by your social system, and then tinker with schemes for relieving their distress. Go to the root of the matter; alter the system. You cannot make injustice any less unjust by being generous.

It is against this tyranny of things that Christ is always warning us. Just as we are to find the value of riches in the use we make of them, so, Christ tells us, it is not the things that happen to a man that really matter. Just as the body takes into itself food of all kinds, some of it revolting and rotten, and transforms it by some wonderful energy of life

into blood and bone and beauty, so the soul may find nourishment in things ugly and even evil in themselves. Nothing from without can defile a man. The soul of man is the real philosopher's stone, and can by subtle alchemy transform all baser substances to purest gold. We talk much of environment and its influences: a window-box blossoming in some London slum, the beautiful face of a child seen in some squalid court, the unerring grace of some uncultured mind, refute our theories with irrefragable evidence. Life itself is more potent than all its conditions; "the spirit bloweth whithersoever it listeth," and we cannot tell from what dunghill may spring up the lily of a lovely life.

Religion is not a ritual; it is not even a creed. Rather let us call it, if we must find a name for what is nameless and felt rather than defined, a mental attitude. It is not a ritual. The conventional world made it so. The Pharisees regarded life as a business. "Do this, and you will get this or that," they asserted; and they had their reward, as Christ said. The act with them was the important thing—to get it done somehow or other. They were the practical people of the world; they looked at conduct rather than character, manners rather than motives, respectability rather than righteousness. They believed absolutely in law and custom; they failed to see that law and custom exist to aid life and not to hamper

it, to save life, not to kill it. They had no imagination, only maxims.

Their rage against Christ was the rage of the conventional against the romantic. He taught the importance of being unpractical. He showed how a man who sets out in life with one object gains what he aims at and no more; life should be treated as a great adventure; one must not be careful and calculating all the chances; there are risks to be taken, and sacrifices to be made. One must indeed lose one's life to gain it. To make compromises is to become commonplace; to allow oneself to get stereotyped is to fail in life. The will must be alive all the time. When once an action has become merely habitual, it ceases to have any value.

The conventional in religion hold firmly to the efficacy of certain actions, the repetition of certain words, the peculiar influence of certain places. Christ showed how in all these, acts, words, places, it is not the things that matter, but the underlying feelings with which we approach them. He chose the commonest objects to symbolise the spiritual—the bread and the wine, the flowers and the corn. All places were alike to Him: "Neither at Jerusalem nor on this mountain," He says to those who are in doubt as to the right surroundings for worship. He loved the clear air of the hills and the

salt sting of the sea-shore, and in all His words are the same qualities of freedom and freshness.

Neither is religion a creed. Put an idea into words, and it becomes less real, for language is inadequate to the full expression of reality. Words are a fluid material; they have different meanings to different minds. If we try to fix them, to cast them in some set form, they become for us words only, beautiful it may be in sound and rhythm, but, as vehicles of idea, dead and obsolete.

All intellectual knowledge demands as its condition a strict process of abstraction; a science of arithmetic can only deal with persons in their numerical aspect. Try to apply this abstract knowledge to life in the concrete, and you have such absurd formulas as "The greatest happiness of the greatest number" for your ethical ideal!

For life in the concrete one must have more than intellectual knowledge; one must use the whole personality. Aristotle saw that in questions of life and human conduct one cannot depend on formulas, definitions, creeds. In defining virtue as a condition of the will, lying in a relative mean, he is obliged to add that this mean is determined by reason, and that reason "as the wise man would determine it."

Define as we will, we are always thrown back on the feeling of humanity, that instinct for truth, that subtle power of sympathy, by which we

transcend all experience and act on theories which we have never been able, and most probably never shall be able, to prove. Call it reason, or human feeling, or the spirit of adventure, or indomitable life, or simply faith, as Christ called it, it is still the mainspring of all enduring action, the source of all sound theory, the condition of all real progress.

The predominance of convention has been responsible for the misuse of this old word, faith; it means for most men a facile acquiescence in a form of words, or a belief in a particular theory, rather than a conviction of the power of the human heart and the reality of man's help from God.

That blind man who was healed on the Sabbath day went to the root of the whole matter. The man was a religious genius; that was why they cast him out of the synagogue. Asked, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" he answered, "And who is he?" In a flash he laid bare the necessity and the value of the Incarnation; he saw that an idea is of no value until it becomes incarnate. To personality alone can men give love, and to love alone can they pay worship.

Even our love for inanimate things, for our mountains and rivers and our homes, is inextricably bound up with human associations.

Ruskin describes a wonderful scene "near time of sunset" on the Jura in springtime, and then goes

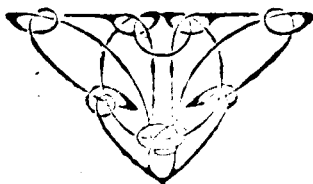
on to say how, " more strictly to arrive at the sources of its impressiveness," he tried to imagine it a scene in some aboriginal forest of a new continent. " The flowers in an instant lost their light; the river its music ; the hills became oppressively desolate ; a heaviness in the boughs of the darkened forest showed how much of their former power had been dependent upon a life which was not theirs, how much of the glory of the imperishable, or continually renewed, creation is reflected from things more precious in their memories than it, in its renewing."


In all romantic literature and in all romantic lives recurs the same note. It is in Dante and Shakespeare and Shelley ; it is in the life of Francis of Assisi, with his love for his little sisters the birds, and his brother the wind. Most perfectly expressed is it in the life of Christ. He took the world for His home, the wonderful world of sun and rain, mountains and seas and cities, and all who did the will of God and lived natural lives as His brothers and sisters. Only, of all who went about with Him and shared that delightful companionship He asked in return belief in Himself, which is indeed belief in human nature itself at its highest.

They were few then, as they are few now, who were bold enough to trust the greatness of the claim asserted ; who were unconventional enough to go against authority and rule, and defy the tyranny of

things ; who were enough in love with life and human nature to lose for it all that most men deem makes life worth living. Yet "whosoever loveth heareth the cry of that voice," and love was alive then, as now, in the most unlikely places—in the lust-tortured body of the harlot, and the shrewd head of the business man who took toll by the sea.

"And Jesus turned and beheld them following and saith unto them, What seek ye? And they said unto him, Master, where abidest thou? He saith unto them, Come, and ye shall see." There is nothing like that in all the literature of the whole world for pure romance.





TO A LADY TRAVELLING
ALONE IN LANDS BEYOND
THE SEA 6

"Omne solum forti Patria."

COURAGE, wheresoe'er it roam,
Finds a home,
From its own land far absented ;
Kind hearts never are alone,
But their own
Joy by others' is augmented.
Here in Hindustan though we
Sundered be
From the friends who know and love us,
Yet we see the same sun's light,
And at night
Still the same stars shine above us.
Therefore, wonder not you found
Foreign ground
Bearing richly friendship's flower ;
All things grow so swiftly here,
That we fear
To delay a single hour.

Seventeen

First the growth and then decay,
 This, they say,
Is the sum of nature's story ;
Human friendships, we are sure,
 Will endure
Longer than a flower's glory.
When to worlds beyond this earth,
 Where our birth
Makes us strangers yet, we're starting,
Be assured that courage still
 And goodwill
Shall bestead us in departing.





ON BEING ONESELF

WHEN to the eager young men, aspiring to leadership in a world very much awake to judge manhood, who came to them for what they called 'wisdom'—meaning thereby a formula for success,—the Greek philosophers quoted with approval the ancient precept, "Know thyself," they were indulging, doubtless, in that ironic play of intellect which has appealed so strongly in all ages to the races of the Levant.

For how difficult, impossible rather, it is to know oneself ! Yet the humiliating process of trying to arrive at this knowledge does bring about a conviction of one's own ignorance ; and this was the result at which, it may be supposed, they were looking ; for this, according to Socrates, the clearest thinker of them all, is the only wisdom that will not turn out in the end to be a vain illusion.

To us the matter is still more complicated than it was to the Greeks. They believed, indeed, in the transmission of tendency. as a principle of religion ; it was the basis of their great tragedies ; but in practice they had invincible faith in the power of the

individual. Virtue depended upon knowledge ; inherited tendencies might be neutralised by acquired knowledge. " The guilt," they affirmed, " is with the chooser ; God is guiltless."

But knowledge is a weapon double-edged ; for them it was turned against the shirker ; they saw that the responsibility was with the individual. For us science has shown an easier way ; each of us, we are told, is an amalgam of ancestral and racial qualities, a product of heredity and environment, labelled, as it were, before he began to live, destined to honour or dishonour by the deeds of those who brought him into being. To know oneself on these terms must require a lifetime of research. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has expressed the problem neatly in a little poem called " The Inner Room." Within that secret and dark chamber of the self is gathered a motley company of ancestors, and each one of them claims the individual as his own. Which of them will win in the contest for the possession of his soul, for the determination of his attitude towards life, for the casting vote in the great crises of his career ?

Let me quote the last two verses of the poem :

" And those shadows are so dense,
There may be
Many—very many—more
Than I see.

They are sitting day and night
Soldier, Rogue, and anchorite ;
And they wrangle and they fight
Over me.
If the stark-faced fellow win,
All is o'er !
If the priest should gain his will,
I doubt no more !
But if each shall have his day,
I shall swing and I shall sway
In the same old weary way
As before."

It is all very discouraging to the man in search of himself. If I get out my chequebook at the appeal of poverty and part with a substantial sum of hard-earned pay, I cannot be sure that some philanthropic ancestor of mine is not in reality looking over my shoulder and forcing my hand to sign the cheque. On the other side, there are compensations. When I jump over the fence and run wild for a while, I can mitigate the rigours of my repentance by calling to mind family traditions of the more crooked branches of our genealogical tree.

But in either case I am no nearer to knowledge of myself ; I am but shifting responsibility to problematical sources. My forbears may have all contributed their quota to me ; but what am I ?

I cannot see that one is any better off under the system of Karma which rules, I take it, that one's present self is the result not of the deeds of one's ancestors, but of one's own previous incarnations. There are some who claim to remember their former lives,—I have never had the good fortune to meet any such,—and for them right conduct on every occasion should be easy. How often we look back to the past and say how differently we should have acted, had we known then what we know now ; " If youth but knew ! " But most of us have not attained this level. For us the past, beyond our birth here, in this stage, is but a region of conjecture. We have our own experience in this life and the recorded experience of others to guide us ; the rest is silence. We suffer, we know not why ; we are glad, and our gratitude finds no recipient. So indefinite are the bounds set to our present personal activities by the past, whether through heredity as the West has it, or by the law of Karma as the East prefers, we cannot be sure of ourselves ; my decision, for good or evil, to-day, may be indeed mine, but equally it may have been made before this " I " was born, by previous selves or by my ancestors.

With the law of Karma I meddle not ; I was born on the wrong side of the " black water " for that ! But against the incubus of heredity I have found lately, in the unpretentious essays of an Australian

Professor of Anatomy, a fortifying solace. It is strange how blind we are to patent truths ! " Nemo dat quod non habet "—" No one can give what he has not "—is an old legal maxim which was often quoted in the controversies about sacerdotal succession in the seventeenth century, where, indeed, I first became acquainted with it ; but it had not occurred to me till I read these essays of Dr. Wood Jones (who, by the way, does not mention it) to apply this maxim to the dogma of heredity. But once you do apply it, how the view is altered ! " Whatever an individual pair of creatures has to pass on to an individual offspring must be a part of the general make-up of the parents at the time of the begetting of the offspring. That is obvious. Nothing that happens to our parents after the begetting of the offspring can enter into the heredity of the offspring. Now, if we agree that the parents can hand on only that which they have at the time when their offspring is begot, it becomes a comparatively simple matter to agree as to what the race can hand on to the individual. The race can only hand on what was in its make-up at the time of the average period of reproduction of the race. That and no more." It follows that for a portion of our lives, up to the average time of reproduction of our species, we can plausibly shift responsibility on to the past, but " there must come a time when this legacy is

exhausted, when we lose the prop of our heritage and face the world as individuals." A new conception, this, of "the grand climacteric !" At what age do we begin to be ourselves? That depends, apparently, on the age of our parents when they married and on their age when we were born. I can see the possibility of a new ethnological science here. In countries where early marriages are the rule, one may expect variety of character, comparatively little national solidarity ; in other countries, on the contrary, where people marry later in life, you will find, surely, a greater uniformity of thought, a national feeling. The suggestion offers attractive lines of research, and India, with its many communities of different customs, should afford material in plenty.

But, whatever the result, it would bring us no nearer to our end. For, eliminating heredity altogether, it is just as difficult to get at the real self. We seem to be different selves at different times. There is generally an optimism in this matter ; and the most optimistic are the least sophisticated. The poor woman who has been beaten by a drunken husband, and is brought up before the magistrate to give evidence, exclaims, " It was not his fault ; he was not himself." When a man behaves outrageously, we say, " Poor fellow ! He was quite beside himself !" In the parable of the prodigal

son, who squandered his patrimony in riotous living, we are told that when he "came to himself" he decided to return to his father, acknowledge his fault and beg for pardon. We habitually think of the better self as the true self. It may be that we flatter ourselves, but, after all, the mere wish that we may be better than we seem shows where our will tends; we feel that we are greater than we know.

