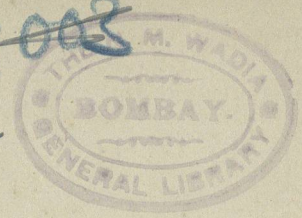

ESSAYS BY DIVERS HANDS

BEING THE

TRANSACTIONS

OF THE

ROYAL SOCIETY OF LITERATURE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

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INTRODUCTION.

By The Editor.

The essays in this little volume range over a wide field, though all except one are concerned with our own country and its literature.

The first, on "The English Ode," is the work of one who is a poet as well as a critic of poetry. He admits the difficulty of defining an ode, since our English usage has given the name not only to impassioned lyrics and heroic songs, but to the carefully chiselled and unemotional "Carmina" of Horace, which he never himself called odes. Horace himself is responsible for the delusion that Pindar wrote *numeris lege solutis;* and our "Pindaric Odes," of which Dryden's "Alexander's Feast" is perhaps the finest, take advantage of the licence which Horace thought he found in Pindar, but forebore to imitate. Mr. Binyon reminds us how many of the greatest poems in English are odes—Milton's splendid "Ode on the Nativity," Spenser's twin marriage-poems, Marvell's singularly virile Horatian "Ode in Honour of Cromwell," and Shelley's "Skylark." He pays a just tribute to the best of Tennyson's laureate odes, and to the fine poem of Meredith about France in 1871. Many readers will be interested to learn that Wordsworth's famous "Ode

on the Intimations of Immortality" was expanded from a much shorter poem, and will perhaps agree with Mr. Binyon, as I do myself, that the introduction of the Platonic doctrine of *anamnesis*, which Wordsworth does not seem to have believed seriously himself, is not an improvement to the ode. The essayist pleads for a revival of the heroic ode, but the Great War does not appear to have inspired any first-rate poetry of this kind.

Dr. Boas has given me peculiar pleasure by his apologia for Tennyson's "Idylls of the King." I cannot believe that the ignorant depreciation of the great Victorian poet, which is now fashionable, is anything more than a transient and discreditable aberration in literary criticism. The detractors of Tennyson have fastened on the "Idylls" with special asperity, and it really seems as if their chief quarrel with Tennyson is that he treats adultery as a disgraceful vice. Arthur is a "prig" because he is ashamed of his wife's infidelity, and tells her that she has dishonoured herself. Probably Tennyson would have been wiser not to have confronted him with Guinevere; Malory's farewell interview between the Queen and Lancelot is finer than the scene in the "Idylls." Dr. Boas has done justice to the matchless beauty of "The Passing of Arthur" and other notable passages in the "Idylls." But perhaps the most striking part of his essay is his proof that the whole poem is meant to be an allegory of the human spirit in its conflict with circumstance and temptation. The allegorical epic, as he says, has an illustrious ancestry in English poetry. The "Fairie Queene" and "Paradise Lost" show how

genius can triumph over difficulties which theoretically might seem insuperable. Like Spenser's great poem, the "Idylls" are a parable, in which tales of love and adventure are set. The time may come when the prejudice against the "Victorians" shall have passed away, and when Tennyson will be recognised as the worthy representative of the second great epoch in English history and literature, as Shakespeare and Spenser were of the first.

Our President has contributed a charming essay on a charming subject—English country life. The Romans, I think, loved the country almost as much as we do, and we must not forget the sportsman Xenophon and the idyllist Theocritus among the Greeks. But a literature in praise of the country perhaps requires the counter-irritant of the modern town—a monstrosity of which neither Greeks nor Romans had any experience.

The seventeenth century memorialists provide material for a very amusing and instructive essay. The writer has not discoursed on the familiar Pepys and Evelyn, but has taken us off the beaten track and introduced us to some little known but very entertaining gossips. The pathetic resignation of Charles I, in his farewell to Lady Fanshawe, is infinitely touching, and his unregenerate son, "who never said a foolish thing," shows his unfailing shrewdness in a prediction that his brother James would soon have to "travel" again when he became King. The essayist is a little severe on modern writers of reminiscences; but they are helping to make history, in their own undignified fashion. Posterity may be grateful to them for showing how

certain sections of English society lived behind the scenes. The misfortune is that, whether in the seventeenth century or in the twentieth, the most self-respecting men and women have no wish to invite the general public to invade their privacy, still less to violate the reserves of hospitality in the case of their friends; so that the gossips help to traduce their generation. But the memorialists dealt with in this essay give, on the whole, a pleasant impression of themselves and of the society in which they moved.

The essay on Beethoven is an agreeable novelty, and will be read with great interest by many. I regret that I am too ignorant of music to be able to comment on it without presumption.

My own essay, on "Classical Metres in English Poetry," is a challenge, which I hope will be taken up. I have against me not only the Poet Laureate —a most accomplished critic—but, I am dismayed to find from an *obiter dictum* quoted in his biography, Tennyson himself. On the other hand, Prof. Saintsbury, and, I hope, Mr. Gosse and most of the other members of the Academic Committee are on my side. The points at issue are these: First, is there a difference of principle between the scansion of classical metres and that of modern metres? I stoutly maintain that there is none. English poetry is scanned by quantity, and we mark the quantities when we read it, but there are many indeterminate quantities in English; and many syllables, instead of being crotchets or quavers, with a fixed ratio of 2 to 1, have intermediate durational values—one-third or three-quarters of a long syllable. I do not suppose that Tennyson would deny this, but he

does, in one passage of his biography, affirm what I have denied in uncompromising language—that a doubled consonant in an English word "shortens the preceding vowel." The question, of course, is whether it shortens the preceding *syllable*. The vowel of *Strumpf*, in the line which I quoted from Goethe, may be "short by nature," but I defy Goethe, Tennyson, and Mr. Bridges together to prevent it from being very long indeed by position. Let my readers bring the matter to a test. The phonometer (or whatever the instrument is called) at London University registers quantity only, not accent. Let them recite to this machine Tennyson's fine line:

"And hollow, hollow, hollow all delight."

They will find that (except for the intractable "and," which is a three-quarters long syllable), the line is a pure iambic, and that the long syllables are just about twice as long as the short. And yet, according to the amazing theory which I am combating, "ānd hŏllŏw" in a hexameter would be a dactyl! If anyone had recited the line to Tennyson in this fashion, *lites audivisset*.

The article on "Idylls of the King in 1921" is reprinted, with some modifications, from *The Nineteenth Century and After* of November, 1921, and thanks are hereby tendered for permission to reproduce it.

THE ENGLISH ODE.

By Laurence Binyon, F.R.S.L.

[Read November 23rd, 1921.]

I suppose we all have a fairly definite idea in our minds of what is meant by an ode. It is, we might say, the lyric at its most exalted and sustained, most complex and elaborate. I am not going to try and define the ode; but it may be interesting to consider some of the types of poem which have assumed or won the name in English. The word ode does not help us; it means simply song; it has come to its present meaning in English by association and tradition. With the ode, as with the most ambitious types of poem, the epic and the tragedy, tradition counts for very much. We often see that a type of poem, or other work of art, assumes its form in response to the requirement of external conditions. These conditions disappear, but the prestige of the form so created remains and imposes itself on later art. The ode is especially associated with the name of Pindar. Before the true metrical structure of his odes was discovered (if it ever has been), it was supposed that they were quite irregular in form, and on this false notion was founded the English Pindaric ode, of which Cowley wrote specimens now forgotten, and of which Dryden's "Alexander's Feast" is a

famous example. Pindar's odes were highly elaborate in structure. He was a poet of original and opulent inspiration, noted for his fire and splendour, yet also a self-conscious artist. His odes celebrated the victors in the games; each was a kind of prize-poem with an external occasion as its motive. Not very tractable or inspiring matter, you would think, for a long series of elaborate poems. How does Pindar attack the problem set him? He relates the occasion celebrated, the particular victor whom he has to praise, with some myth chosen from the rich store of Greek legend, and so sets his theme in a larger light, giving it a national or a universal significance. He fuses narrative into his lyric strains, and thus endows them with substance while finding rich opportunity for change and contrast. I imagine that the finest of the elaborate odes in English would, if set side by side with Pindar's, appear poor in structure. But we must remember that Pindar was helped by external conditions: by choric singers, by music, by the dance. His elaborate structure has been taken over, though the external conditions have disappeared. The Pindaric ode is complex in matter; it is largely impersonal and objective, and easily admits a large narrative element; in tone it is exalted, enthusiastic, highly lyrical. That is the tradition handed down to later literature. The lyrical poems of Horace have also been given by tradition the name of odes. The Latin title is simply "*Carmina*"—songs. The same title is given to the lyrics of Catullus, but we do not call these odes. It seems therefore that there is something peculiar to the Horatian lyric which

suggests the type of poem called in English an ode. Horace was not a poet of overpowering inspiration or lyric fire; but there is something monumental about his odes, as if he were chiselling some hard material to a fine form. Also they are mostly of what one might call a public character; that is, they are not cries of the heart, or intimate avowals and aspirations. The Horatian type of ode (modelled on the Greek of course in metrical form) has also had a powerful influence on English tradition. But the Horatian ode is simple in its metrical structure, not elaborate like the Pindaric ode.

Now let us approach our subject from another side. The lyric first reaches a stage of ripeness in the song, which, closely associated with music, presumes an audience and keeps a popular element in its themes and a broad appeal. Becoming more complex, the lyric expands, and now becomes a varied instrument expressing all sorts of moods and emotions, however intimate and personal to the writer. At last in the ode the lyric attains its most complex and elaborate structure and recovers the universal note, with something of the objective character of epic or drama fused into the lyric exaltation. But in English the ode is not of a single type. There is more than one type of ode, and there are a number of poems which may or may not be called odes as we please, but which approximate to the odic type. The ode is to the song what the epic is to the ballad. We might also say that the ode has in its full development what we might call a choric or orchestral character as compared to the solo voice or simple fluting of the less complex

lyric. At any rate, this orchestral character, the harmonising of a number of motives or rhythmical movements into unity, is the mark of mastery in the ode. Only a poet, great in art as in inspiration, can achieve this mastery. And the ode being so difficult a form, we shall expect its triumphs to be rare, and we shall pay the greater tribute to those who achieve them. Let us begin with the simpler forms. The shortest English poem called an ode that I know of is Collins':

> "How sleep the brave, who sink to rest
> By all their country's wishes blest."

This has but twelve lines in all. But it strikes the note of the ode; it is not a mere effusion of personal feeling. With that I think we may place a few poems like Shirley's poem on death:

> "The glories of our blood and state
> Are shadows, unsubstantial things.
> There is no armour against fate:
> Death lays his icy hand on Kings."

This fine poem is not usually called an ode. Yet there is something broad and choric in its music. It strikes a universal note. Again we have the tone of an ode, if not the typical structure or the scale. It belongs to public poetry.

There is a choric character, again, in Milton's two short odes, "Blest Pair of Sirens" and "Fly Envious Time." These are influenced by the model of Italian canzoni rather than by classic examples. And it is the same with Spenser's two spacious and richly-coloured poems, "The Prothalamion" and "Epithalamion." These group themselves with the

ode rather than the lyric. But we note that though the stanza in these poems is of a majestic structure, and moves with a deliberate pace, a refrain is used throughout. In the first poem it is unvaried; the line—

"Sweet Thames, run softly till I end my song."

In the second the refrain is a slight variation on the line:

"The woods shall to me answer and my echo ring."

This refrain admirably suits with the effect of the whole poem. The ear comes to anticipate with peculiar pleasure its recurrence at the end of each long-drawn stanza. But the refrain is typical rather of the lyric in its most primitive forms, the song and the ballad, where it has the effect of intensifying the emotion evoked by the poem. In these two poems of Spenser it binds the stanzas together, but the effect of such continued repetition becomes lulling and half hypnotic. The mood of the typical ode is, on the contrary, rather one of excitement and ardour; it works by contrast rather than repetition, and it pursues a different kind of musical effect. It has sought to harmonise into unity more intricate strains, deeper and more disturbed emotions; whereas Spenser's movement is melodiously smooth and level. Milton's "Ode on the Nativity," very different as it is, has a certain affinity with these poems of Spenser. It is, for all its ornateness, simple in structure; it has little or no change of mood, it is level and deliberate, and with no culminating point of vision or emotion. Its

movement is a smooth and ceremonial movement, though it contains stanzas of a beauty more magical than any other of Milton's poems, and of a style that is matchless in our literature :

"The lonely mountains o'er
And the resounding shore
A voice of weeping heard and loud lament;
From haunted spring and dale,
Edg'd with poplar pale,
The parting genius is with sighing sent.
With flower inwoven tresses torn
The nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.

Nor is Osiris seen
In Memphian grove, or green,
Trampling the unshowered grass with lowings loud:
Nor can he be at rest
Within his sacred chest;
Nought but profoundest hell can be his shroud.
In vain with timbrell'd anthems dark
The sable-stoled sorcerers bear his worshipt Ark."

How concrete it is, yet how drenched in atmosphere! And how splendidly full and significant are the epithets!

Marvell's ode on Cromwell is, of course, directly modelled on the Horatian type. And here the type is strongly marked. This is unmistakably the kind of poem which we have come to recognise as an ode. It has the public character which I have mentioned already. The poet speaks as a representative man, here as a representative Englishman, appreciating equally the strong genius of Cromwell and the supreme dignity in misfortune of Charles I:

"So restless Cromwell could not cease
In the inglorious arts of peace,
But through adventurous war
Urged his active star. . . .

"Then burning through the air he went
And palaces and temples rent,
And Caesar's head at last
Did through his laurels blast.

. . . . . .

"Though Justice against fate complain
And plead the ancient rights in vain;
But those do hold or break
As men are strong or weak."

And then, of Charles:

"That thence the royal actor borne
The tragic scaffold might adorn,
While round the armèd bands
Did clap their bloody hands.

"He nothing common did or mean
Upon that memorable scene,
But with his keener eye
The axe's edge did try.

"Nor called the gods with vulgar spite,
To vindicate his helpless right,
But bowed his comely head
Down, as upon a bed."

In its own kind this poem is unsurpassed in the language. No one else has so well imitated in English the packed and pregnant form of Horace's stanzas without forcing or obscurity.

On the Horatian model, too, is a poem totally different in character and sentiment, Collins' "Ode to Evening":

"Then lead, calm votaress, where some sheety lake
Cheers the lone heath, or some time-hallowed pile
Or upland fallows grey
Reflect the last cool gleam.
But when chill blustering winds, or driving rains
Forbid my willing feet, be mine the hut
That from the mountain's side
Views wilds, and swelling floods,
And hamlets brown and dim-discovered spires,
And hears their simple bell, and marks o'er all
Thy dewy fingers draw
The gradual dusky veil."

Cowper's "Boadicea," though again quite different in tone, with its ballad-like conciseness and vigour, may be placed in the same group of odes of the simpler type. Perhaps we might add such a poem as Tennyson's lines "To Virgil":

"Roman Virgil, thou that singest
Ilion's lofty temples robed in fire,
Ilion falling, Rome arising,
wars and filial faith, and Dido's pyre.

. . . . . .

"Thou that singest wheat and woodland,
tilth and vineyard, hive and horse and herd,
All the charm of the Muses
often flowering in a lonely word."

There is a breadth and stateliness here which we associate with the ode rather than the simple lyric. But this simpler type has no more majestic example than Wordsworth's "Ode to Duty." This in its way is supreme. Though short, it is massive, pregnant, and deeply felt:

Serene will be our days and bright
And happy will our nature be
When love is an unerring light
And joy its own security."

There, in four lines, is the kernel of Herbert Spencer's philosophy. Wordsworth modelled this ode on Gray's "Ode to Adversity," but how immensely he has surpassed his model! Not less supreme in a quite different vein and more wonderful as a rhythmical creation is Shelley's "Skylark." This is generally called an ode, though it is not of the type we usually associate with the name. It is one of the most beautiful poems in the world, so it does not matter what we call it. The "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" has much more of the pomp and massiveness we expect from the form, but cannot compare with the "Skylark." Here there is not only magic of rhythm, variety of pace, the fluctuating movement as of life itself, there is also the felicity of culmination. The "Skylark" by a succession of images creates an atmosphere of dewy and aërial radiance thrilled with music, and then casts all these images away to express the core of the poet's emotion with poignant directness and simplicity. But that culminating cry of wonder, *What ignorance of pain*!—a mere negation more illuminating than any of those iridescent images which went before—would lose half its value did it not appear as the white light into which, as through coloured and dissolving mists, the poet's thought has penetrated. If we include the "Skylark" among the odes, I think we should also include the exquisite stanzas "To Night":

"Swiftly walk over the western wave,
Spirit of Night!
Out of the misty eastern cave,
Where all the long and lone daylight
Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,
Which make thee terrible and dear,
Swift be thy flight."

There is a lightness and rapidity in the music of both these poems—especially the "Skylark"—which we do not associate usually with the ode. We expect a graver and more massive movement. But this perhaps is only prejudice, due to association.

Let us now turn to more elaborate forms. Ben Jonson was, I imagine, the first to write odes directly imitated from the Greeks, with strophe and antistrophe, which he called "turn" and "counter-turn." But Cowley was the first to write what has got the name of "Pindaric" ode in English. It is a form not really at all like Pindar, because it has no structural correspondences, but is written in a go-as-you-please style, with no definite unit of line or stanza and a complete liberty of rhythm. These are not conditions to make for success without a mastering inspiration, controlled by a fine sense of shape. Some of Cowley's odes, like the "Ode to the Royal Society," may still be read with interest, if not with delight. But their motives are too intellectual, not sufficiently emotional. And here we come upon the main difficulty of a form like the complex ode. It attempts more than the lyric. It deals not only with emotions, but with philosophic ideas or actions, or public events. And yet it must be lyrical in its main character. And

the danger is that it is apt to flow off into abstract disquisition if it deals with philosophic ideas, or into rhetoric if it deals with actions and events.

Dryden's "Alexander's Feast" is an ode of the pseudo-Pindaric kind. The subject was admirably chosen for an ode. It describes Alexander sitting in triumph after his conquest of Persia with the lovely Thais at his side. The bard, Timotheus, plays on the lyre and sings to him, and by changing the mood of his song affects the conqueror, now with the exaltation of pride, now with melting pleasure, then with pity, then with love, and last with the excitement and madness of revenge. In a frenzy Alexander seizes a torch to set fire to the Persian temples. The poem concludes by contrasting Timotheus' power of song with that of St. Cecilia:

> "Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
> Or both divide the crown;
> He raised a mortal to the skies,
> She drew an angel down."

Obviously the theme affords natural occasions for introducing changes of movement and all the complex variety of which the ode is capable. And the lyric note is kept throughout. It is a brilliant performance. Yet it does not wholly satisfy. It excites rather than moves us. Pope wrote another ode for St. Cecilia's Day, obviously imitated—and badly imitated—from Dryden's. Instead of Timotheus he takes for his theme Orpheus playing his lyre among the shades in his quest of Eurydice. He, too, ends on a contrast with St. Cecilia:

"His numbers raised a shade from Hell,
Her's lift the soul to Heaven."

Both of these poems have an epigram for their mainspring. They might almost be described as richly-expanded epigrams. Dryden's is far superior; it has all his easy vigour and sonorous clearness of ring. But just as epigrams are apt to affect us after the first pleasure with a sense of artificial antithesis and shallowness, so it is with "Alexander's Feast." It does not drive deep. It has no soul.

Collins' "Ode on the Passions" is a similar set piece. But this poem loses by the fact that instead of real persons, however superficially characterised, we have abstractions personified as the Passions, and the movement of the verse changes according to the character of each. Collins had a real singing voice; and this ode has beautiful passages, and is well shaped. But it has too much of the character of a literary exercise to rank with the greatest odes.

Gray was perhaps the first to bring the Pindaric ode more into accordance with its supposed model. His odes have a regular structure, though I think we feel that the rhythmical movement does not always really correspond with the matter of the stanza, but is imposed upon it by the exigencies of the chosen form. You see how complex are the problems confronting the composer of an ode. "The Bard" has much the same theme as Cowper's "Boadicea," but is carried out with great elaboration. In plan it is something like "Alexander's Feast," beginning and ending with a concrete picture, while the main stuff of the poem is the prophecy of the bard. It is the right kind of theme for an ode,

lyrical in essence, but with a narrative and pictorial element. The opening stanzas set the figure of the bard before us, high on his rock above the foaming river, and the arrested army of Edward, with its spears and banners winding along the bank below. This places us at once in the atmosphere of the poem, and gives it a certain solid objectiveness which is of great value. Too many odes seem like voices crying in the air. The defect of Gray's poem is a lack of spontaneous glow, though it is by no means without fire and energy; and historic details rather overweight the prophecy. We may compare with "The Bard" Wordsworth's "Dion." This again is concrete in imagery and solidly projected. It contains magnificent passages; but it is a little obscure unless the story is known; its movement is unequal, and the impression left on the mind is rather distant and remote. But these two odes are of a noble type. It is a form which gives full play to all a poet's powers; it calls for his happiest instincts and his utmost skill. He matches himself with an heroic theme. We see the value of the concreteness I have just emphasised when we turn to odes like Shelley's "Ode to Liberty" and many other poems of inferior power which are addressed to abstractions, or to Byron's "Ode to Napoleon," which is vigorous moralising rhetoric. Abstractions and rhetoric are the peculiar bane of the ode.

Contemporary events have been apt to provoke odes, and the frequent pomposity of these have got the ode rather a bad name. In so difficult a form, as with epic and poetic drama, failure must be common. Political matter in poetry is also apt to

be soon out-dated and stale. Yet there are several odes of elaborate form worthy to be placed with Marvel's Horatian ode. Coleridge's "Ode on France," vibrating as it does with deeply felt personal emotion, is one of these. It is surpassed, as I think, by Meredith's splendid "Ode on France" in 1870. Tennyson's "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington" is another fine example.

As against the looseness of the false Pindaric, the imitation of Greek structure, with minute correspondence between strophe and antistrophe, yields an aspect at least of firmer and more satisfying contour. But without the emphasis of music, these minute correspondences of metre have little effect on the ear. A true correspondence or antiphony of the interior structure, even if neglecting the exterior correspondence of form, might give a larger musical effect and leave the poet freer in his movement. Perhaps the odes which have been most successful in English are those which have a universal note and also something of that orchestral character of which I have spoken, but into which the poet has infused the warmth of his own spiritual experience.

The "Ode on the Intimations of Immortality" has been placed by many at the summit, or almost at the summit, of English poetry. Yet critics of authority have found it dissatisfying at the core. It dissatisfies many minds because its motive is an experience which is not universal, and that experience is apparently made the foundation of a belief which is alien to Western thought. The experience is the experience of those who remember

in their childhood to have had vivid sensations of wonder and beauty in the world, and flashes of precious intuition, obscured and gradually lost in later years. The belief is the belief in the ante-natal existence of the soul. The ode as originally written was short, and was inspired solely by the experience. As originally written in the spring of 1802, the poem began as now :

"There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore :
Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more."

And after the description of the May morning, with the song of the birds, the frisking of the lambs—the earth-born joy which the poet shares with his heart but cannot share with his mind—the poem concludes with the returning note of something missed :

"I hear, I hear, with joy I hear.
But there's a tree, of many, one,
A single field which I have looked upon,
Both of them speak of something which is gone :
The pansy at my feet
Doth the same tale repeat.
Whither is fled the visionary gleam ?
Where is it now, the glory and the dream ?"

