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Gloom : window facing wall. Relief afforded by hole about the size of a head. Bielov was making ready to put in a stove. That is, a stove was promised him by Marya Ilyishna, the colonel's wife. She had got a big brick one from the State Publishing House. She promised to sell him her old stove for a twenty thousand spot. And the twenty thousand spot was promised him by Dober, a reliable man. To get it Bielov had only to botch up a poster : chimneys smoking ; sun rising above them ; workman, all muscle — main thing to emphazise the muscles — extending hand to middle peasant. Middle peasant, of course, middling — does not count. Appropriate inscription on bottom :

BRING YOUR POTATOES !

Bielov set to work stove in mind. But instead of chimney he got sticks, instead of muscles — distended commas. And as for the inscription — Ilyitch (1) himself would not understand it ; Bielov rather guessed at it. There would not be any potatoes that was evident. Nor any stove. And he, foolishly had already broken a hole in the wall. No matter. More light anyhow. And flying visitors sometimes — thick-feathered white birds. The sun, aiming at hole, spat copiously making Bielov bray with joy like a donkey.

A professor, his neighbour, a desperate " Counter " (2) busy with an illegal investigation on " the Symptoms of Mental Diseases among Criminal Elements, " heard the braying. He scattered his cheap tobacco, rushed to a secret chink in the wall, got out his note book and jotted down rapidly :

" Another case : lusty cries without reasonable cause. "

Bielov's bed — a hill. His chair shouting : " Attention ! When you sit down lean over to the right to keep your balance. " Cracked wash-basin covered with black icy bark. Slippery floor. Frozen since morning — Bielov had been washing. He was not cold, however — had on a fur jacket. Boys had got it for him. Stolen goods still bearing Army stamp. Had to be dyed. Not enough color — finished right sleeve with wax-dye. Therefore

(1) Lenine.
(2) Counter-revolutionary.

unaproachable. All winter: "Fresh paint!" Lydia Stepanovna, to make sure, would not allow him to get near her even from his dry honest side.

Queer things in room: boards and, attached to them, sockets for electric lamps, a horse-shoe, cords all around, tin disks, glass, rusty wheel from clock, cigarette box, trash. All this not discarded rubbish piled up by accident, but carefully picked collection full of significance. Bielov was not a freak, not a rag-picker, but an artist-constructor. Remember the name: Vassily Bielov.

Tough job getting materials. Though registered in the All-Russian Artists' Union, he could get nothing. Received a card from the Section of Representative Arts. Went there: If you please, some tin, glass, wood and a few other small things. And in answer: "We have only paint in tubes. Would you like some Veronese Green?" Jackasses! He was forced to get everything by a sort of guerilla method, not free from danger sometimes. Electric lamp sockets could, of course, be simply unscrewed anywhere: in Soviet institutions or when visiting. One could always do it by ingenuously turning conversation to the "pyok" (1). Much worse getting tin. Not long ago he swiped a sheet from a burned down house on Zubov Boulevard. Militiaman saw him and was going to shoot. Barely escaped. Same with everything up to cord issued by wise chiefs. To top it all — time lacking. Bielov would therefore work at night, freeze — and work. Nothing else mattered then; the stove, the floor of the "Ice Palace", the smell of cabbage soup — did not taste like soup but rags — all that was part of the daily grind not worth speaking of. Compass. Quantity. Circle great and splendid. No mistake there; nor passion; nor wretched foreign vanity. Existence cabbage-like, crinkled, rotten. Jaw of compass could seize it, measure it, reconstruct it: room then — a berth in sub-lunar regions; four senses forty-four continents. And an Object. There had been others: muzzle of dog inevitably in profile, camel driver in Arabia, fish, cross. Now simply an object. It could be constructed — with due regard to the laws of gravitation — so that it should revolve alone above earth, a new heavenly body among other heavenly bodies.

Gloom — fiddlesticks. Only two objects mattered. Was begetting one now lying on hunch-backed bed supported by board for greater comfort. Stencilled inscription on board: "Attention! Biscuits." New form. Weight of cylinder and sphere. Teeth of triangles darted forward reaching, grasping other parts. All revolving. Walking. Monument to new era. Could not stand still like scarecrow. Would have to be promenading from Strasteny Monastery over all boulevards in circle along car line "A". Last jades would die with fright. Object would be stalking, step by step, marvelous, infallible. Could not pass unnoticed. Even the American special correspondent of the

(1) Bread portion allotted by government.

" Chicago Tribune " born on the thirty-eighth floor and spitting every hour five thousand words over cable, even he, having seen, would fall prostrate, his yellow shoes pointing heavenward. Would be won over to faith in new era.

Bielov had been at work two years. Sockets and tin. Project finished only today. Easy to construct — all calculated, measured, clear. Even name — *Vitrion*. Foolish name. As if some romantic trash were still astir under the cylinders of Bielov's vitals.

Hence second object — more ordinary in appearance than self-moving angles — Lydia Stepanovna Barykova. Love — subject still somewhat dark, uninvestigated. Very hard to explain. Why should Bielov so contemptuous of emotion pay visits to this Soviet lady with hair dressed over ears, and cupid cameo, who would come playing pranks, ruffle him up, tease him, laugh her full at construction, just letting her lips skim over the steep knobs of Bielov's forehead fairly bursting with Vitrions? Why should he? How explain it? One thing — returning past midnight he would flop on his hunchbacked bed all exhausted. His eyes would no longer see a glorious sphere but dimples in cheeks, — imperfections, hair dressed on one side, pupil dim and pale from tenderness and anguish — disorder, splendid nonsense. He looked on without comprehending, while golden beetles were descending from the sky through the hole. Yes! One could construct an object that would revolve in the air — big, steel, unique. But nothing could be done with love: put it down and up it jumps; say " fly! " and it drops like stone and kills you.

***

No one would accept the Vitrion.

" Well, exhibit project . . . it has some graphic qualities. "

Other object born. Like fire, wheel, screw. Lured a big Communist, a fellow whose signature counted for more than any monograph. Every letter thereof in itself conclusion, criterion, mandate. He came, polite, sweet. And his voice, his watch chain, his golden hair — all rang and rang.

" Construction forty-seven . . . provisional draught. "

At last, breathless, pointing out his child:

" This? This is Vitrion. "

Here something disagreable happened. The teeth of the triangles sank into the soft soul of the Communist. He became irritated, mad, once again irritated. Stopping his tears with a cough he cried:

" Why do you do this? Was it of this I dreamed in Geneva? What we need is sunlight, beauty, grace! And this is prison, affliction! I am losing my sanity when I look at it, as if I were to blame that this compass had devoured the universe. "

The " Counter " behind the wall held his breath. Why indeed breathe — plenty of time for that later. Now he was reporting in his notebook another first rate case.

" Confession of criminal. Symptoms : pathological note in the voice, most probably a masochist. "

Could not resist the temptation of looking in.

" Tell me, have you ever a desire to touch these wheels ? "

" Yes ! Often. I pat the globe. This is not art. This is an object. "

Professor having forgotten danger of being detected, purred happily :

" We'll note : Communists are inclined to perversion known as fetishism. "

Fearing he might forget it, he ran quickly to the stove.

Most painful rebuff from Lydia Stepanovna. She did not laugh. She looked with loathing at Vitrion.

" Tear it ! Break it ! "

How could he betray the new object still unborn for the sake of the old one He threw at her the friendly phrase :

" You're a stand patter. "

Yet quite often, at night, he would crumple the worn sheets, break the glass partitions and moan aloud like an old woman. The professor made no further notes. It was all so evident. He feared only one thing — infection. Then he, too, would get himself a globe, enroll in the party — in general go to the dogs.

The high bulging forehead cooled off — has long been untouched by hot dry breath. Then suddenly, like a mushroom, appeared Tomilin the pupil of a ballet studio. In the first place he was a dancer — not a Vitrion. In the second place — his legs — Lydia Stepanovna had a soft spot for legs as if made by Eiffel. In the third place — in adition to the first two — he was an idealist, could do all things, play pranks, steal a kiss in the dark, describe the golden beetles beyond the wall with particular poetic gift. In the fourth place, in the fifth . . . In a word, the kick of Tomilin's Eiffel leg frequently echoed in her talk now.

" Bielov, you never portray love in your work. "

No, of course not. He was creating something else, the other object. He was exposing love in all its nudity. Tomilin could leap to his feet, stand breathless, throw open his arms — everything according to print : " You are my own — for eternity ! " Eternity fairly bursting from his very shoes. But a globe could exist all alone, and if well contrived and constructed could even move above and outside the earth. To give up then ? To let Tomilin alone lose his head seek out the hungry, mad, happy glance. No, he could not give up. Walking. Looking. And suppressing his sorrow calmly continued constructing Vitrion.