It is a comforting fancy, this, that we are good at heart, whatever aberrations in practice we may be guilty of. But is it so certain that our instincts are sound, that we are thus good at heart? Long ago, Plato was appalled by the enormities of which we are capable in dream, when the instinctive or sub-conscious self has its way with us; and most of us must admit that this sleeping partner of ours does not always show a sense of the proprieties; queer things happen when the shutters are closed and the critics of the day have no admission to that dim theatre of mid-night drama. Is it possible that this fellow who plays such pranks upon the stage in the harlequinade of dream is, after all, our real self, and the hero of our waking life but a hypocritical impostor?

I refuse to acquiesce without a struggle in this valuation of the self. Is it not equally possible that the body is in fault? When the telephone is out of order the familiar cadence of the well-loved voice

comes to us distorted, strident, out of harmony ; we can scarce recognize it ; but we know that there is no alteration there, our friend is speaking as he has always spoken ; but the transmitting agency is not working properly ; the message is marred in transit. Just this has happened, I like to think, when our dreams trouble us as we recall them vaguely in the morning. I cannot follow either Jung or Freud in regarding them as infallible revelations of the real self. One must consider the instrument and its limitations. Nine times out of ten we can trace the origin of a nightmare to the fatigue of the nervous system, to the disorder of the stomach, to a breakdown somewhere in the body. And the tenth time? Yes, one may take that as a warning. " This," says the self in these dreams, " this ridiculous, or despicable or disgusting thing, is what I shall become if you persist in doing what you desire, foolishly, at times, to do ; look well at it ; is this what you would have your self to be?" Dreams are not insignificant, but in the glow of this discovery our psycho-analysts are inclined to forget that our waking hours are in the majority when the count is made, and if what we do in them goes down on the credit side we need not fear to face the auditors.

Incomprehensible, then, seems the self. We are the prey of chance desires ; we act instinctively, and these instincts are inherited ; we act deliberately, and

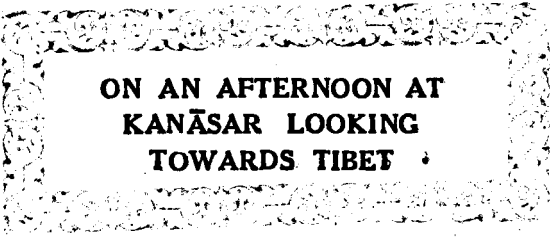
yet, on reflection, we cannot say whether we indeed initiated the action or were impelled to it by subtle influences outside our conscious will. We change from day to day ; we outgrow ourselves, it seems ; there is a continuity in our endeavours, a tendency discernible, but when we look back upon our journey we confess that, after all, we ourselves knew little of the road that we were following ; we have arrived where we are by a miracle of coincidences, and we realise that at certain points we might, for all we knew of our destination, have taken the other turning. Yet here we are, and we have faith yet to go on. Why? It is not that we trust the self we know or think we know. I envy not the man whose optimism is based on self-knowledge of this kind. The saints have ever been distrustful of themselves. "How morbid I" we are inclined to say as we read some of their meditations ; the contempt of self, the abasement, seem symptomatic of a neurasthenic rather than a holy state. Yet if we will consider for a moment the distance between what we are and what we hope to be, we shall understand ; the higher the ambition, the more painful the discontent. When we are confident, if our confidence is more than vanity, it is not in this self we know ; it is in that unknown self upon which, when this fails us, we rely, and from which in our happiest efforts, in our inspired moments, we derive

our strength. This self I dare not say is my self ; yet will I not identify my self with that I know, and herein stands my hope ; I have still the heart to search. I feel that, whatever the brothers of the Shadow may whisper, I have not yet found myself. Let the dreams of the world weave their enchantment about me ; yet, " when I wake up after thy likeness I shall be satisfied with it."

1925.



Twenty-eight



**ON AN AFTERNOON AT
KANĀSAR LOOKING
TOWARDS TIBET**

As when the Ocean, from his hidden heart,
Drives with mysterious force the tides inland,
(At Manningtree or on the Suffolk flats),
The fowler 'mid the dikes feels a fresh saltness,
A motion in the air, and a strange seething
In the dark turbid weed-encumbered waters ;
So did the spirit of the mountains flood
The creeks and inlets of my consciousness,
Till, like the river strengthened by the sea,
I could rise up and cry " I am complete,"
Filled with the joy and strength of an existence
Mine and yet more than this familiar me
Which goes so busily about the world ;
No bounds to this horizon, and no fear
This source shall ever be exhaustible ;
In the immense abyss of Being, I

Conscious, alert, lost not identity,
But found a greater than myself, my Self.

• • • • •

Alas ! the river twice comes to the full,
Twice to its daily task of glad purgation
The flood comes up, but in my life, alas !
Rarely, O yet how rarely, come the moments
Of this renewal of spiritual power !

Oct. 2, 1927.



Thirty



WITHOUT PREJUDICE

How useful it can be, this phrase, which the lawyers have invented ! There are so many people at large in this world who will demand one's " settled conviction," and there are so many questions on which it is impossible, with any wisdom, to be convinced on one side or the other. I remember a man of my year at Oxford, who was all for consistency ; it was a grave defect in his estimation that I should smoke a pipe in his rooms one day and prefer cigarettes thè next ; he could never know, he complained, what I should like. There is no doubt that a consistency of this kind simplifies our relationships ; it may ensure, indeed, a certain measure of success in the worldly sense ; the man who knows exactly what he wants and never changes his direction of desire, has at least a fair chance of reaching fulfilment of it, sooner or later. A Napoleon gains his Empire, but what a vast amount of innocent pleasure he misses by the way ! And the isolation on an island at the end of it all—is there not something in that symbolic

of all such careers? Let the man who covets power and position march along in the dust of the high road with the drums and trumpets ; give me the wind that shakes the barley, and the chance fellowship of the wayside resting-place beneath the trees ; I can make shift, it seems to me, in the world as God made it, without going about to mould it to my own desires. Therefore I refuse to make up my mind permanently on any single subject ; I will not issue a catalogue of my stock in ideas ; for by the time it is out, I hope to have added to them ; I shall have given away a few odd volumes and filled up a gap or two along the shelves. Whatever I say shall be said without prejudice to this liberty of changing my opinion.

Youth, generally, scorns this attitude of suspension ; it craves for a definition that may hold good everywhere and always. Surely, it says, there must be a right and a wrong point of view? Indeed there is ; the difficulty comes in finding it ; for, even as you grasp it, the ground of your decision may give beneath you and there you are left, foundering in a bog of uncertainty, where all seemed solid rock. As the years go on, we grow more tolerant of men and ideas. Time wears down the asperity of our judgments, and we become indifferent to divergences of taste. We find ourselves accepting that it takes all sorts to make the world, and we are grateful to the fates for the infinite diversity of human nature. In

this provision of prudence, we come to discern a maxim of good counsel, a recipe for happiness, and it is easier for us to pronounce "without prejudice" in the wider and kindlier sense. Blessed is the man, says the Vulgate, "qui in cathedra pestilentiae non sedit,"—who has not sat in the seat of the scornful,—and the word it uses,—*beatus*,—implies that this immunity from rash judgment is the gift of God, unattainable, that is, by a man's unaided labour; it is a gift, assuredly, for which a wise man might well pray. Let him keep his intellectual house open; it may be that the fugitive outlaw is a god in disguise. "We feed not the body with the food of one dish only," says a forgotten essayist of the shrewd 17th Century; "nor does the sedulous Bee thyme all her thighs from one flower's single vertues. She takes the best from many; and together she makes them serve; not without working that to honey which the putrid spider would convert to poyson. Thus should the wise man do."

A few days ago we were reading that essay of Walter Pater's in which he maintains the continuity of culture; nature is ever evolving ideas, moralities, modes of inward life, but provides that "the earlier growth should propel its fibres into the later, and so transmit the whole of its forces in an unbroken continuity of life. Then comes the spectacle of the reserve of the elder generation exquisitely

refined by the antagonism of the new." Weaker minds, he goes on to say, do not perceive the change; they try to continue the old modes without adaptation; perverse or violent minds would break away abruptly and completely; "to feel the change everywhere, yet not to abandon oneself to it, is a situation of difficulty and contention." The dangerous time in this process comes, you will notice, when the continuity is forgotten; when the advocates of the new and of the old ways equally ignore the fundamental truth of gradual development, and suppose that they are fighting for or against a complete revolution, which is in the nature of things an impossibility. You cannot dig the roots of the past altogether out of the soil, nor can you prevent fresh growth coming out somewhere; prune as vigorously as you will, some shoot will escape your vigilance.

That is our situation, it would seem, in India now; there are some of us who would shut their eyes to this continuity of culture. What does "culture" mean? Pater was writing a review article; the reader could not arrest him for an answer; but the professor in his room cannot escape; I had to attempt a definition, "without prejudice," and I said we might define culture as the progressive refinement of life and conduct by thought or art. Life may seem a vague term, but none more definite will

suffice ; conduct is not the whole of life, nor yet three-fourths of it. The pessimist may spoil a party by his mere presence, though he open not his lips ; we react on our environment as long as we breathe, however inactive our existence. All our thoughts, too, count in making up our contribution to our contemporaries, thoughts in solitude no less than those to which we give expression in words or in the more palpable forms of art. Education, obviously, is but a part of culture, yet there are many who talk as if education could do the whole work of it ; that can never be ; and, unless we recognise this limitation, we shall continue to blame our educational system for failures that, in fact, come from a general deficiency in culture, while at the same time we shall expect too much from an improvement in the type of education. Youth is impressionable we know, but culture, in the wider meaning, the progressive refinement of life and conduct by thought and art, depends upon the personal volition of the grown man. Let us improve our education by all means, but let us not deceive ourselves into thinking that all the evils of our blood and state will be eradicated thereby, nor brand our education of the past as necessarily bad, because all is not quite right with us.

I was set on this train of thought by reading the memorandum of a certain learned judge of the

Calcutta High Court in those blue volumes which are rapidly acquiring the prestige of a Bible among us. He draws a dreadful picture of our plight. The education provided for the last fifty years and more has been, in its result, he affirms, "deracialising, devitalising and deforming." As a humble servant of the public in this branch of work, who has always had but a modest notion of its scope and influence, I ask myself whether any number of teachers banded together with a common will, or any system of teaching whatsoever, can effect so much. Is it really true? I do not understand that word "deforming;" so far as I do understand it, I cannot agree; we have introduced, I should have said, too many "forms," and one of the legitimate complaints against our system has been against its formalism. "Deracialising"—are we deracialised? Have racial characteristics been destroyed in India? Looking around me to-day I cannot see this to be true; there seems to me more racial feeling about than ever; whether that is a good sign or not I make no question; there it is, unless our observation does not pierce beyond superficialities. A man is not deracialised because he adopts a more convenient form of dress or makes use of commodities which his forefathers could not even imagine. "Devitalised?" I cannot speak for Macaulay's time, but from all I can read, it seems to me that India is vastly more alive now in every

way than she was then. All round me I can feel the stirring into consciousness of new and vital ideas, aspirations and ambitions ; that very "unrest," for which education is sometimes blamed, is surely a sign of life. Can it possibly happen that contact with the literature of other races, strange lands, should crush and not stimulate? At first, perhaps, it may suspend activity ; in the life of every nation there comes a period of pause when men are weighing the relative values of what they have inherited and what they have acquired, adjusting their vision, deciding what to take and what to reject. Without such a period there could be no progress, but it is a symptom of growth, not of decay. Even now we are beginning to be touched with the colours of the dawn. Experiments in literature, art, science are being made in our midst. As it was in Elizabethan England, so it is in India to-day ; the finest spirit are keen to be doing something for their country ; they are eager to show that India has no need to live on the reputation of her past, that she has something new as well as old to bring forth out of her treasures.

That is why I refuse to believe in this theory of decadence and racial suicide induced by education. Dissatisfied we may be, but that is a characteristic of vitality ; it is only when we are sick that we wish to lie still and do nothing. There are many

things I dislike in our educational system, but I am not, for that reason, going to "sit in the seat of the scornful" and condemn the past generation which evolved it. Let me show inconsistency in this at least by consistently speaking "without prejudice."

1920.





SUNRISE ON SNOWDON

THE vision of the morning!—peak on peak
They lift their dreaming heads through drifting
mist,

As slowly, one by one, the sun hath kissed
Their summits into splendour! Who can speak
The lovely thoughts that leap to life? We seek
Further and further for some wider sight,
As further still and further floods the light
From the dim east's wide portals. Bare and bleak,
Cold and clear-cut in the calm morning air,
Stands every mountain o'er its darkened dale.
Full day can never give an hour so fair
As this! See, on the straits a single sail
Shines to the sunrise! While on Siabod there
The white clouds weave a trailing bridal veil.

Sept., 1904.

ON DREAMS ✓

"TAKE no heede to any of your dreames" is the advice of James, first of the Stuarts to rule in England, when writing to "his dearest sonne, Henry the Prince" on the art of life in his "royal gift," the *Basilikon Doron*. And indeed these fantastic visions of the night may well seem, to reason, imponderable. The very word connotes insubstantiality and insignificance. When the poet desires to belittle man he says we are such stuff as dreams are made on; our generations pass "forgotten, as a dream dies at the opening day."

Yet, in all ages, the dream and its interpretation have seemed to many wise and learned men worth serious study. We may omit the scriptural instances of Nebuchadnezzar and Pharaoh, and all the classical references from Homer to Virgil. The dream motive dominates all mediæval poetry.