That is the ode in its original form. It is complete in itself, and a very beautiful poem. It embodies an experience certainly very real in Wordsworth's

own case, but by no means universal. The poem, therefore, does not come home to all readers. Probably there are some who would say that their experience was the opposite of Wordsworth's, and that only in later years was their spiritual self awakened; for I think that by the "visionary gleam" Wordsworth meant the sense of something spiritual in the outer world answering to the spiritual nature of man. It was not merely a keen susceptibility to wonder and beauty in Nature. Whether the poem was originally intended to consist only of the part I have read, or was broken off, we do not know, but it was only after an interval of two years or more that it was continued. The original poem was now made to stand as a sort of a prelude. An individual experience was made the introduction to a more universal idea. I think it is unfortunate that Wordsworth (fired perhaps by Coleridge's talk of Plato's "Phaedo") made the idea of ante-natal existence so distinct in his ode. For this idea does seem to be expressed as an actual belief:

> "Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
> The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
> Hath had elsewhere its setting
> And cometh from afar."

Yet I doubt if Wordsworth held this as a definite belief in the sense in which it is actually taken. I do not think it occurs in his other writings. He had, being a true poet, a profound sense of the mystery of life, the mystery of the human soul. In his day psychology had not yet discovered the immense importance of what we now call the sub-conscious

self, the submerged part of the soul, which works by intuition, and its relation to the smaller fully-conscious part, which works by reason. Yet is not this really the subject of Wordsworth's ode? The child, whose mind is a mystery to the grown-up person, shows flashes of intuition beyond the reach of reason—a mind not yet warped by custom or tamed by fear; and Wordsworth, contemplating the child, is led to seek backward and ponder what immense powers inspire and sustain that consciousness as yet so little awake to itself, as we might ponder what luminous oceans of streaming nebula have collected and contracted to a single star. And so the child, whose "exterior semblance doth belie its soul's immensity," became to Wordsworth the type and symbol of all that submerged consciousness, that something vaster and more luminous in ourselves which is the secret spring of the imaginative powers of man. As Wordsworth expresses it elsewhere:

"We feel that we are greater than we know."

Perhaps it is a kindred emotion that Leonardo has expressed in his "Adoration of the Magi," where the three kings, portrayed as masters of intellectual power and experience, press forward, not so much in humble adoration as with a gaze of passionate *interrogation* on the Child, to whom is revealed what all their wisdom has failed to learn. If with this clue we read the ode again, we shall, I think, find that the idea of *individual* ante-natal existence falls into the background, and the lines which formulate that belief can be read in a less literal sense, which is at once deeper and more satisfying. It is not

only then the constant felicities of phrase, the exalted note, which make this ode so treasured a possession: it is that, if logically vulnerable it is, at bottom, true to human experience. It is not mere glamour of words clothing an insubstantial fancy. We turn to it because we find expressed in it something which no other poet has expressed with such conviction and such beauty:

> "The obstinate questionings
> Of sense and outward things,
> Fallings from us, vanishings,"

the doubt of materiality which is the first step on the road of thought, the dissatisfaction with the world of fact and the explanations of common-sense; doubt and dissatisfaction which thought knows how to put to constructive use.

In the same spring of 1802 in which Wordsworth wrote the first part of his poem, Coleridge wrote the poem called "Dejection." It was originally addressed to Wordsworth, for whose name the conventional "Lady" was afterwards substituted. To read this poem in conjunction with the "Immortality" ode is to find a heightened interest in both, for there is a close relation between them. What is the subject of Coleridge's ode? It is the realisation that his imaginative powers have become atrophied (actually through enslavement to opium), and that the joy which comes from the exercise of those powers has gone from him; but mingled with the dejection of this mood is generous pleasure in the thought that Wordsworth has remained true to his youth's devotion, that he retains this joy. The

poem was published on Wordsworth's wedding-day, as an offering from his friend. It is an April evening after sunset: the poet from his window has been gazing on the western sky and its peculiar tint of yellow green, on the thin clouds that give away their motion to the stars, and on the crescent moon in its lake of blue:

> "I see them all so excellently fair;
> I see, not feel, how beautiful they are."

To those who can understand and enter into the full meaning of that last line and of the loss it describes there are few more pathetic lines in our poetry. The lines which follow expand this thought:

> "I may not hope from outward forms to win
> The passion and the life whose fountains are within.
> . . . we receive but what we give,
> And in our life alone does nature live . . .
> And would we aught behold of higher worth
> Than that inanimate cold world allowed
> To the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd,
> Ah, from the soul itself must issue forth
> A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud
> Enveloping the earth."

Does this not recall to us Wordsworth's—

> "The earth and every common sight
> To me did seem
> Apparelled in celestial light
> The glory and the freshness of a dream."

And again, the "shades of the prison house," the "weight of custom, heavy as frost, and deep almost as life," do they not describe the cause of the world becoming inanimate and cold to the crowd of men, though Coleridge ascribes the same effect to the

cares and anxieties of existence smothering the powers of love? Both poets lament a loss; Wordsworth of that mystical intuition he felt in childhood, Coleridge of that creative faculty of imagination which relates the life of things outside us to our own; but Wordsworth can still remember and imaginatively recover what he has lost, he can still share the innocent joy of childhood, though he has submitted to will and reason. Contrast the two lines—

"I see, not feel, how beautiful they are,"

and—

"The fulness of your bliss, I feel, I feel it all."

These two odes are written in irregular stanzas. In neither is the changing movement always triumphantly happy. Coleridge's has more natural music, but it is less well sustained to the close.

We see the imperfections of both when we place beside them Keats' "Ode to the Nightingale"—an entrancing masterpiece. There is a fault which is often found in poetry. The poet has an emotion to express, and at the same time wishes to create an imaginative picture; and out of these springs a thought or a train of reflection. The fault is one of imperfect fusion. Once entered on the expression of his thought the poet is in danger of straying into a colder atmosphere. The thought loses the colour of the original emotion, and becomes something separate. The glowing unity is lost. Keats' "Nightingale" is a miracle of perfect fusion. There are faults in the poem, but the atmosphere of it is so intoxicating that it is hard to be conscious of them

in reading it. It is not only a picture that comes before us, but sound and smell, and the very feel of the just-stirred summer air; and through it all comes that same cry of spiritual desire for the ideal life which is the central motive in the poems that move us most. That cry is heard yet more distinct and poignant in the "Ode to the West Wind" of Shelley. How characteristic of Shelley's spirit it is, that ideal life to him seems inseparable from swift motion: the flowing of the wind, or the soaring of the skylark. Both these odes are in stanzas, and regular in form, but within the form there is so much subtle convolution and vibration that they seem rich and complex. No English ode of the looser form gives us quite the same supreme satisfaction of shape and mood that these and Keats' other great odes give us.

And yet I cannot help feeling that great things might yet be done in the other, the heroic kind, with no servile or artificial imitation of the Pindaric model in its now obsolete conditions, but with a similar bold and concrete projection of the theme, a similar large admittance of the narrative or dramatic element. It may be too late a day for epics; but in the heroic ode a great human theme can be seized at its most poignant moment, the lyric opportunity discovered; and the form allows free scope for orchestral play of contrast within what is now perhaps too much neglected, a large and strong design.

"IDYLLS OF THE KING" IN 1921.

By F. S. Boas, LL.D., F.R.S.L.

[Read January 19th, 1920.]

"The Reaction against Tennyson," which is the subject of an illuminating study by Prof. A. C. Bradley in an English Association pamphlet, has culminated in the prevalent depreciation of his most ambitious and, for long, most popular work, "Idylls of the King." Even the most advanced anti-Victorian critic, unless paradoxically careless of any reputation for poetic taste or insight, could not deny the exquisite verbal felicity of many of the shorter poems. And however lightly he rated "The Princess" or "Maud" as a whole, they contained songs and lyrical passages "that envy could not but call fair." "In Memoriam" might be discounted as a speculative and religious poem, but it was impossible to question its interest as a personal record and as an idealised delineation of aspects of Victorian culture and social life.

"Idylls of the King" lay more open to a frontal attack partly because weapons for the purpose could be sought in Malory's "Morte d'Arthur," the source of the chief episodes in the poem. Yet many of the attempts to use the prose romance to discredit the Idylls have been based upon a misunderstanding, and have missed the really vulnerable point in

Tennyson's reinterpretation of the Arthurian story. Malory was a fine artist, but in selecting and adapting from his "French books" he did not trouble overmuch about consistency. There are two contradictory elements in "Morte d'Arthur." On the one hand, the downfall of the Table Round is represented as due to an early sin of Arthur, who in his youth had betrayed Bellicent, not knowing she was his own half-sister. The issue of this lawless passion was Modred, the traitor knight, who brought the king to his doom. This version of the story is the subject of the interesting Elizabethan play, "The Misfortunes of Arthur," and it has been contended that Tennyson should have followed similar lines, and shown us Arthur as the victim of Nemesis.

Such a treatment would not only have been alien from the Victorian poet's temper and outlook, but it would have been false to the dominant element in "Morte d'Arthur" itself, where the king is pictured as the flower of knights and men, and where at the close his tomb bears the inscription, "*Rex quondam, rexque futurus.*" Thus Tennyson would have been justified by Malory's example in representing Arthur as the perfect knight and ruler. But he was not content with this. From the time of his earliest study of the story, he began, as his son has told us in his "Memoir," to allegorise it, though he wavered as to the form of his interpretation. In a memorandum drawn up in the 'thirties of last century, and presented in 1869 to James Knowles, Arthur appears as "Religious Faith," and the Round Table as "liberal institutions." But Knowles himself states that Tennyson said to him, "By King Arthur I

always meant the soul, and by the Round Table the passions and capacities of a man. . . . There is no grander subject in the world than King Arthur."

Tennyson, however, found it impossible to give a strictly allegorical interpretation to the story. His method (as has been often pointed out) is more akin to the parable, wherein the characters are not personifications of some single quality, but where the story as a whole has a secondary moral or spiritual meaning. He makes this clear in his Epilogue addressed to Queen Victoria:

> "Accept this old imperfect tale,
> New-old, and shadowing Sense at war with Soul,
> Ideal manhood closed in real man,
> Rather than that gray king, whose name, a ghost,
> Streams like a cloud, man-shaped, from mountain peak,
> And cleaves to cairn and cromlech still; or him
> Of Geoffrey's book, or him of Malleor's."

It is the endeavour to turn the great romance to edifying uses that has been, apart from changes in poetic taste, the stumbling-block to a younger generation more deeply versed than Tennyson's contemporaries in medieval literature, and impatient of the intrusion of ethics into art. And I would not deny that Tennyson's scheme necessitates an illegitimate transvaluation of parts of the Arthurian story, and leads to some insoluble entanglements. But even here there are episodes of sheer romantic beauty. And the general conception of Arthur as an embodiment of the spiritual principle in the world leavening human society and lifting it above the beast is not only lawful, but is of the very essence of Tennyson's genius. It therefore produces,

when his genius is working at white heat, poetry that is not Victorian in any sense, good or bad, but in its degree as timeless as that of Spenser or Milton. And as "Paradise Lost" and "The Faerie Queene," both of which have a didactic purpose, present new angles of interest to every succeeding age, so Tennyson's distinctive interpretation of the medieval romance may be found to have a significance after the world-upheaval of the war which it lacked for a generation which had not known, nor even dreamt of, such a cataclysm.

One of Tennyson's favourite images is that of the soul coming from the deep and returning to it. Hence the mystery of Arthur's origin is symbolised in the tale believed by Bellicent, that on the night of King Uther's death in Tintagil, Merlin on the shore had—

> "Watch'd the great sea fall,
> Wave after wave, each mightier than the last,
> Till last, a ninth one, gathering half the deep
> And full of voices, slowly rose and plunged
> Roaring, and all the wave was in a flame:
> And down the wave and in the flame was borne
> A naked babe, and rode to Merlin's feet,
> Who stoopt and caught the babe, and cried, 'The King!
> Here is an heir for Uther!'"

The authority of the spiritual ruler must be taken on faith, and it has that within it that overbears doubt and opposition:

> "The savage yells
> Of Uther's peerage died, and Arthur sat
> Crowned on the daïs, and his warriors cried,
> 'Be thou the king, and we will work thy will,
> Who love thee.'"

Arthur's answer to the cry is to found his ideal society, the fair Order of the Table Round, "a glorious company, the flower of men," whereon his own image is to be impressed. His words work with such power upon his followers—

> "That when they rose, knighted from kneeling, some
> Were pale as at the passing of a ghost,
> Some flush'd, and others dazed."

It is with the same mystical authority that he appears in the vision of Leodogran, King of Cameliard. Leodogran, dreaming, saw upon a peak haze-hidden—

> "A phantom king,
> Now looming, and now lost,"

who 'mid the smoke and fire of war—

> "Sent out at times a voice; and here or there
> Stood one who pointed toward the voice, the rest
> Slew on and burnt, crying, 'No king of ours,
> No son of Uther, and no king of ours';
> Till with a wink his dream was changed, the haze
> Descended, and the solid earth became
> As nothing, but the King stood out in heaven,
> Crown'd."

And Leodogran, realising with the eye of faith who and what Arthur is, gives him his daughter Guinevere to wife. But Guinevere, swearing at the altar a deathless love, "with drooping eyes," is to prove fatal not only to the Table Round but to the scheme of the poem. It was possible for Tennyson to represent Arthur as the soul or the spiritual principle in relation to the ideal society of his knights. But insuperable difficulty arises

when thus regarded, he is brought into individual human relationships, above all that of a husband. It is true that Spenser, whose Prince Arthur, as Magnificence, represents all the moral virtues, makes him the lover of the "Faerie Queene." But then she is herself a transcendental figure, and their union, had Spenser lived to complete his epic, would have been that of perfected humanity with glory in its noblest form. It is only thus that the love of the ideal Knight and King can find fitting interpretation. If we are to keep the Guinevere of medieval story, Arthur cannot be completely spiritualised.

But this can be only fully realised later in the poem. Meanwhile in the "Idylls" that immediately follow "The Coming of Arthur," in "Gareth and Lynette," "The Marriage of Geraint" and "Geraint and Enid," the King and Queen are in the background, and the parabolic intention wears so thin that it well-nigh disappears. These "Idylls" are of the versified novelette type, and they are very loosely knit to the main theme. But in "Gareth and Lynette" there is one significant episode, in the description of Camelot, the shadowy city of palaces, which, as Gareth and his companions approach it, flashes with its spires and turrets through the mists and then again disappears, so that they cry, "Here is a city of enchanters," and—

> "There is no such city anywhere,
> But all a vision."

And when Merlin meets them at the gate, he gives a riddling key to the mystery:

"For truly as thou sayest, a Fairy King
And Fairy Queens have built the city, son . . .
And, as thou sayest, it is enchanted, son,
For there is nothing in it as it seems
Saving the King; tho' some there be that hold
The King a shadow, and the city real."

Camelot, as Tennyson himself said, is "symbolic of the gradual growth of human beliefs and institutions and of the spiritual development of man." It is therefore—

"Never built at all,
And therefore built for ever."

And as always, when he is developing this *leit-motif* of the poem, the verse suddenly thrills with a subtler cadence that marks off the episode from the "Idyll" as a whole. The figure of Gareth has a virginal charm, but the story of his adventures has not much poetic significance, and so far as it has a definitely allegorical intention, as in the contests with Morning Star, Noon-Sun, Evening Star, and Night or Death, it is an excrescence on the general symbolism of the Idylls.

Tennyson shows more of the art of the story-teller in verse in "The Marriage of Geraint," where he found his materials in the "Mabinogion," not in "Morte d'Arthur." The tale of Cinderella and Prince Charming in all its variants has an eternal attraction. Enid of the faded silk, doing blithely the menial service in her father's ruined hall, is one of the most exquisite of Cinderellas, and none of them has been heralded into the presence of the Prince to lovelier music. The lines have still their thrush-like sweetness and purity:

> "And while he waited in the castle court,
> The voice of Enid, Yniol's daughter, rang
> Clear thro' the open casement of the hall,
> Singing; and as the sweet voice of a bird,
> Heard by the lander in a lonely isle,
> Moves him to think what kind of bird it is
> That sings so delicately clear, and make
> Conjecture of the plumage and the form;
> So the sweet voice of Enid moved Geraint."

And the journey of Enid, at Geraint's wish, to court in the faded silk, instead of the gorgeous gown in which her mother had clothed her, is in the true romantic vein. But the stupid tests to which Geraint later puts his wife's loyalty and obedience leave us cold. The pattern of the wife who meekly endures all tribulation at her husband's hands has been drawn once for all by Chaucer, after Petrarch and Boccaccio, in the Clerk's "Tale of Griseldis," and anyone else attempts it at his peril. But even were the narrative of Enid's trials more pedestrian than it is, it would be redeemed by the seraphic sweetness of the lines that tell of the reconciliation of the twain:

> "And never yet, since high in Paradise
> O'er the four rivers the first roses blew,
> Came purer pleasure unto mortal kind
> Than lived thro' her, who in that perilous hour
> Put hand to hand beneath her husband's heart
> And felt him hers again: she did not weep,
> But o'er her meek eyes came a happy mist
> Like that which kept the heart of Eden green
> Before the useful trouble of the rain."

How exquisite here is not only the cadence of the

verse, but the suggestion of a love as pure and perfect as that of our first parents before the Fall.

With "Balin and Balan" we come closer again to the central theme of the war of Sense against Soul. We see the beginning of the break-up of the spiritual society of the Round Table. In the "Memoir" of the poet by his son we are told that the "Idyll," of which an earlier version by Tennyson is printed, was written because he felt that some further introduction to "Merlin and Vivien" was necessary. I do not know whether he had been moved at all by the criticism of R. H. Hutton that the atmosphere of "Merlin and Vivien" was too dark and lurid for its position in the epical series. But so far as Vivien is concerned, I wish that the addition had not been made. The "damsel-errant," as she appears in "Balin and Balan," making mock of her boyish squire, "Sir Chick," maddening Balin with her lies and proclaiming the return of the old sun-worship, is more crudely drawn than the wily Vivien whom we see lying at Merlin's feet before an oak in the wild woods of Broceliande. She is here no mere damsel-errant, but another Lilith or Lamia, the woman-snake with the horrible beauty of the serpent, its cunning, its malignant hiss, its envenomed bite. She has fascination in the real meaning of the word, and she seeks to capture the great Enchanter with an enchantment more potent than his own. Merlin is the type of the sceptical intellect which can discern the true spiritual king and enlist in his service, and therein perform mighty works, but which is not spiritual itself, and is thus exposed to the snares of Sense. The duel between

the two is worthy of its magnificent elemental setting of wild woods and gathering storm, for it is vital to the future of the spiritual society. And as always when he is dealing with this central theme, Tennyson's art catches fire. If we read again the "Idyll" from Vivien's opening manœuvre—

> "And lissome Vivien, holding by his heel,
> Writhed towards him, slided up his knee and sat,
> Behind his ankle twined her hollow feet
> Together, curved an arm about his neck,
> Clung like a snake;"

to the close when (in one of the poet's most original similes)—

> "The pale blood of the wizard at her touch
> Took gayer colours, like an opal warmed,"

and he told her all the charm and slept; and—

> "In one moment she put forth the charm
> Of woven paces and of waving hands,
> And in the hollow oak he lay as dead,
> And lost to life and use and name and fame—"

we shall find that Tennyson has here shown a dramatic power for which to-day he does not receive due credit. But it is a power that extends only to symbolic types, as both Vivien and Merlin are, and not to complex personalities. That is partly why Tennyson fails with Lancelot, who is taken all in all a lay figure. But it is not the whole reason.

> "Noi leggevamo un giorno per diletto
> Di Lancelotto, come amor lo strinse . . .
> Quando leggemmo il disiato riso
> Esser baciato da cotanto amante,
> Questi, che mai da me non fia diviso,
> La bocca mi baciò tutto tremante:
> Galeotto fu il libro e chi lo scrisse:
> Quel giorno più non vi leggemmo avante."

Dante was an austere enough moralist, and it is from the second circle of the Inferno that Francesca is speaking. But he knew what medieval love was, and Tennyson did not. It is in the gingerly handling of the passion of Lancelot and Guinevere that he lays himself most open to the charge of "Victorianism." It is a vain thing to draw out leviathan with an hook, to turn the romance of these grand amourists to moral edification. It is not thus that these immortal stories enlighten and inspire, as of a truth they do. Nor is it by the love of the maid of Astolat that we would see Lancelot redeemed, when we remember that in Malory it is Elaine who bears Galahad as son to Lancelot. Yet no one could wish that Tennyson had not written his "Idyll." The lily maid, as uncompanioned of women as Miranda, living her lonely life of fantasy, till it flames into sudden and destroying love, is an exquisite creation. And she is loveliest of all in death, when she passes at last as she had wished—

> "Beyond the poplar and far up the flood,
> Until I find the palace of the King."

This is one of the high places of romance, where Tennyson had ventured with eager, youthful step in "The Lady of Shalott," and where he now walks again with statelier pace:

> "So those two brethren from the chariot took
> And on the black decks laid her in her bed,
> Set in her hand a lily, o'er her hung
> The silken case with braided blazonings,
> And kiss'd her quiet brows, and saying to her,

'Sister, farewell for ever,' and again
'Farewell, sweet sister,' parted all in tears.
Then rose the dumb old servitor, and the dead,
Oar'd by the dumb, went upward with the flood—
In her right hand the lily, in her left
The letter—all her bright hair streaming down—
And all the coverlid was cloth of gold
Drawn to her waist, and she herself in white
All but her face, and that clear-featured face,
Was lovely, for she did not seem as dead,
But fast asleep, and lay as tho' she smiled."

In "The Holy Grail," too, Tennyson was treading again on ground long familiar to him. His early lyric, "Sir Galahad," in its lustrous beauty and spiritual intensity had anticipated the work of the pre-Raphaelites. He might well have seemed the predestined re-interpreter of the San Graal story to a generation awakening anew to its significance. But, unfortunately, in "The Holy Grail" he twisted the symbolism of the legend. The quest for the Grail is no longer the search for absolute union with Christ. It means the renunciation of ordinary ties and duties for the sake of spiritual excitement. A society already decadent through indulgence in sensual excess rushes feverishly into the opposite extreme of an overstrained asceticism, and thereafter recoils into yet lower depths.

Such is in essence Tennyson's application of the Grail story, as it is voiced by King Arthur himself:

"And spake I not too truly, O my knights?
Was I too dark a prophet when I said
To those who went upon the Holy Quest,
That most of them would follow wandering fires,

Lost in the quagmire?—lost to me and gone,
And left me gazing at a barren board,
And a lean Order—scare return'd a tithe."

Thus while Wagner in "Parsifal" was drawing from Wolfram von Eschenbach's High German version of the legend renewed sacramental significance, Tennyson was emptying Malory's narrative of the Quest of much of its spiritual content. Yet this shifting of values is not consistently carried out. The figure of Galahad enthralled his imagination as in his youthful days. With the virgin-knight the "Holy Thing" moves night and day uncovered, and in the strength of it he rides "shattering all evil customs everywhere." And the narrative art of the "Idylls" reaches its climax of luminous beauty in Sir Percivale's recital of Galahad's passing "in silver-shining armour starry-clear" over the great sea while "o'er his head the holy vessel hung" to the spiritual city.