Lost patience and asked :

"Tell me frankly — is it Tomilin?"

Gravely, sadly, eyes under lowered lashes like birds in a cage, she said: "No."

Then — a pleasantry offensive enough to take one's breath away, to make one stamp one's feet:

"I love only your Vitrion."

Bielov wanted to understand but could not. And so it all remained unchanged — from golden down on nape of neck to tin and glass, from metaphysics of Tomilin to the sudden rustle of her passing hands.

***

Lucky day. A certain Guguerman visited Bielov. Looked at Vitrion and became agitated. Guguerman was, of course, the man who had formerly been lawyer. He used to transact small law suits, consumed quantities of "booze", and, being of a melancholy disposition, would cogitate: did Raskolnikov have the right to kill the old woman? Was the love of Anna Karenina criminal from the standpoint of higher ethics? And so on. Then came October and its after results. Guguerman's father, a jewelry man, was done in by the Revolutionary Tribunal, probably on account of his all too many carats. Mother died from typhoid fever. And, in general, nothing was left — even his purse with monogram on it was swiped in a car. Left with neither family nor monogram. Guguerman was a man — and pants on him. Moscow, a city — and Lubiansky Square in it. Evidently one must live. And Guguerman landed a job — fate had its laugh at his melancholy — in the Circus Section of the State Theatre. He served conscientiously, was never swerved by Raskolnikov or "booze". He tried his best to harmonize the black clowns, the wrestlers bellowing "Mmm" with the eleven points of the resolution on the "Proletarian Spirit in the Modern Circus". sign orders from his three-legged *Empire* chair with a coat of arms on it, and received two thirds of the corresponding "pyok".

Having looked at Vitrion, Guguerman first got frightened, then began to laugh; the big triangles were darting forward exactly like Chief Kiriushin the jealous attendant of all girl secretaries in the State Theatre. Quite amusing. What if the thing should be put into a Circus? Men, snakes, two piece elephants, living dolls — everybody already sick of that. This contrivance would provoke merriment at any rate; one could even slip in edgewise some idealism: the world proletariat awakening, stretching its limbs, rising, walking forward, destroying.

"Would you want it in the Circus?" Queer. And yet... Well let it be the Circus. Main thing is to finish it. And then it would move of itself from

the stage to the boulevards ; no member of the Revolutionary Tribunal would ever catch it.

Decided. In the evening at Lydia Stepanovna's. Success. She was silent. Would not even tease him. It was time for him to go, to work away full speed.

" Good night. "

" Vassia, stay a while . . . I can't bear it. "

First time " Vassia ". Laughing at him ? Should he stay ? But globe could not wait. Wanted to live, to move, to be born.

" All this is moonshine. There is Vitrion waiting at home. "

Dark on the stairs. Treacherous landing — he slipped. And straight into somebody's arms. Tenderly and maliciously fur ear laps of Tomilin's hat brushed his face. Dancer fearless, bent down, swung up his arms — like wings — one could see at once he was an idealist, and up over two steps to the top.

***

In the Circus Section of the State Theatre work was in full swing. A new sketch " The Third International " was being rehearsed. Nations would come in tremendous masks. Make-up out of date. Masks indispensable. Mugs a foot long. Terrible mugs. Not only Australian and Kaffir, but even some nameless beasts came crawling up. Violet varnished muzzle — neither eyes nor nose only a black mysterious slit, an enraptured mouth shouting greetings. Tried it on. Everybody frightened. Looked like the behind of some baboon ; one could not tell whether it was a face or something else.

Came the horse rider, a negro. Sad. Coughing. " Pyok " had been reduced. Dressed in some nondescript pantaloons. Could not bear it any longer :

" Wanna, go back to Marseilles. "

Guguerman, reasoning with him. Splendid suit according to all rules of " Suprematism " (1).

Driver cringing for shoes — toes sticking out, shame before horses' hoofs. And on side, reader from Communist group spouting :

" Circus must reveal the physical beauty of the proletariat. It's all in the muscles. "

Muscles to be sure not commas. But the negro insisted :

" *Pyok* " reduced.

Easy to say : muscles. Bones still held together in " Suprematist " pants — thank Heaven for that.

Animals too — not men alone Vyssokov came up excited :

" You want the bear to call nations together with drum ? Tear the

(1) School of Painting.

hydra of capital to pieces? I tell you he is going to croak. Can hardly walk. Give him the hydra — and he to lick it. How can you feed a big bear on a pound of bread a day? Do you think he's a bourgeois? He'll kick the bucket and you'll be stuck with your hydra."

He could hardly be calmed. And the girl secretary tapped out:

"Circus section of the State Theatre herewith issue orders to give Comrade Vyssokov a larger "Pyok" for the Circus bear in view of his arduous service."

Well, sketch finished. Waiting for Bielov to demonstrade Vitrion. Truth is — all were scared. The manager's wife scared of her husband. Pious man he. Last summer she had to ride on army horse. No sooner had she mounted than horse took to dancing American dance. Trained horse Merimée. Husband was at the window. Poor wretch got mad with fright. Seized holy image and into yard to save wife. And Merimée, having finished dance did next number on program — fell on her knees. Right in front of the holy image. Husband made sign of cross. Won over to faith in wonder-working image. But wife was Communist — awkward situation. What would happen with Vitrion in action? Husband would repeat old trick and then — public scandal.

Guguerman had neither husband nor wife to fear, but there was the Communist group. What if they suspected it all to be a hoax? Some figures are comprehensible to all: cross, star. But here was something mysterious: globe neither white nor red. Freezing poor thing though set on pipes.

Arrived with some dark youth. Unpacked. Vitrion came to himself, rose, and went straight for the corridor. In the back, delegate from Penza at work on linen, fitting up a suit for Julius Caesar who had been forced to parade in Little Russian shirt. Twenty-five foot order. Suddenly something advancing without feet, without hands — with grinding intestines. Angles, globe, wheels, tin, trash. Though the delegate was party-man he fell back on superstition from great fright, and suddenly began to pray for the intercession of the Holy Virgin. Sat down on "Izviestia" (1) in a corner and whined:

"Why did they ever send me to Moscow? — Assassins". People came running from other rooms. Guguerman understood and shouted:

"For the State Circus! Model of the world proletariat."

And in a twang:

"Our latest."

Commander, a sailor, saluted. Everybody sang. Took to examining Vitrion Even the delegate picked up enough courage:

"Would be fine thing to send us to Penza; trick like this for propaganda purposes. When everybody is out to look, have orator ready on Tax in Kind."

(1) Official paper of Soviet Government.

Everybody pleased. First performance decided for February 27. Sketch, trained animals, and finally apotheosis. Victory of Vitrion.

Bielov no longer listening. Rushed to Ostojenka. Only to see her. To hell with all globes and triangles. Not at home. He came in. On window sill emerald rags from card table — Lydia Stepanovna was making a hat from them. Empty vials of Paris perfume. Bottle of linseed oil. Old card for articles of first necessities. On back beginning of letter:

"3 A. M. Come, dear . . ." Ink spot. Bad ink? Tears? For whom? For Tomilin? He got mad. Tore card and threw on floor one rag particularly spring like — as he would tin or cardboard.

"To please dancer!"

And perhaps to please some one else? Then . . . Moved to tenderness, salty taste in mouth, eyes dimmed. Left note:

"Come on Sunday 27th. — to First Circus. Will leave ticket for you at offices. Vitrion is to perform."

***

Before the performance everybody apprehensive of some misfortune Trouble started in the morning. On Soukharev Square speculators' fair dispersed.. There was shooting. Puppy killed. Only old man selling phonographs alone remained. In snow-storm, on deserted square, horn bawling:

"Please don't go away, please stay with me . . . ."

But even crows frightened. Watchman of mimo-plastic studio on Bojedomka swore that Soukharev Tower leaned visibly forward and a distinct voice came thence roaring:

"And devourers shall be devoured like unto Egyptian kine."

At noon before the theatre on Theatre Square, speculator Guliash, having been paid for choice wheat flour intended ostensibly for an infant home, dropped eleven millions. Wind blew. Like birds the ten-thousand rouble bills went soaring up with all their Arabian, Chinese and other inscriptions. Passersby began to run after them — children after butterflies. Then they felt offended — let them fly. They did. And in a secret joint at Mrs. Bayzay's on Kislovka a poet of the "Nothingist" school, absent-mindedly imbibed some wine, and began to poetize somebody in extremely syncopated verse. Soon, however, he thawed to such degree — he could not even finish his wine. Got under the table and began to crawl backwards like a crab. And he just drank a drop. Bad day!