"Many men seyn that in sweveninges
Ther nis but fables and lesinges;
But men many somme swevenes seen,

Which hardely ne false been,
But afterward ben apparaunte."

Thus begins the Romaunt of the Rose, most popular of those interminable allegories in which the age of Chaucer found its delight and edification. In his own days, James must have been in a minority. The melancholy Burton tells us that the philosophers have divided dreams into divers kinds, "natural, divine, dæmoniacal, which vary according to humours, diet, actions, objects, etc." The venerable medical authorities, Cardanus, Artemidorus, and Sambucus, have written "great volumes" on the subject, and been followed by "their several interpretators" whom he mercifully passes over without specification. The scientific Sir Thomas Browne opines that "we are something more than ourselves in our sleeps and the slumber of the body seems to be but the waking of the soul." He thanks God for his happy dreams, and affirms that "were my memory as faithful as my reason is then fruitful, I would never study but in my dreams." For the popular feeling we may consult the dramatists, who at all times may be relied upon as its faithful reflectors. One might write at length on Shakespeare's use of the dream. The vision of Clarence with all its "dismal terror" is, perhaps, a somewhat flamboyant episode, nor does the prophetic dream

of Calpurnia rise beyond theatrical appropriateness ; but to the psychologist and mental physician his treatment of Lady Macbeth in the great sleep-talking scene is of the utmost interest. Again, in a quiet passage of dialogue in Hamlet, he makes us aware that he had thought upon this problem almost on modern lines.

“ O God ! I could be bounded in a nutshell and count myself a king of infinite space were it not that I have had dreams.” If there had been a psychoanalyst in Denmark, he would soon have plucked out the heart of Hamlet’s mystery. All the ideas associated with your father’s murder and his exhortations to revenge have formed, he would tell him, a complex, which, because it was unpleasant, you have deliberately thrust out of your consciousness ; but in sleep you lose control, the unconscious part of you has its way, and these ideas emerge to trouble you in dream. You are trying to forget, and your unconscious, which is wiser than your conscious self, will not allow you to forget. You must make an adjustment, or you will become mad.

Which brings us at once to the modern theories about dreams. Of course, if we are materialists, we can dismiss these straightway. We shall then be content to postulate a physical cause for dreaming. Excess or irregularity in diet will be held accountable. But while it is possible that such digestive

disturbances may be the cause, it is equally probable that they are merely the occasion. A blow, received upon a vulnerable part of the body, may set up local inflammation and stimulate into activity tubercle germs which were latent there ; but the blow is not the cause of the tuberculosis ; we must go deeper into the history of the patient for that. Similarly, we turn a handle and apply a needle, but that act is not the cause of the sounds which pour out from the gramophone ; we liberate by our own motion that which was inscribed upon the record by another agency.

On this analogy the physical disturbance which precedes or accompanies the dream state in certain cases,—for some people dream habitually,—may be but the occasion of setting in motion forces of a different origin. It seems more agreeable to scientific method to seek a psychological rather than a physical cause for a condition of the mind.

The life of the individual may be compared with a joint stock company formed to undertake manifold enterprises of various degrees of importance and difficulty. The business is divided between two departments, with a managing director at the head of each, and behind both is the board of directors, whose duty it is to look after the interests of the whole concern and see to it that neither side is developed to the prejudice of the other. In the back-

ground, but yet influential on occasions, are the shareholders, and the great difficulty of the directors is to know exactly the composition of this body,—since shares are constantly changing ownership,—and to administer the affairs of the company in accordance with the will of the majority. When mistakes are made, as they often are, these shareholders give trouble, and the directorate has to do something to satisfy them ; if it fails, the company suffers and ultimately has to go into liquidation.

The interpretation of the parable is plain enough. The bodily and mental powers of the man, his physical and psychological systems, are regulated independently, but are closely related, and there seems to be some directing force behind each, which makes itself felt when the activities of either are in excess or defect, dormant or misdirected. As for the shareholders, we are all aware that we are not altogether our own property. We are responsible to the full to ourselves ; we suffer by our wrong-doing, we are proud of our achievements ; in one sense we are all self-made men. But this feeling of personal responsibility merges in a wider consciousness of trust. Not only are we responsible to some being higher than ourselves, but also, we feel, the least of our actions is not altogether free from its influence. On the stage of this world we play our parts before an invisible audience ; though we cannot see who or

what is present in the darkness beyond the foot-lights, we are yet acutely aware that a presence there is, and however much we may pretend to ourselves that we are acting for our own amusement only or for the applause of our fellow-players, in our hearts we know that this is a lie ; the praise we covet, the derision we fear, will come, is actually, we feel sometimes, on its way to us, out of that unseen auditorium. More than this. For all our study in the art of acting and our attempts at proficiency in our parts, a strange doubt will keep disturbing us that we are, in reality, but marionettes jigging, with all the semblance of vitality, at the end of wires, operated as the author of the piece directs.

To revert to our former metaphor ; it is the influence of the shareholders that determines ultimately the direction of our company. This it is that makes life such a complicated business ; the interests that move us are so various, so commingled, so hard to disengage for consideration before we yield to them. When we speak of our higher and our lower instincts, what exactly do we mean? Do we know whence they come? We speak as if we did, but who can set apart his desires and say that these are self-begotten, these inherited? See how closely our physical system alone is related to its environment, how subtly it reacts to external stimuli, to variations in heat and cold, altitude, weather, diet and a hundred other

forces beyond our present knowledge. Yet this environment of the body is plain to understanding, when compared with our psychological background. Our telescopes can reveal to us the chemical composition of distant stars; our microscopes can separate for us the constituents of the atom. Infinite as are the potentialities of substance which our scientists investigate, they are easy of comprehension beside the mysteries of that dark region which the psychologist is now beginning to explore. The system in which our mind revolves is as vast as the visible universe, and well may it fill us with an awe still greater than that Kant felt before the spectacle of the starry heavens.

A little, a very little, we have already learned. A few of our shareholders are known to us, though we do not yet know the extent of their several holdings. We can calculate roughly that in any estimate of our psychological interests we must include the primitive and not yet extinct fears and desires of our animal ancestors and of their successors in the early ages of man's struggle for supremacy over the brute. We may suppress these in our conscious life, but they are there in the background. With them lie stored up, as on a film waiting to be released, the collective experiences of the race, the tribe, the class, the family; for good or for evil the deeds, emotions, and ideas of our parents remain there as

heirlooms for us. What shall be said of the social sense? Strongly as we may repudiate the ideas of our time, these strike upon this sense and leave their image in the unconscious mind. A thousand sights and sounds which do not awaken interest, and of which therefore we are not definitely conscious so as to attend to them, these pass also into that repository of material. All these, from primitive memories to contemporary trivialities, may be regarded as the sleeping partners in our enterprise. They do not, ordinarily, appear in the public meetings of our company, in moments of conscious deliberation, that is, but they can make themselves felt by influence behind the scenes, in those dreams when the unconscious releases its films, and in bewildering succession the apparently unintelligible pictures pass before us. And just as in a company, one of the directors or an influential group of shareholders will contrive to secure a predominating vote on some important question by making use of proxies, so in a crisis of our life, when there is a conflict of interests, one or other of the interested parties will endeavour to influence our decision by invoking on its side these sleeping partners.

Hence you must, my reader, in spite of King James take heed, and careful heed, to your dreams. You desire, I doubt not, to be an equitable chairman, or director in chief, of your company. In your

capacity of trustee for the whole body of your shareholders you will try to keep even the balance of interests. Yet it is no easy matter. Your manager on the physical side will be insistent with his demands, nor is it too difficult to interpret his meaning. Pain swiftly indicates any maladjustment of our physical condition. We may know with tolerable accuracy just where the mischief is, nor will it be beyond our skill to put things right, if we are patient and capable of control. The language of the body may be interpreted by experience. But in dealing with that other department we are at a disadvantage. Our manager there is not so ready of speech ; he has to employ signs, and show us his meaning in diagrams or pictures. These are our dreams, and in attempting to read them we must beware of false inferences drawn from our familiarity with conscious processes. We must remember that while they may represent real interests in our concern, they may, on the contrary, be cunningly used, like proxy voting papers, on the side of a powerful, yet inherently less respectable, minority. Fortunately for us, it would seem that the great body of our shareholders is genuinely anxious to make our business a success. All interferences with the management will usually be found to have a beneficent object ; when either of the two great interests complains we may be sure that there is a measure

of justification in the complaint, nor can we go far wrong in our policy if we give due regard to the warnings of each.

Sleep has ever been belauded by the poets as nature's great restorer. And in sleep it is that nature does, indeed, endeavour to restore for us a true perspective of our state. During the day, while the active intellect is in command, we attend to this or that according to the direction of our dominant interests ; we find little difficulty in suppressing ideas that are at variance with these ; the door can be kept shut to unwelcome visitors. But at night the house of our mind is thrown open ; in our dreams we are made aware of what is going on about us in those purlieus of our being which, awake, we disregard. It may be that these sleeping partners approve our actions, and we thank God for our happy dreams ; it may be that they register a disavowal, and the visions of the night make us afraid. The wise man will take counsel with his waking mind what these messages in cipher may purport.

1923.



F. 4

Fatesnine



**AN IMPRESSION NEAR NAINI
TAL**

WHERE the path steepens roughly, to the right
I turned aside and took a little track,
Known only to the grasscutters and me,
Across the hill's bare shoulder climbing back ;
Then stood and thanked God for the sudden sight.
Though, west, behind, the sun was setting, still
The light flowed northward level, warm, abundant,
Over the forest rising hill on hill
To where, beyond, on cloud uplifted rose
Clear, calm and bright, in that triumphant light,
The snows.

Gradually, slow, redundant,
Down withdrawn the day receded ;
Shadows lengthened ; valleys deepened
Dark and darker ; soon there needed
Longer looking to discover
Path and roadway running over
Ridge to valley where it steepened.
Chill the air grew ; scent of grasses,

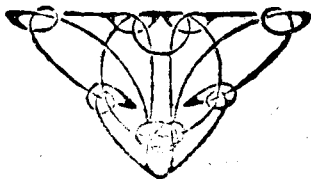
Scent of flowers, ferns and cooled earth,
Made me conscious of a new night's birth.
Far remote the mountain passes,
As the clouds and shadows shifted,
Showed their secrets and concealed them
In the moment that revealed them.

* * * *

Yet high above this dying world uplifted,
In pure white radiance rose
The still unshadowed snows.

* * * *

And now the habitable land in night
Was shrouded quite,
Day's supreme tide flowed on and flushed them red.
Then, at that sight, I said,
Courage, my heart! earth's loveliest are her strongest,
The highest mountains hold the sun the longest ;
When all men else despair the strong brave mind
The failing light shall keep, the truth shall find.



ON LIVING A DOUBLE LIFE

WE all do it. That is why there is so widespread an interest when a case comes into the papers. We are thrilled when we read that Mr. X., lately deceased, who was a respectable member of the Town Council, a regular attendant at the most uncompromising of the local chapels, and a recipient, for his civil services in the war, of an O. B. E., has now been discovered, through his testamentary dispositions, to have kept up a second establishment remote from his eligible suburban residence and cultivated in addition to his scheduled holding a not inconsiderable acreage of wild oats. There is no malicious feeling of moral superiority in the matter; the pleasure we feel is not akin to that awakened by the spectacle on the stage when the hypocrisy of a Joseph Surface is unmasked. We are positively sympathetic, not negatively critical. Such, we say, is human nature. The man was not a mere automaton in a frock coat moved by social expediences. We warm towards Mr. X in this delayed revelation of his vitality. We recognize the attractions of a double life.

Not many years ago this popular tendency was utilised with remarkable effect in the famous Druce case. It was alleged, you will remember, that the Duke of Portland and a certain Mr. Druce, proprietor of a large miscellaneous shop known as the Baker St. Bazaar had been one and the same person ; in consequence, the heirs of this Druce claimed the Portland estates and the right of succession to the title. A fund to finance the claimants, conferring participatory rights on the contributors, was started, and shillings poured in from all over the country. The investors lost their money,—but who can say that they did not have their money's worth and more in the satisfaction of their romantic interest? Not one of them, I warrant you, but believes yet in the truth of the claim, not one of them but maintains stoutly that a legal technicality turned the scales of justice.

The plain fact is we are all so habituated to living a double life mentally or in imagination, as the phrase goes, that we feel no surprise on hearing of another who has materialised his duality of persons. The necessities of life demand such constant service that most of us have no spare time for action of this kind ; at rare intervals we put on a fancy dress for an evening dance, or disguise ourselves to act a part in some play or pageant. Further than this we do not venture outside the ring-fence of our accepted

functions. We do what our world expects us to do ; our friends and acquaintances can label us with sufficient accuracy ; they think they " know all about us."

But how little they know after all ! The sleek gentleman who travels up to the city every morning intrenched behind the " Times " and catches the same train back every evening, travels in his mind far beyond the limits of this daily journey. He has groped through the dense jungles of Central Africa and camped in the desert beneath the Syrian stars ; he is a nomad of the wilderness, a prospector in the barren hills ; he is kin to Cortes and one of the great company of dauntless adventurers in distant seas. You would not suspect that, would you ? He is living a double life.