But even of Galahad himself, Arthur speaks with a note of yearning, which is discordant with the spirit of the Grail story:

"And one hath had the vision face to face
And now his chair desires him here in vain,
However they may crown him otherwhere."

As for the other knights they have followed wandering fires. They have deserted, in the quest for signs and wonders, the service of their true King, who is seeking to leaven the world about him here and now, and who irradiates it with his own spirituality:

> "Until this earth he walks on seems not earth,
> This light that strikes his eyeball is not light,
> This air that smites his forehead is not air
> But vision."

If the Grail story has suffered violence at Tennyson's hands, his own ideal finds noble utterance here.

In "The Last Tournament" another of the great medieval stories goes through a transvaluation. Tristram and Isolt are originally as high figures of romance as Lancelot and Guinevere, and fate has an even more overmastering part in the tale of their tragic love. We all know how the story has come again to glorious life in the greatest of love-operas. But Tennyson's aim was again as different from Wagner's as in their treatment of the Grail theme. He did not want to magnetise us with the glamour and pity of the old-world tale. He took Tristram as the type of the Round Table in its decay, when even Arthur begins to fear—

> "Lest this my realm, uprear'd,
> By noble deeds at one with noble vows,
> From flat confusion and brute violences,
> Reel back into the beast, and be no more?"

And from this point of view, if we can bring ourselves to enter into it, Tennyson's Tristram, just because he is a type, is a more successful creation than his Lancelot. In him sense has completely triumphed over spirit, and finds its fitting hymn on his lips:

> "New leaf, new life—the days of frost are o'er;
> New life, new love, to suit the newer day:
> New loves are sweet as those that went before:
> Free love—free field—we love but while we may."

In the impassioned last dialogue with Isolt in the casemented room in Tintagil, when Tristram repudiates his fealty to the King, who once seemed to him "no man, but Michael trampling Satan," and who is now "a doubtful lord" seeking to bind men—

> "By inviolable vows
> Which flesh and blood perforce would violate"

—in that dialogue, broken by the avenging battle-axe of King Mark, we hear the death-knell of the Table Round.

With the flight of Guinevere, when her sin is discovered, comes the end. In Malory it is to her lover himself, in the convent at Almesbury, that she makes her confession of wrong done and avows her hope that she may yet be saved:

"Therefore, Sir Launcelot, wit thee well I am set in such a plight to get my soul's health; and yet, I trust, through God's grace, that after my death to have a sight of the blessed face of Christ, and at doomsday to sit on his right hand, for as sinful as ever I was are saints in heaven. Therefore, Sir Launcelot, I require thee and beseech thee heartily for all the love that ever was betwixt us, that thou never see me more in the visage; and I command thee on God's behalf that thou forsake my company . . . For as well as I have loved thee, mine heart will not serve me to see thee; for through thee and me is the flower of Kings and Knights destroyed."

There speaks the voice of the Middle Age. Its earthly and its heavenly passion—all is there. But with Tennyson's interpretation of the story it was necessary that Arthur himself should be brought face to face with Guinevere and unfold to her the ruin that her sin has wrought. And if we think of

the King and Queen as types, he of the spiritual ideal, she of the voluptuous life of the senses, that has sapped and brought low the fair fabric of the Round Table, then all is consonant. Such an Arthur to such a Guinevere not only can but must use the mighty words that we all know:

> "Well is it that no child is born of thee.
> The children born of thee are sword and fire,
> Red ruin and the breaking up of laws."

He must lay bare the sin that has spoilt the purpose of his life; he must forgive her as eternal God forgives, must cry:

> "Let no man dream but that I love thee still."

And by this love and forgiveness such a Guinevere must be uplifted and redeemed:

> "I thought I could not breath in that fine air,
> That pure severity of perfect light.
> I yearn'd for warmth and colour which I found
> In Lancelot—now I see thee what thou art,
> Thou are the highest and most human, too,
> Not Lancelot, nor another."

To question or deny the poetic splendour of this last dialogue between husband and wife is idle. But just because it is between husband and wife it has been fiercely assailed. And of a truth Tennyson here finds himself in the *impasse* to which, as I have said, he was predestined by his mystical conception of Arthur. To show a figure, so conceived, in the *rôle* of the blameless and accusing husband was to invite the charge so hotly made that the King has here become a prig and Pharisee. To those who choose to make it there is no answer except that the Arthur whom they impeach is not Tennyson's

Arthur, and for this the poet must himself bear the responsibility. A keener sense of the incongruous would have saved him from exposing his ideal King in a situation round which cluster a thousand disturbing associations from the novel and the stage.

In "The Passing of Arthur" the King reassumes his true *rôle* of the hero of a spiritual epic. He rides forth to meet "death or he knows not what mysterious doom" in the last weird battle in the west. The battle is fought amid spectral gloom; it is a confused *melée:*

> "For friend and foe were shadows in the midst,
> And friend slew friend, not knowing whom he slew."

It is the twilight of the gods, wherein all spiritual values are obscured. And into the rhythm of the lines that picture the stricken field by the winter sea has crept the chill of a world in eclipse:

> "Only the wan wave
> Brake in among dead faces, to and fro
> Swaying the helpless hands, and up and down
> Tumbling the hollow helmets of the fallen,
> And shivered brands that once had fought with Rome,
> And rolling far along the gloomy shores
> The voice of days of old and days to be."

From Arthur's lips as he gazes on the spectacle rises the cry of the despair that assails the highest, holiest nature in its dark hour:

> "I know not what I am,
> Nor whence I am, nor whether I be King,
> Behold, I seem but King among the dead."

Yet even now to the eye of faith his true royalty lies open and bare:

> "Then spake the bold Sir Bedivere, 'My King,
> King everywhere, and so the dead have kings,
> There also will I worship thee as King.'"

And when Sir Bedivere belies in part these brave words by hesitating to throw away Excalibur, the last visible memorial of the glories of the Round Table, Arthur's spiritual authority still avails to overawe him into obedience. Betrayed, defeated, sorely stricken, Arthur is yet, in the truest and most majestic sense, every inch a king.

"The vision of Leodogran's dream," as R. H. Hutton has said, "is literally fulfilled. The cloud has rolled down upon the earth, and the King, a mighty phantom, stands out in heaven, but stands out crowned, for he has lost nothing in himself of the spiritual elements of his kingdom." Such a life cannot end in death. It came with signs and wonders and with them it passes away. We hear again the echoes of Merlin's riddling prophecy:

> "From the great deep to the great deep he goes."

Whither he is borne on the dusky barge we cannot tell, but we know that there is no thought of failure in his heart. "The old order changeth yielding place to new." The fair and stately fabric of the Round Table has been shattered. But the spirit which was regnant at its core, which irradiated its being with living light and fire, can take no hurt from "the waves and weathers" of Time, and tramples with victor-feet Death itself into the dust.

Thus Tennyson uses the Arthurian story to symbolise his own "Welt-Anschauung," that there

is a spiritual principle in the universe, incessantly struggling with the material elements, liable to temporary defeat, but in essence unconquerable and immortal. When the author of the "Idylls" was in the hey-day of his fame a Dorsetshire poet and novelist was slowly catching the ear of a smaller public with a strangely different interpretation of life. To Mr. Thomas Hardy man is the plaything of ironic powers:

> "As flies to wanton boys are we to the Gods,
> They kill us for their sport."

When the President of the Immortals has finished his sport with Tess, and with the rest of us, there is no more to be said. By his consummate expression of this view of the world Mr. Hardy has become a classic in his lifetime. But to Tennyson this would have been a creed of despair. For him human society could only exist on a spiritual basis, with God renewing himself in many ways. He clothed this conception in the garb, half-medieval, half-modernised of the Arthurian story. Hence have sprung the flaws and inconsistencies which have provoked so violent a reaction against the poem that at first was so widely acclaimed. For all that is shallow or half-hearted in his handling of the great romance for his own purposes Tennyson has paid dearly. But Time is the most impartial of critics, and the generation that has lived through the Great War may be able to do more justice to the "Idylls" than that which preceded. Wordsworth's sonnets have spoken with a new voice to those who have found in them not only a poetic record of the Napoleonic struggle, but a majestic

proclamation of those ever-living principles which were at issue once again in the World-War. For Wordsworth those principles were enshrined in the historic national liberties of England, Switzerland and Spain, assaulted by tyrannic military power. Tennyson viewed them in the legendary form of an ideal society reared for a time above the encircling welter of pagan savagery. In either case the poets were concerned with the war of Sense against Soul. And has not the world-conflict revealed to shuddering humanity this elemental struggle in its most naked form beneath the laboriously built-up structure of civilisation ?

> "The children born of thee are sword and fire,
> Red ruin, and the breaking up of laws.
> * * * *
> The fear lest this my realm, uprear'd
> By noble deeds at one with noble vows,
> From flat confusion and brute violences,
> Reel back into the beast, and be no more."

Such familiar lines have gained immensely in significance since August, 1914. They are the more poignant and arresting because they have originally no relation to historic facts. It is one of the tests of genius that its utterances are perpetually proving their value and aptness in unforeseen applications. "Idylls of the King" is not an organic whole; it is a medley, with a strangely fitful inspiration. But when this inspiration is at work on this central theme of the poem, it gives birth to verse that no change of literary fashion can affect, because, like all true art, it is incomparable and timeless.

SOME WRITERS ON ENGLISH COUNTRY LIFE.

By the Most Hon. the Marquess of Crewe, K.G., LL.D., P.R.S.L., etc.

[Read January 25th, 1922.]

The title of this paper may seem to cover such a wide field that I must begin by defining what it is that I am trying to illustrate to-day. Country life in England may be devoted to the study of geology, natural history, or botany; to the survey of topography; to agriculture, forestry, garden-craft or sport. The term would include, also, serious treatises on the tenure of land, and on the condition of farmers and of village labourers at different periods of history. In fact the mere bibliography of the subject would fill a large volume; but my purpose is to select, not quite at random, some authors whose work can indeed be classified under one or other of the heads I have mentioned, but who, differing utterly in purpose and method, are alike in this, that, whether scholars or self-taught, they followed consciously or unconsciously in the train of Pan and the Nymphs, and enjoyed by inheritance or by attainment the priceless freedom of the countryside. To-day, moreover, I will stick to the main highway of English prose. The sober rapture of the country inspired many poets for centuries before men tried to render immortal, by

line or colour, the splendours and terrors of Nature. "Why it was that the ancients had no landscape painting," observes De Quincey, "is a question deep almost as the mystery of life, and harder of solution than all the problems of jurisprudence combined."* In Greece, as has often been observed, Nature interested man chiefly in relation to his own concerns, and even though to a Roman—to such far truer lovers of the country as Horace and Pliny—the ordered charm of farm and vineyard made an appeal, they could not have understood the magic of—

> "The silence that is in the starry sky,
> The sleep that is among the lonely hills."

On the other hand, in Greece from Hesiod to Theocritus, and in Rome with the "Bucolics" and "Georgics" of Virgil, idyllic and pastoral poetry enjoyed a recognised place in letters. To come nearer home and past the Middle Ages, pastoral poetry, revived in Italy late in the 15th Century, travelled to Scotland and England by way of France; but I will not follow it along its tame and artificial course for full three hundred years after its Italian renaissance, nor will I touch on Drayton's 'Poly-olbion'—that remarkable county guide-book in verse—or on such poems as Andrew Marvell's wonderful "Thoughts in a Garden."

With the eighteenth century came the more trammelled writers about the country, headed by James Thomson, the author of "The Seasons," and including William Somerville of "The Chase," the estimable John Dyer, who wrote "The Fleece," a poem about

* De Quincey's 'Essay on Style,' part ii, vol. x, p. 200.

sheep and the wool trade, but also the admirably natural verses on his native "Grongar Hill," William Shenstone, and Robert Bloomfield.

Towards that century's close appeared Crabbe, a most faithful interpreter of country life, but unfortunate, as Sir Sidney Colvin has lately told us, in having chosen verse instead of prose as his medium; and Wordsworth, the greatest prophet of Nature in our poetry. But I must not pause even at his name, or be tempted to touch on the amazing art by which Tennyson, a generation later, set to perfect music his almost meticulous observation of the phenomena of rural life. But at the same time, as we proceed on our pedestrian journey, we are going to shun the technical instructor, however skilled, and the mere statistician, however accurate; whether a book professes to cater for the farmer, the political enthusiast, the observer of manners, the sportsman, or the idle traveller, even though it be not hallowed by "the consecration and the Poet's dream," it must be such as to lift us out of the dull round of life into a finer air and a happier scene. Few English writers on any subject achieve this end more perfectly than does Izaak Walton.

He was a Staffordshire man by birth, but a thorough Londoner by residence and occupation, being a prosperous haberdasher in Fleet Street. He was born in the last decade of the sixteenth century, and lived to be over ninety. His short biographies of several contemporaries are admirable work, but I am only concerned to-day with 'The Compleat Angler,' one of the most famous books in the language, though not because of its unusual technical merit; for the

fisherman's art is but simply taught, and it was left for his younger contemporary, Charles Cotton, in Part II, to instruct the world "how to angle for Trout and Grayling in a clear Streem." I have a personal and local interest in 'The Compleat Angler,' as it was dedicated to my forbear, Mr. John Offley, of Madeley Manor, not far from Newcastle in Staffordshire. The little volume in its original binding of sheep has, for some time past, attracted collectors of rare books, and the first edition makes £600 or £700 at auction. But even this may seem moderate by the side of £1700 paid not long ago for a scarce fifteenth century treatise on angling by that mysterious lady, Dame Julian Berners, or Barnes, the legendary Prioress of St. Albans. 'The Compleat Angler' was issued in five editions during Izaak Walton's life, and the quest for them is more legitimate than the hunt for such rareties often is, because it is one of the books thus shown to be a progressive composition, and the additions to each issue mark the experience of repeated holidays on the banks of quiet streams. All through the easy dialogue in which the book is framed the writer drinks in all the delight and the peace of the countryside. But he enjoys observing its manners too, he studies the ways of gipsies, who told fortunes and stole chickens as freely then as they have ever done since. Nor did he find the beggars less interesting; and it is worth while to remember how large a part was played by the habitual beggar of both sexes in the life of our forefathers.

Here is an excerpt from Chapter IV of 'The Compleat Angler,' where the Fisherman, who is the

writer, describes the scene to his companion, who is the Sportsman. It is a most familiar citation, but I make no apology for recalling it:

"Look, under that bright beech tree I sat down, when I was last this way a-fishing, and the birds in the adjoining grove seemed to have a friendly contention with an echo, whose dead voice seemed to live in a hollow tree, near to the brow of that primrose hill."

He goes on to point to the streams gathering their waters, and flowing to the sea, and the harmless lambs giving life to the scene:

"As I left this place and entered into the next field, a second pleasure entertained me; t'was a handsome Milk-maid that had not attained so much age and wisdom as to load her mind with any fears of many things that will never happen, as too many men too often do, but she cast away all care and sang like a nightingale; her voice was good, and the ditty fitted for it; t'was that smooth song, which was made by Kit Marlow, now at least fifty years ago: and the Milk-maid's mother sung an answer to it which was made by Sir Walter Raleigh in his young days."

These are the well-known poems on the theme "Come live with me and be my Love," and if they were really sung as described, the standard of popular music must have been enviably high. Here is another reflection in a different scene, and in the more serious key with which the book closes:

"Having still a mind to Tottenham High-Cross, I will, as we walk towards it in the cool shade of this sweet honeysuckle hedge, mention to you some of the thoughts and joys that have possessed my soul since we two met together, and these thoughts shall be told you that you

also may join with me in thankfulness to the Giver of every good and perfect gift for our happiness."

He dwells on the blessings of health and of a quiet conscience, and on the good fortune of those "healthful and cheerful like us, who with the expense of a little money have eat and drank, and laughed, and angled, and sung, and slept securely; and rise next day and cast away care, and sung, and laughed, and angled again." And the book ends on this comfortable note. Speaking of the light of the sun—

"and this and many other like blessings we enjoy daily, and for most of them, because they be so common, most men forget to pay their praises; but let not us, because it is a sacrifice so pleasant to Him who made that Sun, and us, and still protects us, and gives us flowers and showers, and stomachs and meat, and content, and leisure to go a-fishing."

Everybody must recognise, in each of these quotations, the charm of the straightforward seventeenth century English, on which even the greatest masters of our language have never since been able to improve.

The career of John Evelyn, who was some thirty years younger, was pursued on a totally different plane. He was a man of family and wealth, one of the most respectable courtiers at the lively Court of the Restoration, immersed in public affairs, but deeply interested in natural science, and even more devoted to sylviculture and his garden. His book on forestry, 'Sylva,' was published by the Royal Society, of which he was one of the founders, as their first volume, but, as is the usual fate of such

books, its interest now is mainly antiquarian. Evelyn's 'Diary' is not mainly concerned with country life, except here and there with descriptions of his friends' gardens, but it is one of the most attractive of English books, and one which everybody ought to read, not less for the highmindedness apparent on almost every page than for the power of vivid description, equal to, though different from, that of his friend Samuel Pepys.

It seems almost a paradox to say that in the next generation the milestone at which to pause is that of the most urbane of English writers, Joseph Addison, journalist, playwright, Secretary of State, and arbiter of literary London. But for this purpose he is pre-eminent as the creator, with the aid of his collaborator Richard Steele, of "Sir Roger de Coverley," firmly established as the typical country gentleman of the early eighteenth century, and as a manly and sympathetic character of fiction, worthy to stand side by side with Parson Adams, with Uncle Toby, and with the Vicar of Wakefield.

Addison was the son of a Wiltshire clergyman, afterwards Dean of Lichfield, and must have enjoyed many early opportunities of watching the humours and simplicities of a rural circle. Fifteen numbers of *The Spectator* are devoted to visits at Sir Roger's country house in Worcestershire. He is first sketched by Steele in No. 2, and the same hand is responsible for five or six of the other numbers, but most of the touches that make a living figure of the country squire, 55 years old, crossed in love long ago, the idol of his old servants, must be Addison's. We enjoy Sir Roger's choice of an

elderly chaplain of plain sense, because he "was afraid of being insulted with Greek and Latin at his own table, and if possible a man that understood a little of backgammon." The country Sunday, we are told, clears away the rust of the whole week. Sir Roger suffered no one to sleep in church but himself, "for if by chance he has been surprised into a short nap at sermon, upon recovering out of it he stands up and looks about him, and if he sees anybody else napping, either wakes them himself, or sends his servant to them." Those were the days of high-backed pews, when the lapse of an individual could only be remarked from a considerable elevation.

An attractive inmate of the house is Will Wimble, younger brother of a local baronet, a great sportsman, a darling of the county, and "a good-natured, officious fellow." Officious, we must remember, then meant obliging, and it is one of the many English words, such as "egregious," "indifferent" and "plausible," which have descended in the scale of favourable meaning. Nobody, we hear, had "so good a heart, and such busy hands, wholly employed in trifles. He was the younger brother of a great family, who had rather see their children starve like gentlemen than thrive in a trade or profession that is beneath their quality. This humour fills several parts of Europe with pride and beggary." The *Spectator* develops this lament, that the younger sons of landed families were debarred from trade, and confined to the services or to the study of law, divinity, or physic. It may be not irrelevant to note that this prejudice indeed developed in the

eighteenth century, and was, as the *Spectator* hints, due to foreign influence. In the Middle Ages in England, sons of the great Norman houses did not engage in business, for they had no need to do so. They were a caste apart, and not numerous; but even in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries there was no special prejudice against trade, and by the Tudor period many representatives of landed families were engaged in it. There would be nothing remarkable in finding a Howard, or a Talbot, or a Berkeley engaged as a corn-merchant or a wool-stapler in a county town. But for the accidents of attainder, and the extinction of younger branches, the British nobility might now be headed by a mercantile family. Michael de la Pole, son of a merchant of Hull, and continuing to live there, became Earl of Suffolk nearly fifty years before the date of the oldest existing English earldom except the feudal title of Arundel. The fourth Earl became Marquess more than a hundred years prior to the oldest existing marquisate, and Duke thirty-five years ahead of our oldest Dukedom, while the second Duke married a Plantagenet Princess, sister of King Edward IV. The nineteenth, and still more the twentieth centuries, have reverted in a great degree to the older custom, which has maintained the British peerage and the land-owning class on a more rational footing than that found in any continental country before the convulsion which has lately shaken the world of the 'Almanach de Gotha' to its foundation.

All through the De Coverley *Spectators* one notes the keen and not unsympathetic observation, not so

much of a townsman criticising the habits of an alien race, as of a man of the world for whom this rural society forms as integral a part of the national life as Fleet Street or St. James's. He finds a laboured politeness in the country; for instance, Will Wimble is much too civil, and, one infers, much more civil than a man of his standing would have been in London. On the other hand, undue freedom in talk is a vice far more of town than of country. There is a worthy society, too, of a humbler grade. He meets "a yeoman of a hundred a year, a very sensible man, shoots flying, and has been several times foreman of the petty jury." Remember that a hundred a year represented perhaps four times the same sum on a pre-war valuation.

We pass on to Gilbert White, whose origin was like Addison's in that he came from a clerical family in the country, but whose life was cast on very different lines. He was born in 1720, and never married, though he is said to have been in love with a well-known lady who became Mrs. Chapone, and author of 'Letters to a Young Lady on the Improvement of the Mind.' He inherited clerical duties, as he did scientific tastes; acquired, in the easy-going fashion of the day, a living in another county, at which he never did any duty; later on inherited a house in his own home parish of Selborne, and set himself down to the simple attempt, which has made him so famous, of writing a year's diary of its natural history. Here again it is the atmosphere that charms. Nothing could be less mannered or pretentious than the letters to Thomas Pennant, another lover of Nature, which form part of the

journal. He honours his position as a Fellow of Oriel by frequent classical quotations of average felicity. He notes the geological facts, and by no means ignores the forestry and botany of the neighbourhood, but his keenest delight is in animal life. The local extinction of red deer, the ravens that built each year in an oak, the gradual disappearance of black game, the occasional visits of peregrines or hoopoes, the migrations of frogs, all these are set down with evident relish. And he evidently engaged deeply in some special researches. Many pages are given up to observation of the different swallows, and after much hesitation he was disposed to accept the legend of the hibernation of, at any rate, some of them, largely because a brood was discovered as late as September 18th. In another passage he partly anticipates the study of earth-worms made a century later by a greater naturalist, Charles Darwin. "Earth-worms, if lost, would make a lamentable chasm . . . their work of rendering the soil pervious to rains and the fibres of the plants by drawing straws and stalks of leaves and twigs down into it, and most of all by throwing up such infinite number of lumps of earth, called worm casts, which is a fine manure for grain and grass. Worms probably provide new soil for hills and slopes where the rain washes the earth away." He goes on to point out that though gardeners and farmers detest worms, they "would find that the earth, without worms, would soon become cold, hard-bound, and void of fermentation." You may remember how Darwin describes the work of earth-worms in preparing for vegetable growth

a superficial bed of fine soil; for example, in one reclaimed field they superimposed three inches of soil in fifteen years, and, in another field, a bed of marl in less than eighty years was covered with twelve or thirteen inches of soil. 'The Natural History of Selborne' still finds plenty of readers, and I hope it long may. Although, as was said of a still more famous book, 'Robinson Crusoe,' there "is nothing in it to arouse either tears or laughter," yet it wins by its pleasant candour, and by its appeal to tastes which most of us would develop if we could.