Arena swept. Came Army students in a bunch headed by chief explaining everything and keeping order.

Vitrion lay as in a cradle in the straw near the stable, Merimée was agitated,

scratched her neck, stamped her hoof as if tapping a message to somebody. Bielov sat down on box near the stall. Was not thinking of triumph but of tender distracted smile. Letter for somebody. From Office :

" Comrade Bielov. "

Lydia Stepanovna. Behind her insignificant but annoying shadow — Tomilin. Why did he wear such tremendous hat. Like some Lapp.

" You want a ticket ? I left instruction to give you one . . . "

What if she should suddenly say " I want You " ? She squinted tenderly her cunning eye at him.

" I came to see Vitrion. I confessed to you already I love him. "

Tomilin dissatisfied. Shot up his arms like wings of a bat and was gone. Bielov did not answer. Grunted courteously and back to stable.

" Bielov, some people here from Executive Committee and Peoples' Comissariat of Education. In box on left. Great success. Academic " pyok ".

Completely exhausted. To seize the damned globe, to knock it flat. To wrench its cogs like pincers of crab and make them crack. Fine, how do you do. To conceive and beget his own rival. How did she dare think of this tin when there was Bielov with his hairy breast and the animal rumble in it ? How did she dare that ? To her house now. To the green rags, to the empty perfume vials. Bend them over and drink ! Mouth dry . . .

Sat down and asked for water, but even this smelled of wretched tin. Like Vitrion when his monstrous body perspires with effort.

General restlessness. Negro all in cubes tried a somersault, then yawned aloud suddenly like an old dog before a storm, rambled off and whispered to Merimée :

" Would like to go Marseille. But they won't let me. "

Merimée darted aside and neighed. Bad sign.

No people left. Alarm. What if in truth last man has gone to ruin. All things are possible. Masks hatched out began to turn somersaults, and express their hellish weariness in all manner of ways. Afghans, Irish — that was not so bad. There was worse. The nondescript thing, the creature of no definite nationality or region — some monstrosity, turned its baboon behind on main box. In box, a woman hiccuped and dropped lorgnette as if she had eaten Bielov's cabbage and not a first class Savoy *ragout*.

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Masks at least resembled something. Then came animals. Nothing but tails. Hares charging cannons and pulling up by string various flags : merchant, war, sea — red background with five gold letters in left corner. What cowards. In gallery, wheedlers and grafters, shallow tide of officialdom, surged and swelled. Armored breast breathing rapidly. You looked and thought it was a

human being. Mistake. Exterior: — jacket turned to look new: interior — big second hand stuffing. Then a dog gave exhibition of faithfulness. Newspaper man Fedin who must have previously imbibed a good pail of home-made brew, began to remove his pants shouting as in a public bath:

"Down with imperialism. I demand a new tariff. Man is no dog."

They led him away. Trouble not yet over. Fox and hen kissing tenderly. Abomination. Someone very elegant began to toss about, cackling:

"How so? How so?"

Crept under bench ashamed, but to remove suspicion stuck a frozen apple into his mouth. Some night!

Bielov saw nothing. Heard only tramping of hoofs and neighing of Merimée who was sadly thinking of home and colt. Drum. Grooms in red frocks quickly folded rug. Last number: Vitrion.

Bielov went reluctantly to exit. Red now emerald shouted:

"Triumph! Ki — ki!"

Gong — palm on behind. Silence. Vitrion got up. Prim and orderly, one would say American president; walked forward. Shiver through crowd. Tried to hold him. Away! Poked clown and student in the shoulderblades. And forward. General terror. Where was he going? Where?

Only Bielov understood everything. Noticed in sixth row to the right her cunning eye. Globe stalking straight for her across rows, extending his claws, grinding the cogs of his wheels. She gave him her glove. Too much for Bielov. Tried to catch them. Flopped in the sand. Roared:

Hold him! Hey, Vitrion! Rascal! Vitia! Halt! Don't you dare!" Calm again. Dark. Public gone. Only accountant making uproar in empty entrance — some one swiped silk handkerchief. Fine business! Sketch! Culture!

Bielov knew, of course, where the impertinent fled. On after him. Over boulevards where car "A" used to pass formerly. At the door — locked. Entrance closed by boards. He knocked: "Open the door." No answer. In terrible racket woman's voice heard:

"Citizen, what's this noise? After ten, strangers not allowed. Rule of House Committee."

"Why did you let him in?"

"Whom?"

"Vitrion."

"Who is that? What flat?"

"Globe cylinder and trash. Let me in."

"Seen no cylinders."

Silence. One hour passed. Another. Feet freezing. Stepped into snow drift. Morning came. Ran up, listened at door. Rattle. Sigh — languorous

moan. Dry tin kiss. Pushed against door with all the might of his love and anguish. Door gave way. Remained hanging guiltily on one hinge. He did not even notice on table Lapland hat which lay there grinning, ears thrown back. Noticed Vitrion in corner, cheeks sunken in and pale with kissing. He knew it. Seized the machine, pummeled it, breaking, crushing glass, tearing tin. Mistress screaming:

"Good Lord! A massacre!"

Into yard. Back home. Lying on hunchbacked bed till night, till end of things, till death.

***

Six weeks in bed. Professor saved him. And was himself infected. Without globe or party card, to be sure, but with lamentation, torrents of tears, with bellowing to bleached sun. Fed Bielov to satiety with frozen potatoes nauseatingly sweet. Had pity for all — as in opera — for traitress with hair dressed on side, for stabbed lucky rival, bearing this Italian name Vitrion, for poor jealous lover who exhaled all the three as well as the fourth — love, and was choking in glass globe.

Bielov got up. Took a walk. Reeled from intoxication with warm pools — as if some one drank and spilled the finest wine. Everybody drunk and no bother about accounts or discounts — all gift of spring.

On to her. She was changed. Eyes still there through habit but no cunning in them. Vacant stare. Cold — all the time picking up kerchief with her elbow. There are such unspringlike springs. Spoke distinctly, in distant voice as in telephone.

"I was waiting for you so anxiously then . . . And you were preoccupied with your tin. . . Now it is too late. . . I loved without love as an object!"

And then, changing telephone voice very quietly to herself, no, to him: "he might have been father — he was not." And with despairing tenderness, hardly audible:

"I am all in another . . . I am expecting a child."

A child? A child of Vitrion? Bielov got up dazed. Stamped his feet. In self torment:

"When did it happen?"

"The night you left and fell sick. . . We carried him together . . . And he remained!"

He did not listen. On to the boulevards. Speeding around circle. Another must have passed here, stalking alone, restoring order. Climbed up into pavilion where soldiers used to play once *potpourris* and now just came in for ordinary business. In a prophetic voice:

"The race of Vitrion is continued."

At Nikitska Gate threw himself at motor-cycle leaning wearily against wall.

" You chatter. You breathe. My son. "

Motorcycle was property of Revolutionary War Committee, and no disorderly conduct would be tolerated, anyhow. Nobody believed story of son. Gloom. Insults. Somebody's arms, clutches, angles, long painful jolting over all the bumps of Moscow's pavements. Got up. Head turning. On floor. Farewell love ! Too late. Cold long suffering head. Painted floor. Silence.

* * *

No days — just day. Bielov was shy like a girl, sensible and gentle. Even Fedotova, worst nurse there, would feed him sometimes on millet broth. He could not eat without aid. Knew he had to, but was always forgetting. Would take the dish then at once drowsiness, din, shiver. Seemed to rise like vapor.

At first he felt very tired. Patted globes of flowerbeds, bells, jugs, and every discarded object. All those — children. Pressed them to his breast, sang lullabies, called them tenderly Vitia, and worried over cracks in them, as a mother would over children's sickness. Was anxious to be out in the world where objects walked, revolved, grew, where at night, whole caravans of disks and angles, doubtless, passed at Strasteny Monastery and along the boulevards.

Later he became quiet. Great serenity of spirit ; caressed his knees, squinted his eyes. He was patriarch, ancestor of thousand generations, great first source. Looked closely at men for first time — all children of Vitrion but in foolish soft masks. Not bodies, but tin warmed to perspiration. Step. Half turn. Quiet. Sleep. Grating. Grinding. Death.

Looked at Moscow through window : roofs, chimneys, smoke, bustle. Splendid nest of tin. At night he could hear the rattle and wheeling and cry of big glass heart.