We are all artists in some degree ; we are all living more lives than one, and most of us die many deaths before we are laid in our demonstrable graves. And these existences we lead, hidden from the conjecture of our temporal associates, are often more precious to us than the highest honours of our known career. Thus is life bountiful in compensations. If we may call no man happy in his apparent prosperity, yet we should be sparing of our pity too. The clerk on a bare living wage, working in a routine that appals us with its dull monotony, may be in reality enjoying a richer and fuller life than the millionaire with all his opportunities.

It pleases me to remember Lamb at his desk in the India House. I imagine a Director on his round of inspection pitying the poor fellow and piously giving thanks for his goodlier heritage. Ah! Mr. Director! in the portion of real good which the labouring ages have bequeathed to humanity we are all co-heirs; the lowliest among us has his equal share. Our work may be assigned to us; that is our duty, which only the coward declines. But we can be what we care to be; that is our right, and God, before whom ever lie bare the abysmal deeps of personality, God alone knows how we use it.

No fellow-man can ever know us through and through. We listen to each other's social talk; we note the unconscious gestures. Between friends indeed, as among the stars, there needs no speech nor language for communication; we are intuitively aware and wait not for expression. But even here, in the closest familiarity that may be imagined, there is something which eludes the most unselfish love. The inner life is hid. And yet this is the source of our happiness or unhappiness in the world. Parents spend many anxious hours in deciding what to make of their sons; one hears much of vocational training and practical education. But a man may be completely successful in his career and miss happiness. The economists and the politicians would have us believe that an amelioration of external conditions

of life will make us all happy and contented. Comfortable houses, a sufficiency of nourishing food, plenty of leisure, facilities for amusement,—secure these for the people and Utopia will be achieved. Such is their promise, but all the evidence is against them. There are as many miserable folk among the rich as among the poor. This belief in the efficacy of legislation is an old delusion ; our politicians are still like foolish parents who imagine they can keep their children pleased by giving them a multiplicity of toys. “ We’ve given Tommy all he wants and he is crying again ! ”

If there is unrest and discontent in the world, it is futile to look for the cause in external conditions. These are probably neither worse nor better than they were in the past, or will be in the future. We may have certain advantages which our ancestors lacked, but all progress brings with it a kind of backwash that sweeps away something of value as it recedes. However that may be, these objective goods count neither one way nor the other in this question of human happiness. That is the concern of the individual and no external agency can help him towards it. He must find happiness in his inner life, in an attitude of the mind or soul towards all, external or internal, to which it is related. Truly “ there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so.”

Yet this word " thinking " is too active for our meaning here ; it implies conscious will. But it would seem sometimes that our happiness or unhappiness is drawn from sources hidden from our consciousness ; our moods evade our most subtle analysis. This soul, this medium in which we move and think seems linked, we know not how, with some vast indefinable substance. of infinite potentialities beyond our control. At moments we are aware suddenly of the relationship ; the contact is made, the circle completed ; but no sooner has the intimation come to us than it is withdrawn. We may liken ourselves to men adrift in the sea upon a raft ; a faint sound breaks in upon the silence that surrounds us ; with straining eyes we look out over the dark waters, but only a twisting eddy shows that the surface has ever been disturbed ; what it was that emerged and has now gone down again we cannot, by any effort, recall. Such is the mystery of our conscious life touching at all points this unplumbed region which we call the unconscious. We feel its movements, but know not how they are communicated to us. We are visited by joy and terror ; strange promptings toward good and evil reach us, but we cannot tell whence they come. Haunted by ancestral echoes, intoxicated with primitive desires, distracted by conflicting messages from this unseen power, man yet contrives to make some sort of

pattern in his life. Bound to the service of his own daily necessities, to the succour of his family, his neighbours, and men of all races according to their needs, he yet finds freedom to fashion for himself an ideal world where all is ordered as he would have it and he may live as he will. Here, he knows, is his sole chance of happiness and this knowledge will preserve him from despair when the social fabric about him is shattered by the frantic dissensions of men. The guarded kingdom is secure from assault ; it will be preserved inviolate from the strife of tongues.

The world is young yet and for centuries more, in all probability its inhabitants will continue to talk and plan to perfect its external conditions ; they will rob and kill one another in this process of making it a better place to live in, as they say. And while this mad struggle to realise happiness goes on producing instead envy and hatred, fear and death, all the time many humble individuals will be living their double lives, having solved for themselves the problem which these others are fighting over. Then, perhaps, when scientific research applied to warfare has brought the race formidably near to extinction, man, like the prodigal son, will come to himself, his real " self," and seek at last within that and not in the world of things, the happiness which might have been his at any period of his tragic history.

1923.

REASON AND INSTINCT: AN ALLEGORY OF A PARADOX

THE mind of man is "incurably" religious. Drug it he may, for a time, with the potent opiates of pleasure, or seduce it to forgetfulness with the heady wine of speculation ; but the night of his unknowing cannot be prolonged by any such spell beyond its due season, and remembrance arises with the dew of the morning. It may be that the merciful clouds still shroud the mountain tops from his awakened eyes, and he perceives not, at the moment in which he comes to himself, the distance he has yet to travel ; or it may be that the air is clear and the peaks stand out sharply against the blue sky, reflecting, with an infinite variety of colouring, the light of that immeasurable dome, but by this very clarity of their revelation cruelly oppressing him with a sense of their remoteness and inaccessibility to such a weak wayfarer as he has found himself.

Yet the valleys cannot keep him for all their delicate offerings. The little homesteads, so securely set beside the meadows on the edge of the forest,

are not home to him ; the wandering streams that bring down pure water to the placid flocks cannot satisfy his thirst ; the sound of them, as they flow serenely over the stones of a shallow reach, stirs in him a restlessness which he cannot understand, but must, without question, obey. On with the pack is the unspoken order, and all the allurements of reason are powerless to hold him. Lazily the cattle lift their heads as he passes, then turning them again to the green earth go on with the comfortable usages of their existence. Many times—as he mounts higher and the slope steepens, as the heat of the day increases and the ridge rises ever farther above him, he pauses and looks back to bless and envy them their sensible contentment. Intolerable indeed seems to him then his mysterious destiny, unattainable utterly his futile desire, yet equally indomitable the hope of his spirit and no less imperative the urge of his primal instinct. He must toil on till the tired nerves refuse to carry any longer the messages of the will, and his body collapses like a fighting plane whose pilot has been shot through the head.

* * * *

It may be that the heights will never yield their secret ; it may be that for all these ages they have been jealously guarding from us—nothing! Some who declare that they have climbed them report impossible things ; others, we know, have left their

bones to bleach upon the rocks, a witness to their failure and a warning to others of the folly of these forlorn attempts. Yet the warning remains unregarded and the failure revered. Generation after generation the call is heard, the struggle endured, the surrender made ; spring after spring, under the same compulsion, with the same reluctance, men leave the valley to seek the upper ranges. Only the cattle and the sheep stay always in the pleasant pastures ; they alone are reasonable beings, for they alone know the meaning of their desires and by knowledge move serenely to their satisfaction. Which is health, we may well ask, and which is disease? Shall we follow reason or instinct? You may ask of those seekers, but in vain. Try this one who is setting out even now while the dawn is dim in the east. "What do you expect to find on those heights?" He is silent, as one who does not understand. "How do you know that there is anything there?" At last he answers: "I do not know, I believe because it is incredible!"

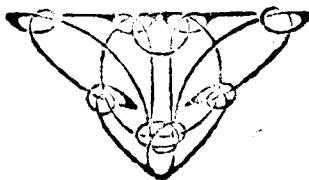
Absurd, is it not? And yet,— to-morrow, you, even you, will be up early, following.

• • • •

The mind of man is incurably religious. But the miracle might happen. If the philosophers could at last succeed in their endeavours, and rationalise

religion, then, perhaps, the spell would be broken and man, liberated from his ancestral malady, find peace among the valleys in the enjoyment of his possessions. And then would begin again the work of creation from which, they say, God rested when he had made man ; once more would the great Artificer of the Universe take up the task that had seemed complete. For God is not willing to dwell upon the heights alone.

1922.



**IN THE VALLEY OF THE SIND,
KASHMIR I**

MIDWAY between the valley and the sky,
That shines so blue beyond the domes of snow
And rocky pinnacles, now high, now low,
The white wind-woven clouds go drifting by ;
Amid the pine and languorous deodar
Their vapours interlace, then fade apart,
Like to the motions of some human heart
In whose recess longing and loathing are.
So mine own life drifts onward to some end
I know not, and at last shall melt away
Ev'n as the mist, and though I may not stay
I shall be sad to go. Thou visible Friend,
O let me die even as this cloud here,
In sight of the sun-flooded glacier.



A VACATION MEMORY

IN the bitter cold before the dawn, we had left our little camp beneath the silver birches and climbed on ice, or snow as hard as ice, to the summit of the pass, to be welcomed, as we reached it, by the warm rays of the new-risen sun. Then we had joyously glissaded for some thousands of feet over shining spaces of firm snow, and had come, with much contentment and the appetite of giants, to the bed of the nullah down which our route was to take us to the village where we should spend the night.

But now the joys of that glorious morning had long been forgotten ; all day we had toiled laboriously under a blazing sun through snow which now precariously supported, and now treacherously let the foot sink through ; there was no shelter of rock nor shade of tree in that mountain valley, and we began seriously to question the wisdom of the Arab proverb which tells us " Voyaging is victory ! " It was early yet, on the first of June, for this journey, and indeed

we were the pioneers that year. The route along the bed of the nullah had, at many places, to be abandoned, for the sun had melted the snow bridges, and the black water flowed deeply where we had expected to be able to walk ; it was necessary, at times, to turn aside and climb up the steep hillside, cutting steps into the ice, which lay beneath the avalanchy snow, that our laden coolies might pass safely across. All this had taken time, tried the patience, and tired the body ; and now, though night was falling, our village seemed no nearer. This was not surprising, for, as we found later, it did not exist !

Meanwhile we must camp, as best we might, in that inhospitable spot. It reminded one strangely of the scene in Browning :

" The hills, like giants at a hunting, lay,
Chin upon hand, to see the game at bay."

We found at last a little space, beside the river, bare of snow, where a few starveling junipers gave promise of scanty firewood ; and there we set up our tents. The little fires of the coolies sprang up on this side and on that ; the stars shone down upon our evening meal, and after a while it seemed, as we lay and smoked and warmed ourselves at the blaze, that this, after all, was the only sort of life for a man who would taste of the joys of real living.

On the other side of the fire, I had gathered our coolies together ; the light flickered on their bearded faces and brown blankets ; Il Greco would have loved to paint them in the wavering shadows. Tall, muscular men, with dark eyes and close-set eyebrows, prominent cheek-bones and broad foreheads, they had rarely moved out of the valley in which they were born. Divided from the rest of the world by a circle of snow mountains, over which there are but few passes and those difficult, if not impossible, for half the year, they had preserved, untouched by modernity, the traditions and the sympathies of their Dard ancestors, a race almost unknown to us now, though it peopled these regions in the past. Among such men old memories survive beyond their consciousness, and if one can only break down their barrier of bashfulness and get them to talk or sing, one may learn much that the anthropologist in his study must sigh for in vain.

On this occasion, the labours we had shared together, or, to put the case more materially, the distribution of some tea and cigarettes, opened their hearts, and soon we had them singing the old songs of their secluded valley, the songs of the long winter when no work can be done, and the songs of the march which make the load seem lighter. There is a peculiar fascination in all such singing ; we seem to come nearer, as we listen, to the simple things of

THE SONG OF THE COOLIES

O you cooli folk ! it is time to be stirring.

The wind of the dawn blows cold, and the stars are yet in the sky. But the journey before us is long, and the loads are heavy.

O you cooli folk ! it is time to be stirring.

Come let us sing as we go, for the birds are singing too. They also have their time for travel. When we have made our stage we will light a fire of sticks, and then we shall have joy of our food. Our journeying will be over for the day. Oh ! that will be pleasant ! But, men and birds—we must all be moving.

O you cooli folk ! it is time to be stirring.

For our life on this earth is just coming and going. We cannot stay anywhere for long. Even Rajahs are just like us, coming and going. We have a long march to make, and now we must be off. It is no good staying at home. A man's home is his heart, but he who goeth out of his own heart, may, perchance, find God upon his journey.

O you cooli folk ! it is time to be stirring.

THE SONG OF THE BULBUL

This is the song the bulbul sings :—

In the morning I wake up early and go into the meadows. The dew is on the bushes by the river ; the water of the night shines in the little pools. The branch sways with all its blossoms as I sit and sing. Who will listen to the voice of my complaining?

This is the song the bulbul sings :—

Early in the morning I go out to seek him. By the stones of the river where the spiders have set their webs among the thorns. Ah! life is full of stones and thorns, and there is many a snare for the heart! Where has he hidden himself from the sight of mine eyes?

This is the song the bulbul sings :—

In the morning by the river, as the sun looks over the hill, he sings what is in his heart. It is God he is seeking, of God he is singing. One day he will find him, and so shall we ; for from us too he has hidden himself. But find him we shall some day, if we sleep not too long. Ah! we must wake up early and go forth to find him.

This is the song the bulbul sings.

THE DREAMER

I am a rich man, I have great possessions. All the good things in the bazaar I can give you. Food and fine raiment are mine in plenty. I have nothing to do but sit still and enjoy them. Ah! don't you envy me?