Arthur Young was about twenty years younger, being born in 1741, also the son of a country parson. Having a natural gift for writing, he tried pamphleteering and novel-writing before he started farming at twenty-two. His famous books are the stories of the various tours through the United Kingdom and France which he undertook from 1768 onwards. They are composed, as has been observed, "in racy, downright English," and, while primarily agricultural, and full of shrewd observations on crops and stock, he describes the country conditions and scenery with no little gusto. What may seem even stranger in a farmer's tour, he depicts at length great country houses, and the tapestry and furniture adorning them, with careful enumeration and criticism of their picture galleries. For example, he devotes twenty-five pages to the galleries of Wentworth Woodhouse and its then owner, Lord Rockingham. But of natural history there is scarcely a word in any of the books.

Here is a passage showing what travelling meant in the latter half of the eighteenth century, within

twenty-five miles of London, off one of the main arterial roads: "Of all the cursèd roads that ever disgraced this kingdom in all the ages of barbarism none ever equalled that from Billericay to the King's Head at Tilbury. It is for more than twelve miles so narrow that a mouse cannot pass by any carriage. I saw a fellow creep under his wagon to assist me to lift, if possible, my chaise over a hedge. The rutts are of an incredible depth . . . and to add to all the infamous circumstances which concur to plague a traveller I must not forget the eternally meeting with chalk-wagons; this is frequently stuck fast, till a collection of them are in the same condition, that twenty or thirty horses may be tacked to each to draw them out one by one." This was about 150 years ago, and it may have been nearly half that term of years before country lanes were greatly improved, even in districts where lime was not carted on so large a scale for manuring. It is a singular reflection that, from the Norman Conquest down almost to living memory, the means of transport off the main highways has scarcely altered, except by the substitution for strings of pack-horses of clumsy carts on such roads as Arthur Young describes. But the neighbourhood of London had its charms as well. He describes Blackheath and the view from Greenwich Observatory as "beautiful beyond imagination. The projection of this hill is so bold that you do not look down upon a following slope or flat enclosures, but at once upon the tops of branching trees; which grow in knots and clumps out of deep hollows and embrowning dells; the cattle which feed on the

lawns which appear in breaks among them seem moving in a region of fairyland." He is naturally even more enthusiastic over the delightful valley of the Wye, "which seems dropped from the clouds, complete in all its beauty." It is there that he describes how, leaving a friend's garden, "we turned to the left, through a winding walk cut out of the rock; but with wood enough against the river to prevent the horrors, which would otherwise attend the treading on such a precipice; after passing through a hay field we entered the wood again, etc." You will note this conformity to the habits of our ancestors in regarding as terrible and sublime scenery which we should now treat as rather rough and romantic; they exhausted on an English hill-side such epithets as would befit the precipices of Mount Everest. There is much, too, in the more business-like pages of the 'Tour' which is interesting to-day, even to those who have no technical knowledge of farming. It is worth noting that in England, as in Ireland, the existence of small holdings has not of itself, in the past, meant agricultural prosperity. He describes an estate in the North Riding of Yorkshire, with a rental of £16,000 a year, with scarcely a farm of £50 a year, the usual size being £20. He adds that the husbandry in this part of the world is universally bad, and the rents far too low. "Raise the rents, first with moderation; and if this does not bring forth industry, double them." He deprecates the throwing of fifteen or twenty farms into one—a process which was overdone a generation or two ago; while his remarks on afforestation, and the

increase of arable farming on the Wolds, show careful observation and are marked by excellent sense. The general reader will probably consider the 'Tour in France,' which does not fall within the scope of this paper, the most attractive of Arthur Young's books, and his picture of ordinary life there, just before the Revolution, may attract anybody to consider at first hand rural conditions which may have done less to bring about the cataclysm than is erroneously supposed. Altogether Arthur Young, with his cheerful, smart ways, must have been a most agreeable social figure, besides filling a definite place among British men of letters.

Of a totally different type was William Cobbett. Born in Surrey, just when Arthur Young was starting as a farmer, he was a peasant's son, and brought up in the fields, but became copying clerk to an attorney, and a few months later, with the restlessness that never left him, enlisted in the Army. We are not concerned to-day with his self-education, his service in Canada, his discharge from the Army, his sojourn in France and the United States, his return to England in 1800, or his settling down as a political journalist and reformer in a perpetual atmosphere of libel actions. Our business is with the tours on horseback, inspired by political ideas, and informed with his early rustic knowledge, the accounts of which he published under the title of 'Rural Rides' after 1830. He had more than one farm of his own at which he tried experiments, especially in producing seed, and he published a little book advocating the use of maize under its American name of "corn," which he believed would

"drive the accursèd, soul-degrading potato out of that land into which it ought never to have come." He also published, soon after the Reform Act, the 'Legacy to Labourers,' a bitter attack on "clearing" and enforced emigration, with reflections on the limited rights of land-owners, which at that date must have sent a shudder through every quarter sessions in England. "The fierce Cobbett," as Borrow calls him, was always an actively disliked person, but few readers will dislike the writer of the 'Rural Rides.' The hasty and violent judgments are tempered by admirable descriptions of the country scenery, and by touches such as this: "I like to look at the winding side of a great down, with two or three numerous flocks of sheep on it, belonging to different farms; and to see, lower down, the folds in the fields ready to receive them for the night." Nor did he despise country pleasures. After passing through an ostentatious park, he says: "At the end of this scene of mock grandeur and mock antiquity, I found something more rational, namely, some hare-hounds, and I had the first hare-hunt that I had since I wore a smock-frock." And he goes on to maintain, what none will dispute, the merits of early rising for a morning with the harriers; and also the complete absence of cruelty from the sport, which will, perhaps, not be so generally admitted. And with all his radicalism he is able to regret the disappearance of many of the old-fashioned country gentry, and their replacement by "nabobs and negro-drivers"—the possessors of fortunes, that is to say, made in the East or West Indies.

Cobbett was still touring and fulminating when a calmer observer of our country life penned a series of sketches which have still deservedly escaped oblivion. This was Washington Irving, the American writer, who, in the twenties of the last century, in the name of Geoffrey Crayon, published and dedicated to Sir Walter Scott the 'Sketch Book,' which was followed by 'Bracebridge Hall,' the elaboration of one of the sketches in the first volume. None of these have attained quite the same celebrity as the American tale of 'Rip Van Winkle,' but they make pleasant, easy reading, and, like the succeeding generations of portraits in a gallery, carry on the history of manners into the early nineteenth century. The original of Bracebridge Hall still stands, a beautiful Tudor house, on the border of Derbyshire and Yorkshire, more nearly invaded now by coal-pits and miners' houses, but enjoying the care of sympathetic owners. Washington Irving delights in the "rural feeling that runs through British literature," which he holds to be due to the intermingling of classes and community of interest existing here, and he believes the effect on our national character to be the healthiest possible. Like all American observers, with eyes used to large spaces, he enjoys the "continual succession of small landscapes of captivating loveliness," and what he regards as the moral feeling that pervades English scenery, indicated by the stile and footpath leading to the church, across pleasant fields, and by the village green hard by, all showing, as he says, "the hereditary transmission of home-bred virtues and local attachments,"

and speaking of "home-feeling, the parent of the steadiest virtues and purest enjoyments." It is almost consoling, in what we conceive to be a flippant age, to read that a hundred years ago this friendly observer regarded the rural Christmas as exhibiting "more of dissipation and less of enjoyment. Pleasure has expanded into a broader but shallower stream." He is glad, however, still to find some specimens of the "obsolete finery of formal gardening," pointing out, what is historically true, that "the boasted imitation of Nature in modern gardening had sprung up with modern republican notions . . . it smacked of the levelling system." Are we, then, entitled to consider the present revived vogue of formal gardening, with clipped hedges, lead statues and stone-built tanks, as a silent protest against the march of democracy?

Departing from an exact order of succession, I may here observe that, some forty years later, another distinguished American writer, the author of delightful novels and essays, Nathaniel Hawthorne, paid us a similar compliment by publishing 'Our Old Home' and 'English Note Books,' after serving as Consul-General for the United States at Liverpool.

Reverting to our compatriots, I come to a marked contrast to the formidable William Cobbett in William Howitt, about thirty years his junior. He was the son of a Quaker, with a small farm in Derbyshire, and his wife, Mary, represented like him all the traditional virtues of the Society of Friends. In 1823 they toured on foot through Scotland—a more unusual feat then than a journey

to the Victoria Falls is now—and in the pauses from the amazing industry which they showed as editors and translators of books by the dozen, they enjoyed to the full the harmless delights of country life. They also lived for some years at Heidelberg, and wrote of rural Germany. And William Howitt made a long tour in Australia, with some resulting books. His 'Rural Life in England' is a stout volume of unimpeachable sentiments and amiable information, which a future inquirer might well take down from a remote shelf for purposes of reference, but it is not exactly inspiring. When the last of the devoted pair died their obituary notice pointed out that nothing written by either could possibly become immortal, but paid a tribute to writers "so industrious, so disinterested, so amiable, so devoted to the work of spreading good and innocent literature." So we can bid farewell to them respectfully, and add, as either of them might probably have wished, "let not Ambition mock their useful toil, their homely joys, and destiny obscure."

A nearer approach, if not to immortality, at any rate to an enduring fame, can be predicted of George Borrow, a man of a very different type, but one whose faith in the eternal things that are not seen was not less lively or profound. His father was a recruiting officer, whose work made him a wanderer, and it happened that George was born in Norfolk in 1803, which made him the East Anglian that he remained through all his journeyings. After an irregular education, which must, however, somehow have gone to the root of the matter, he

started as a hack writer in London with very little success, and then engaged in the tours through England which he afterwards idealised in 'Lavengro' and 'The Romany Rye.' He married in 1840 and three years later went on the expedition to Spain, on behalf of the Bible Society, which produced what I suppose has remained his most popular book, 'The Bible in Spain.' It is an altogether delightful narrative, and after it was published he woke up something of a hero, but the issue of the two English adventure stories above mentioned alienated many of his admirers. The serious and almost grandmotherly criticism of the Victorian mid-century was shocked by the gipsy wanderings, and the "coarse adventures" with prize-fighters which make up a substantial part of the books; and it was not reconciled by the deep seriousness and the religious conviction which are equally apparent. Even now they may not be everybody's books, from their lack of consecutive arrangement, if not from their defiance of conventionality. 'Wild Wales,' which followed five or six years later, is still, I hope, generally read, but at the time it suffered in popularity because of its immediate predecessors.

Borrow ultimately settled down in the Norfolk Broads, where he exercised a sort of Arab hospitality for his friends, including any gipsies that came that way. Few English writers have retained more ardent devotees, rightly attached to one of the most high-minded of men, and one of the most ardent apostles of the open-air life, almost intoxicated by the delight of the fresh green and the

budding trees and the wind on the heath. If not a great philologist, he was one of the most remarkable linguists that the country has produced. Here is a passage from 'Lavengro,' which will show you what admirably balanced English he wrote; it describes his approach to Salisbury by way of Old Sarum:

"I passed over the causeway, and found myself in a kind of gateway which admitted me into a square space of many acres, surrounded on all sides by mounds or ramparts of earth. Though I had never been in such a place before, I knew that I stood within the precincts of what had been a Roman encampment, and one probably of the largest size, for many thousand warriors might have found room to perform their evolutions in that space, in which corn was now growing, the green ears waving in the morning wind. After I had gazed about the space for a time, standing in the gateway formed by the mounds, I climbed up a mound to the left hand, and at the top of that mound I found myself at a great altitude; beneath, at the distance of a mile, was a fair old city, situated amongst verdant meadows, watered with streams, and from the heart of that old city, from amidst mighty trees, I beheld towering to the skies the finest spire in the world.

"After I had looked from the Roman rampart for a long time I hurried away, and, retracing my steps along the causeway, regained the road, and passing over the brow of the hill, descended to the city of the spire."

Several years before Borrow's restless life closed in his quiet Norfolk retreat, was born at a small Wiltshire farm, in 1848, a man of much the same type, Richard Jefferies. He ran away from home in the most approved manner, and after finding his way back became a reporter on local newspapers. He then wrote three or four unsuccessful novels,

but found his way into the right channel by a series of articles in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, afterwards published as a book, in 1887, by the title of 'The Gamekeeper at Home.' This was followed by perhaps his best work, 'Wild Life in a Southern County,' an attractive record of the downland in the south-west of England, marked by the closest observation of Nature, and particularly of the life and habits of animals, but also showing intimate knowledge of the customs, industries and superstitions of cottage people. He is deeply sensible, too, of the colour and warmth of the country, and he acquired a manner of describing the processes of Nature quite untouched by what are considered the ordinary vices of journalism. As in such a passage as this, for instance, after describing the growth of wheat, when a modest ear comes forth from the green and succulent plant, and the white bloom begins to show as the ears pale into yellow, and the birds set to work, not now attacking the grain but the caterpillars infesting it, he goes on:

"Yesterday you came to the wheat and found it pale like this (it seems but twenty-four hours ago, it is really only a little longer); to-day, when you look again, lo! there is a fleeting yellow already on the ears. They have so quickly caught the hue of the bright sunshine pouring on them. Yet another day or two, and the faint floating yellow has become fixed and certain as the colours are deepened by the Great Artist. Only when the wind blows, and the ears bend in those places where the breeze takes most, it looks paler because the under part of the ear is shown and part of the stalk. Finally comes that rich hue for which no exact similitude exists. In it there is somewhat of the red of the orange, somewhat of the tint of

bronze, and somewhat of the hue of the maize; but these are poor words wherewith to render fixed a colour that plays over the surface of this yellow sea, for if you take one, two, or a dozen ears, you shall not find it, but must look abroad and let your gaze travel to and fro. Nor is every field alike; here are acres and acres more yellow, yonder a space whiter, beyond that a slope richly ruddy, according to the kind of seed that was sown."

Afterwards Jefferies published 'Wood Magic,' a fanciful tale of a world of animals, carrying on conversation and a communal life with a small boy as observer and chorus. Mr. Kipling developed the idea some time afterwards in the 'Jungle Books,' where such creatures as the Black Panther and the terrible pack of wild dogs give to the story a life and colour not to be achieved by the less romantic inhabitants of English woods and fields. I fancy that there has been some reaction from the extreme popularity enjoyed by the work of Jefferies in his lifetime, but I question whether the joy of open-air life, and the utter abandonment to the charm of the country, have ever been more completely expressed than by him.

A contemporary of his was the Rev. Augustus Jessop, an East Anglian clergyman of great antiquarian knowledge, the author of 'Arcady for Better or Worse' and other books containing the results of much shrewd observation of his parishioners, reported with a dry and detached humour which would enable many country clergymen, if they could cultivate it, to extract from apparently humdrum surroundings records which would be highly acceptable to the urban majority.

Another contemporary was Mr. Lewis Jennings, who wrote pleasantly of the country, but rather from the standpoint of the cultivated townsman than that of an inmate.

But I must close this incomplete story of our landscape painters in words. I have said nothing of the novelists, some of whom might have figured large in such a paper as this. Fielding and Smollett, if not Richardson, might have spoken for the eighteenth century, so might Goldsmith in particular, and, to some extent, Sterne, though the 'Sentimental Journey' lies outside my province.

Students of the manners of the following generation cannot pass by 'St. Ronan's Well,' or any of the novels of Miss Ferrier and of Jane Austen, though none of these fulfil all the conditions which I set out at the beginning of this address. Neither does Dickens, nor Thackeray, nor Disraeli, nor even Trollope. From the point of view of sport, but of that only, Surtees, in books which are long sketches rather than stories, now and then captures the open-air sensation to perfection; so, here and there, does Whyte Melville, in the class of more regularly constructed tales. But the two novelists of the past who have gone the farthest on this road are Charles and Henry Kingsley, of whom the first was more engaging, and perhaps more convincing, as naturalist and sportsman than as social and religious reformer. I avoid mention of living writers; but I cannot forbear saying that Mr. Hardy, more particularly in 'The Woodlanders,' attains the utmost heights that an imaginative writer can reach in portraying the realities of the

country, and compelling his readers to apprehend them.

Is English country life, in the sense in which I am dealing with it to-day, coming to an end? Is the structure of society so altering, through new conditions attached to the ownership and tenure of land, through fresh conceptions of agriculture as a business to be carried on rather for the benefit of the community than for the profit of the individual, through the institution of a system of forestry on purely scientific lines, and, speaking generally, through the imposition of a purely utilitarian colour on rural life, that the wilder amenities of the country will entirely disappear in company with many of its shortcomings, with the general result of turning England into a gigantic garden suburb, intersected by a network of admirable motor roads, and furnished for hygienic reasons with a due number of artificial wildernesses, or nature reserves? I hope not exactly, though the tendency undoubtedly will be, as agriculture on a small scale becomes the business of more and more citizens, to abolish the particular picturesqueness afforded by ragged hedges clustered with wild roses, and by undrained bottoms where marsh plants flourish. On the other hand, I believe that there is a real desire among the people generally to preserve the special beauties of our English landscape. Here and there a local authority may hit on the edge of a common as a cheap and accessible building site, but I am confident that such encroachments will be fiercely resisted; the present reaction from the over-preservation of game is all to the good, if only as preventing the destruc-

tion of all animal life which may be suspect by a gamekeeper. The nature reserves of which I spoke are admirable things in themselves, and ought to be multiplied, provided that they do not constitute the only alternative to gravel walks and tarmac roads. And in this country the processes of social change are usually slow, so that if our children will not be able to wander with Isaak Walton, or even with George Borrow, I hope that there will still be open downs to roam on, and winding lanes to get lost in.

Meanwhile let us cherish all the glimpses of the spirit of the past that we can call up in recollection, and as we speak of famous men, make our pilgrimage when we can to the fountain-head of their writings, where, turning aside from this dusty world, the traveller may find refreshment and peace.

SOME MEMORIALISTS OF THE PERIOD OF THE RESTORATION.

By Sir Henry M. Imbert-Terry, Bart., F.R.S.L.

[Read February 22nd, 1922.]

John Selden in one of his quaint essays made the pronouncement, "Wise men say nothing in dangerous times." I do not venture an opinion as to whether this aphorism applies equally to the female sex, who at the period in which the Puritan writer lived took a somewhat less prominent place in public life than at present; but it is a fact established by experience that immediately after periods of great national or political excitement, a rich crop of personal reminiscence appears, not emanating from male writers alone, which probably is the literary outpouring of those who, constrained by the fear of consequences or the weight of circumstances, wisely refrain from recording their opinions and criticisms until the risk of unpleasant results from so doing is removed.

The world, or rather that portion of the universe which arrogates the title to itself, has just undergone a visitation, disastrous and wide-spreading, but which, unfortunately, is but one of similar episodes recorded in history; and it is interesting to observe that the particular attributes which characterise the national demeanour of to-day find to a considerable extent their counterpart in the social and literary activities which occurred after the Revolution in

France and the Napoleonic convulsion at the end of the eighteenth century, and still farther back immediately after the civil war between the Cavaliers and the Roundheads in this country in the middle of the seventeenth century.

In all these periods the relief from a prolonged strain of danger and anxiety produced a reaction which, varying with the special surroundings of the age, yet exhibited itself in much the same fashion, whether in personal behaviour or in literary productions of a particularly self-inclusive nature.

Both written and pictorial records of the French Revolution and the advent of the Empire bear testimony to the extreme exiguity of covering with which the female portion of the community concealed, or perhaps it would be more truthful to say suggested, its physical charms; and it is an easy task for modern readers to discover for themselves the licence with which the authors of both sexes in the above-named period revealed their craving for notoriety, exercising that proclivity without restraint, violating confidences and aspersing public and private characters in a manner which at the best is an offence against good taste, at the worst a sin against national morality.

This criticism, which forcibly applies to the end of the eighteenth century, the beginning of the nineteenth, and which some of us, possibly because fortuitously we came into the world in the mid-Victorian era, think not altogether inapplicable to the second and third decade of the twentieth century, relates even more appropriately to that period of our domestic history which concerns the restoration

of the House of Stuart to the throne of Great Britain. As the reaction from the unnatural social conditions engendered by the truculent hypocrisy of Puritan domination produced an orgy of vice which spread over all classes of the community, so the repression of wholesome thought and the interdiction to a large extent of imaginative compositions awoke an irrepressible desire, in those who possessed the pen of a ready writer, so soon as the restrictions were removed, to pour out the long-pent-up emanations of their souls. When, therefore, King Charles II ascended the throne, himself gifted with no mean literary talent and a sincere lover of the beautiful (in this direction it may be said not always confined to the inanimate), a steady stream of personal recollections issued forth, sometimes apocryphal, sometimes true, but always affording a lively picture of the times then existent.

We owe a debt of gratitude to these authors, little as some seriously-minded people are disposed to pay it.

"Manners makyth man." The diarists and satirists of an age are the historians of its manners. The dry-as-dust chronicler who simply relates that a king died or a prince was born, that a war ensued or a ministry evaded its responsibilities, valuable as may be his information, yet is only an animated calendar. To reach the true soul of events we must have recourse to the recollections of those who knew and portrayed the living actors. And this inner phase of history has an immeasurable value. Without an intimate acquaintance with the habits of a people no veracious history of a nation can be compiled,

and, moreover, it may strongly be urged, that without a sufficient knowledge of the character of those composing the governing body, whether a monarch, his ministers or their supplanters, no reasonably accurate estimate can be formed of the true trend of national policy or the genuine purport of the popular actions.

To the writers of personal reminiscences we must look for such information. As Pope says, "To catch the manners living as they rise" affords to us an insight into the character and intentions of the people who lived in the period—intelligence which can be obtained from no other source.

Indeed some of the older memorialists aver that they penned their productions for the specific purpose of affording information of a special and personal nature which might mitigate and influence the verdict of posterity, and acknowledge that by so doing they incur a heavy responsibility. It is true that this recognition of their accountability to public opinion in no way prevents them from making statements of doubtful authenticity or from reflecting on the dispositions of those they disliked with more acrimony than discrimination, but it is fruitful to observe, especially with our modern experience, that these old authors felt that they owed a duty to posterity, and endeavoured to discharge it with a due sense of its importance.

In this connection it is a seductive speculation to consider whether modern compilers of personal anecdotes accept the same position and acknowledge the same responsibility as their predecessors. Judging from recent publications, it perhaps is

permissible to doubt whether memorialists of to-day adopt the same view as their fellow workers of a previous age. It may be that the change of procedure they favour is caused by the influence of a condition of affairs diametrically opposed to that which existed in earlier times, and, while the self-sufficiency of former writers caused them to attach an undue importance to their own literary productions, our twentieth century diarists, whether male or female, military or political, are compelled by their own inherent modesty to doubt whether the historian of the future will ever trouble, seriously, to refer to their personal recollections.

To those who wish to make a comprehensive study of the aspect of affairs at the time of the restoration of monarchy in these islands, a veritable plethora of information is provided bearing upon the domestic, social and political life of the people, for the number and diversity of these chronicles is legion.

Pepys, Evelyn, Sidney, Lake, Grammont, Bruce, Lady Fanshawe, Bulstrode, Wellwood, are but a few of the names, to say nothing of such purveyors of undiluted scandal as La Comtesse de Dunois and the crowd of anonymous writers who revelled in secret histories and libellous romances.