Warm. Growing dark. Bielov counted chimneys : fourteen, seventeen. Hard to continue. All his past — waste ground, and his house — mere lumber. Very rarely the wind would blow up from brick stomach a scrap of wall paper coming from children's room, showing Chinaman behind net ; another scrap, green, warm. Bielov happy — happy to have engendered great tin tribe. Happy also not to be with it but rather away on cot near window. Came wave of dense heat from belly of earth. Green rag and hair dressed on side cascade-like. Disorder. Far away world and Vitrion. Also love. Better for him. And sky the same as in hole down there. Bielov got up and hummed tenderly like golden beetles passing by :

" Dzoom — dzoom. "

And higher into window like vapor.

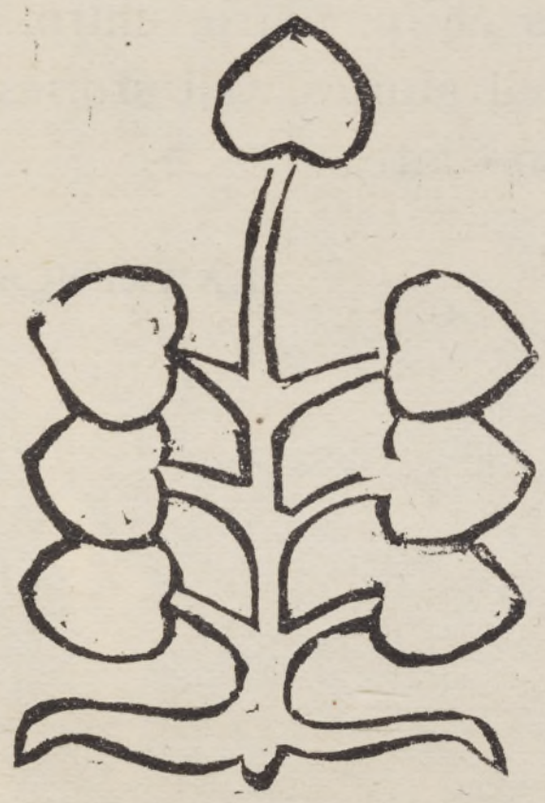
And if he should come down later — love is no globe. If forgotten it flies ; if triumphant falls like stone to ground. To love, all things are possible.

(*From the Russian of* ILYA EHRENBOURG *by Louis Lozowick*)

SLEEP

Sleep is the enemy of love,
A monstrous Lord,
All powerful,
Who takes my soft beloved
With an indecent utterness
And makes her
Alien metal.

Her breasts
Are pinkish bronze,
Fain would I polish them
With emery paper,
Her head
Split with a hammer.



LITTLE BIRDS AND OLD MEN

Old men and little birds
Too early in morning
Make squeaks.

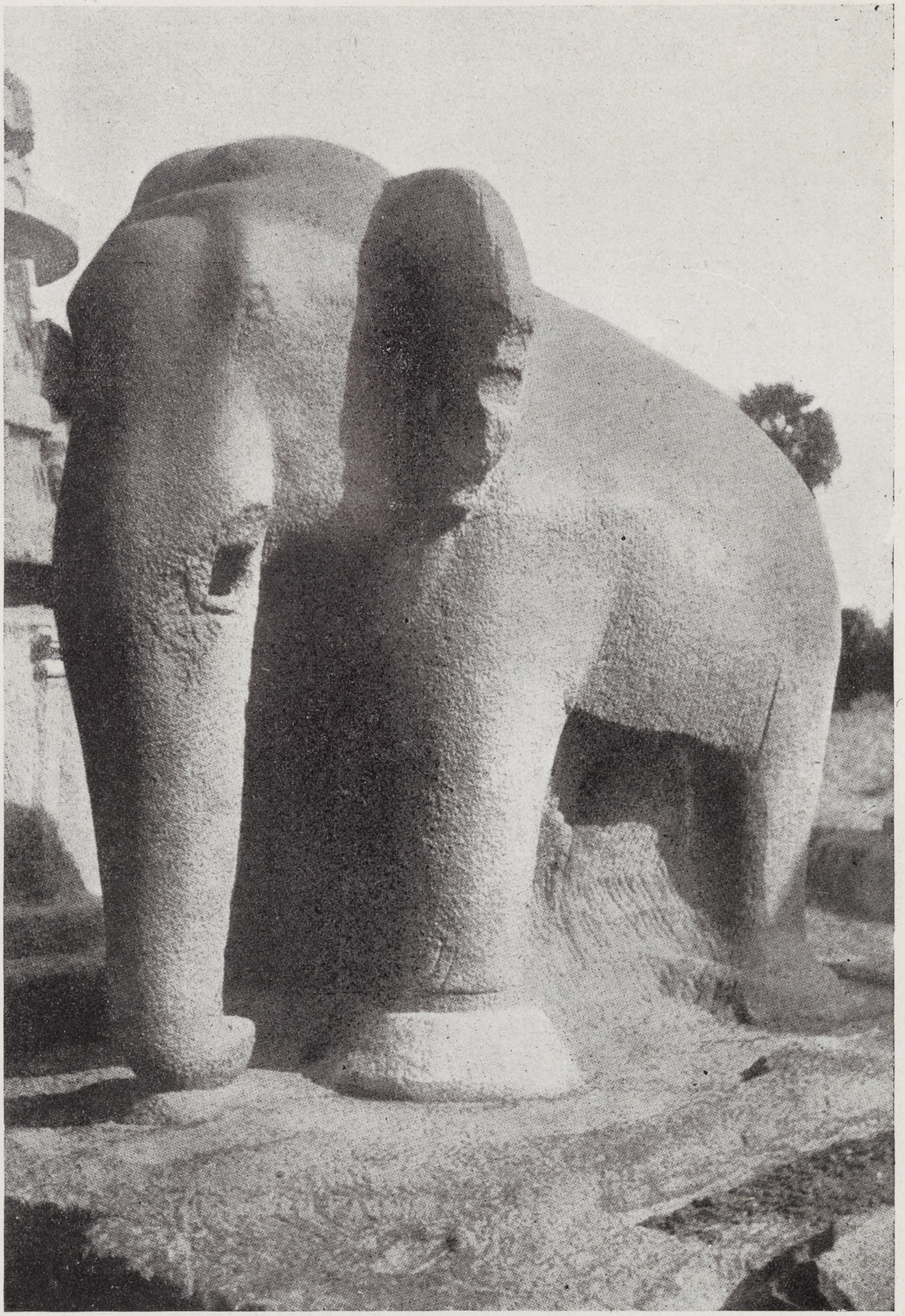
Little birds are more brazen ;
Primly, they dip feet in puddles.
Old men have delicate feet.

Old men have weak bowels,
Little birds are careless,
Near love of neither
Is sweet.

Little birds chirp, chirp, chirp, chirrup ;
Old men tell stories, tell stories ;
Both die too late.