Alas! who has taken away all my beautiful things? I know they are somewhere still, but I cannot find them. Some one has locked them up, so that I cannot open the door. I do not seem to know this country wherein I wander ever up and down, seeking for that which I cannot find.

Ah! don't you pity me?

There are many good things in the shops, fine raiment and food in plenty. So are there with God, and it is he who gives them and takes them away. I shall find them when he wills. In the darkness of night we cannot see; it is the light that shows us all things. God is the light, and, according to our deeds here, he will show us good or evil hereafter. My heart is torn asunder, because I cannot find him.

Ah! don't you pity me?

THE LOVER

O, my life, come to me! as the bulbul to the roses, even so, O my life, come to me!

The scent of thee is as musk, and the smell of thy body as jessamine; lo! thy back is slender and thy face like the face of a celestial maiden. O thou generous one, bring me, I beseech thee, into the garden of Paristan.

Thy face is as a shining lamp. I would burn my life in the flames thereof. I have sought thee in the gardens and the orchards; on the hills and in the valleys have I followed thy footsteps.

O my life, come to me! as the bulbul to the roses, even so, O my life, come to me!

Since I drank the wine of thy love, my heart has become very restless. I am so fond of thy beautiful hair. It curls about my heart.

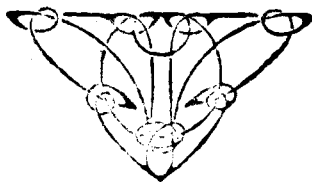
O what a thief thou art! Thou hast stolen all that I had! None is so faithless as thou. Thou hast made me a sure mark for the arrows of sorrow. Thou hast taken away my heart by thy wiles, and a stone is here in its place.

Yea! but as a stone, as a precious stone, are

thy shining eyes. Thou turnest them on all sides.
Turn them on me!

O my life, come to me! as the bulbul to the
roses, even so, O my life, come to me!

Ah! I cannot endure the delay of this separa-
tion. I have no power to come and meet you. My
strength has gone from me, and I crumble into dust.
O my love, my love! be not a stranger to me! O
my life, come to me! as the bulbul to the roses,
even so, O my life come to me!



ON AN APOLOGY FOR TRAVELLERS

WE all judge on the evidence of our own experience, and record, perhaps, in a certain mood, a generalisation from that experience which we shall be inclined to alter when the mood has passed ; but the record remains ; others take it up and repeat it ; and thus an ill-considered judgment is elevated to the rank of an axiom. So has it been with the notorious statement of Horace that travellers can leave their own land and wander far, but cannot get away from their temperament ; "*Coelum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt.*" People have gone on quoting this tag for generations until it has been accepted as truth irrefragable, but, surely, some at least might have consulted their own experience and ventured to a disclaimer ? Horace was a bad guide in such a matter. Like all Romans he hated travel ; his farm in the Sabine hills, even, was pleasant to him only by reason of the contrast it afforded with the stir and liveliness of Rome. The modern Roman keeps that civic prejudice ; his city is to

him the hub of the universe ; he pities the man whose necessity takes him away from its streets and fountains, the social functions, and the scandals of the central hive. Temperamentally, too, the poet was incapable of a clear vision in this direction ; he disliked the inconvenience of moving about in uncomfortable vehicles, of feeding upon chance food, of sleeping in casual quarters. One wonders, indeed, if he was ever young, he is so specially the poet of middle-age. But he is not alone in this curious attitude towards travel ; an Englishman of all men has joined with him. For Milton asserts, in that decisive manner of his, that the mind is its own place, and implies that change of place brings with it no change of mind. He was blind when he said that, and he put the words into the mouth of the Devil ; let us hope he was speaking dramatically and not in his own person ! But one fears he did believe it ; the record of his tour in Italy shows him to have been one of those uncompromising Britons who make us appear a little mad among foreigners.

Obviously if Horace and Milton are in the right there is little to be gained by travel ; the pleasure it can give will be but superficial and transitory. All experience that is to be valuable for personality must make for mental enrichment ; if travel does not affect the inner life of a man, he may do better

to save his railway and steamer fares and take a stall instead at the Cinema. But the theory repels us ; we feel that the Arabic proverb is right ; voyaging is victory ; we do gain something when we go abroad. What an "Apology for Travellers" might be written ! Let us see what the apologist might find to say.

The effect of travel, he will begin, may be regarded in two aspects according as we look to the result upon the individual as a unit desiring his own happiness, or as a factor in society contributing to the general good. In the former case the traveller may be said to receive a new vision of all human values. He is like a man who has lived all his life in a village at the foot of the hills and one day climbs up ever higher and higher till he tops a ridge and sees spread out before him, on one side, the variegated plain,—its cities smoking in the distance, its rivers winding in silver curves, its white roads running straight to dimly conjectured destinations,—and, on the other, the snowy ranges standing in untrodden silence beyond the reach, it would seem, of human yearning, yet attainable, as he knows by report, to a supreme effort of courageous toil. Such a man—and, by our figure, the traveller is just such a man,—will return to his village wiser and more contented ; he will know better his place in the universe ; he will care less for the petty criticisms

of his neighbours, he will make allowance for their narrow views ; when tempted to indignation, anger or self-pity, he will think for a moment of the wider world he has seen and recall his glimpse of the eternal verities, and a greater peace, born of toleration, will be his. And if we look at the other aspect of travel, the effect will be found no less potent. The man who goes out among foreign peoples who know nothing about him and do not care how great a personage he may be in his own land, will soon learn that primal truth which is so often obscured from us in the society of our countrymen, that manners make a man. He is dependent for his comfort on those who have no interest in him beyond what they see in him ; he has no social power over them except, perhaps, the power of money ; that will always buy a certain amount of service but it will not buy that willing service which personality or good manners alone can command. Insensibly he begins to treat people with consideration, to be pleasant in his conversation, to be careful about not offending in those trifles that, if neglected, set up friction in the social machinery. He begins to judge a man by what he is, not by what he has, by what he can contribute to the general stock of joy, not by what he has taken out of it and kept to himself.

You see how the theme could be developed? I

have said nothing of the aesthetic side, of those provocations to enjoyment sensuous or intellectual, that new scenes, unaccustomed societies, must hold for those who travel with eyes open and minds alert. I started with the idea of writing some account of a recent tour on the continent of Europe. The pen is an unruly subject, almost as difficult of control as the tongue!

1922.



ON WALKING POETRY

DOUBTLESS there is a pleasure to some people in the mere reading of poetry, in letting the eye skim over the printed page and taking into the mind the meaning of the words. Thus planted in the memory, like a seed beneath the porous earth, it may be that in due season the verse will germinate and blossom into song. But the process is precarious, and too often it is a burial, not a sowing. The intellect, left to itself, sterilises poetry when it does not at once kill it. I suspect the commentators read the poetry of which they write such tedious nugatories. They look upon the rich liquor, the blissful Hippocrene, with the cool eye of the analyst ; the beaded bubbles winking at the brim are observed and noted ; they can tell the year of the vintage and discourse to you in technical terms of the properties of the wine. But one doubts if they have ever drunk it with the slow savouring meditation of your connoisseur. One thinks of an American professor lecturing upon a bottle of Hermitage a hundred

years hence,—if America shall remain “dry” so long.

Wordsworth, we know, had the habit of chanting his poems as he walked up the ghylls and across the fells ; one can imagine his voice getting clearer and happier the higher he climbed, till he found himself shouting against the wind that blows among the summit boulders. Coleridge, too,—his was a peculiar intoning that reminded his hearers of Chaucer’s Prioress who sung full well the service divine,

“Entuned in her nose full semely.”

I remember vividly how I first heard of Rabindranath Tagore. A friend had seen him sitting, without any embarrassment, on the floor of a London drawing-room, and listened to him singing his own songs to an audience unused to such simplicities of art. That is how the poets themselves approach poetry ; it is the natural way, for all verse is song, food for the voice and ear more than for the eye and intellect. It is the brain that works upon it ultimately and absorbs that food into the self ; but the senses move it along the subtle channels of our being, and if they neglect their functions, it is never assimilated. We hear much today of vitamins, how essential it is that they should be present in our diet and how easily their value is dissipated by wrong methods of cooking. Poetry, we may say,

is full of vitamins necessary for our spiritual health, but we take our poetry carelessly and do not receive the benefit of them. The higher the food value of a poem, the more difficult will it be to absorb it. We must vary our cooking.

All poetry will not yield its full flavour, its vital powers, to the voice and ear. We must set the other senses to work upon it. There are some poems that must be danced if you would perceive the true rhythms of them ; there are others that must be slept. When first, as a boy, I read " *Fifine at the Fair* " I was puzzled, and a little annoyed, by the intricacy of the metre. The music of it, if music there was, eluded me. It was an afternoon of the summer holidays and the bees droned round me among the dahlias. I put down " *Fifine* " and thanked the blue skies above me that I had not to be playing cricket, my ineluctable " recreation " at that hour had it been term-time, and then I slipped into sleep. When I awoke and picked up Browning again, I understood ; my mind had been busy with the rhythm, moving as the verse moved ; I could run along the lines now without stumbling. That was the kind of cookery " *Fifine* " required, and I had been trying to eat it raw !

Since then I have done a great deal of this " sleep-reading." It suffices to read a page or two of some pronounced style, verse or prose, and

straightway, when sleep comes, the rhythm reproduces itself ; one dreams in that style. Some people habitually read themselves to sleep ; there are bed-books specially recommended for them. For myself, I am cautious of such midnight company ; these late visitors are apt with me to linger too long. To dream Addison is soothing enough, and Lamb can sometimes wake one up chuckling at a quaint turn of phrase, which will not, however, bear the light of full consciousness ; but Sir Thomas Browne has too regal a presence for my humble chamber, and Carlyle is a most discomfortable bed-fellow. One of my worst night-mares canters uncollected to the beat of the " French Revolution." I know not if others are affected in this way ; 'tis a faculty of ambiguous blessing.

Quite recently I was permitted a new illustration of the old truth, so obvious but so frequently neglected, that a poem if it is fully to be appreciated must be absorbed ; taken into the system, like a serum ; in a word, lived. I confess to what Donne would call an immoderate hydroptic desire of beholding the glories of the world. That has always seemed to me a paradoxical piety which refuses to take pleasure in the wonders of the visible universe. Even if these are but the play of the Eternal, an illusory bubble blown in sport to beguile us, surely it would be churlish not to take part in the game?

I aspire to no self-sufficiency, save in the high philosophical sense ; I need the company of my fellow-beings, and among these I count the rocks and the lizards that flicker in and out of their crannies, the pine-trees straining against the slope, the wrinkled glaciers that never sleep for all their apparent rigidity, the peaks standing out above the undulating snow field, the clouds that are born in the valleys and float up, above the forests, to lose themselves at last in the blue of infinite space. There are moods when one can understand Socrates and Dr. Johnson, —their love of the populous city, the hum of the bartering streets, the keen commerce of wit and sociable speculation. But, surely, the heart has its reasons when it yearns for the sleep that is among the lonely hills, the lone Chorasman shore, and all the gorgeous ministers of the wilderness,

“ the clouds,

The mist, the shadows, light of golden suns,
Motions of moonlight.”

However this may be, whenever the opportunity offers, I go awandering, content to believe that there is more wisdom and knowledge waiting for me somewhere in the world than may be found in all the libraries. Thus it came about that, in the early part of the very cold and rainy May which this year gave us, I was starting out from the green waterways

of the Dal Lake in Kashmir for a journey that would mean solitude for two months. I was bound for the high country beyond Skardu, on the northern borders of Baltistan, where a tangle of lofty peaks and great intersecting glaciers divides our peninsula almost insuperably from the vast plateau of Central Asia. Need was that I should travel light, for in that land all one's gear must go upon the bowed backs of men who labour, like ants, along the narrow track which follows the roaring Indus, climbing here across a steep slope of rattling shale, and descending there a precipitous cliff of granite by a series of poplar ladders insecurely tied together with frayed withies. I was like the man condemned to a desert island with the choice of but three books for company. Well, one that I selected was old Homer's *Odyssey*, and for fourteen days, till I finished it, that book was my sole contact with literature. Taken in this way, by itself, during halts in the march, beneath a sheltering rock or in the cool shadow of a tree, the familiar poem revealed itself as something new and vital; I had read from it many times before; for the first time I was living with it as my sole companion, in the open air, on a journey,—in a word, walking it. That is how the *Odyssey* must be treated. How can one hope to enter into its secret in the midst of an enfolding civilisation, by electric light in a comfortable chair, and with other reading, other tasks,

conversations, visits, functions intervening? Never again will I subscribe to that German heresy that the *Odyssey* is a series of separate lays stitched together by the rhapsodists. One may believe that if one reads it by episodes, with an eye upon textual difficulties and with little or no interest in the progress of the tale, as a task among other tasks, or as an alternative to an article in the "Spectator." But read it continuously, and you will see how it develops organically as a work of art, and marvel at the cunning of the transitions,—sure indication of a mind that planned the whole. Make it your only book for a time on a journey as I did, and you will be able to enjoy it as its original hearers enjoyed it, when they put from them the desire of food and drink, and the minstrel took down his lyre from the peg where it hung on the pillar behind him, and they were all hushed in silence to listen to the song. Nor ever again will I be deceived by the specious argument of Poe that a long poem is simply a flat contradiction in terms. A poem, he maintains, "deserves its title only inasmuch as it excites, by elevating the soul. The value of the poem is in the ratio of this elevating excitement. But all excitements are, through a psychical necessity, transient. That degree of excitement which would entitle a poem to be so called at all, cannot be sustained throughout a composition of any great length

If, to preserve its Unity its totality of effect or impression we read it (as would be necessary) at a single sitting, the result is but a constant alternation of excitement and depression." I can well imagine that if Poe ever tried to read the *Odyssey* "at a single sitting" he must have experienced considerable periods of depression! Of course, the *Odyssey* was never presented in this way. When Odysseus after battling with the waves has at last won to the land of the Phaeacians, terrible weariness comes upon him. Then he creeps into a wood, and there between two bushes lies down to rest, heaping over him the fallen leaves. He knows nothing of the country; he is in fear of wild beasts. So, "as a man hides a brand beneath the dark embers in an outlying farm, a man who has no neighbours, and so saves a seed of fire, that he may not have to kindle it from some other source, so Odysseus covered himself with leaves. And Athene shed sleep upon his eyes, that it might enfold his lids and speedily free him from toilsome weariness." Just here, I suppose, the minstrel put down his lyre, and reluctantly his hearers went to their beds, pondering in their minds the sequel of the tale and eagerly awaiting another instalment on the next evening. They would come fresh to it again, but the sense of unity in the epic would be there, for they had no books or newspapers to distract their interest.