With the works of the better known of these authors, those first named, I shall not trouble you, except with this one allusion which I trust you will regard as pertinent.

Pepys wrote his wonderful diary, that mirror of middle-class human nature, that apotheosis of gossip, in shorthand—a treatment which precluded the

possibility that the world at large could become cognisant of its contents; he also hid it away so securely that it remained unknown to the public for 156 years. Whether Pepys contemplated an interval of such length cannot now be determined, probably from the revelations the book contains he did so; but the procedure he adopted has many advantages both to the author and the reader.

Some, at least, of the memoirs of to-day would greatly benefit by the interposition of a lengthy interval between the composition and the publication, for thereby an opportunity would be afforded for a new generation to arise which was in no way personally acquainted with the individual celebrities who figured in the narrative. Consequently the authors, even if he or she allowed their fertile imagination to overcome their sense of definite accuracy, would run no risk of meeting with contradiction or rebuff; their reputation would remain immaculate, and the readers also would be in a position to enjoy the piquant recollections with the added savour of believing them to be entirely veracious—a luxury which it is difficult to imagine they now can enjoy.

Yet it is but charitable to allow that all relators of personal reminiscence should have a considerable degree of indulgence extended to them. Even such a crabbed Puritan as Prynne felt constrained to admit as much: "An exact diary is a window into his heart that maketh it; and therefore pity it is that any should look therein but either the friends of the party or such ingenuous foes as will not, in things doubtful, make conjectural comments to his disgrace."

It must be conceded that in all ages there appears to be a tendency on the part of those who relate their personal experiences to a constant inaccuracy as regards dates, possibly because the mind of the recorder is more intent on the details of the incident than on the exact moment of its performance.

The three memorialists, Doctor James Wellwood, Sir Richard Bulstrode and Ann, Lady Fanshawe, to whose works I propose to call attention, are not by any means immune from this imperfection, but their record of events, though coloured doubtless by personal predilection and prejudice, yet possesses one distinctive quality at least: they are held by the highest authorities on historical research to have supplied information on important episodes in the times in which they lived which, up to the present, cannot be obtained from the narrative of any other writers or traced to any different source. Moreover these authors, occupying different spheres of action, regard, occasionally, the same incident from different points of view—a circumstance which undoubtedly adds to the value of their testimony. James Wellwood, although indeed he occupied a position at Court as the private physician to King William III, yet is singularly free from the bias of a courtier; the fact that for a considerable portion of his early life he lived in Holland—at that time the asylum for all discontented politicians, at one period being the headquarters of the Puritan malcontents—imbued him with a sense of impartiality engendered, probably, by a knowledge of the shortcomings of both factions.

As he himself prefaces his remarks: "I hope I

may venture to say that I have tread as softly as was possible over the Graves of the Dead and have not aggravated the Errors of the Living." He must have resisted temptation in so doing, for he possessed an opportunity given to few of destroying the reputation and exposing the errors of some celebrated persons who took part in the transactions which he chronicled. Many secret papers of James II, on the flight of that Monarch, fell into the hands of the military staff of William of Orange, and Wellwood, being intimate with the Prince, standing high in his favour, not only perused them, but in some instances obtained permission to copy and afterwards publish their contents.

The value of this information stimulated him to write a series of political pamphlets, the last of which bore the title of 'Memoirs of the most material transactions in England for the last hundred years preceding the Revolution of 1688.'

Although not a contemporary of King Charles I, being born in 1652, Wellwood lived so near to the great events which convulsed that reign that his intercourse and intimacy with those who actually participated in the Civil War render him a most valuable chronicler; exceptionally so as from his surroundings he could view the many problems which confronted the nation with a degree of detachment from the bitter prejudices which then existed.

For this reason the following sentences, an epitome of the fate which befell that most unfortunate sovereign, possess a melancholy value:

"Notwithstanding all the disadvantages which attended his succession the nation hoped that their condition would

be mended under a Prince of so much Virtue, as indeed he was; if the Seeds of Discontent which were sown in his Father's time had not every day taken deeper Root and acquired new Growth through the ill management of his Ministers rather than any Wilful Errors of his own. Some of them drove so fast that it was no wonder the Wheels and Chariot broke, and it was in great part due to the indiscreet Zeal of a Mitred Head, that had got an Ascendant over his Master's Mind and Counsels, that both the Monarchy and the Hierarchy owed afterwards their Fall."

The truth of these words must appeal to all who have studied the contest between the various religious sects from the time of Elizabeth to the temporary suspension of the Monarchy, for every incident in that embittered struggle only serves to demonstrate the fact that, while the religious differences strongly influenced the political atmosphere, the most conscientiously religious minds then existing in the nation became so oblivious, not only to the trend of popular feeling, but to the true teaching of their own faith, that their whole care consisted not in how Christian men should behave one to the other, but which section of religious thought should rule autocratically the whole Church of Christ.

The unhappy result of these dissensions is very strongly expressed in the portion of the Memoirs dealing with this period, and the concluding paragraph plainly depicts the almost hopeless outlook which confronted those who strove single-heartedly for the welfare of their native land: "During the whole course of this unnatural War it was hard to define what would be the Fate of England, whether

an Absolute Unlimited Monarchy, a new huddled up Commonwealth, or a downright Anarchy."

Wellwood, apart from his own expressed opinions, furnishes us with much original information concerning critical events, printing a letter from the Marquis of Montrose to King Charles, the effect of which caused that ill-advised monarch to break off the treaty of Uxbridge, with most disastrous effects to his crown. This epistle, which, as Wellwood states, "has hitherto lain secret in History," has been accepted as authentic by all competent authorities.

To those who know but little concerning Charles I, except the tragedy of his fate, some few characteristics recorded by this writer may prove interesting—the King's taste in learning, his patronage of the fine arts and his deep knowledge of the laws of England, which latter attribute draws from the chronicler the ironic remark, "and pity it was that any of his Ministers should have advised him to make Breaches in what he so well understood."

It perhaps may not be generally known that, although Charles spoke several languages with good grace, yet, when excited, he was inclined to stammer; at all times his manners were so cold and distant that, to quote Wellwood, "he bestowed favours with a worse grace than his son King Charles II denied them, and many times obliterated the sense of the Obligation by the Manner of it," but, as the narrator continues, "he had seldom much to give, being short of money the great part of his reign."

From an historical point of view by far the most

interesting and valuable portion of the Memoirs is to be found in that relating to the reign of Charles II. Wellwood, from his sojourn in Holland and his connection with the Court of the Prince of Orange, obtained many opportunities of conversing with persons who, for political reasons, found it advisable, both before and after the Restoration, to leave England for a while and seek asylum in the United Provinces, such being the custom in those days.

Among others who found their way to the Court of William was that unfortunate and unstable young man, James Crofts, Duke of Monmouth.

Good looks frequently form a passport to promotion; they did so in the person of Lucy Walters, Mrs. Barlow, Monmouth's mother—that "beautiful, bold, brown, insipid creature," as Evelyn calls her, who early established herself in the good graces of the Merrie Monarch—not, it may be added, a difficult feat.

Monmouth inherited much of his mother's beauty, both in face and figure; but vain, shallow and most ambitious, he possessed so little reticence or self-control that his aspirations, vague but persistent, to the Throne of England became known to all about the Court, and, not unnaturally, excited the enmity of James, Duke of York.

Saucy Nell Gwyn dubbed him to his face "Prince Perkin," in allusion to Perkin Warbeck, the Pretender; and when Monmouth, irritated by her ridicule, called her "ill-bred," Nellie, with a grimace, remarked, "And pray, was Mrs. Barlow better bred than I?"

Wellwood declared that Charles loved Monmouth tenderly, and "could not refrain sometimes in company, when he might be free, from regretting his own hard fortune which necessitated him to frown upon a son whose greatest crime was to have incurred his brother James' displeasure."

The latter portion of the reign of Charles II became a network of dark intrigues and treasonable designs. At the Restoration and a few years after the personal attributes of the King, the liberal tolerance and merciful disposition which he displayed on all occasions, gained for him a place in the affections of his subjects to which few other monarchs could hope to attain. But as years went on political and religious grievances arose, which, combined with the intense distrust felt by the majority of the nation towards James, Duke of York, heir to the Throne, a convinced Roman Catholic, produced an atmosphere of suspicion and alarm most conducive to plots and conspiracies.

The chief of these, the infamous Popish Plot, a monstrous farrago of murder and revolution, probably concocted by Titus Oates and Israel Tonge (a knave and a fool—always a dangerous combination), and fostered, for his own political ends, by Anthony Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury, not only, as is usual in such moments of national aberration, caused much innocent blood to be spilt, but produced effects which remained until the end of the reign.

When this convulsion spent its force another conspiracy arose, also due to the intrigues of Shaftesbury, which is known to posterity as the Rye House Plot, and which was responsible for the death of

two famous persons, Lord Russell and Algernon Sidney. In this latter movement Monmouth, the tool of Shaftesbury, became involved, but, shielded by the parent against whom he conspired, was permitted to escape and seek refuge in Holland.

Ill in body, weary in mind, Charles after these events took but little action in public affairs, until the injudicious and dangerous practices of his brother James—as Wellwood in a curious paragraph relates—"did help to waken him out of his slumber and brought him to lay a Project for a mighty change in the affairs of England which probably would have made both him and the nation happy. If he had lived but a few weeks longer, Monmouth had been recalled to Court, the Duke of York had been sent beyond the sea and a new Parliament convened. But what further was to follow must be buried with his Ashes, there being naught left us but bare Suspicion of what might have been. This is certain, the King's death came opportunely for the Duke, and in such a Manner and with such circumstances as will be a Problem to Posterity, whether he died a Natural Death or was hastened to his Grave by Treachery."

Posterity has already solved the problem: Charles II died from natural causes, not by poison.

Wellwood at all times evinced profound admiration and allegiance to William of Orange, so much so as to declare that Charles II, by bringing about the marriage of his niece Mary with the Dutch Prince, performed "the happiest action of his life by which he made sufficient Atonement for all the errors of his reign." Being thus prepossessed in

favour of William, he, not unnaturally, regarded James II with such deep dislike and distrust as to render him incapable of resisting the suspicion, prevalent at the time, that the religious partisans of James hastened his accession to the throne by secretly murdering his brother.

We know these sinister reports to be absolutely false, medical science holding, from the evidence extant, that Charles II died from an internal complaint, but at the time of his decease the rumour of foul play spread very widely, and conduced materially to the unpopularity of King James's Catholic supporters.

Wellwood, at heart a fair-minded and dispassionate observer, although he reproduces all the circumstances which corroborate the allegation of treachery, yet is bound to admit that many incidents pointed to the Monarch dying from natural causes. He relates occasions on which King Charles II suffered from attacks of illness, and he instances one particular event which is peculiarly interesting. At the time of the Popish Plot Charles endeavoured to carry out some secret negotiations through the instrumentality of a Roman priest. This young man, introduced into Whitehall in disguise, spent a considerable time in the royal closet alone with the King. Suddenly he reappeared in a state of intense disquietude and terror, telling the attendant in waiting that "he had run the greatest Risque that ever man did, for while he was with the King his Majesty was suddenly seized with a fit accompanied by violent convulsions of his body and contortions of his face which lasted for some moments, and

when he was going to call for help the King held him by force till it was over and then bid him not to be afraid for he had been troubled with the like before."

The narrator then expatiates on the ghastly fate which, at that period of national disturbance, might have fallen upon the unfortunate priest had the King died under the attack, but he fails to give that information which adds so immeasurably to the poignancy of the situation, that the young man who stood in this terrible position was James de la Cloche, the eldest illegitimate son of King Charles II himself, the fruit of a connection he formed when very young during his stay in the Channel Islands.

Dr. Wellwood, in his historical recital, endeavours to maintain a measure of impartiality. The same remark cannot be applied to a contemporary author, Sir Richard Bulstrode. He, indeed, is a writer of strong opinions, and makes no effort to mitigate his judgments or hide the trend of his convictions. Late in life he became a member of the Roman church, consequently his estimate of those who differed from his own religious creed is distinct and definite. "Presbytery never was received into any state which it did not embroil; never any man was possessed of it whom it did not strangely transform with Moroseness. The rest of Schismatics are but its spawn."

Then the worthy Cavalier becomes epigrammatic, for, while declaring that the principles of Presbyterianism are fitted only for the mouth of a Ravaillac, the murderer of Henri Quatre, he concludes—"their whole practice being to deprive God of his glory,

the Prince of his honour, and the people of their sense."

The pressure of the times engendered strong opinions. To a man educated in the school of such hard experience as Sir Richard Bulstrode any attempt at excusing either the conduct or the principles of those who slew his King and persecuted his class appeared almost as black treason as the deeds of Oliver Cromwell himself.

He was the descendant of an ancient house in Buckinghamshire, and a tradition existed in his family that originally they bore the name of Shrobbington, derived from a manor of the same appellation. William the Conqueror, so the legend runs, conferred this estate upon one of his followers, who hastened to take possession. The rightful owner defended his inheritance with such vigour and pertinacity as to defeat the invader, completing his discomfiture by sallying forth accompanied by his servants and tenants all mounted on bulls, horses apparently being non-existent. William, not deeming it prudent to drive the English to desperation, promised the daring Thane a safe conduct to the Norman Court. The invitation being accepted, Shrobbington appeared in due course, still mounted upon his strange steed, an appearance which, together with the arguments of the rider, so impressed the Norman invader that he granted to his visitor the free enjoyment of his estate, at the same time decreeing that the family should be called Bullstrode in addition to their ancient patronymic.

How much credence is to be attached to this legend is a matter upon which opinion may differ,

but that the race possessed some distinctive qualities was demonstrated amply by the career of him who bore the name at the date of the Civil War.

Born in 1610, Richard Bulstrode lived until 1711, perhaps even a few years longer, dying certainly at the age of 101, possibly even at 105. When he arrived at fourscore years he occupied his time by composing and publishing 185 elegies and epigrams, chiefly, so it is recorded, on divine subjects, which possibly might be better expressed as on subjects relating to divinity. He died, not from senile decay, but from acute indigestion, the attack only being fatal because, so the chronicler avers, his own physician was "out of the way," and the doctors called in for the emergency feared to administer the usual remedies.

From the records which are extant concerning the treatment meted out by the medical faculty to their patients in those days, which, in the case of royal personages, leaves an uneasy feeling that the court physicians were eminently successful regicides, it really appears that this statement concerning the death of Sir Richard Bulstrode should be amended, and that the authoritative pronouncement should be that the worthy knight arrived at a ripe old age largely from the fact that, at critical periods, a beneficent Providence decreed that the family medical adviser should always be out of the way.

When the Rebellion broke out, Bulstrode, a student of the law, found himself in London. He tells us, in a sentence somewhat reminiscent of John Bunyan, "I was very young and in a Labyrinth, not knowing where to go"; following there-

fore his inclination, with some other members of the Inner Temple, he journeyed to Whitehall and offered his services to King Charles I.

From that day until the time of his death he remained a devoted servant of the House of Stuart, fighting for the Royal cause during the Civil War, becoming a resident and eventually an envoy to the Netherlands after the Restoration, and dying in banishment a faithful follower of an exiled king.

Since he was an eye-witness of varied events at the Civil War, and an officer on the staff of one of the royal armies, 'Bulstrode's Memoirs' are of distinct value to the student or writer of history, but his strong mental bias, his turgid and involved style, it may also be added, his undiluted invective, render his recollections far less interesting than those of Wellwood, whose statements, however, he corroborates in many instances.

At the commencement of his military career he discerned the difficulties which beset the Royal cause, and, in his own characteristic phraseology, compares the lot of Charles to that of King David: "But the case of our King was worse than that of King David, for the text says his enemies kept about him like bees and were extinct, there was some honey with them, but our King's enemies came about him like Hornets, where there was all sting and no honey."

Bulstrode, from the observations he made in his official connection with the operations in the west of England, is enabled to give a vivid picture of the incapacity, irresolution and positive debauchery of the Cavalier leaders: "Their not foreseeing," to

use his own words, "what was evident and their jealousys of what was not like to be; they often deliberated too long without Resolution, and as often resolved without deliberation, never executing rigourously what was resolved upon; and all went to Wreck by Negligence, Inadvertence and Dejection of Spirit."

The character of the generals throws light upon their subsequent disaster. Lord Wilmot, the General of the Horse, being dismissed from his command, General Goring obtained the appointment in his place—in the opinion of Sir Richard Bulstrode a most unfortunate choice, an opinion obviously well founded if the subjoined information is correct: "Wilmot never drank when he was within distance of an enemy, and Goring seldom or never refused it and could not resist temptation." Moreover the latter commander in appointing his subordinates estimated a capacity for conviviality considerably higher than proficiency in military operations. On one occasion, speaking of his second in command, he himself observes: "My brother in law, Lieutenant General Porter, is the best Company but the worst Officer that ever served the King."

The defeat, capture and imprisonment of his Monarch shocked the loyal Cavalier to his very soul, every incident in his life and training leading him to regard with deep reverence many forms and ceremonies which to-day have largely lost their significance; hence the discourteous and stern behaviour of the Roundhead soldiers to their captive Monarch drew from him the quaint but pathetic complaint that "they denied their sovereign not only the ceremony

of the Knee but even the common civility of the Hat."

Exiled during the greater part of the Protectorate, he returned to England before the death of Cromwell and gives a highly coloured account of the portents which preceded and accompanied the dissolution of the Protector.

When Oliver lay on his deathbed the physicians made light of his ailments, described as an ague, thus leading their patient to express a conviction that "God would not take him away until he had done some more work for him." Such a hope being reported, drives the embittered Royalist savagely to declare: "If God did not take him the Devil did, for he died on the third of September following; a day that had proved so fortunate for him proved his last in the world, and such a Tempest accompanied his Death that night as was not seen in the memory of man. Great trees in St. James' Park were blown up by the Roots, of which I was an eye-witness, great shipwrecks at Sea besides several by the Storm in divers parts of England on land. The Prince of the Air showed his power was above the Protector, who thought not fit that he should pass quietly out of this World who had made such a Combustion, Trouble and Misery in it."

In palliation of this violence of language and uncharity of thought it must be remembered that the tragedy of the death of King Charles I created an agony and a horror in the minds of those who supported his cause as, in their own eyes, to justify any measures which might be taken against the authors of the deed—men whom every Cavalier deemed, in his

inmost heart, to be the veritable spawn of the Evil One.

Yet, even in the midst of his frenzied invective, Bulstrode unconsciously pays this tribute to the Lord Protector: "He made Foreign Nations know more of England's Strength than any of our Kings of late years."

With the coming of the restored Monarch, Charles II, effected, as the writer quaintly puts it, "by the Scotch army under the command of the prudent Fabius, General Monck," Bulstrode attained to a position of usefulness and even to a degree of eminence, being appointed Agent and Resident, eventually Envoy, to the Court of Spain in the Low Countries, at that time forming a portion of the Spanish dominions.

Much information concerning the somewhat intricate course of the foreign policy pursued by the British Government can be gleaned from the correspondence received by him in his official capacity from the Secretary of State, Sir Leoline Jenkins and his successor Lord Sunderland; but, as in Wellwood, the most valuable contributions to history are to be found in the records of the doings of the participators in the various intrigues, plots and conspiracies which surrounded the latter years of Charles II, and Bulstrode alone supplies some information concerning the sudden return to England of the Duke of York upon the occasion of a dangerous illness of the King in 1677.

Among the gossip retailed is an account of the visit of the Prince of Orange to London: "He has been somewhat unlucky at play, having lost in one

night three thousand pounds at Bassett." This misfortune, if it occurred, must have grieved William deeply, for at that time he possessed no opportunity of recouping himself from the pockets of the English people—a habit acquired in later years when appointed their Constitutional Sovereign.

Another royal personage also arrived on these shores, Prince George of Denmark, soon to be the husband of the Princess Anne, afterwards Queen Anne. Bulstrode is restrained in his admiration of this distinguished visitor, contenting himself with the description that "he is a person of good mien and had dined with the King and Queen and Duke, who gave the Prince the Upper hand"—in modern parlance, personal precedence. The news, moreover, is announced that Charles intended to confer the Order of the Garter upon his guest, but a hitch occurred, for the Prince, in the writer's own words, already wore the decoration of the Elephant, and "it would not be seemly to wear the Order of the Garter at the same time," the incongruity apparently being ceremonial, not anatomical.

From other sources it may be gathered that the lively court of King Charles II—with all its profligacy and vice, yet the home of much wit and intellectual activity—thought but little of the newcomer. He quickly obtained the sobriquet "Est il possible ?"—an expression which, uttered in French with a Danish accent, appears to have constituted the gamut of his critical perception; indeed, the most truly characteristic description of this royal personage is that provided by King Charles II himself, an adept at pithy sayings: "I have tried

him drunk and I have tried him sober; there is nothing in him."

As in Wellwood's Memoirs, much and most important revelations are made concerning the Rye House Plot, the official despatches of Sir Leoline Jenkins being printed almost *in extenso*, but most of this matter appears in other authorities. It is interesting to find Bulstrode, while inveighing against Shaftesbury and Monmouth, describes them as "that false and treacherous villain Achitophel who hath corrupted and debauched the counterfeit Absalom." Evidently the old Cavalier must have become well acquainted with Dryden's celebrated satire.

The intentions of Charles II just before his death of summoning a Parliament and recalling Monmouth, as stated by Wellwood, are reiterated by Bulstrode, who moreover adds a personal reminiscence of great interest. Certain sayings of Charles II concerning his own intentions and his estimate of his brother's character and capabilities are so well known as to be a household word to all who study this period. This is Bulstrode's version: "About two years before the death of King Charles II, he gave me leave to come into England. Some days after my arrival at Whitehall he commanded me to walk with him to Hyde Park and as I walked with him (the rest of the company keeping a good distance), he told me, . . . that during his exile abroad he had seen many countries of which none pleased him so much as that of the Fleming, . . . and then added, 'But I am weary of travelling, I am resolved to go abroad no more. But when I am dead and gone I know not what my brother will do. I am

much afraid that when he comes to the Crown he will be obliged to travel again. And yet I will take care to leave him my Kingdoms in Peace, wishing he may long keep them so, . . . but I am much afraid that when my brother comes to the Crown he will be obliged to leave his native soil.'" "How often have I remembered with much grief and sorrow this discourse of the King's," adds the writer, and then he concludes with words too little acknowledged and remembered by modern historians, "Certainly had this King loved business as well as he understood it he had been the greatest Prince of his time."

Wellwood and Bulstrode, though not in themselves important persons, yet represent types of men who find their counterparts in all periods of similar political complexion: The conscientious individual, whose mind, originally strongly influenced by social and religious environment, becomes, in course of time, modified and mellowed by actual experience until, eventually, the old opinions are obliterated, the new mental shapes approaching very closely to those professed by others bitterly opposed to all the opinions formerly held.

The second, the unbending enthusiast who, impervious to the natural progress of events, invariably looks backward for consolation, not forward for inspiration; consequently spends the latter portion of his life in exile, either physically or mentally, and generally finds comfort for the state of neglect into which he has fallen by drastically criticising the actions of those who have supplanted him.

But in addition to these specimens of mankind a

female diarist frequently supervenes, whose family connections, for some reason, being debarred from the high positions they once held, finds her own horizon somewhat obscured, and so, not unnaturally, endeavours to obtain for herself a rather larger share of the light of public recognition than, just at that time, is falling to her lot.