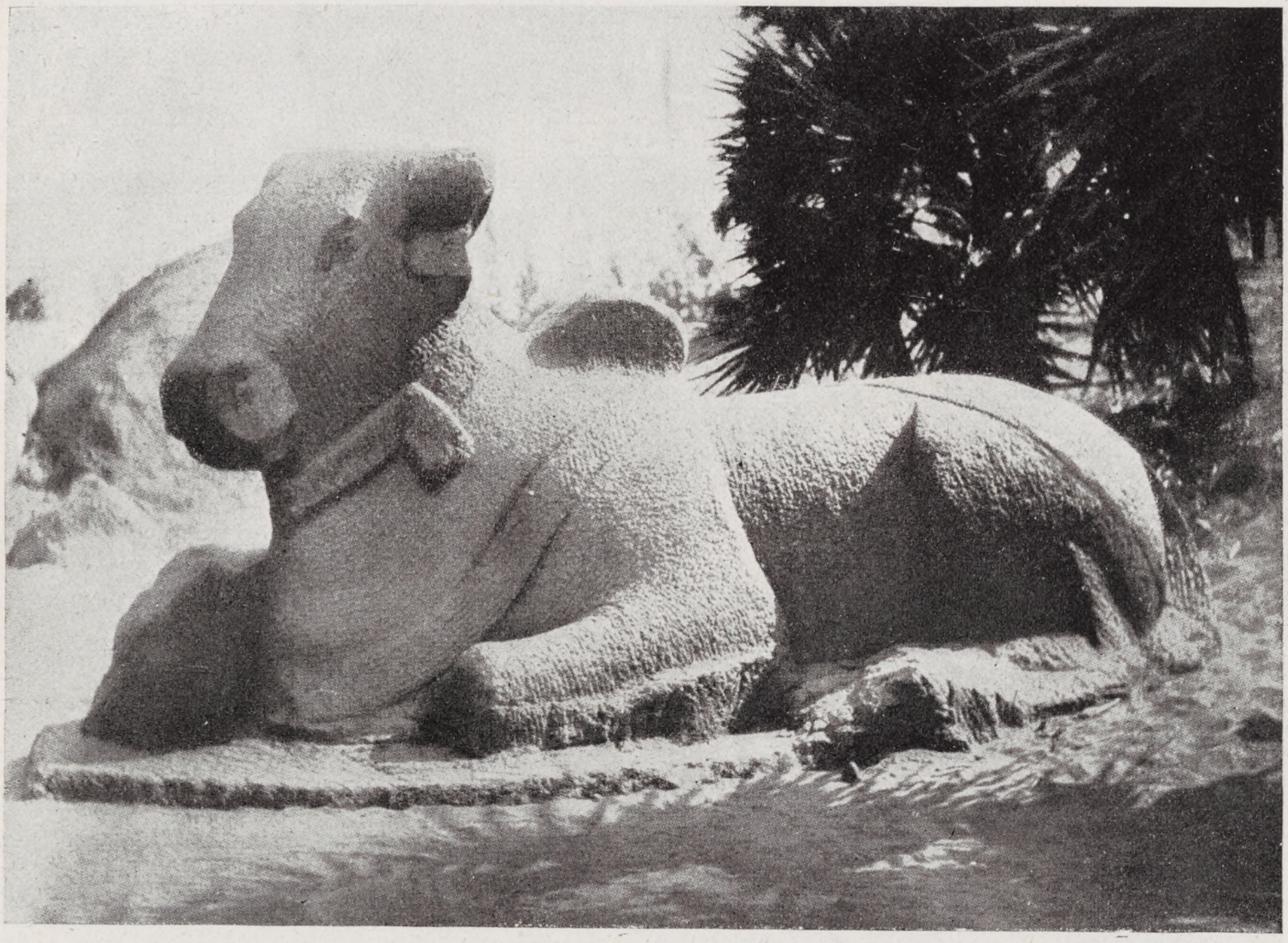
LAWRENCE VAIL

Camel. Pekin.



Elephant : Mämallapuram.
South India.

VIIth Century.



Nandi : Mämallapuram.
South India.

VIIth Century.

Nandi : Java.

XIth Century.

Tjandi Prambanan: Relief Panel Java.
Temple of Siva.

ANIMALS

Only man still exists today as the hub of life, sole possessor of that which is visible and utterable, all that, in short, which contributes to the value and substance of being. Reality has dissolved in human reflections. Works of art seem to be the summit of vitality ; not the expression of an objective reality so much as of a personal will and valuation of a subjective passion. The subject matter is all instinct, the execution of the work is a creative process of the artist, whereas the form is a higher and absolute reality.

The brain and the heart live of themselves and in themselves ; there are only slight points of contact between man and earth which produce electric sparks. The whole outside world is thus merely subjective material for the artist who in his impenetrable isolation can grasp only himself. Nor can he let go of himself any more, and pierce deep into the reality of the world that he may be reborn a thousand times thereby.

What are animals ? What do they mean to us ? Domesticated beings, distorted for the sake of heightened utility, tamed, dull and spiritless ; or " wild beasts, " dragged out of some strange region and exhibited as spectacles for instruction and amusement, scorned curiosities, distortions of their own types. Children have fearful dreams of serpents and spiders ; scorpions and hyenas appear to our nerves as evil and hostile monsters ; the serpent as temptation for Adam and Eve ! Man and nature are estranged ; and eternal enmity seems to have arisen between them ; dualistic broodings threaten and torture the innermost recesses of the mind. But the formidable spirit of science comes with its promise of order, tranquility and power, and demands therefor the salvation of all living organisms. All nature gives way before a dreadful succession of rigorous categories unless biological bridges are flung out between man and animals. But man is " Victor triumphans ", man is the goal, the ultimate form of animal existence. And thus the community of life in Nature and all earthly brotherhood vanish before the restrictions and hostility of a destructive dualism.

It is quite otherwise in the tropical world, where a fantastically luxuriant nature besets and embraces man ; where the overflowing vitality of the earthly forces never releases him and gives him no chance to banish nature from the mind or to oppress and immolate it ; man can never become ruler over this chaos of gigantic fertility and remains instead — its brother. There his body remains

physically at one with the organism of nature ; there animals and men live intimately together even today.

This physical fraternity does not imply a domestic relationship. It is based on the general idea in Southern Asia, that the whole world is a living unity, that man is not exiled from the bosom of nature by his rebellious intellect. The profound abstractions of Indian philosophy do not bring about separation from life, evoke no condemnations ; they bind and gather everything living together into a harmonious existence. Whereas European thought is harrowed by an agonizing dualism, the life of the Indian postulates a persistent consciousness of the identity of all being. This feeling for the supreme unity and totality is revealed with superhuman power even as early as the " Rigveda ", in the Song of Unity, or in the Hymn of Creation as well as in the expression of the great mystico-religious conceptions. Philosophy and religion nourish all being in themselves without distorting or segregating any phase or species of life from the others. All nature with its worlds of plants, animals, men and gods constitutes an original entity. The human consciousness does not cease to function at the limits of human forms of existence, and that of the gods, for that matter, reaches deep down into the realm of animals. The divisions between animal and man, and between man and god are only transitional. Everything is one living unity which binds plants, animals, men, demons and gods in one vast erotic architecture, boundless as the tropics, and of infinite directions. Myths and religion, legends and tales are filled with the unplumbed power of animals. Tropical man is surrounded by a fantastic world of animals, which reflects itself with eternally new associations in his pictorial language, and in his whole literature from the Rigveda and the Kalidasa up to Tagore.

The faculty of synthesis reaches its highest expression in plastic art. The forms of the human body are too narrow and too near to embody certain elementary powers. The richness which wells out of its affiliation wih the most vital aspects of nature and her inner relationships, attains here its greatest significance. The animal body — through its physical superiority and greater potency — becomes the adequate medium for expressing cosmic and metaphysical conceptions. Metaphysically, the animal form in all its lurid vitality becomes the symbol of superhuman greatness ; this is what animal representation means in India. Certain differences can be defined in accordance with supra-sensual interpretations, *i. e.* Buddhist or Brahman interpretations.

To the Buddhists the animal is the brother, the past of oneself ; one's soul wanders in a thousand forms through the realm of animals, men and gods. The human being is deemed as a better form of existence only because out of it alone is the reincarnation into a superhuman state possible. But animals too participate in the doctrine of salvation, and to kill them is sinful.

Although early Buddhism puts emphasis on the spiritual relationship with the animal world, through Brahmanism — which is rooted in the old mythology — representations of animals become gigantic masses of elementary forces. Human existence appears here as something small, ephemeral and mutable, against the colossal strength of nature, and the divine power of natural energies. Here the world of animals approaches closest to the life of man and at once surpasses man in most vital ways. The animal world becomes the field for transformations, the arena of divine apparitions, where symbols and primitive forces are continually represented. Animals become incarnations of God, holy symbols, and in the sacrifices, man mingles with the blood of gods through the blood of animals; in the animal the earth's power to conceive and the passions of celestial beings seem to come together with the most violent shock.

The animal god "*Siva*" represents eternal energy, destruction and renewal; he is time and death as well as resurrection and eternity. The bull "*Nandi*" is his chosen animal, revealing the mighty power of the earth, which bears and absorbs again all earthly life. Its head appears on the altar emerging from the severe simplicity of the towering block; a piece of telluric mystery and plastic greatness. The spiritual quality of the animal is less important here, while its strange substantiality is felt as a demoniac apparition and seen as symbol of the immanent powers of objects and apparitions; the physical shape of the bull becomes the symbol of natural laws and is not considered a reproduction, but rather the concrete embodiment of an elementary force or spiritual power.

The strange symbolism of the "*Ganesha*" representations is rather difficult for us to understand. His animal is the elephant, expressing spiritual powers, an embodiment of primitive, earth-born wisdom, full of earthly secrets and their projection in soul and phallus. From an artistic point of view, these figures of "*Ganesha*" reach the greatest harmony of curved forms in the sculpture of India; they are the mightiest "ronde-bosse" presentations of plastic elements. A connection between the *Nandi* and *Ganesha* symbolism, and astrology can be surmised; the elephant having been consecrated to the East, and the bull to the West, the basis of this being the sun's course and the relation of sun and earth.