Wordsworth said the poet must create the taste that shall enjoy him ; it is equally necessary for the reader to recreate the atmosphere in which the poem was produced. If your mind is pre-occupied with schemes for getting money you will have but little sympathy with the " makers " of romance ; the Stock Exchange will not put you in the mood for the chivalrous quixotries of the " Fairie Queene." If you have never been cold and hungry, tired out and benighted in the gloom of mist on the desolate hills, you will think it unreal that men as strong as the comrades of Odysseus should " wail aloud and shed big tears," or that so often the poet should describe with gusto the business of the banquet scene where men " sit all day long till set of sun feasting on abundant flesh and sweet wine." To enjoy the Odyssey you must, it seems, have wandered full many ways yourself like that man of many devices, suffering many woes in your heart from roughness of weather and the cursedness of fate. The spirited pegasus of the imagination, once you mount and give him a touch of the spur, will carry you lightly over many a fair demesne that poets in allegiance to Apollo hold ; but there are some regions unfit for such easy faring ; to reach the highest mountains you must go afoot.

We make much ado about canons of criticism and the education of taste. I may not quarrel with

a fashion that provides me with my bread and butter ; but the thought will come that only experience of life can give us the right entry to the palace of art. And when I think of all the things in life I do not begin to understand, of all those many matters that are yet dark to me, I take comfort in the words of the Hebrew poet,

" It is mine own infirmity, but I will remember
the years of the right hand of the most highest."

Yes! there will be time yet, I trust, for knowing, understanding, loving, though life be short and the shears even now held ready. " Death is a fearful thing," shuddered Claudio in the prison of Vienna. But Claudio was a paltry fellow. He could never have had much joy in life if he was so reluctant to leave it. For the man who has loved this world and all that is in it death's an adventure that has infinite attraction. " Eloquent, just and mighty," . . . it has inspired so many poets it must surely be keeping back for us a further revelation of that which some call Beauty and others God. May it not be that, since some poetry must be walked, " lived," some perhaps must be " died? "

Oct. 4, 1924.



THE SIRENS

OF old they fabled Sirens,
Who lured men, by their wiles,
To break their ships asunder
On rocky reef-ringed Isles ;
Where, generations after,
The bleaching bones were found
Of those who heard the Sirens
And followed at the sound.

Vain tales! Who knew what happened?
Those bones could never tell ;
The sun had sucked their secret out,
And that the wise knew well ;
The lies which they invented
Could never be proved wrong,
And hence were told those tales of old
Of the Sirens and their song.

The old they feel so lonely
They want the young about ;

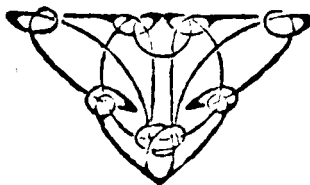
They cannot bear to let them go
To seek the Sirens out ;
The wind it has no message
To waken their desire,
They hear, but crouch the closer
To warm them at the fire.

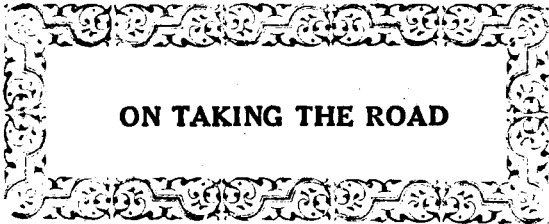
The folk who live in houses,
And gossip in the shops,
They will not leave the city
To climb the mountain tops ;
They will their sons shall follow
The ways that they have trod ;
' Beware,' they say, ' of voyaging !
These are the laws of God.'

For him who mates with danger
Each minute has its joy ;
His strength is as a grown man's strength,
His heart the heart of a boy ;
His is the lover's rapture,
He has heard the Sirens' song,
And he lives his life with delight in it
Be that life short or long.

Then heed no more the prudent
And fear no more the wise,

**But set your face to the open sea
With the sunshine in your eyes ;
The world shall be yours for the taking,
And God for your faith your friend ;
You shall find whatever you try to find,
And peace at the end.**





ON TAKING THE ROAD

It is in metaphor that men speak truth ; the reticent deity must be clothed, it seems, before she will walk down among us in the light of day, and the more beautiful her raiment, the speedier, you may be sure, will be her recognition. The poets, of course, have long been her licensed dressmakers ; the philosophers and men of science may decree the fashions,—and strange those fashions are at times,—but it is the poets who do the work of making and fitting on. Yet she disdains not to accept adornment whoever offers it, and more often than not we cannot tell where she picked up—there is no other word for it—some of the garments that become her most. Their style may not be of the highest, but they fit, and for that much can be forgiven.

Enough ! you see what I would be at. The bare statement has no power upon us, we pass it by unregarded ; it exists, no doubt ; it has a meaning ; but for us it is as being invisible, and means nothing. Look at this road along which we walk or ride upon

our lawful (or unlawful) occasions. The King's Highway it is called, except in those unfortunate countries that have abandoned the symbolic embellishments of life. We may trace it on the map, linking one place to another, and the mind moves forward as the finger points, but it is of things we are thinking, landmarks, points of contact with material necessity, the surface of it, the dips and swellings of its contour, the hedges or walls beside it, the inns where we may break our journey. And there, inasmuch as we have arrived at a metaphor, we do begin to touch life; there comes to us the hint of refreshment and the possible adventure of new companionship, spiritual contact. But, the stark proposition, "we are on the King's Highway?" As fact, 'tis incontestable; as truth, we cannot feel it. The King, indeed, for all we know, may be in his parlour eating bread and honey, if his queen will graciously permit him; more probably, he is exercising royal tact in the boredom of an audience with a perfectly well-meaning, but humanly unattractive, minister, or laying the foundation stone of some architectural monstrosity erected at the cost of a profiteer who would make friends of the mammon of unrighteousness. At the most, he may pass along it a few times in the year, and then very swiftly in a high-powered limousine, using it merely in transit from one function to another; in all likelihood he

will never even look upon it in his life. How can the King be said to possess it, much less to enjoy it? The King's Highway? What a travesty of truth is this statement of fact!

No! Truly, the road is his who takes it. One knows not who made the metaphor; but Truth has accepted it, wears it, and well it fits her. Every tramp knows that; ragged and homeless, without the money for a meal, lacking even the pence for a pint of beer which would give him a place in the jolly fellowship of a "pub," yet he has this to console him, the road is his, by right of possession, because he took it. When I speak of the tramp, it is of the past I am thinking. I doubt if the tramp, as I knew him, exists now. Living, as I did in boyhood, close to the Old Dover Road, not far from the home of Dickens and from that well of St. Thomas where Chaucer's Canterbury pilgrims stopped to water their horses, I had opportunities enjoyed by few of meeting the genuine tramp and learning the truth about the road. He was invariably an interesting man, not seldom a well-read, an educated man; I have heard better literary criticism from some of these vagabonds than ever was uttered in the lecture rooms. I remember one who declaimed with a connoisseur's relish the stanzas of "Childe Harold"; Byron to him was a "man and a brother," Wordsworth a "stuck-up cuckoo"—a verdict which would

have equally surprised and disgusted each of them ; another was as intimate with the characters of Dickens as Gissing or Chesterton could claim to be. Perhaps, to a boy they showed only the best side of themselves ; or is it that a boy is a better judge of character than the grown man whose heart has become hardened against the unconventional ? I know my elders did not share these casual sympathies of mine ; they kept a wary eye on the fruit in the orchards, the pheasants in the wood, even on the plate in the pantry, when my friends of the road were about. Which shows how hard it is, as Browning discovered, to be a Christian ! But these, rogues and vagabonds as they were in the eyes of the law, without " visible means of support,"—as if a man who has fists could ever be so described !—these men who had taken the road did, to my mind, veritably possess it. We others might use it, but theirs it was to know and enjoy and live with, day and night. Hardships they might have, of course ; I had heard all about them, but they appear more terrible to those who live habitually in houses than they are in experience to those who have acquired the art of " sleeping out." There were compensations and, it seemed to me, in abundance. George Borrow, Walt Whitman, Thoreau were yet but names to me, if indeed I had heard their names, and their enthusiasm is, after all, the enthusiasm of

the amateur or convert ; you may learn something from them ; but these men were professionals, they were *born* free. I never knew a tramp, a real tramp, I mean, not a casual " out-of-work " looking for a job, who was not a poet, more or less ; endowed, that is, with a love of nature in all her moods, no fair-weather wooer, but taking her to wife for better or for worse. It is difficult to find out the truth about the proportion of pleasure and pain in any life but our own, and even in that, on looking back at its varied course, not easy. One may idealize and envy, or sentimentalize and pity ; and either emotion is, probably, unjustified. Hence, I would not write too ecstatically of the lives these men led wandering at will beneath the canopy of heaven. All I will affirm is that they chose it and liked it and would not change it. That, of course, may argue a defect in them, some lack of self-respect or social sense, of some quality of the respectable citizen who bends his neck obediently to the yoke. And if it pleases anyone to press to the logical conclusion, let him say at once that I too must have " low tastes " to discern anything attractive in such outcasts. Let him ; I care not ; " I'm myself, ain't I, not somebody else ? " as I once heard a flower-woman retort on a friend who tried to restrain her from too vigorous a comment on an incident in a play that displeased her. (There is often more acute dramatic

criticism in the pit than in the stalls. But then, you must remember, the critics in the pit have paid for their seats !).

Anyhow, it matters little now. The tramp has gone, as the gipsy too is going. Petrol has driven him off the road. And of roads, too, in England, and indeed in Europe generally, there is hardly one left worth the taking. You cannot walk on a road that has a hard, shining, black surface; that is wide and straight and levelled; that is filled day and night with the noise and smell of hurrying motors passing and re-passing one another in a feverish passion of speed. Belloc's "Path to Rome" was written just in time; soon we shall read it as a relic of antiquity when men actually walked, just as we turn for its historical interest to some chronicle of old coaching days. It may be that in a few generations the air will take up this traffic from the roads and leave them free once more for "men with a mind on a rational basis."

Meanwhile, if Europe be closed to the pedestrian, Asia is open; here there are roads still to be taken, and here the tramp is more than tolerated, he receives even some measure of veneration. I do not know how many Sadhus there are wandering at this moment over the plains of Hindustan and among the foothills of the Himalaya, but they are many more than the total of all the tramps, pedlars,

gipsies and nondescripts that ever haunted the highways of my little island since first she bore the name of England. They toil-not, neither, in spite of the Mahatma's pleading, do they spin, and certainly Solomon was never unclothed like one of them; yet they flourish. The pilgrim season in India never ends; a man so minded may space out his year very pleasantly, investing his spiritual capital, so to speak, on the approved principle of geographical distribution. Benares, Allahabad and Hardwar rank as gilt-edged securities, of course, but there are other less frequented shrines and bathing places well "worth attention." Legislators and other persons of importance speak of these wanderers as idle and debased mendicants and urge the Government to "take steps"—that blessed phrase!—to diminish their number; but tales are told—Kipling has told more than one—of some of these very persons of importance retiring quietly into the wise passiveness that takes no thought for the morrow. And this reminds me of "Kim," and of the Grand Trunk and the Hindustan Tibet Road. The former has lost its glamour; its rival, the rail, is now the favourite; the latter still has attractions, but it is too popular with the celebrities of Simla to offer secure travelling to the "likes of me." Give me the roads that lead one north out of that seductive, but ill-inhabited, vale of Kashmir over the ranges till, beyond

and yet beyond, one can indeed lift up one's eyes unto the hills and thank the great Architect of the Universe for the beauty and peace of them, their magnificent and divine indifference.

" The world is old and thou art young ; the world
is large and thou art small ;
Cease, atom of a moment's span, to hold
thyself an all-in-all."