The attitude adopted by Madame de Stael after the Revolution in France at the end of the eighteenth century, and by a close connection of a distinguished statesman at the beginning of the twentieth century, was assumed at the period of the Restoration by Anne, the wife of Sir Richard Fanshawe, a Cavalier of high standing at the court of both Charles I and Charles II; attending the latter when, as Prince of Wales, he fled his native country, and afterwards, subsequent to the Revolution, holding high diplomatic posts in Spain and elsewhere.

Born in 1625 in St. Olave's, Hart Street, London, the daughter of Sir John Harrison of Balls, Hertfordshire, Lady Fanshawe received an education, to use her own expression, "which was with all the advantages that time afforded both for working all sorts of fine work with my needle and learning French, singing, the lute, the virginals and dancing." Yet with all these acquirements the fair writer confesses that she was "wild to that degree that riding, skipping and activity being my delight, I was what the graver people call a hoyting girl"—possibly a seventeenth century anticipation of the land girl of to-day. But when she married she easily adapted herself to the cares and responsibilities of matrimony, presenting her partner with six sons and

eight daughters, not taking into account half-a-dozen other infants, whom the stress of those stormy years brought to an untimely end or an immature beginning.

It may well be imagined that a lady of this persevering disposition would not rest content unless she participated as much as possible in her husband's pursuits. As Sir Richard occupied a high and confidential position in the King's household occasions arose when reticence became necessary. Reticence, doubtless, is a virtue possessed by both sexes; there appears, however, to be a difference in their methods of practice.

On this occasion the wife asked many questions; the husband smiled and equivocated. She renewed her importunity; he embraced her and talked of other things. At supper she ate nothing and expressed a belief that he did not love her, to which he replied by stopping her mouth with kisses. "So we went to bed; I cried; he went to sleep." The narratrix then recounts that the same procedure continued the next day until Sir Richard took the fair inquisitor in his arms and said: "My dearest soul; nothing on earth can afflict me like this; when you ask me of my business it is wholly out of my power to satisfy thee; my life and fortune shall be thine but my honour is my own which I cannot preserve if I communicate the Prince's affairs. I pray thee with this answer rest satisfied."

The whole episode, as daintily related by Lady Fanshawe, is quite charming, far more so than many like scenes in the comedies of the period, and it gives an excellent example both of the gifts of the authoress and of her right and true disposition;

"for his reason and goodness made my folly appear to me so vile that from that day until the day of his death I never thought to ask him any business but that he freely communicated to me."

Though her husband held a high official post in the household, Lady Fanshawe never travelled with the Prince or indeed ever saw him but at church, "for it was not in those days the fashion for honest women, unless they had business, to visit a man's court"; such is the pronouncement of the authoress.

Following the army in its disastrous retreat into Cornwall the royal party made their headquarters at Launceston, "where came many gentlemen of the county to do their duties to his Highness. They were generally loyal to the crown and hospitable to their neighbours; but they are a crafty and censorious nature as most are so far from London."

When, driven from his Father's Kingdom, Prince Charles took refuge in the Isle of Scilly, Sir Richard and Lady Fanshawe followed. "We have put all our present estate into two trunks and carried them aboard with us into a ship commanded by Sir Nicolas Crispe, whose skill and honesty the master and seamen have no opinion of whatever." The crew may have been right in their estimate of Sir Nicolas, but certainly they did not exceed him in the latter virtue of honesty, for they broke open Lady Fanshawe's luggage, stole £60 and everything they could lay their hands on, so, as she dejectedly observes, "after having been pillaged and extremely sick I was set ashore almost dead in the Island of Scilly."

Poor lady, her troubles did not cease with the

voyage ; the island provided no suitable accommodation for so large an influx of visitors. Worn out with fatigue she relates : " I went immediately to bed which was so vile my footman ever lay in a better and we had but three in the whole house. . . . But when I waked in the morning I was so cold I knew not what to do, but the daylight discovered our bed was near swimming with the sea ; which, as the owner told us afterwards, it never did but at spring tides. With this we were destitute of clothes, and meat or fuel for half the court to serve them a month was not to be had in the whole Island. And truly we begged our daily bread of God for we thought every meal was our last."

In relating all the various adventures, Lady Fanshawe habitually punctuates her narrative by interposing the interesting information that either before or after the reported event she contributed an addition to her family, on one occasion producing three infant sons at a fell swoop. In the interval between these periodical visitations she returned to England for the purpose of arranging for a safety pass for her husband so that he might compound with the Parliamentary authorities for his estate, in which enterprise she succeeded sufficiently to allow Sir Richard to remain in London until October, 1647.

The disastrous attempt of Charles I to escape from Hampton Court caused the deepest dejection among the devoted band of followers who remained around the person of their Monarch. Lady Fanshawe visited the King three times during his sojourn in this place. Her account of her final

interview is worthy of remembrance: "The last time I ever saw him when I took my leave I could not refrain from weeping. When he saluted me I prayed God to preserve his Majesty with long life and happy years. He stroked me on my cheek and said: 'Child; if God pleases it shall be so, but both you and I must submit to God's will,' and then he added significantly, 'you know in what hands I am.'"

History has recorded the act those hands committed; it is not the place here to discuss that tragedy, but when Lady Fanshawe concludes by mourning "that the deed then done brought grief to the heart of all Christians not forsaken by God," she utters an expression of belief which stirred the souls of thousands of those whose every instinct of loyal allegiance was outraged by the murder of their Sovereign.

Returning to France in 1648 the authoress and her husband transacted many errands connected with the cause of the exiled royal family, on one occasion finding themselves in Calais in company of the Earl of Strafford and Sir Kenelm Digby.

The latter personage, if the description given by his contemporary, Aubrey, is true, possessed some individual qualities: "He was such a goodly handsome personage, gigantic and of great voice and had so graceful elocution and noble address that had he dropped out of the clouds in any part of the world he would have made himself respected." This statement apparently should be qualified, for, on the same authority, "being envoy for Queen Henrietta Maria to the Pope, he, after some time, grew so

high that he hectored his Holiness and gave him the lie. The Pope said he was mad."

On the occasion of this gentleman's visit to Calais he appears to have acted up to his reputation and "enlarged somewhat more in extraordinary stories than might be averred; and all of them passed with great applause and wonder by the French then at the table. But the concluding one was that barnacles, a bird in Jersey, was first a shell fish to appearance, and from that, sticking upon old wood, became a bird. After some consideration they all unanimously burst out into laughter believing it altogether false, though," adds Lady Fanshawe, "it was the only thing true he had discussed with them."

The French, however, had some excuse for their incredulity, for, up to the present moment, physiological science has failed to trace the direct development of the barnacle goose from the barnacle cirriped.

After this recital we can better understand the motives of Sir Thomas Browne, an author of the previous generation, when he endeavoured, in his book on 'Vulgar Errors,' to dispel the mistaken belief that there were no rainbows before the Flood.

Devotedly attached to her husband, a very worthy gentleman indeed, Lady Fanshawe followed him to Ireland and shared the many adventures which there befell him. Her opinion of the Irish, however, hardly corresponds with that which is prevalent to-day, for she found them "a very loving people to each other but constantly false to strangers."

After being much perturbed by the suspicion that

both she and her husband had caught the plague, the bubonic spots turning out, in reality, to be the result of the ravages of a strenuous domestic flea, she experienced a thrilling adventure which can only be told in her own words:

"From there we went to the Lady Honora O'Brien's, a lady that gave herself out to be unmarried, but few believed it. She was the youngest daughter of the Earl Thomond. There we stayed three nights, the first of which I was surprised at being laid in a chamber where, about one o'clock, I heard a voice that awakened me. I drew the curtain and in the casement of the window I saw by the light of the moon a woman leaning into the window through the casement, in white, with red hair and ghastly complexion. She spoke loud and in a tone I never heard, thrice, 'Ahone'; and then with a sigh more like the wind than breath she vanished, and to me her body looked more like a thick cloud than substance. I was so much affrighted that my hair stood on end and my night clothes fell off. I pulled and pinched your Father who never awakened during the disorder I was in." However when once aroused Sir Richard made amends for his apathy by discoursing at some length on the subject and declaring that such apparitions as reported were much more "usual" in Ireland than in England.

Still conversing in her sprightly manner concerning the adventures and vicissitudes which beset them she gives much interesting information relative to the actual embarkation and voyage to Dover of King Charles II upon his restoration, declaring with

loyal joy that "so great were the acclamations and numbers of the people that they reached like one street from Dover to Whitehall."

The optimistic tone does not continue long. Many pages of the Memoirs contain accounts of the jealousies which divided the ministers of the restored Sovereign, and Lady Fanshawe, her husband not receiving the high honours which she, a dutiful wife, conceived to be his due, felt no hesitation in ascribing many unworthy actions both to the Chancellor, the celebrated Lord Clarendon, and his less famous colleague Sir Edward Nicolas, the Secretary of State.

Possibly in so doing she may have established a precedent which since has been followed by other distinguished female memorialists, and in endeavouring to enhance her husband's undoubted worth and distinguished service, has been led into detailing incidents and imputing motives which owe their origin more to the writer's fertility of imagination than to their fairness of judgment or strict sense of verity.

As a consolation for not receiving a higher ministerial post Sir Richard was appointed Ambassador to Portugal, subsequently as plenipotentiary to Spain, remaining in the latter capacity until his death on June 25th, 1666. In the many vivid descriptions which Lady Fanshawe gives of the great state ceremonies in which she took part, as perhaps may be expected from one who possessed such eminently feminine attributes, she devotes considerable space to the clothing of the various dignitaries then present, the description on one occasion being

so meticulous as to enumerate the actual number of diamond buttons which decorated the trunk hose of a high Spanish official. During these celebrations many gifts were given to her, on the entry into the city of Seville the presentation taking the form of a young lion; "but I desired his Excellency's pardon that I did not accept of it saying I was of so cowardly a make that I durst not keep company with it."

Sir Richard's death brought the Memoirs to a sad end, and it is a deplorable fact that the widow of a distinguished ambassador was perforce compelled to sell her husband's plate to defray the cost of the conveyance of his body, herself and her children back to their native country, her claim for £6600, paid by the ambassador, out of his own estate, for charges incurred in his official capacity on behalf of the Government, remaining totally unsatisfied for more than a year, then being defrayed only in part. It is true that early in the reign King Charles conferred the patent of a baronet upon Sir Richard, and later granted an augmentation of arms—doubtless an honour, but not so substantial a remuneration as the refunding of money out of pocket would have proved.

It was a Stuart attribute to be prone to bestow rewards which cost their donor nothing. Possibly this may have been the motive which prompted Charles II whenever he met anybody with, to use his own designation, "an asking face," to smile graciously and say fervently, "God bless you, my friend, God bless you," then walk away at his "wonted large pace."

From a literary point of view the memoirs of these three writers are chiefly interesting as showing the change of language and style which occurred at or about this period in our national history.

Sir Richard Bulstrode, as in his nature so in his literary efforts, displays a survival of the Tudor times when the education and mode of literary expression of an educated man may be described as comprised in a quotable knowledge of the Classics, tempered by a command of the phraseology of the Bible. Occasionally reminiscent of John Bunyan, the writer intermittently emulates Lord Clarendon in the portentous length of his sentences, the turgidity of his style being only sporadically relieved by glimpses of humour, streaks of heated invectives or aptly applied Latin quotations.

But the Restoration, as in all other periods of disturbance and strenuous activity, produced a change in the type of literature qualified to influence the thoughts of men. Quotations became less freely used; the public mind sought more for the arguments of practical experience than for the formal pronouncements of antiquated authority. And this difference of style is very pronounced in Wellwood, who rarely uses the Stuart idiom, but tells his tale lucidly and effectively, the construction of his work at times faintly anticipating the dignity of Bolingbroke and the polish of Addison.

Charles II, ever attracted by the taste and splendour of the French Court, formed his own artistic standard from the model set therein, the poets and, in a more pronounced degree, the dramatists of his reign following his example,

Molière being the source from which many a Restoration playwright drew his inspiration.

This French influence is plainly seen in Lady Fanshawe's journal; indeed on more than one occasion she uses a French word to express her meaning, as, for instance, when she intimates that "we did rendezvous at a certain place," constantly the turn and spirit of her sentences showing the sway of French conversation and surroundings.

At times, however, she can write good broad English, as, when reciting the loss of her money, she inveighs against the author of the delay, Lord Shaftesbury, "the worst of men who, I have been told, did this to have a bribe. Only I wish I had given one though I had poured it down his throat for the good of mankind."

When perusing the writings of these three actors in a great historic drama, the fact becomes strongly impressed on the reader that at the Restoration the mental condition of the people showed much the same characteristics as existed during the Napoleonic campaigns, and even more so after the prolonged and heartrending struggle of the late war.

On each occasion, in addition to a general spread of personal indulgence, a wave of irreverence and doubt appears to have swept over the country. To-day all ministers of religion complain that in a space of but three years the religious feeling which appeared to be reviving during the war in all classes of the community is now waning and dwindling into either apathy or positive negation.

The zealots of the French Revolution abolished Christianity, substituting for it the Feast of the

Goddess of Reason, most appropriately personified by a woman of known profligate habits. The termination of the rigour of Puritan rule likewise produced the inevitable reaction in the promulgation of a scheme of counterfeit epicureanism, which, from contemporary writers, received the name of Hobbism, from its author, Thomas Hobbes.

The dogma of this creed may be summed up in the sentence that the true destiny of man is pleasure, the only possible motive for action, the only inducement to life, lying in the desire to avoid pain and to obtain enjoyment of mind and body. Our duty is absolutely to ourselves alone, to others only as far as it affects our own enjoyment. Virtue is judicious, for it is apparent that it may conduce to personal pleasure; vice is injudicious, for obviously it frequently produces unpleasant consequences.

Lord Macaulay thought fit to pronounce that Charles II spent his life in suspense between Hobbism and Popery. Like a good many other deductions of Lord Macaulay this remark is inaccurate, but undoubtedly these tenets became very fashionable after the Civil War, and it would not be far from the truth to say that they are equally prevalent in the present day, although probably those who practise them now are profoundly ignorant of Thomas Hobbes, and chiefly remember Charles II only as the admirer of Nell Gwyn, and because he set the fashion of carrying in his arms small and useless dogs.

The effect of these mischievous doctrines appears constantly in the actions of many who lived at the period of the Restoration; but although reference

is made to the laxity of living then prevalent, neither of the memorialists under observation in any way subscribe to the errors of Hobbes. In some instances they appear to have held antagonistic opinions, Wellwood professing severe Protestant tenets, Bulstrode being a sincere Roman Catholic, and Lady Fanshawe a devoted adherent to that Anglican Church for whose ascendancy her beloved sovereign, Charles I, so earnestly strove and so poignantly suffered.

The three memorialists under consideration are but stars of a very inferior magnitude in the great literary constellation which shed its lustre over these times, yet still they fulfil a useful purpose. They throw a light on many intimate details of the lives of famous figures in a great national drama; moreover they demonstrate in the performance of their appointed task—unimportant compositions, it may be, written by not particularly inspired pens—that even in the middle of the seventeenth century the English language, varied and flexible, not only for inspired works but for the relation of ordinary events, formed a most noble literary medium capable of expressing in the fullest degree the experience and the sentiments of those who used it as the vehicle of their thoughts, and, a lesson many scribes of to-day may well lay to heart, this result was obtained without the intrusion of linguistic atrocities or Transatlantic verbal abortions.

Lastly, though it may be added not of least importance at the present juncture in the world's affairs, these old authors teach us the useful lesson that in times of great national trouble, when men's

minds were heavily disturbed and the very framework of society, as then existent, shaken to the foundations, our ancestors maintained their courage and their character, freely giving of their best for the sake of a cause they deemed to be worthy, never, even under the most calamitous circumstances, despairing of the future of their native land. They thought, as we, struggling with many of the same problems should also strive to think, that, in the inspired lines of a poet of to-day—

> "The shadows stay not, but the splendour stays,
> For we have known the high God's purpose
> Fulfilled in freedom; we have seen the Land
> From reeking ashes rise invincible
> To the new Sacrament of Life."

A GREAT POET IN ANOTHER ART—BEETHOVEN.

By Ernest Kiver, F.R.C.O., F.R.S.L.

[Read June 1st, 1921.]

The heading I have ventured to give this paper may perhaps provoke comment from the poet members of this Society, if there be any present—they may object to my calling a musician a poet; but the title "Ton-dichter" was that which Beethoven himself prized the most of all the encomiums lavished upon him, and I hope to prove to you that this title was not undeserved. Within the short limits of a single lecture it is impossible to treat the subject with anything approaching fulness, but a short preliminary sketch of his life and character seems to be due to an audience like the present one, where there may be many who are not in the habit of reading musical biography. I propose, therefore, to give a rapid survey of his life first, then to sketch his personality, and finally to discuss him as a tone-poet.

Ludwig van Beethoven was born at Bonn, on the Rhine, probably on December 16th, 1770. I say *probably* because there is no certainty as to the day of birth, but, as it was customary in those times to baptise infants the day after their appearance, and as his baptism was registered on December 17th, there is good ground for assuming that the 16th was

the day of his birth. The family was obviously of Dutch extraction, but all the circumstances of his birth, training and environment justify us in considering Beethoven a German musician.

His grandfather and father were musicians in the Court band of the Elector of Cologne at Bonn, the grandfather being a bass singer and the father a tenor. The grandfather was evidently a man of strong character and fine integrity, and his memory was a precious possession to Ludwig all through his life. Unfortunately he tried to supplement his salary as court singer by running a small wine merchant's business, and this was the beginning of the deterioration of his family, for the wife became an intemperate, and had eventually to be confined in a convent at Cologne, and her vice was inherited by her only son—the father of Ludwig. This son contracted a marriage with a daughter of the chief cook at Ehrenbreitstein, a girl who had been chambermaid to some of the court families at Bonn, and Ludwig was the second of their seven children.

Not a very promising parentage for a budding genius, yet one must admit that, eugenics notwithstanding, genius will surmount such initial difficulties as bad parentage. The mother died when the son was 16, and the father sank lower and lower until he lost his appointment as court singer. It must have been a pathetic sight to see the Beethoven boys helping their drunken father home in his later years. But we are anticipating a little. The father, while weak in character, was a sufficiently good musician to detect signs of the young Ludwig's abilities very early in the day; he gave the lad the

best instruction his means would allow and kept him to his music with a stern, strict hand. The result was that the boy made his first public appearance as a pianist at the age of 7, was made deputy organist at the Court chapel at 11½ years, and chief organist at the age of 13. At this age he had to terminate his ordinary schooling as a consequence of his father's increasing financial difficulties. The next twelve years show unceasing activity as a performer, and it is curious to note that his real entry into fame and position was made through his performing abilities, and not through the compositions which were afterwards to win him such a prominent place in the Valhalla of Art. He wrote but little, and he published nothing, until the year 1795—the 25th of his age (how different from Mozart, who could point to 300 works composed before he was 24!). His pianoforte playing was the passport to the warm interest taken in him by art-loving patrons such as Count Waldstein, the Countess von Breuning, the Countess von Hatzfeld and others whose kindly help has been immortalised by the inscription of their names in the dedication of his works.

When Beethoven was 22 the Elector of Cologne, at his own expense, sent the young man to Vienna to study with Haydn. It appears that his first lesson with his new teacher cost about 9½d.; whether it was that the cheapness of the lessons made him doubt their value, whether Haydn was irregular in his lesson-giving or whether it was that there was incompatibility of temper no historian seems to be able to decide, but after a time young Beethoven left Haydn and transferred himself to another

teacher—Albrechtsberger. This new pupilage lasted even less than the earlier one, and it left Albrechtsberger with the impression of his pupil as a revolutionary in music. "Have nothing to do with him," said Albrechtsberger to an inquirer; "he has learnt nothing, and will never do anything in decent style."

And if it be true that the pupil's constant rejoinder to every reproof of his teacher was, "I say it *is* right," it may be granted that there were good grounds for Albrechtsberger's irritation. Evidently Beethoven was not a very docile pupil, and he seems to have taken the stand that while rules in art may be deduced from the work of previous artists, thought must not be fettered by them—it must be free and left to work out its own lines. On the other hand, what I have to tell you later on will, I think, prove to you that his art work shows evolution rather than revolution.

Vienna, then, was the new home of young Beethoven's activities, and, as it turned out, Vienna was to be his home for the rest of his life. True it is that for a time he left the place, feeling the intellectual atmosphere of the pleasure-loving Viennese to be an unpromising soil for the ideas that were germinating in his mind. With this feeling he set out for Berlin in 1796 in the hope of finding something more of austerity and solidity than was to be looked for in Vienna. But he was doomed to disappointment; instead of the manliness of character he expected to find in the colder, sterner north, he was confronted with a voluptuous luxury to which his art was only a handmaid; and he

was inclined, perhaps unfairly, to attribute the uncongenial atmosphere to Voltaire's residence and influence in Berlin. His stay in the north was of short duration and he returned to Vienna, and practically never left Austria for the rest of his days. His abilities won him many influential friends in this new sphere, some of their names being recorded on his different works.

Now began his life of composition, and his creative efforts made their appearance in a steady stream. Money appears to have been fairly plentiful with him at this time; what with subsidies from wealthy patrons, and receipts from the sale of his compositions, his circumstances were such as to allow him to give full vein to the desire to create. Anything like a detailed list of his compositions would be impossible in the limits of time at my command, and would also be somewhat tedious for an audience like the present. It comprises 9 symphonies for orchestra, 9 overtures for orchestra, 1 concerto for violin and orchestra, 5 concertos for pianoforte and orchestra, 2 quintets for stringed instruments, 16 quartets for strings, 5 trios for strings, 8 trios for pianoforte and strings, 10 sonatas for pianoforte and violin, 5 sonatas for pianoforte and 'cello, 38 sonatas for pianoforte alone, 21 sets of variations for pianoforte, 50 to 60 odd pieces for varied instrumental combinations, 2 masses, 1 oratorio, 1 opera, 66 songs, 7 books of English, Scotch, Irish, Welsh and Italian songs for the unusual combination of voice, pianoforte, violin and 'cello, and about 30 other vocal pieces of varied character —not a bad record of mental labour in the space of

thirty-one or thirty-two years. A few of these works will be touched on later in this paper.

At the age of 28 began a grave trouble which increased as the years went on, and which was the occasion of great humiliation to him towards the end. Whether the cause was congenital disease or was youthful indiscretion and lack of care may not be known with any certainty, but he became gradually and hopelessly deaf—almost the greatest conceivable calamity to one in his position. He fought against it courageously and managed to conduct performances of his works for the next fifteen years; in 1816 he took to an ear trumpet, in 1822 he attempted to conduct his opera 'Fidelio,' but it was such a complete fiasco that he never exposed himself to this humiliation again.

Another cause of trouble to him in his latter years lay in his unreasoning devotion to a worthless nephew, who involved him in all sorts of worries—legal, financial and otherwise.

At length his physical frame began to wear out, dropsy set in and he died on March 26th, 1827, in his fifty-seventh year—comparatively speaking a young man.

In the words of one biographer, "No mourning wife, no son or daughter wept at his grave, but *a world* wept at it." No less than 20,000 people attended the funeral.