Later Buddhism absorbed many of these elements of the Hindu credo in its *Mahâyâna* system. In this form it spread to China and Japan; and thus the same animalistic elements emerge in Eastern Asia too, though in a different light; they are not conceived and formalized in such cosmic proportions and such fundamental earthliness, but as mystical beings, akin to man — which might seem to suggest the influence of the *Bodhisattvas*. In China as well as in India, the literature of tales and popular fables shows a strong inter-dependence between men and animals, a profound picture of human and animal life. "Here it is not the mysticism of

a clear-eyed awe, so much as the magic of the purely natural. The order of Nature is not distorted, but enlarged : the abundance of life ceases nowhere, and everything living carries the seed of the spirit. Consciousness exists in animals, plants and stones which all have the desire to be transformed into human shape as their ultimate reincarnation, What thy hand forms, wants to breathe and mix with others who breathe ; what thy mind thinks, moves and presents itself as something real and visible. — But all this is not unfamiliar, it is home, it is life. This race (in which the teaching of *Laotse* of the all-embracing paths and the teaching of *Buddha* of the all-effective deed dwell beside one another or even with one another) — created in its ghost tales a song of the sister-elements in love, a song for Gods and men. " (Martin Buber). In these ghost and animal stories human fates mingle immediately with the fates of animals. All this is less elemental, less profoundly stirring than in India, but more intimate and perhaps richer in charm and magic by grace of the united rhythms of the lives of humans, animals, trees and stars.

We can class in the feeling of this atmosphere the small animal figures, carved in nephrite, jade or ivory, which can be considered as amulets and symbols of fabulous relationships far beyond the frivolously decorative. Elemental greatness and earthly sorrow, fervent devotion and spiritual revelations appear in them, and the earth's beating heart gently offers itself to hands, which vibrate to it. It is said in the *Yiking* ; " *Chien* is sky, is jade, is gold, " it is the symbolic word for all the positive powers of nature ; and these stones — embodying the *Yang*, the sheer male power — were placed in the tombs to prevent the decomposition of the corpses. The simple forms of these animal figures reflect the *taoistic* culture of the Chinese in its graceful and refined calm, in all its grandeur, bound to the earth and yet far above it.

The animal plays a far-reaching role in the era of really religious cultures, in which the events of the surrounding world, of sky, earth, death and deity are still formidable powers, where fundamental relations between man and time and between man's fate and the fate of nature still exist. The sacred bronze jars — many in the shapes of animals — belong to the oldest and most solemn documents of Chinese art ; generally the animal's back carries the vase, used for wine or the blood of sacrificed animals.

In India, animal representations reached their highest perfection in the *Nandi* figures ; in China in the great animal alleys of the imperial tombs and inside the labyrinths of palaces. Since the time of *Han* we know of animal figures formed in clay, which were placed in tombs. Mighty animal sculptures stand in the burial ground of the emperors as if at the gates of death, as precious testimonials to the greatness of plastic creation. Since, in the later periods of Chinese culture, most of the specimens of monumental art of the Chinese have been lost,

In the burial ground of the *Sung* emperors at *Kungh* (xth century A. D.), there is the " Path of the Spirit " composed of animals of angular firmness and cyclopean massiveness. Yungloh the second Ming emperor who, transferred the imperial residence from Nanking to Peking, founded the cemetery in a level valley at Changping, about 50 kilometres north of Peking, where thirteen emperors were buried during the xvth, xvith, and xviith centuries. The burial temples stand at the foot of the mountain which encloses the valley in a gentle semicircle. A long path with two high gates leads to them, flanked by sculptures 18 meters apart : with pairs of standing and reclining lions, Kylins, *i. e.* fantastic unicorns, camels, elephants, horses and one pair of military and four pairs of civil mandarins. These statues stand before the remains of emperors — mortal men — as signs of the triumph of greater lives. And yet this triumph seems to be a torture, a banishment, inevitably turned into stone — and resisting metempsychosis. Or are these sculptures only manifestations of a constraining and guarding power, filled with wisdom and duty ?

In Asia, animals are always represented at the limits of human life, where it goes on to a primary or eternal existence : in the sacrifice, in the rites of death, and in the coitus. They are represented as symbols of divine beings, as sisters or elements of nature.

But what do we know of animals, of sacrifices, death, and the bright noon of nature ?

" *Dshuang Dsi* took a walk once with *Hui Dsi* along a river. *Dshuang Dsi* said : 'How gaily the fish leap out of the water ! How happy the fish are ! ' Said *Hui Dsi* : 'You are not a fish ; how can you know the joy of the fish ?' *Dshuang Dsi* said : ' You are not me, how can you know whether I know the joy of the fish or not ? ' Said *Hui Dsi* : ' I am not you, and so I cannot know you. But it is certain that you are not a fish and therefore it is clear that you do not perceive the joy of the fish ! ' Then *Dshuang Dsi* spake : ' Please, let us go back to our point of departure ! You asked, " how can I perceive the joy of the fish ? " But you know quite well, that I know it, and yet you question me. I recognize the joy of the fish by virtue of my joy in walking by the river. ' " (from *Dshuang Dsi*).

(Translated from the German of)
KARL WITH

A TOAST TO OURSELVES

We are the last of our caste,
And we have a short term to live!
Hawkers of happiness,
Craftsmen of intimate verse!

Multitudes are coming to replace us
Foreign to all blood disturbances
Machinists of iron fame,
Artisans of love

And they will spare enough time,
From their work upon machines and foundations;
Seven minutes for caressing the bride.
Three seconds for poetry.

With nerves like steel rails
(I do not say it in blame but in praise!)
They will both eat and pray
Between noon and half-past twelve

Make haste, then, girls, women,
To woo us singers of wonders.
We are the last furrows
Not yet flooded by progress!

We are the last of our dynasty,
Love us, then, in the time that remains
Hawkers of happiness,
Craftsmen of intimate verse!

VADIM SHERSHENYEVITCH

(Translated by Louis Lozowick)

THE LAY OF MALDOROR

SELECTION FROM SECOND CANTO

It is midnight ; not even a Bastille to the Madeleine omnibus is to be seen . . . I am mistaken, there is one, appearing suddenly as though out of the earth. The few belated wayfarers look curiously at it, for it seems to be unlike any other. Seated outside are men with fixed eyes like those of dead fish. They are pressed one against the other, and appear to be lifeless ; for the rest, the regulation number is not exceeded. When the driver whips up his horses, one would think it was the whip made the arm move and not his arm the whip. What can be this collection of bizarre and silent beings ? Are they inhabitants of the moon? There are moments when one is tempted to believe it ; but they more resemble corpses,. The omnibus anxious to reach the last stop devours the distance and makes the road crack . . . It flies . . . . But a shapeless mass pursues its trail obstinately through the dust. "Stop, I beg you, stop . . . my legs are swollen with walking all day . . . I have not eaten since yesterday . . . My parents have abandoned me . . . I no longer know what to do . . . I made up my mind to return home, and would be there quickly if you will give me a place . . . I am only eight, and I trust in you . . . It flies . . . it flies ! . . . But a shapeless mass pursues its trail obstinately through the dust. One of the men with a fishy eye, elbows his neighbour, and seems to express his dissatisfaction with these silvery-voiced wailings which reach his ear. The other bends his head imperceptibly as a sign of acquiescence and then plunges again into the stolidity of his egoism, like a tortoise into his carapace. Everything in the features of the other travellers indicates the same feelings as those of the two former. For two or three minutes more, the cries are heard, more piercing second by second. Windows are seen to open

on the boulevard, and a terrified figure, bearing a light, after having thrown a glance upon the pavement, closes the shutter violently, not to reappear . . . It flies ! . . . it flies ! . . . But a shapeless mass pursues its trail obstinately through the dust. Only, a young man sunk in thought among these strange people, seems to feel pity for the evil. He dare not raise his voice in favour of the child who thought that with its little aching legs it might catch them up, for the other men threw looks of scorn and authority at him, and he knows he can do nothing against them all . . .