But it is not of these visible glories of God, nor of their healing and helping power, that I would speak now ; that is the end of the journey, the objective. For an end, or purpose, there must be to set one on to take the road ; if it had no such call, one might be well content to camp on pleasant margs, alps, or uplands,—sanctuaries for the human animal,—remote from the vulgarities of modern " progress," yet conveniently situated, to use the language of the house agent, for intimate converse with such amusing neighbours as trees and birds and butterflies, rocks, streams, glaciers, and not too inaccessible peaks, ungraded as yet by any Alpine Club. If it is amusement you are seeking, just a holiday and nothing more, there you may find it ; the road is not for you. But if your need is greater,—and each heart has its own bitterness which no other can know or share,—then it is the road alone that will satisfy you, the discipline of travelling in sun or shade, on a smooth track or stony, whether

you feel fit and strong, or footsore and weary ; doing your determined number of miles day after day ; ticking off the stages in your route book ; unrolling the map inch by inch, as you go towards your goal. That may be Gilgit and the Pamirs, with the great mass of Nanga Parbat rising sheer from the Indus valley to reward you on the way, and Rakaposhi and other unforgettable makers of mist. The Gilgit road is a wonderful road, and it gives you from its first pass one of the most beautiful views of the Kashmir valley ; but the sentimental traveller is not encouraged to that barren country which it penetrates ; you must have a " mission " of some kind for official sanction, a sop to appease the political dragons that guard it. No ! The road of roads for you, my spiritual adventurer, starts up the green valley of the Sind, but begins to make you really aware of its self somewhere near the top of the Zoji La, when you pause to take breath after the steepest pitch of the nullah and to give a " Shabash ! " to your coolies labouring up the slope with your loads. And then, as you look south, you are suddenly conscious that the darkness has lightened ; in a moment the snowy crest of Kolahoi, just appearing above the intermediate mountains, is tinged with gold and glows beneath the touch of Dawn's rosy fingers ; the snowy distances, so cold and dead before, begin to radiate life. Outlines

become clear-cut in a second; blank hollows fill with colour; every detail is intensified. From a few starved silver birches at the corner above, where the summer road curves round, comes, with a startling clarity, the call of a cuckoo; it is a welcome and a challenge, literally, a *pass-word*; the ceremony of initiation is over; you are entered on the road. Thenceforward, however far you travel, the farther indeed that you travel,—and you may go right into the heart of Asia,—it is not you that have taken the road; it has taken you. And all you meet are part of it, and therefore your brothers; and all they say to you, though you may understand not a word of it, sounds companionable. It is the same with places; you arrive at your “*parao*” and in half-an-hour it is home to you; next morning, as you start off in the chill and silent twilight, you take leave of it with reluctance; you would like to stay longer and explore that nullah or climb that peak; but the road claims you, and there will be another home equally attractive, in its own way, for you to rest in to-night.

“All places that the eye of heaven visits
Are to a wise man ports and happy havens.”

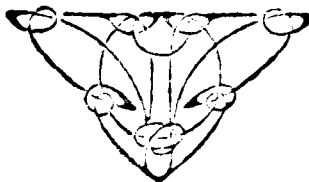
It is not, however, your necessity that reasons thus, you know it by glad experience. And if you feel this about your halts, you will feel it as much about your marches. These will differ in quality

to you according to your preference for this or that type of country, but none will be dull, without interest, and if you give yourself to the road it will never leave you unsatisfied with beauty for a single mile. Doubtless, you will find yourself revising your ideas about beauty itself, and perhaps you will appreciate as you never did before the full significance of the old Semitic account of the creation, "God saw *everything* that He had made and behold, it was very good." And then, though you may not realize it at once, you will have reached the end of your journey, the end of every journey of the body and the mind and the soul,—acceptance; the secret of all happy journeying will be yours,—love.



THE JOURNEY'S END

SO, when to that last camp of all
I come, before the darkness fall
I hope to hear a comrade call
Me " Welcome home ! "
I shall not, at the road's last bend,
Look back, but forward, for my friend,
And find him at the journey's end,
When there I come.





THE CASE AGAINST SPIRITUALISM

TO-NIGHT I have been listening to a lecture on spiritualism. At the end of it I rose up and went away hastily before the discussion began. I was afraid that I should be tempted to speak. The pen is more obedient than the tongue; let me make amends now in the quiet of night. Had I spoken then, I might have offended a man who was visibly in earnest. He told us of his belief in the continuity of life; that man but sheds the body when he dies, as we take off our clothes at night; that the personality itself remains essentially the same. Most of us, I must think, would agree to that as to a common-place. Life for me at least would seem intolerable did I believe otherwise. *Credo ut vivam*—I believe to live. But then the lecturer went on to tell us how we could communicate with those who had suffered this change. The familiar methods were described; the table-tilting, the automatic writing, the messages through a psychic medium. Finally he told us of the consolation that these

methods had given to the bereaved, and concluded that in spiritualism alone could be found the answer to materialism, that in using these methods alone could we save ourselves from getting absorbed in the transitory pleasures, the trivial business of this mundane existence. He cited the fact that men of science, such as Sir William Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir Conan Doyle, were convinced, by these methods, of the truth and value of spiritualism.

I can conceive no argument more fatal than this to the position the lecturer wished to maintain. If spirit exists, there is, surely, no need of these material evidences. Doubtless, men of science, accustomed to handle, measure and evaluate material facts, will demand material evidence, and declare, if that is forthcoming, that the case is proved. But for all material phenomena we should seek first for material causes and when these are not at once apparent, it is rash, they will admit, to assume without exhaustive investigation a supernatural cause. The scientist laughs at the primitive theory that the earth quakes because a buried Titan is writhing beneath in pain; but he accepts the spiritualistic theory that the table moves because a spirit desires to communicate a message. Yet there are so many possible explanations. We know very little yet of our own psychic life, or of that medium through which by vibrations of thought, it would seem, we

are able without speech to make another aware of what is passing in our mind. The body and the brain alike are more sensitive to influences from other forms of life, and even from inert matter which has been associated with life, than we have yet suspected. Telepathy, suggestion, the subconscious or unconscious, have these been fully considered as factors in these strange occurrences which the spiritualists relate as evidence of supernatural agency?

But apart from this tendency to reject prematurely other hypotheses, the principle on which these phenomena are explained by the spiritualists belongs to a discredited philosophy. It assumes,—does it not?—that spirit can operate only by means of matter. The experience of mankind has proved that to be wrong; there are “Powers which of themselves our minds impress”; here and now we are subjects of a spiritual kingdom with rights in it no less realisable than those we hold in the world of sense. Why should those who have passed out of this world of sense prefer still to use in their communications with us these its contrivances, so clumsy as they are in comparison with the immediacy of spiritual intercourse?

“Ah,” says the lecturer, “you do not disdain to use the telephone? Why should you think it ridiculous if a spirit uses a table?” Well, I should

think it ridiculous to use a telephone if I could speak with my friend direct. And spirit with spirit can speak.

Materialism as an explanation of man's nature is dead. It died fully thirty years ago, and it died quite young. But mysticism is still alive, vigorous though old, and it will survive spiritualism, dangerous as that antagonist is.

For the danger of spiritualism lies in its appeal to the indolence of humanity. The mystics, the scientists of religion, the saints, tell us that if we would learn about the spiritual life we must enter into that life. We must be born again, not of woman but of spirit. Discipline, purity, good-will, simplicity of heart, freedom from anxiety about this world, love and wisdom, these, they affirm, are the ways of communication with the spirit world. Read their lives and you will see by what steps they attained to vision and hearing of things invisible and ineffable.

How much easier is the way of spiritualism! Let us pay our fee to a medium, let us sit round a table, let us manipulate planchette, or expose a photographic plate. And this is our one defence against materialism!

Consolations there are for those who have loved and lost, more beautiful in their abiding peace than these sign-seeking necromancers can imagine; but

those who have known them, even in the least degree, keep silence.

“ 'Twere profanation of our joys
To tell the laity our love.”

Only in that region of thought where spirit speaks more freely than in prose, sometimes we may overhear, as it were, a significant word.

“ Joy of my life while left me here !
And still my love !
How in thy absence thou dost steere
Me from above !

A life well led
This truth commends,
With quick or dead
It never ends.”

Vain is the imagination that by matter we may hold communion with the immortal ; if the personality of man survives imperishable, it is through the imperishable part of us that we must strive, in defiance of death, for a continuance of that love or friendship which has been our joy and stay upon earth.

“ O could I track them ! but souls must
Track one the other ;
And now the spirit, not the dust,
Must be thy brother.”

Dec. 3, 1923 (mid-night).

Hundred and nine

WHEN TO THAT HIGH LAND

WHEN to that high land you go
Where the snow
Lies for half the year unbroken,
Cast away unfaithful fear,
I shall hear
Though no word by you be spoken.

When, by duty or by fate
Separate,
This companionship we sever,
Not in memory alone
But as one
Present I shall have you ever.

When the clouds are on your mind,
And you find
Nothing in the world to please you,
If you value loyal love
Far above
All things else, that thought may ease you.

ON "FRIENDSHIP IN PERFECTION"

It was Mrs. Bargrave who started the subject with her lament that "it is hard indeed to find a true friend in these days." Then, "Says Mrs. Veal, 'Mr. Norris has a fine copy of verses, called 'Friendship in Perfection' which I wonderfully admire.' 'Have you seen the book?' asks Mrs. Veal. 'No,' says Mrs. Bargrave, 'but I have the verses of my own writing out.' 'Have you?' says Mrs. Veal; 'then fetch them' which she did from above stairs and offered them to Mrs. Veal to read, who refused, and waived the thing, saying, 'holding down my head would make it ache'; and then desired Mrs. Bargrave to read them to her, which she did." Now whether this "True Relation of the Apparition of one Mrs. Veal, the next day after her death, to one Mrs. Bargrave at Canterbury, the 8th of September, 1705" was the offspring of Defoe's imagination and his gift of verisimilitude in fiction, or whether

it was, as some hold, merely a piece of clever editing by him of a ghost story then current in gossip, are questions which we may be content to leave unexplored ; however they may be answered, it is at least probable that Defoe was writing with a definite object, to puff the sale of a new translation of Drelincourt, whose " Consolations against the Fears of Death " brought so much comfort to those of our ancestors who had a wholesome apprehension of " that amazing Curiosity," as this same John Norris of Bemerton quaintly calls it. And here the ability of Defoe as an advertising agent shows itself. He might, for the purposes of his narrative, have drawn on other authors just as suitable to illustrate the permanence of friendship in the life after death ; what indeed could have been more apposite than a reference to the address of the " matchless Orinda " to my " excellent Lucasia on our Friendship," since this was a friendship between women and therefore of peculiar appeal to Mrs. Bargrave and Mrs. Veal? But, instead, he selects from Mr. Norris whose " Damon and Pythias : Or Friendship in Perfection," is, indeed, apt to Mrs. Veal's intention, but has reference to a pair of men and not a pair of women. As this copy of verses, which may still be described as " fine," has not found its way into any of the anthologies, let us follow Mrs. Bargrave and write it out.

Damon and Pythias : Or, Friendship in Perfection.

I

Pyth. 'Tis true (my Damon) we as yet have been
Patterns of constant love, I know ;
We have stuck so close no third could
come between;
But will it (Damon) will it still be so?

II

Da. Keep your Love true, I dare engage that mine
Shall like my Soul immortal prove.
In Friendship's orb how brightly shall we
shine
Where all shall envy, none divide our Love!

III

Pyth. Death will ; when once (as it's by Fate
design'd)
T' Elysium you shall be remov'd,
Such sweet Companions there no doubt
you'll find,
That you'll forget that Pythias e'r you lov'd.

IV

Da. No, banish all such fears ; I then will be
Your Friend and Guardian Angel too.
And tho' with more refin'd Society
I'll leave Elysium to converse with you.

Hundred and thirteen

V

Pyth. But grant that after Fate you still are kind,
 You cannot long continue so ;
 When I, like you, become all Thought
and Mind,
 By what Mark then shall we each other
know ?

VI

Da. With care on your last hour I will attend,
 And lest like Souls should me deceive,
 I closely will embrace my new-born Friend,
 And never after my dear Pythias leave.

The poem was, it will be seen, appropriate to Defoe's purpose, but there were others, as well or better known, equally appropriate which he might have used. His reason will be apparent when we remember that the volume of "Miscellanies" in which it had originally appeared in 1687 was published by the same S. Manship, at the Ship in Cornhill, who was also publishing at this time many religious works from the French, Drelincourt among them. Defoe's clever device of publicity succeeded, and a fifth edition of the "Miscellanies" was issued by Manship in 1710 when the tract about Mrs. Veal was the talk of the town. It is a pleasant little volume to handle and pleasant to read, for its prose as well

as for its verse. The revered author died at his rectory of Bemerton a year later (1711) and is remembered now more as a philosopher than a poet ; but his appearance in Defoe's tract, though it be, in his own phrase, " like angels' visits, short and bright," will keep his name alive.

The subject of " Damon and Pythias " is one that must attract all to whom friendship is more than a name. This desire for a companionship, which has been our stay upon earth, to continue after the physical catastrophe of death cannot be quieted by any rational appeal to a stoic resignation. In vain are we told that a motive for belief is a reason for doubt ; the cry of the heart will be heard,—" I shall not lose thee though I die." Tennyson, indeed, plays many a variation on this theme, but after every attempt to find a proof he falls back upon the bare confession, " We have but faith ; we cannot know." This is too paradoxical to be accepted ; it draws a line across experience, and divides off one part of it from another as a partition wall closes up one room to access from another. Yet such a line is apparent, not real ; so long as we think it is there, no doubt, it will exist for us ; while our will is under the inhibition we cannot act. But faith means action ; a faith which is not tested, put to experience, like a horse to a fence, is but an opinion, however obstinately it

may be held. Tennyson has been called a mystic ; such lines as I have quoted above show how loosely the name is used when it can be applied to him. The language of the mystic is very different.