It is pleasant to know that our English forefathers were able to earn his gratitude and esteem. The house of Broadwood sent him one of their finest pianofortes in 1817 (a present which he prized highly), and the Philharmonic Society sent him a sum of £100 near the end of his life.

We now turn to Beethoven's person and personality. He was a short man, not more than 5 ft. 5 in. in height, but broadly and sturdily built. Doubtless many of you are familiar with his portraits, which show his firm and determined mouth, his piercing eyes, and the remarkable frontal development of his head. In his youth he was somewhat of a dandy, but in later years he went to the other extreme.

His character may be concisely summed up as variegated. He showed courage in battling against his misfortune; he showed sturdy independence and freedom from sycophancy somewhat rare in an age when artists lived more or less upon the bounty of a few patrons; he had an affectionate disposition which prompted many acts of kindness on his part. But against this side it must be admitted that his manners were often very uncouth, and that he could be as irascible, obstinate, rancorous, and unjust as any man, also that his eccentricities were innumerable. Yet are we to put him down as an unmannerly boor, ungrateful for, and unmindful of all the kindness and benefits that were showered upon him? I think not. I think the truer and juster view would be to realise him as a being of extreme sensitiveness—one who, living in a large degree (as was said just now) by the subsidies of wealthy patrons, and being cordially welcomed into their social circles, yet felt himself to belong to a world of thought far removed from their world, and immeasurably higher in some ways. The Viennese of his day were easy-going pleasure lovers, and his introspective nature was forced into an inner psychic

life laying leagues apart from the things that interested them, and deepening in proportion as his infirmity grew upon him. Egotistical he undoubtedly was, but who shall say the world has not gained by it?

I have now to try and prove his title to be called a tone poet.

What is a poet, or shall we ask first what is poetry? Rather than give you any definition of my own I would ask to be allowed to read to you what others have written. Coleridge said, "Poetry is the blossom and the fragrancy of all human knowledge, human thoughts, human passions, emotions, and language."

Mr. J. Middleton Murry, in these later days, says of poetry, "All that can be demanded of any spiritual activity of man we must demand from poetry. It must be adequate to all our experience; it must not be a *diversion from*, but a *culmination of* life. . . . Poetry is the sovereign language of the human spirit, the sublimation of all experience." If this be a proper description of poetry, then the man who writes verse according to this somewhat high order of excellence is a poet. Not a mere stringer-together of rhymes, not a man who clothes didactic ideas in verse, but I submit to you that the man who, taking great and noble events, vests them in such great and noble lines as shall touch his readers to fine issues is a poet; also the man who takes the ideas and aspirations germinating in his own and others' minds and presents them with all the glamour of beautiful imagery, painting them in all the keen intense brightness of his own feelings and emotions, and again touching his readers to

fine issues, is a poet. If I be anywhere near accuracy in this statement then Beethoven was a great poet—a poet in tone.

The medium in which he worked may not appeal to every ear in the same way as the spoken or written word, but to those that are at all susceptible to its beauty and suggestions music appeals infinitely more intensely and instantly than language. Do not take this contention as a mere idea of mine, but let me quote to you the opinions of others much better qualified to judge the question. An old preceptor of mine, the late Sir George Macfarren, was speaking of the connection between the fine arts. He said, "All the arts are connected, and the reflection of one upon another enhances the beauty of each. In sculpture we see the imitation of natural forms, in painting we have form with colour added, in acting we have form and colour and gesture. In literature these three qualities are lost; but in uttered speech we have the thoughts of the persons who are the subject of the work of art. We enter on the inner imitation of Nature. . . . Music utters what is beyond the reach of words; and whereas speech may describe our feeling, music goes beyond the description, and produces the feeling itself."

Mr. Edward Carpenter says much the same thing in 'Angels' Wings': "Certain it is with regard to music that in some obscure manner the movements of sound are associated with all the changing shades of human emotion. The musical composer plays in marvellous wise upon the whole gamut of human feeling even as he plays on the keyboard of his

instrument. There is no art in which feeling moves more direct from the author to his audience. Not even with the divine use of words is there so close a touch."

A few years ago, in a very able paper read to this Society by Mr. Edwin Evans, he quoted a long extract from that consummate master of words, Walter Pater, bearing on the same subject. May I crave your patience while I read a little of this: "All art constantly aspires towards the condition of music. For while in all other works of art it is possible to distinguish the matter from the form, yet it is the constant effort of art to obliterate this distinction. This artistic ideal, this perfect identification of form and matter, is most completely realised in the art of music." One more quotation, and I think I shall have proved that instant appeal of music which I claimed a few moments ago. This is from Robert Browning's "Parleyings with Certain People":

> "There is no truer truth obtainable
> By man than comes of music . . .
> . . . . to match and mate
> Feeling with knowledge—make as manifest
> Soul's work as mind's work, . . .
> . . . . have the plain result to show
> How we feel, hard and fast as what we know—
> This were the prize, and is the puzzle which
> Music essays to solve . . . .
> All arts endeavour this, and she the most
> Attains thereto."

So you see there is something to be said for music, isn't there?

Before I come back to Beethoven, allow me to say a word or two about musical construction. In the plastic arts of sculpture and architecture, as in the graphic art of drawing and painting, the complete work of the artist is presented at once to the beholder, its form and proportion, its colour or blending of colours, its harmoniousness, in fact its totality is visible in one perception. In poetry and prose this is not so, but the ideas therein embodied are recognisable by every kind of intelligence, and there is always the possibility of turning back to trace an argument, or a sequence of ideas. In music it is different. There is nothing *concrete* in musical ideas; they are always *abstract*, and in that respect more difficult to grasp. Therefore the prodigality of ideas which may be possible in a piece of literature is not a commendable thing in a piece of music. Indeed after the two fundamental principles, first of contrast and variety, and next of the gratefulness of repetition, are consistently maintained, *paucity*, or at all events *economy* of ideas is essential to an easy following of it. The simplest form of a musical piece is: (A) statement of idea, (B) contrasting idea, and (A) restatement of first idea, and practically all other forms are modifications or enlargements of this plan.

At the time Beethoven entered the musical firmament these two principles of contrast and repetition had found their highest development and synthesis in the form known as sonata form. Will you bear with me for a moment or two while I try to give you a little tabloid instruction as to what a sonata is, otherwise I shall be using terms that may be

incomprehensible to some of you. First of all as to the name. Some 300 years ago or more, when instrumental music began to break away from its subjection to and connection with choral music, a piece or group of pieces that was sung was called a cantata (from the Italian word "cantare," to sing); a piece or group of pieces *played* was called a suonata, later sonata, from the Italian word "suonare," to sound. The great Sebastian Bach wrote suites of dance movements which embodied the principle of variety in the contrast of their pace and their style, but which achieved unity by all being in the same key or tonality. The line of cleavage began when composers chose a different key for their second movement—the sonata as we understand it began to emerge, and to-day the term stands for a group of three or four movements, of which the slow movement is in a different key from the others, and of which another movement may be an imitation of the old minuet dance-movement, but the first and last movements are always in the same key, generally quick movements, and far removed in style from the old dance movements. Then each of these three or four movements is a complete entity in itself, and has its own completely rounded form, derived, as I told you a minute or two ago, from the simple formula of A.B.A. The first movement of a sonata generally has the most highly organised form of the set, and may be summed up concisely somewhat in this way: (A) Statement of principal theme or idea; (B) statement of secondary theme in a contrasted key; (C) a development of either, or both, of the foregoing themes, or of portions of them; after C a restate-

ment of A and B, followed sometimes by a peroration, or coda as it is called. This you will observe is somewhat similar to a preacher's discourse: statement of text and thesis, discussion of arguments and ideas pertinent thereto, final summing up, and peroration.

Now to return to Beethoven. He found that the sonata, in the course of its evolution, had reached a highly finished form in the writings of his immediate predecessors Haydn and Mozart; he accepted that form, and the vast majority of his compositions will be found to belong to it, although that is not to say that he left it where he found it; on the contrary he enriched it and modified it in many ways.

Our short survey of his work will therefore deal with that form—with his sonatas for pianoforte. This restriction of our consideration to the pianoforte sonatas by no means implies depreciation of his string quartets, works for pianoforte and strings, for choir and for orchestra; but the pianoforte sonatas are much more familiar to most people, and they are generally considered to show his development as a creative artist more completely than his other writings. Again, his first thirty-one works of importance are all cast in sonata form, and the majority of them are actually solo sonatas for pianoforte.

In his early works he adheres more or less rigidly to the form as he found it, but with a distinct difference of texture.

In Haydn and Mozart one gets of course beautiful ideas, but one gets the impression that they were interested before all else in the architectural aspect

of their compositions, not in the emotional or intellectual character. They were rather in the position of the child who revels in the patterns he is able to make from his box of toy bricks. Their works give the impression of being built in blocks (*chunky* in fact), and one sometimes feels that any given chunk could be exchanged for any other chunk of similar key and time measure without much loss to the artistic unity of the work. With Beethoven the case is quite different. With him every work is a specimen of organic growth, of intellectual development from his starting point. His first sonata shows this difference. Curiously enough the first theme in his first movement commences with the same germinal idea as the first theme of the last movement in Mozart's well-known "Symphony in G Minor"—the notes of a simple chord being sounded one above the other in succession until a climax note is reached. Mozart follows this by a passage which really borders on the trivial, and then presents an arpeggio motive similar to the first, and again another trivial embroidery passage.

Beethoven starts, as I said, with the same root idea, but the passage immediately following his climax note is a direct outcome from that root idea—is in fact a repetition of the same figure on higher notes of the scale, and its effect is a heightening and intensifying of the idea. Then he takes his climax note and plays with *that*, reiterating it and intensifying it, all before it reaches his first real point of repose, or cadence as it is called. Now this kind of writing shows much closer texture than Mozart's presentation of the same idea; and following on you

will find, if you look at it, that the old-time chunkiness has disappeared, and that in place of this there is logical growth and development which almost has the character of *inevitability* as it merges into the second theme.

In other words Beethoven had profited to the full by his study of Sebastian Bach's forty-eight preludes and fugues for the clavichord (a work or series of works which has been aptly described as the old testament of musical literature, while Beethoven's sonatas for pianoforte are the new testament). He learnt from old Bach how to develop the latent power and meaning of his themes—he learnt the secret of "unity in variety," the highest law in all artistic musical creation. But there was more than mere difference of texture between the writing of Beethoven and his immediate predecessors. His works show much more *emotional* intensity, and he himself used the term "poetic idea" to describe what underlay the mere musical structure. And here we begin to see what he meant by claiming to be a tone poet. This emotional and poetic basis to his compositions continued to become more and more prominent in proportion to his artistic development. To again quote Mr. Carpenter: "Beethoven was always trying to express *himself;* yet not, be it said, so much any little phase of himself or of his feelings, as the total of his life-experience. He was always trying to reach down and get the fullest, deepest utterance of which his subject in hand was capable, and to relate it to the rest of his experience. But being such as he was, and a master-spirit of his age, when he

reached into himself for his own expression, he reached to the expression also of others—to the expression of all the thoughts and feelings of that wonderful revolutionary time, seething with the legacy of the past and germinal with the hopes and aspirations of the future. "Music came to him, rich already with gathered voices; but he enlarged its language beyond all precedent for the needs of a new humanity."

May I be allowed to say a word or two in parenthesis here? When I told you Beethoven left school at the age of 13 I hope you didn't run away with the notion that he was for ever afterwards an ignoramus. On the contrary he was an omnivorous reader from the age of 17, and acquired a thorough knowledge of German literature, came under Goethe's influence at the age of 20, and always had a love for our English Shakespeare. He was saturated to the core with the humanitarian and republican ideals that were fermenting through Europe at the time. Later on his careful study of the British Constitution is said to have cured him of his republicanism, but he never lost his humanitarianism.

In our days of easy education, when everything is in the direction of inventing patent methods for cramming pupils with facts, and turning them all out on the same pattern and generally making parrots of them, one is inclined to believe that the man of one hundred years ago who educated himself, while not perhaps having a vast amount of *knowledge*, was probably a deeper and truer *thinker*.

It is customary to divide Beethoven's creative life into three periods. The first period runs from his

twenty-fifth to his thirty-first year—when he was, so to speak, finding himself. As I have said, he accepted the sonata form as left by Haydn and Mozart, and moulded his thoughts to that plan, but with a finer texture and a stronger emotional content.

I propose to omit any discussion of his first seven sonatas, and to take perhaps the two best known of this period—the "Pathetic Sonata" and the "Funeral March Sonata." The "Pathetic" presents a new feature at once: it begins with a fairly long grave introduction—a break with the conventions he had scrupulously adhered to in the preceding seven. This grave introduction is built almost entirely on the opening motive of a sharp rhythmical pattern, and generally sounding the note of wistful complaining; when this is merged into the first movement proper the mood changes, and is much more restless and insurgent; the second theme of the movement might almost be set to the words "Why are things thus?" It certainly has the character of fretful questioning in its first sentence; the second sentence is more decisive, and seems to say, "Cease questioning, endure and work." After the exposition of these ideas he interpolates a few bars from the introduction (serving to give homogeneity to the movement, also breaking the restless rushing the music has just been showing, and likewise giving an opportunity for a clever display of what is known in musical phraseology as enharmonic modulation—forgive the technical term). He then proceeds in most daring fashion to develop and discuss his first theme proper combined with the grave motive in a key far, far removed from his

original key—a thing which must have given a bad shock to the pedants of his time. Fortunately for them he makes it short, and the recapitulation section of the movement follows orthodox lines except for another interpolation, and short development of the grave motive just before the furious strenuous close. Now follows the slow movement (adagio cantabile, *i. e.* slow and singing in style). But the pianoforte is really inadequate for the proper expression of one of the most lovely melodies ever invented; it calls for sustained tone, and still more sustained tone, and one feels that only a rich violoncello can do justice to its tender yearning. The movement is too well known to need detailed comment, and my time will not allow of it. The final movement of the sonata has been described as embodying a happy courageous submission to inevitability, but I must confess it does not affect me in that way; I feel that Beethoven intended it to be a bright, merry movement, albeit that the key is minor instead of major (something in the nature of the happy ending all good novels are supposed to give); indeed he perpetrates a small joke in the middle of it—a sort of parody of a bungler's attempt at a little fugue.

We now come to the "Funeral March Sonata," Op. 26. Here is another innovation: his first movement is an air with variations, and not the ordinary first movement at all. The idea of variations for pianoforte gives one a shudder, and one's mind immediately rushes to the hideous tinkling drawing-room trivialities usually associated with the term, but these variations of Beethoven's are not at all of

that type. A theme of dignified simplicity is followed by five variations of surpassing interest, and Beethoven shows, not a series of brilliant displays, but a gradual unfolding and development of the potentialities of that theme. The "Funeral March" is said to have been written at the suggestion of some friends. Beethoven wasn't *always* obstinate, and, if the story be true, we owe thanks to those friends for a fine, noble piece of music. It is entitled "Funeral March on the Death of a Hero." Its effect is made without melody; it lies in skilful manipulation of harmony and key changes; perhaps the middle section of it savours a little of banality, with its obvious allusion to drums and trumpets, but that is soon forgotten in the return of the majestic harmonies, the poignancy of the peroration, and the quiet resignation of its ending.

The sonata commonly known as the "Moonlight Sonata" is classed by some commentators as belonging to Beethoven's first period too, but it seems to me that the emotional content so immensely outweighs the form that it should more properly be placed in his second period. It is dedicated to the Countess Giulietta Guicciardi, a young lady for whom he had conceived a romantic but hopeless passion. This, in conjunction with his increasing deafness, threw him into a state of great despondency, and this sonata is the outcome of it. The title "Moonlight" was not given to it by Beethoven, nor do I think it describes correctly the poetic idea underlying the first movement. To me it represents the very essence of despair, without any illuminating ray of hope. It tears the heart-strings of anyone who is

responsive to music, and its somewhat irregular form is quite forgotten as it grips our emotional ear to the shutting up of the intellectual ear. In the last movement despair is changed to seething, boiling passion; the strong insurgent passages I spoke of as belonging to the "Pathetic Sonata" are milk and water compared to this. Every feeling one can associate with grief, expostulation and rage amounting almost to frenzy is exhibited in this movement—truly it is a "kicking against the pricks"! So strongly predominant is the emotional side of these two movements that I think we are justified in regarding them as belonging to his second period—the space of time from 1802 to 1814—the period in which (to again quote Mr. Carpenter) "he gives his own special individuality its fullest, deepest, and most artistic expression." To this period are generally assigned the "Waldstein," the "Appassionata," and the "Lebewohl Sonatas." In the "Waldstein" Beethoven returns to the standard form for his first movement, but by no means to the detriment of its underlying idea, which seems to me to be restless resistless energy, sometimes slightly suppressed, but generally very exuberant. A grateful variety is supplied by the placidity of the second theme with its lovely figuration, but energy is the predominant feeling of the movement as a whole. The second number of the sonata was originally what is now known as the "Andante in F," but a friend having suggested that the whole sonata was far too long (to Beethoven's excessive annoyance, be it said), further reflection convinced the composer that his friend was right, and he substituted the intermezzo which now serves as an

introduction to the last movement. The theme of this last movement is said to be founded on a national melody of the lower Rhine district—an additional compliment to his old friend and patron Count Waldstein, to whom he dedicated the sonata. This theme is of happy, sunny simplicity, and gives the poetic basis to the movement, although there are sections of abounding energy like that of the first. By the way I remember reading somewhere an amusing story about this sonata. Somebody, his publisher I presume, had been suggesting that his music wasn't difficult and brilliant enough—"Why don't you give us something like Herr Hummel's or Herr Dussek's pieces?" Beethoven's immediate response was a growl, but after a few weeks he walked into the publisher's shop one morning, dashed a MS. down upon the counter, shouted "there's your brilliant piece," and stalked out.

Another well-known sonata is the "Appassionata," not so called by the composer, but well deserving of the name by reason of its emotional content. Passion is the predominating feature, and even the suavity of the second theme is coloured and broken in upon by this same passion. The movement being a long one and requiring close attention, Beethoven makes the second movement, a simple, quiet theme with variations; these are quite easy to follow, and they give the mind a rest before the turmoil and stress of the last movement.

One other sonata of this period—the "Lebewohl"—may be briefly mentioned as being one of the very few pieces of definite programme music perpetrated by Beethoven. His general rule was what he wrote

on his "Pastoral Symphony," "Expression of feeling rather representation of scenes," but in this sonata he labels his movements "Farewell," "Absence," and "Return," the three movements in turn expressing the feelings of grief, loneliness, and joy.

Beethoven's third period is generally dated from 1814 to his death thirteen years later. Mr. Carpenter says of this period, "The results of a lifetime are gathered up, as it were, in a final message to the world." The late Sir Hubert Parry said of it, "His mood is less energetic and exuberant, and more concentrated, more reflective. There is more thought and more experience of life in this period, and if less of geniality than in his middle life, infinitely wider range of feeling, characteristic expression and style. It seems as if his art had widened from being the mere expression of his own personality, and had become the interpreter of the innermost joys and sorrows of all human creatures." Wordsworth's idea of the highest poetry, "Emotion remembered in tranquillity," may occur to some of you in this connection.

"He was filled full with the curse of his time, with its bitterness, hollowness, and thousandfold contradictions till his heart was like to break; but he subdued all this, rose victorious, and manifoldly by word and act showed others that come after how to do the like." That last sentence was written by Thomas Carlyle on the death of Goethe, but it seems equally applicable to our Beethoven.

The five sonatas that emanate from this third period

of Beethoven's fully bear out the remarks of the commentators I have just been quoting, but space forbids my giving any details of them, also they are much too difficult for the average amateur to play through; those who wish to know them should lose no opportunity of hearing Op. 101, Op. 106, Op. 110, and Op. 111 performed by great recitalists. Suffice it to say that they are full to the brim of close earnest thought and feeling, the thoughts and feelings of what the French call "le contemplateur" —the man who has passed through the storms of life, and is now content to sit still and view the universal human life as a whole and from outside.

And now I am come to the end of my tax upon your patience. I have confined myself to the pianoforte sonatas for the reasons I gave you before. It would have been a fascinating study to consider his other works—his string quartets, his combinations for pianoforte and strings, his opera, his masses, and above all his orchestral symphonies, but this would have entailed what is called in another place an all-night sitting. If any of you have the good fortune to know some of these other works already or to hear them in the future, you will find in them just what I have been trying to describe to you in connection with the sonatas—not a mere pattern of musical sounds, but the innermost thoughts and feelings of a noble lofty soul. What he wrote on his great 'Missa Solennis' may be fitly applied to all his works, "From the heart it came, to the heart may it go."

CLASSICAL METRES IN ENGLISH POETRY.

By The Very Rev. William R. Inge, D.D., F.R.S.L., F.B.A., Dean of St. Paul's.

[Read October 20th, 1920.]

Different languages have a natural affinity for different metres, and a metre which is transplanted from one language to another often changes its character. The chief cause is that each nation has its own way of speaking. There are four ways of emphasising a syllable: (1) It may be spoken louder than the rest of the word; this is commonly called stress accent, though some, like Kingsley, would have us reserve the word accent for tone, and would revive the Greek words *arsis* and *thesis* for the stressed and non-stressed syllables respectively. (2) A longer time may be given to one syllable than to another; this is called quantity. (3) The pitch of the voice may be varied, the important syllable being pronounced on a higher note. This is called pitch or tone accent. (4) The important syllable may be articulated more precisely. In English, I may say parenthetically, we often think we are using (1) when we are really using (4).

The Greek accents, as is well known, are musical notes. The Greeks were able to distinguish not only a higher and a lower note, but a higher followed by a lower in the same syllable, which they indicated by putting a circumflex accent over a vowel. Our

appreciation of Greek poetry must be affected by our inability to use the pitch accent, which I have called (3). We are not peculiar in this respect, for the Romans could not manage the pitch accent either, and when they pronounced Greek words they tended to turn the acute accent into a long quantity. And the Greeks themselves, or those who spoke Greek after them, lost the pitch accent too, and the accents, which were still retained, dragged the quantity with them. That is why we find *sofīa* in late Latin, and why a late Latin poet produces the egregious hendecasyllable "Æschȳlus Sophocles et Euripīdes." In modern Greek the assimilation of quantity to accent is complete. I heard the Electra of Sophocles performed at Athens, and though the actors made some feeble attempt to mark the metre, they were quite unsuccessful. The iambic rhythm was wholly destroyed. It is absurd to suppose that ancient Greek was pronounced in this way. In classical Greek pitch accent and quantity never interfered with each other, and there were only two quantities, long and short. Perhaps this could hardly have been maintained, but for the fact that in Greek literature quantitative verse came before prose, and the Homeric dialect was clearly formed for the Homeric metre.

In Latin, as I have said, pitch accent was not used, although the modern Italians do use it in conversation. The stress accent in Latin, which I have called (1), was strong—stronger than in Greek, though not quite so strong as in English. The Romans also used what I have called (4); they slurred unaccented syllables, especially those ending

in *s* and *m*. In early Latin poetry final *s* may be elided; in all Latin poetry final *m* must be elided before a vowel. The indigenous Latin metre, the Saturnian, seems to have been scanned by accent rather than by quantity. The best known example is the boast of Naevius about himself:

> "Immortales mortales si foret fas flere
> Flerent divae Camenae Naevium poetam;
> Itaque postquam est Orci traditus thesauro
> Obliti sunt Romai loquier lingua Latina."