His elbows on his knees and his head in his hands, he asks himself with stupefaction, if this is really what is called " *human charity.* " He recognises then that it is but an empty word no longer even to be found in the dictionary of poetry, and frankly admits his error. He says to himself : " In effect, why interest oneself in a tiny child ? Leave him on one side. " Nevertheless, a burning tear has rolled down the cheek of the blasphemous adolescent. He passes his hand over his forehead painfully, as though to brush aside a cloud whose opacity obscures his reason. He struggles, but vainly, against the age into which he has been thrown ; he feels that he is out of place, and still he cannot escape. Terrible prison ! Hideous fatality ! Lombano, from that day I have been satisfied with you ! I did not cease observing you all the time my face breathed the same indifference as those of the other travellers. The adolescent rises in a movement of indignation, and wants to descend, so as not to participate, however involuntarily, in an evil deed. I make a sign to him and he reseats himself at my side . . . It flies ! . . . it flies . . . But a shapeless mass pursues its trail obstinately through the dust. The cries stop suddenly for the child has stumbled over a jutting stone, and has wounded its head in falling. The omnibus has disappeared on the horizon, and only the silent street is to be seen . . . It flies . . . it flies . . . But a shapeless mass pursues its trail obstinately through the dust. See this rag-picker who passes, bent over his dim lantern ; there is more heart in him than in all his fellows of the omnibus. He picks up the child ; be sure that he will heal it and will not abandon

it as have his parents. It flies . . . it flies . . . But, from where he stands, the piercing look of the rag-picker pursues its trail obstinately through the dust ! Stupid and idiotic race ! You will repent of behaving thus. It is I who say it to you. You will repent, agreed, you will repent. My poetry will consist only of every kind of attack upon man, that wild beast, and the Creator, who should not have engendered such vermin. Volumes will heap upon volumes to the end of my days, and yet this single idea alone shall be seen forever present to my conscience.

* * *

There in a flower embowered thicket sleeps the hermaphrodite, profoundly hushed upon the grass drenched with his tears. The moon has freed her disc from the mass of clouds, and caresses the sweet boy's face with her pale rays. His features denote the most virile energy and at the same time the face of some heavenly virgin. Nothing in him appears natural, not even the muscles of his body, which make a path for themselves through the harmonious lines of his feminine curves. One arm is bent over his forehead, the other against his chest as though to compress the beating of a heart shut to every confidence, and loaded with the heavy burden of an eternal secret. Tired of living and ashamed to walk among beings who do not resemble him, despair has possessed his soul, and he goes on his way, alone, like the valley beggar. How does he manage to exist ? Compassionate souls watch over him closely and he does not suspect their watchfulness. They do not abandon him ; he is so good ! he is so resigned ! Willingly he sometimes speaks with those who have a sensitive character, but without touching their hands, and holds himself at a distance, afraid of an imaginary danger. If he is asked why he has chosen solitude for helpmeet, his eyes look to heaven and with difficulty hold back a tear of reproach against Providence ; but he does not reply to the imprudent question, which spreads the scarlet of the morning rose in the snow of his lids. If the conversation is prolonged, he grows restless, turns his eyes to the four quarters

of the horizon, as though seeking to fly the presence of an approaching invisible enemy, says a brusque good-bye with his hands, recedes upon the wings of his awakened shame and disappears into the forest. Usually he is taken to be mad. One day, four masked men, under orders, threw themselves on him and bound him solidly so that he could move only his legs. The whip fell with harsh lashes on his back, and they told him to proceed without delay in the direction of the road that leads to Bedlam. He began to smile amid the blows and spoke to them with so much feeling and intelligence about many of the human sciences which he had studied, and which showed deep learning in one who had not yet crossed the threshold of youth; and the destinies of humanity, in which he so completely disclosed the poetical nobility of his soul; that his captors, terrified to the core by the deed they had committed, untied his broken limbs, threw themselves at his feet begging a pardon which he granted; and went away with all the marks of a veneration seldom accorded to man. From that event, which was much spoken of, his secret was divined by everyone, but all pretended to ignore it so as not to augment his suffering, and the government grants him an honorable pension to make him forget that at one time it wanted to put him forcibly and without previous verification into an asylum for the mad. As for himself, he used half of the money, the rest he gave to the poor. When he sees a man and a woman walking in some alley of plane trees, he feels his body split in two from top to toe, and each new part go to embrace one of the walkers; but it was but an hallucination, and reason did not tarry to regain her sway. For that reason he did not consort either with men, or with women, for his excessive modesty which was born from the idea that he was a monster, kept him from according his burning sympathy to whomever it might be. He imagined it would pollute him and he thought it would defile others. His pride repeated this axiom to him: "Let each remain true to himself." His pride I said, for he feared that in joining his life to a man or a woman, sooner or later he would be reproached for the conformation of his organs as though it were a monstrous fault. Thus, he withdraws into his

self-esteem, offended by the impious suggestion for which only himself is responsible and he persists in remaining alone without consolation among his torments. There in a flower-embowered thicket the hermaphrodite sleeps, profoundly hushed upon the grass drenched in his tears. The awakened birds are ravished in contemplation of his sad face through the branches and the nightingale mutes her crystal cavatinas. The wood by the nocturnal presence of the unfortunate hermaphrodite has become as sacred as a tomb. Strayed wanderer ; by the adventurous spirit which made you, even at a most tender age, leave your father and mother ; by the sufferings thirst has caused you in the desert, by the fatherland which perhaps you are seeking, after having a long time wandered proscribed in strange parts ; by your steed, your faithful friend, who with you bore exile and the intemperance of climates in which your roving disposition made you wander ; by the dignity which voyages into distant lands and unknown seas, among polar ice floes, or beneath a torrid sun give to man, do not as though with a flutter of wind touch with your hand these curls which strewn upon the earth mix with the green grass. Move a few steps aside and you will be doing better. This hair is sacred ; it is the hermaphrodite himself who wished it. He does not want human lips to kiss religiously his hair, perfumed by the mountain breeze, nor his forehead, which at this moment, is resplendent as stars of the sky. But it is better to imagine that a star itself in passing through space fell from its orbit upon this majestic forehead, and envelops it in diamond clarity as though an aureole. Night, brushing her sadness aside with a finger, clothes herself in all her charms to celebrate the slumber of this incarnation of modesty, of this perfect image of angelic innocence ; the murmur of insects is less perceptible. The branches bend their tufted heights over him, to keep him from the dew, and the wind, making the cords of his melodious harp tremble, sends its joyful harmony through the universal silence, towards those dropped lips which motionless, imagine they assist at the harmonious concord of the swinging spheres. He dreams he is happy ; that his bodily nature has changed ; or that at least, he has flown on a purple

cloud to another sphere inhabited by beings of a similar nature. Alas ! may his illusion continue until dawn wakes ! He dreams that the flowers dance round him in rings like huge frolicsome garlands, and saturate him with their sweet scents, during which he sings a hymn of love in the arms of a human being of magical beauty. But it is only a twilight vapour his arms enfold ; and when he wakes, his arms no longer enfold it. Do not awake, hermaphrodite, do not awake yet, I implore you. Why will you not believe me ? Sleep . . . sleep for ever. If your breast swell in pursuit of the chimerical hope of happiness I will permit it, but do not open your eyes. Ah ! do not open your eyes. I want to leave you so, not to witness your awakening. Perhaps some day, by the aid of a thick book, in emotional pages, I shall relate your history; terrified by its content, and the information which will come out of it. Until now, I have not been able ; for each time I attempted it, copious tears fell upon the paper, and my fingers trembled; it was not old age. But at the end I want to have this courage. I am shooked at not having better nerves than a woman, and fainting like a little girl, every time I think of your great misery.

Sleep . . . sleep always, but do not open your eyes ! Farewell hermaphrodite ! Every day I will not fail to pray heaven for you (were it for myself, I would not pray). May peace be in your breast.

* * *

"O lamp with the silvery flame spouse, of cathedral domes, my eyes perceive you in the air, wondering at your suspension. It is said your rays light at night the mob of those who come to adore the Almighty; and that you show to the repenting the path that leads to the altar. Listen, it is very probable ; but . . . must you render such services to those to whom you owe nothing ? Leave the cathedral pillars plunged in darkness ; and when a blast of the tempest upon which the whirling demon is swept through space penetrates with him into the sacred place, scattering terror there ; instead of fighting courageously, against the pest-laden squall of the prince of evil, extinguish yourself suddenly beneath his feverish breath, so that he may, unseen, choose his victims among the kneeling believers."