“ Whether I live, or whether I die,
 Whatever the worlds I see,
I shall come to you by and by
 And you will come to me.
Whoever was foolish, we were wise,
 We crossed the boundary line,
I saw my soul look out of your eyes,
 You saw your soul in mine.”

(M. E. Coleridge.)

But however certain we may be of the immortality of friendship, there is a mystery in the relation which involves the most baffling questions that the mind can ask. It is the old problem, when one comes down to it, of identity in difference. Love seeks for complete union, and yet there must remain, in this human stage at least, a sense of otherness. Do what I will for my friend there is something I cannot do. It is in time of trouble, when one would help most, that this sense of helplessness overwhelms one, and the soul is appalled by its own solitude. The old Hebrew knew this ; for all the multitude of his riches,—and he meant by this, I feel, the riches of the mind and heart as well as material wealth,—no man, he says, “ may

deliver his brother, nor make agreement unto God for him ; for it cost more to redeem their souls, so that he must let that alone for ever." That passage has always seemed to me the most sorrowful in all the Hebrew poems, filled with the pathos of human frustration as they are. It finds an echo in our own literature. In the verses that follow the poet seems to pass on from the Psalmist's regret—if regret rather than pious resignation it may be called—to the affirmation of St. Augustine that " our hearts are restless till they rest in Him," and concludes, it would seem, in the faith of a Malebranche that we see all things in God.

" It seems not quite enough that you
And I are each to the other true ;
There's something still it seems that I
Can't give you, howsoe'r I try.
Confess ! though this our love is sweet
Your happiness is not complete.
The reason ? How I wish I knew
That I might fill it up for you !
Beauty and truth and goodness, each
Is rare, but not beyond our reach.
This happiness alone no care
Can track and capture anywhere.
If there were anything you lacked,
And I with Fate could make a pact,

' Take from me,' I would say, ' my all ;
I give it up beyond recall ;
But, in return, Fate, grant to me
That this he wants shall given be.'

I should not fear—no idle talk !—
Into the dark at once to walk,
To quench my life in endless night,
If that spark might increase your light ;
Or, if a lesser loss were asked,
I should not find myself o'ertasked.

But though the blood from vein to vein
May be transfused to another's gain,
And as the one grows faint and dies
The other lives by his sacrifice ;
Yet spirit's life man cannot give.—
That gift is God's prerogative.

I cannot hold the facile creeds
That satisfy man's selfish needs ;
Love is enough ; I love you so,
That God is Love, I surely know ;
Because I trust my friend, I trust
A Friend to raise us both from dust,
If you are you and I am I,
We're separate for eternity ;
We yearn for union, but find
This otherness within the mind ;

But when from out ourselves we go,
In one Soul we each other know."

In these verses, which, but for some crudity of expression and a warmth of feeling incompatible with our modern reserve, might have been written yesterday, we find a simple re-statement of the old position that our most authentic warrant for a belief in the goodness of God is the existence of human Love, and that our only way to the knowledge of God is through effectual love of our fellows. It is reminiscent of the words of the Christ, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Which is a practical inference that may be acted upon, whatever theory we may hold of the relation of God to the soul. And if we did act upon it always and everywhere rather than occasionally and in special cases, should we not, perhaps, find that distinction between faith and knowledge, which now operates so often as a sedative, altogether illusory? Those who love, know.

In a friendship really perfect the question of Pythias, "will it still be so?"—the question of its immortality—would be without meaning. To such a friendship the barriers of time and place would

be easily surmountable, even in this stage of existence in the body, and it would be impossible even to imagine separation.

“ God and the soul. That secret strife
Makes each man restless all his life ;
Until by love, that conquers sin,
He knows at last the God within,
Surrenders, finding that the soul
Is God itself, the perfect Whole.”

Nov., 1925.

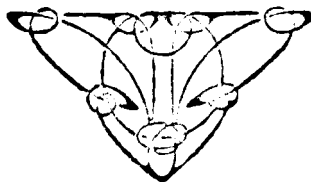


Fig. 1. (continued)



THE TAJ MAHAL

(A Fragment)

CALM thought, clear vision of eternal peace
Enduring after mortal stirrings cease ;
A light perpetual,—held, reflected, felt
In the uplifted mind ; as colours melt
Into a pale white radiance, visible still
When night's thick shadows all the garden fill ;
A song of joy transmuted into stone ;
Rhythm and rest, motion and pause at one ;
An union of human and divine,
Immortal in these long dead lovers' shrine.



ON MAKING THE BEST OF THINGS

COMMON expressions, the phrases one hears often in daily intercourse, are usually worth analysis. They represent the wisdom of the vulgar, and as such are the fruit of a wider experience, and of an experience more painfully acquired, than the hypotheses of the learned, which are given the greater credit the less they are comprehended. Undoubtedly, in its origin each of them might be traced back to the happy inspiration of an individual, but as they are accepted by one after another and pass from mouth to mouth, they become public property, the possession of the people ; just as the ballad, which, as a work of art, must in its first form have been the achievement of some particular maker or poet, becomes, in course of time, as it is repeated, altered and added to by countless reciters, the folk song, which some foolish historians of literature would have you believe is, because the word implies that, the work of the folk or people. Whoever he was that first uttered this phrase which serves us here for a point of departure,

he was a true philosopher, and the people, in adopting it for common use, have shown that philosophy is no specialised product of culture, but an instinctive reaction of humanity to its environment. Which must all be very comforting to the philosopher who may thus rest as assured of a livelihood as any other purveyor of life's necessities.

For, in this phrase, is compressed the whole history of man's evolution upon earth. Here he finds himself a force incarnate, within himself he recognizes a will and an energy,—a number of desires, if you like to put it in that way, of which ordinarily some, or, more rarely, one, rise into supremacy over the others,—and the consciousness of power to set about the fulfilment of those desires. But over against this microcosm of himself, he is confronted with a set of phenomena which, at first sight, appear utterly alien, intractable ; some of them seem to him dead ; he calls them things, or, in summary, matter ; others, like the wind, and the sea, and the forests, and the earth itself, which is capable, as he learns in terror, of motion, possess, he feels, a life, a force, similar to his own, but beyond his control or comprehension. These latter, forces of nature as we call them now, he at first personifies and endeavours to placate with worship ; hence had their origin Zeus, the cloud-gatherer, controller of the sky, Poseidon, the

earth-enfolder and earth-shaker, and the whole host of Olympian deities. The visible world in motion suggested inevitably the presence of animating life.

“ The traveller slaked
His thirst from rill or gushing fount, and thanked
The Naiad. Sunbeams upon distant hills
Gliding apace, with shadows in their train,
Might, with small help from fancy, be transformed
Into fleet Oreads sporting visibly.”

With this world, thus conceived, he could hope, fearfully, perhaps, and always with a suppression of an obstinate scepticism, to come to some sort of an understanding: let us sacrifice to the gods and hope for the best.

But for the other world of things, or matter, the stubborn, inert, non-co-operative aspect of the universe,—what could be done with that? What could be ‘done’? Yes! that was the right word. For, manifestly, where no spark of responsive consciousness appeared, no prayer could be made, no offering avail. Man himself must deal with this “Matter,” subdue it to his purposes, use it, or sink into an apathy, decay and death. Might that not, he began to speculate, have been the origin of this itself? Once alive, now dead? One of the first things he used was wood, for burning, to warm him and cook food; for building, to shelter him; for

implements of agriculture, hunting, war. Wood soon became the type of all material, something without life and to be used for purposes of life. And yet this wood, this type of matter, retains, it would seem, a memory of life. Who has not been stirred in the silence of the night in some old house to hear the mysterious creaking of the oak panelling, the stair, the very furniture? Vaughan in "The Timber" meditates upon this.

" Sure thou didst flourish once! and many springs
Many bright mornings, much dew, many showers,
Past o'er thy head; many light Hearts and Wings
Which now are dead, lodg'd in thy living bowers.

And still a new succession sings and flies;
Fresh groves grow up, and their green

branches shoot

Towards the old and still enduring skies;
While the low violet thrives at their root.

But thou beneath the sad and heavy line
Of death doth waste all senseless, cold and dark;
Where not so much as dreams of light may shine,
Nor any thought of green-ness, leaf or bark.

And yet, as if some deep hate and dissent,
Bred in thy growth betwixt high winds and thee,
Were still alive, thou dost great storms resent,
Before they come, and know'st how near they be.

Else all at rest thou lyest, and the fierce breath
Of tempests can no more disturb thy ease ;
But this thy strange resentment after death
Means only those who broke in life thy peace."

And what is true of timber, that it was once alive, as anyone who walks through a forest may know, and can at times revive, as the poet conjectures, this may be true also of all matter. I remember an old priest at Oxford striking with his stick the pavement upon which we were walking, as he exclaimed vehemently, " This was alive once ! " Indeed, according to a theory of the schoolmen, derived from earlier Gnostics and the Pythagoreans, the whole creation, inanimate as well as animate, suffering for the sin of man and involved in the consequences of his fall from innocence, is waiting, as St. Paul puts it, in bondage, groaning till the deliverance, when man shall become aware of his real destiny and life flow freely once again through the limbs, now apparently so rigid, of earth his mother. However that may be, it was a happy inspiration of the Greek genius, that chose for Philosophy the word "wood," "hulé," to designate matter, the substance which is capable of receiving form, of being worked upon, as distinguished from living energy, the intelligent or formative principle, NOUS, or mind. For the word had been used both for the living wood, the

trees and the undergrowth, and for the wood cut down, the timber or unwrought material. Had that double meaning of the word received its full significance, the problem of dualism might never have arisen. But the distinction, originally definitive, was erected into a description; the alleged antagonism between mind and matter has troubled Philosophy ever since. From the first, the idealist has attempted to explain matter, the stubborn non-co-operative element of things, by explaining it away, by calling it appearance as opposed to reality; but an appearance does appear, and the plain man asks, "How?" and "Why?" In theology the same dualism has caused difficulties for thought. If God or Good is omnipotent, how to account for the presence of evil? Again comes the easy solution, explain it away; evil is merely good in the making, pain is but blessing in disguise; out of our failures we get strength. Does that explanation satisfy? He must have but little experience of life who can deny the existence of evil, or subscribe sincerely to the doctrine of purgative pain.

The clue to this labyrinth of philosophical problems may be picked up, perhaps, by going back to the original Greek term used, as we have seen, for the living wood and the dead material alike. Life in this universe of time and space implies not only birth and growth, but the possibility also of

decay and death: freedom to develop carries with it the risk of non-development, just as in the moral universe free will implies the possibility of wrong choice and consequent error or sin. Is it, then, merely fanciful to think of "matter" as the relic of life, that did not develop?

"Sure thou didst flourish once!"

And in this mood one may come to view the world of inanimate matter as possessing still the potentiality of life, like the sleeping palace in the fairy tale, waiting in suspension of its faculties for the coming of the Prince. Every year the Mystery of winter and spring is played with all the pageantry of prodigal nature before our eyes. At the heart of every religious ritual is the same allegory; the Eleusinian ceremony and the Christian Mass have the same message of resurrection, re-animation of the elements. In all myth the same theme recurs; Proserpina and the Sleeping Beauty are sisters. And man is beginning to feel that he, for all his weakness and ignorance, is destined to play the Prince. There are

"Words of promise in his walk,
And whisper'd voices at his ear."

The scientists can tell us already wonderful stories about matter quite as fascinating and with

much the same 'moral' to them, as the fairy tales of the world's youth.

" More close and close his footsteps wind ;
The Magic Music in his heart
Beats quick and quicker, till he find
The quiet chamber far apart.

His spirit flutters like a lark,
He stoops to kiss her on his knee,
' Love, if thy tresses be so dark,
How dark those hidden eyes must be ! ' "

We have long since ceased to believe that we are the creatures of our environment ; we have been learning year by year how to use that material, which primitive man found so obstructive, for our purposes. But it is becoming evident that these purposes are wider than our own interests alone ; the whole world of matter lying, as the old phrase has it, under the bondage of corruption, is waiting for the revelation of the sons of God to deliver it. It is for us, literally, " *to make the best of things.*"





INDIA, O INDIA

INDIA ! O India ! who loves you if not I ?
From the birds' first rapturous twittering to the
last glow in the sky,
By morning and by evening and all that comes
between,
There is no new loveliness I have not seen.

Stirring and murmuring, the populous peepul tree
With calling bird and hidden word is audible to me ;
I hear the secret message that swings upon the
bough.
There is none of its music that I know not now.

My feet they have been guided through green
fields to the sand,
Till now by Ganga's quiet stream in dream I stand,
And veil on veil is lifted until I see less dim
The glory of the spreading wings that
overshadow Him.

The temple on the river bank is silent, no man
comes
To wake the God with singing, with ringing
bells and drums ;
But I, an alien worshipper, go not forlorn away,
I am satisfied with beauty at the end of the day.

Feb. 1, 1924.