This metre is substantially the same as "The Queen was in her parlour eating bread and honey," and, if I am not wrong, it reappears slightly modified in Meredith's "Love in a Valley":

> "Under yonder beech-tree single on the greensward,
> Couched with her arms behind her golden head,
> Knees and tresses folded to slip and ripple idly,
> Lies my young love sleeping in the shade."

But the "horridus Saturnius" was discarded as barbarous as soon as the Romans became familiar with Greek poetry. They borrowed both the hexameter and the iambic trimeter. The latter is used with every variety of licence by Plautus; the hexameter was modified by the difference of Latin from Greek. Greek is rich in dactyls, Latin in heavy spondees. Kingsley tried the experiment of counting the spondees (omitting the final foot in each line) in 50 lines of Homer, and then in 50 lines of Latin poetry. The result was—in Homer 48 spondees, in Lucretius 87, in Virgil 116, in Ovid about the same; in his own "Andromeda" 31. English is even poorer in spondees than Greek. The different effect

of the hexameter in Latin and Greek may be judged by comparing—

"ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἐν αἰγιαλῷ πολυηχέϊ κῦμα θαλάσσης
ὄρνυτ' ἐπασσύτερον Ζεφύρου ὑπὸ κινήσαντος,
πόντῳ μέν τε πρῶτα κορύσσεται, αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα
χέρσῳ ῥηγνύμενον μεγάλα βρέμει, ἀμφὶ δέ τ' ἄκρας
κυρτὸν ἰὸν κορυφοῦται, ἀποπτύει δ' ἁλὸς ἀχνην."

with—

"In caeloque deum sedes et templa locarunt,
Per caelum volvi quia sol et luna videntur,
Luna dies et nox et noctis signa severa
Noctivagaeque faces caeli flammaeque volantes
Nubila ros imbres nix venti fulmina grando
Et rapidi fremitus et murmura magna minarum."

or still more with this from Ennius:

"Non cauponantes bellum sed belligerantes
Ferro non auro litem cernamus utrique."

Ennius' failures are sometimes unrelieved spondees, like—

"Sparsis hastis longis campus splendet et horret,"

or even—

"Cives Romani tum facti sunt Campani."

The Homeric hexameter has a slight tendency to run into anapaests, though much less so than the English. We unconsciously scan English hexameters as anapaests, and therefore prefer them to be almost purely dactylic; as Coleridge says:

"This is a galloping measure, a hop, and a trot, and a gallop."

Latin anapaests are a dead failure; this metre is repugnant to the language.

The Greek pentameter could not be transplanted; Catullus tried it, and was not very successful. The Ovidian pentameter is a marvellous and brilliant success, but it is not at all like Greek. The Horatian Alcaic is another brilliant success, one of the grandest of all metres, as Tennyson says; but again, it is not the Greek metre, which gives quite a different effect, much lighter and less dignified. I will defer my remarks about the sapphic till we come to English sapphics.

To the English ear no metre is more suited to Latin than the long trochaic; but after Ennius had tried it with success it fell into disrepute, being associated with lampoons and the like, till it is revived in the swan song of Latin poetry, the "Pervigilium Veneris":

"Illa cantat, nos tacemus, quando ver venit meum?
Quando fiam uti chelidon ut tacere desinam?
Cras amet qui numquam amavit, quique amavit cras amet."

Tennyson caught the lilt in his "May Queen."

In Latin, as in Greek, there was no uncertainty about quantities when once quantitative scansion was adopted. The only false quantity I can remember in Latin poetry is *rūdere* in "Persius."

To turn to our own language. We do not use pitch-accent at all. Our stress accent is very strong. We have about four quantities, and unfortunately some of the commonest words are between long and short. Tennyson said he thought he knew the quantity of every syllable in English, except perhaps the last syllable of *scissors*; but what is the quantity

of *and*, *but*, and of the second syllable of *carpenter?* The difficulty which this causes in English quantitive poetry, written in ancient metres, combined with the paucity of real spondees, is largely compensated by the great number of syllables which may be legitimately treated as common, and by our free use of the slur in unaccented syllables. Take, for instance, this accidental hexameter in the Psalms:

"Ponder my words, O Lord, consider my meditation."

The shortening of the second syllable of *ponder* before *my* is quite legitimate in English, because we do not sound the final *r*, and the lengthening of the last syllable in *consider* is also legitimate. It is a bad line only because *pondĕr mў* is immediately followed by *consīdēr mў*, thus calling attention to the licence.

"Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, who is it that smote thee?"

contains two false quantities—*untō*, and *thăt smote thee; that hit thee* would scan.

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning?"

is a good line, though the shortening of both *art* and *thou* makes the first dactyl too heavy.

The best hexameter in the Bible is—

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection."

The large number of these accidental hexameters in good prose should be remembered by those who say that the metre is unsuited to English.

It is an utter mistake to say that the classical rules of quantity do not apply to English poetry. We have our own rules for lengthening or shortening syllables, and I shall mention some of these rules presently, but we do treat them as long and short. An English heroic line consists of five iambi or spondees and their trisyllabic equivalents; it is sharply distinguished from a trochaic measure.

Foot-scansion, equivalence, and substitution are, as Saintsbury says, the key to scan all good English poetry, *e. g.* that of Milton. Trisyllabic feet, which some recent critics have strangely tried to banish from Milton by hook or by crook, have always been allowed in English poetry, and are very frequent in "Paradise Lost." As examples of trisyllabic equivalence, which may be found on almost every page of "Paradise Lost," we will take—

"And Tirĕsĭăs and Phineus, prophets old" (tribrach in second foot).

"Filĭăl obedience as a sacrifice" (tribrach in first).

"Therefore thў hŭmĭliātion shall exalt" (tribrach in second).

Substitution or anacrusis (transposition of a long and short syllable) is often used with great effect:

"A mind *not to* be changed by time or place.
Me me *only* just object of his ire.
For one restraint, *lords of* the world besides."

This is a most valuable licence in English poetry, and the fact that it cannot possibly be used in classical metres is one of the chief drawbacks to their employment in English. But some of the

examples quoted by critics from Milton are not to the point, *e. g.* in—

"Beyond all past example and *future*,"

we are unquestionably to pronounce *future* as in Latin; and in the line—

"*Universal* reproach, far worse to bear,"

we may say that the line is designedly unmetrical, like Tennyson's—

"On the bald street breaks the blank day."

The two lines are triumphs of the poet's art.

I wish now to give some of the rules which determine quantity in English.

(1) Pure vowel sound does not determine quantity. We may find in Milton, and in every other poet, hundreds of instances, like ĕternal, ŏbedience, prŏclaim, and conversely like metrōpolis, hōnour. A monstrous heresy has been propounded, and has met with some support, that in English a consonant is doubled to shorten the preceding syllable. It is difficult to prove a negative, but being in a defiant mood I challenge the Poet Laureate and his henchmen to name a single word in the English language in which the doubling of a consonant shortens the preceding syllable. Surely I am right in saying that the doubling of a consonant always indicates that the preceding vowel is long by position. The only exception I can think of is *desert* and *dessert*, which is not a fair example, because *dessert* is French; I counter this instance with *gallant* and *galant*. Compare *below* and *bellow*; *suborn* and *stubborn*; *redeem* and *redden*: *agreement* and *aggregate*; call an Irishman who spells himself McDonnell,

McDonéll, or *vice versâ*, and see what he says. There are no longer syllables in English than the first syllables of *torrent*, *current*, *hollow*, *yellow*, *battlement*. If anyone doubts this, let him try the experiment at the laboratory at University College, London. There is an instrument there which records accurately the time of each syllable, and he will find, as I did, that *cattle*, which the Poet Laureate shortens, is quite as long as *cater*. The peculiar perversity of this theory lies in the fact that the rules which determine Latin quantity are abandoned just where they apply to English, and applied where they should be abandoned. In the Laureate's hexameters syllables are made long by position when we pronounce them short, as "fallĕn from heaven," which Mr. Bridges would not admit as a dactyl, and they are not made long by position when they are followed by two consonants, although *pressure* in English is just as long as *pressus* in Latin, and for the same reason. Mr. Brett Young, an enthusiastic admirer of Mr. Bridges' hexameters, quotes—

> "Red Phlegethon and huge boulders his roundy bubbles be"

and calls it very effective and natural; and adds as another gem—:

> "Only the monkey chatters and discordant the parrot screams."

He does not wish us to mark the scansion in reading such lines, but if we keep the quantities as they are in English, all semblance of verse is lost. Tennyson wrote for fun—

> "All men alike hate slops, particularly gruel."

If we say *pārtĭcŭlārlў*, we are not speaking English; if we say *particularly*, the line is not a pentameter; and, I say emphatically, it does not become a pentameter because an old Roman, ignorant of English and spelling out the words, might say that it looks like one.

(2) Vowels long by position may be sometimes shortened when followed by a strong syllable, *e. g.* no one can object to ăffection, resŭrrection. As I have said, short syllables at the end of words, on which the accent does not fall, may be scanned short, though a consonant follows, like "pōndĕr mў words." Kingsley, good judge as he is, allows too much freedom in shortening unaccented long syllables; he even allows "sighed at ĕach fall," though not "sighed at each plunge." This is only tolerable, if it is tolerable, because *at* almost disappears in pronunciation, making the foot a quasi-spondee. These extra-short syllables in English sometimes help to carry off an almost-long syllable next to them.

(3) Slightly-stressed short syllables, like *pálace*, *ríver*, may be lengthened. Such words at the end of a pentameter are not quite pleasing.

(4) Some double consonants in English represent a single sound, and ought to be represented by a single letter, if we had one:

"White-robed priests sĭngĭng hymns"

is quite admissible as the first half of a hexameter.

An accented syllable is almost always long (compare, however, words like *reciprŏcity*, *populărity*); but a good writer of iambics in English, like Milton, frequently uses the transposition of long and short

syllables, which I have mentioned, to prevent the metre from becoming monotonous. In Latin many accented syllables remain short, and Virgil uses them very deftly to vary the metre. It is unusual in Latin poetry to find the ictus of the metre regularly coinciding with the accent. An example is the pretty ode of Catullus beginning "Phaselus ille quem videtis hospites."

The introduction of classical metres into English was the result of a much-needed study of prosody in Shakespeare's time; it seems to have started at Cambridge. An early example, by Bishop Thomas Watson, shows that some of the heresies of which I have complained are not modern:

"All travellers do gladly report great praise of Ulysses,
For that he knew many men's manners and saw many cities."

The last syllables of *travellers* and *manners* are among the long list of puzzles for a writer of hexameters; he should not have used them both so near together. One Drant, who died in 1578, drew up a list of rules for English quantities, which has been lost. Ascham says that the hexameter "doth rather trot and hobble than run smoothly in our English tongue." Stanyhurst's Virgil is a curiosity; he will not give in to the dactylic temptation, but writes lines like—

"With pell mell ramping, with thwick thwack sturdily thund'ring."

Sir Philip Sydney in his "Defence of Poesie," writes:

"Now of versifying there are two sorts, the one ancient, the other modern; the ancient marked the quantity of each

syllable, and according to that framed his verse; the modern, observing only number, with some regard of the accent, the chief life of it standeth in that like sounding of the words, which we call rhyme. Whether of these be the more excellent, would bear many speeches; the ancient no doubt more fit for music, both words and time observing quantity, and more fit lively to express divers passions, by the low or lofty sound of the well-weighed syllable. The latter likewise with his rhyme striketh a certain music to the ear; and in fine, since it doth delight, though by another way, it obtaineth the same purpose, there being in either, sweetness, and wanting in neither, majesty. Truly the English, before any vulgar language I know, is fit for both sorts; for, for the ancient, the Italian is so full of vowels that it must ever be combined with elisions; the Dutch so, of the other side, with consonants, that they cannot yield the sweet sliding fit for a verse. The French in his whole language hath not one word that hath his accent on the last syllable saving two, called antepenultima; and little more hath the Spanish, and therefore very gracelessly may they use dactyls."

These criticisms of other languages are interesting. French hexameters are indeed hopeless; Spanish seem to me much better, but I admit that I have never heard that language spoken, and Villegas, who wrote Spanish hexameters, has had few or no imitators. The badness of German hexameters—

"Hexameters no worse than daring Germany gave us"

—is amazing. Goethe gives us as a pentameter:

"Rothstrumpf immer gehasst und Violetstrumpf dazu."

If the vowel of *strumpf* is not long by position, what vowel can be?

After Daniel's criticism of the English hexameter

it slumbered for nearly two centuries, though an anonymous treatise on the subject appeared in 1737.

To come to modern poets, Southey's "Vision of Judgment" is in hexameters. This poem contains many fine lines, and his treatment of the metre seems to me good. But he lengthens too many short syllables, including even *the*, and begins a line with *mālēdictions*. Occasionally he allows a hypermetric syllable at the beginning of a line—a licence which illustrates the English tendency to run into anapaests.

Coleridge's hexameters are poor for such a good metrist. He begins lines with— :

> "Hail thou goddess, thrĭce hail
> Fill thē pause of my harp
> Huge wăstefŭl empīres founded."

He also perpetrated some "hendecasyllables" which do not contain eleven syllables and will not scan at all.

Like Kingsley, Coleridge complains of the paucity of spondees in English.

Longfellow's hexameters were a popular success, and he demonstrated that it is a rather good metre for easy narrative. But metrically his lines are bad; almost the only good ones are dactylic (except "singing the Hundredth Psalm, that fine old Puritan anthem"), and he is capable of ending a line with "the forgotten bones of Miles Standish." The same may be said of Clough. His verses run easily and pleasantly, but he takes unpardonable liberties, and often lapses into pure prose. He has also tried elegiacs and alcaics, with about the same degree of

success. In reading him, I feel the possibilities of the metres in English, and sometimes he comes near to success without quite reaching it. Some of the elegiacs are perhaps the best, *e. g.*—

"Come let us go to a land wherein gods of the old time wandered,
Where every breath even now changes to ether divine."

or—

"Nemi embedded in wood, Nemi inurned in the hill."

Less known is the admirable translation of a Greek epigram by Dr. E. C. Hawtrey, of Eton:

"Δάκρυα σοὶ καὶ νέρθε διὰ χθονός, Ἡλιοδώρα,
δωροῦμαι, στοργᾶς λείψανον, εἰς Ἀΐδαν,
δάκρυα δυσδάκρυτα· πολυκλάυτῳ δ' ἐπὶ τύμβῳ
σπένδω μνᾶμα πόθων, μνᾶμα φιλοφροσύνας.
οἰκτρὰ γὰρ οἰκτρὰ φίλαν σε καὶ ἐν φθιμένοις Μελέαγρος
αἰάζω κενεὰν εἰς Ἀχέροντα χάριν.
αἴ αἴ, ποῦ τὸ ποθεινὸν ἐμοὶ θάλος; ἅρπασεν Ἅιδης,
ἅρπασεν, ἀκμαῖον δ' ἄνθος ἔφυρε κόνις.
ἀλλά σε γοννοῦμαι, γᾶ πάντροφε, τὰν πανόδυρτον
ἠρέμα σοῖς κόλποις, μᾶτερ, ἐναγκαλίσαι."

"Though the earth hide thee, yet there, even there, my Heliodora,
All that is left me I give, tears of my love to thy grave;
Tears how bitterly shed, on thy tomb bedewed with my weeping,
Pledge of my fond regret, pledge of affection for thee.
Piteously, piteously still, yet in vain, grieves on Meleager,
Thou art among the dead, Acheron heeds not my woe.
Where is the flower that I loved? Death has torn it away in the springtide,

Torn it away, and the dust stains the fair leaves in their bloom.
Genial earth, be it thine, at the mourner's humble entreaty,
Gently to hold in thine arms her whom I ever deplore."

These are nearly perfect; but there are false quantities in *bēdewed*, perhaps in *rēgret*, and *thē dead*—all cases of lengthening short syllables.

Kingsley's "Andromeda" is justly famous, but his success is due to his frankly treating the hexameter as a "galloping metre, a hop and a trot and a gallop." His lines are almost purely dactylic, and the rhythm is really anapaestic.

His letters on the subject are interesting. Among other things he lays down the rule that "when noun and epithet come together, the noun should be in arsis," *e. g.* "*blue* sea," or "*deep* ditch" would not do at the end of a hexameter.

Tennyson, who did not believe in the possibilities of the English hexameter, and thought it "only fit for comic subjects," wrote a few himself, and is far stricter about quantity than the poets whom we have been quoting. He avoids shortening syllables which would be long by position in Latin, while at the same time taking care not to destroy the metre of the line as an Englishman would read it. His alcaics on Milton are very fine, but his rules are too severe; even a practised metrist would find it impossible to write a long poem in this style.

Some very interesting hexameters on the Tennysonian system are hidden away in a child's book, Miss Thackeray's 'Bluebeard's Keys.' They are said in the preface to be of composite authorship,

the writers being indicated by initials. Two of them are Francis Warre Cornish and Hallam, now Lord Tennyson. One or two specimens may be given:

"Bluebeard spake to his wife in tones of tender affection:
'Barbara, take these keys; thine husband goes on a journey,
Such a necessity drives me to go: unwilling I leave thee;
Be thou keeper of all while Bluebeard mourns in his absence.'"

But I cannot help thinking that I detect the hand of Alfred Tennyson himself in some of the lines, such as these:

"Hearken, a noise in the hall, the strong portcullis ascending.
Bluebeard strode to his bride, and kissed his Barbara fiercely,
Thundering, 'Where's my key?' but waiting long for an answer,
His blue beard grew dark and writhed in indigo blackness."

These hexameters are certainly among the best that have been written in English, and perhaps support the opinion that the metre in our language is most suited to serio-comic themes.

Swinburne's "Evening on the Broads" is written in elegiacs adapted to English metrical idiom. He allows an extra syllable at the beginning of a line, and after the caesura in the pentameter; he also admits spondees in the last half of the pentameter, *e. g.*:

"Hover the colours and clouds of the twilight void of a star."

Opinions may differ as to the success of these innovations, but the handling of quantity is masterly; he is the best model for anyone who wishes to write English hexameters or elegiacs.

We may now consider other classical metres in English. The alcaics of Tennyson and of Clough have been mentioned. The metre seems to me to be more adapted to Latin than to English, or even (though it is rash to say so) than to Greek. It is not likely to be often attempted in our language. Very different is the case of the sapphic. The history of this metre is very curious. Sappho's own poems —in the grievously meagre fragments which survive —give the feeling of a totally different metre from that of Horace, and are still more unlike the English sapphic. Compare the following stanza of Sappho with any Horatian or English stanza:

"Ποικιλόθρον' ἀθάνατ' Ἀφροδίτα,
παῖ Διὸς δολοπλόκε λίσσομαί σε
μή μ' ἄσαισι μήδ' ὀνίαισι δάμνα
πότνια θυμόν."

Catullus imitates Sappho, but for all his skill the harshness of the Latin language mars the smoothness of the Greek rhythm:

"Nec meum respectet ut ante amorem
Qui illius culpa cecidit, velut prati
Ultimi flos, praetereunte postquam
Tactus aratro est."

I have never felt sure how Horace meant his sapphics to be read. The rigid caesura followed by two short syllables seems to break the line violently into two halves:

"Nescias an te generum beati
Phyllidis flavae decorent parentes,
Regium certe genus et Penates
Maeret iniquos."

We all know how school-boys (and in my time schoolmasters also) scan the Horatian sapphic. Boys have to be cautioned not to put a long syllable after the caesura in their own sapphics.

Now in English the antipathy to the antispastic rhythm of the Latin sapphic has actually lengthened this syllable. The English sapphic has four stresses: on the first syllable, on the fourth, which in Sappho and Catullus may be short, on the sixth, which in Greek and Latin must be short, and on the tenth. The third syllable, always long in Greek and Latin, may be shortened:

"*I* give thee *six*pence? *I* will see thee *d*——*d* first!
Wretch whom no *sense* of *wrongs* can rouse to *ven*geance!
*Sor*did, un*feel*ing, *rep*robate, de*grad*ed,
Spiritless outcast!"

That is good vigorous English, well served by its metre. But what would Sappho have said to it? There is, indeed, something ludicrous in the use which we have made of the metre, which was invented to consecrate the disreputable love affairs of the Lesbian poetess. Canning has used it for a political satire: Watts and Cowper have used it to expound a horrible and ferocious theology. Note that in these lines of Watts the syllable after the caesura is common:

"Hark, the shrill outcries of the guilty wretches!
Lively bright horror and amazing anguish
Stare through their eyelids, while the living worm lies
Gnawing within them.

"Hopeless immortals! how they scream and shiver,
While devils push them to the pit wide-yawning
Hideous and gloomy, to receive them headlong
Down to the centre!"

Poor Cowper writes, in delirium:

"Damned below Judas, more abhorred than he was
Who for a few pence sold his holy Master,
Twice-betrayed Jesus me the last delinquent
Deems the profanest."

Before leaving the sapphic, I would say that Myers' "St. Paul," a most interesting experiment in metre, bears much the same relation to the sapphic that Meredith's "Love in a Valley" bears to the saturnian:

"Whoso hath felt the Spirit of the Highest
Cannot confound nor doubt Him, nor deny.
Yea, with one voice, O world, though thou deniest
Stand thou on that side, for on this am I."

Some of the lines read like iambic trimeters catalectic, but the sapphic rhythm is purposely suggested in the opening of almost all of them.

One of the strangest of ancient metres is the galliambic, which Catullus borrowed from some unknown Greek source for his wonderful poem, "Attis," describing the self-mutilation and repentance of a young devotee of Cybele. The basis of the metre seems to be ionic a minori catalectic; but it is complicated beyond all other Latin metres by anacrusis. It is not necessary here to deal in detail with the problems of the metre; what I want to emphasise is that to the ancients it was a soft,

effeminate metre, well suited to the subject of the "Attis." Martial says:

> "Nec dictet mihi luculentus Attis
> Mollem debilitate Galliambon."

It is this emasculate and rather disreputable measure which Meredith has taken for his "Phaëthon," and Tennyson for his "Boadicea." Meredith's poem is not too far removed from the atmosphere of the "Attis"; Tennyson's is a fine heroic theme. What are we to say? Is the metre quite different in English, so that it may be counted on to produce a totally different effect from its use by Catullus? I will not venture to say. Tennyson's poem is a wonderful *tour de force*, and very nearly if not quite a success.

I am not attempting an exhaustive list, or I might call attention to the possibilities of the iambic tetrameter catalectic, like—

"A captain bold of Halifax who lived in country quarters."

In conclusion, it seems to me that I have the weight of authority on my side in maintaining that the laws of quantity apply to English poetry, though the determination of quantities is a complicated and difficult problem. I should like to see a scientific treatise on the subject, laying down what liberties are and are not admissible. Much recent poetry is metrically very bad—often, it would seem, deliberately so, like the deliberately bad drawing of "advanced" modern painters. We want laws, or we shall lose all beauty of form. As for experiments in classical metres, I think there is a future for

English hexameters, but oddly enough it is not a heroic metre in English. English elegiacs are more difficult, but there have been a few encouraging experiments in this metre. The English sapphic is, as I have said, almost a new metre, and is quite unsuited to the themes of the ancient sapphic.

But my chief object in this paper has been to protest against certain prosodical heresies, and I hope that in this I shall have most of the Society and of my other listeners with me.

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