If you do this you may say that I owe you all my happiness. When you so shine, spreading a glimmering but adequate light, I dare not give vein to the impulses of my nature and I stand under the sacred portal, looking through the half opened door at those who in the bosom of the Lord, escape my vengeance. O Poetical Lamp! You who would be my friend could you understand me, when in nocturnal hours my feet press the basalt of churches, why do you begin to burn in a manner, which, I must admit seems to me extraordinary ? Your reflections are tinged then with the white hues of electric light ; the eye is unable to fix you ; and you light up with a new and powerful flame the least details of the Creator's kennel, as though you were prey to holy wrath. And when, having blasphemed I withdraw, you become again unseen, humble and wan, certain of having accomplished a deed of justice. Tell me, would it be because you know the mazes of my heart, that when it happens that I appear where you watch, you hasten to point out my pernicious presence and draw the attention of the worshippers to the place where the enemy of man has shown himself ? I incline to this opinion ; for I too begin to know you ; and I know who you are, old witch, that so well watches over the sacred mosques, where like a cockscomb struts your singular master. Vigilant guardian, you have given yourself a mad mission. I warn you : the first time you point me out to the prudence of my fellows, by increasing your phosphorescent gleams (since I do not like this optical phenomenon which for the rest, is not mentioned in any book of physics) I will take you by the skin of your chest and fixing my claws in the scars of your scrofulous neck fling you into the Seine. I do not assert that while I do nothing to you, you knowingly behave in a manner which is hurtful to me. There I will permit you to shine as long as it pleases me ; there ; you will defy me with an inextinguishable smile ; there, assured of the incompetence of your criminal oil, you will bitterly urinate. After having thus spoken, Maldoror no longer issues from the temple and remains, eyes fixed upon the lamp of the sacred place. He imagines he sees a kind of provocation in the attitude of this lamp, which irritates him to the last degree by

its inopportune presence. He tells himself that, if some spirit be shut in this lamp, it is cowardly not to reply with sincerity to a straightforward attack. He beats the air with his sinewy arms and wishes that the lamp would transform itself into a man ; he promises himself he will give him a bad quarter of an hour. But by what means does a lamp change into a man ; that's not natural. He does not resign himself, and goes to the threshold of the miserable pagoda to seek for a flat stone with a cutting edge. He throws it strongly into the air . . . the chain is cut in the middle as grass by a scythe and the instrument of worship falls to earth, scattering its oils upon the slabs . . .

He grasps the lamp to carry it outside, but it resists him and grows. He seems to see wings on its thighs, and the upper portion puts on the shape of an angel's bust. The whole wants to rise in the air to take its flight . . . but with a firm hand he holds it back. A lamp and an angel which compose a single body, there's a thing one does not often see. He recognises the shape of the lamp, he recognises the shape of the angel ; but he cannot divide them in his spirit ; actually, they were stuck one within the other, and formed but one independent and free body ; but he imagines that some cloud has veiled his eyes and caused his sight to be slightly affected. Nevertheless, he addresses himself courageously to fight, for his adversary is fearless. Simple folk relate to those who will believe them, that the porches shut of themselves, turning on protesting hinges, that nobody might be present at the impious struggle whose vicissitudes were about to evolve within the violated sanctuary. The cloaked man, though cruelly wounded by an invisible blade, strives to draw the face of the angel to his mouth ; he thinks only of that and all his efforts are to that end. The other tires and seems to presage his destiny. He fights but feebly and the moment can be calculated when his adversary may kiss him at his ease, should he so wish.

Well, the moment is come. With his muscles, he strangles the throat of the angel who can no longer breathe, and turns back

his head by leaning on his odious chest. For a moment, he is moved by the fate which awaits this celestial being, whom he would willingly have made his friend. But he tells himself that it is the emissary of the Creator, and he cannot hold back his wrath. It is done ; some horrible thing will go back into the cage of time ! He leans, and puts his tongue dripping with saliva upon the angelic cheek which throws supplicating glances. For some time he passes his tongue over this cheek. Oh ! See ! . . . see . . . The milk and rose cheek has become black like a coal ! It exhales putrid miasmas. It is gangrene ; no longer is it possible to doubt it. The gnawing evil extends to all the face, and from there, wreaks its fury upon the lower parts ; soon the whole body is but one foul wound. Terrified himself (for he did not think his tongue held a poison of such violence) he picks up the lamp and flies the church. Once outside, he sees in the air a blackish form with burnt wings which, with difficulty, makes its flight towards the heavenly regions. They look at each other, the angel rising towards the serene heights of goodness and Maldoror, on the contrary, descending to the giddy abysms of evil. What a look ! All that humanity has thought for sixty centuries and what it will think throughout the following centuries could be easily contained in it, so many things they said in this supreme good-bye ! But it must be understood that these were thoughts more lofty than those which spurt from the human intelligence ; firstly, because of the two people and then because of the circumstances. This look united them in an eternal amity. He is astounded that the Creator can have emissaries of so noble a spirit. For a moment he imagines himself deceived and asks himself should he have followed the road of evil as he has done. The hesitation is over, he perseveres in his resolution ; and it is glorious, according to him, to overcome sooner or later the Arch-All, in order to reign in his place over the entire universe and over the legions of equally beautiful angels. That angel gives him to understand that as he mounted into heaven so he would regain his original shape ; lets fall a tear which refreshes the forehead of him who gave him the gangrene, and little by little disappears, like a vulture rising through

the clouds. The criminal looks at the lamp, cause of what went before. He runs like a madman through the streets, making for the Seine, and throws the lamp over the parapet. It eddies for some moments and sinks finally into the muddy water. Since that day, every evening, after night fall, a shining lamp is seen which emerges and floats gracefully upon the surface of the river, off the *pont Napoléon*, with for handles, two tiny angel's wings. It moves slowly upon the water, and under the arches of the *pont de la Gare* and the *pont d'Austerlitz* and prolongs its silent wake upon the Seine as far as the *pont de l'Alma*. Once there it easily ascends the river and after four hours arrives back at its point of departure. And so on through the whole night. *Its hues, white like electric light,* blot out the gas jets which border the two banks, and between which it moves like a queen, lonely, impenetrable, *with an inextinguishable smile, its oil bitterly spilling*. In the beginning, the boats gave cry, but it tricked all their efforts, escaped their pursuit by plunging like a flirt and reappeared at a great distance. Nowadays, superstitious watermen, when they see it, row in an opposite direction and stifle their songs. When at night, you cross a bridge, pay great heed ; you are sure to see the lamp shining somewhere ; but it is said that it does not show itself to everybody. When some human being with an oppressed conscience passes over the bridges it suddenly puts out its shimmer and the terrified passer-by with a despairing eye vainly searches the surface and ooze of the river. He knows what it signifies. He wants to think he has seen the heavenly light ; but he tells himself that the light came from the stern of a boat or from the reflections of gas jets ; and he is right . . . He knows that the disappearance, is due to himself and, plunged in sad meditation, he hastens his step to gain his lodging. Then the lamp with silvery flame reappears on the surface and pursues its course amid elegant and capricious arabesques.

COMTE DE LAUTRÉAMONT

(To be continued)

(Translated by John Rodker)

Ganesha : Java. XIIIth Century.

Rock Relief: Mämallapuram.
South India.

VIIIth Century.

Through the little window, under the eaves, look. The line of my eyes and the line of her eyes encounter each other. I shall have the advantage of altitude she says to herself. But across the street, shutters are banged open and her attention is distracted or seized. I shall have the advantage of the shops to look at.

But in the end, should I ascend, where it were better to descend and arm in arm go elsewhere? No one gazes any more.

***

He leans over the parapet retaining his small head by the ears. Where the roofs stop they make a parallel to his shoulders and the chimney there has the air of being his neck.

The clouds set the house walking in the garden. In the tangle of telegraph wires and branches it is arrested. Don't look up any more.

The spider-web rips with the rustle of silk as the window is opened at length, and he whose head has never moved loses his kingly crown of hitherto.

***

The little puppet, good-luck doll, rattles against my window at the wind's whim. What of the rain, her dress is soaking wet, her face and hands discolored and effaced. One of her legs gone, too. But she never loses the ring on her finger and her magic persists. In winter she kicks at the pane with her tiny blue shoe and dances, dances madly and joyfully because of the cold and to warm her heart, her lucky wooden heart. At nights she lifts her arms, suppliant, to the stars.

* * *

Suppose I lost my key and all the world laughed at me and every one pointed to the big key hanging at my neck ? I should be the only person who had no means of getting into any place. They all retire and the locked doors leave the street very sad. No one in. I knock everywhere.

Oaths are hurled at me from windows and I run away.

Then, a little further out of town, by the edge of a river and a wood, I find a door : a perfectly simple door, of easy entrance, without any key. I place myself behind it, and in the night that has no windows but has wide curtains, between the forest and the river, which protect me, I am able to sleep.

PIERRE REVERDY

(Translated by M. J.)

THE MYSTICISM OF MONEY

The criticism of America by American intellectuals which has been growing in geometrical progression since the early years of the century, has become, I believe, a serious menace to American artistic expression.

The basis of their accusations is that America is not Europe. This can be admitted at once, but why it should be opprobrious is another question. The intellectual assumes that American civilization should commence at the same point as Europe's and carry on the great occidental tradition as a fraternal member of one family. But America cannot do this, and as a result endures the reproaches of its intellectuals, saturated with the traditions of the older countries.

This would not matter if the continuous recriminations were not beginning to take effect, but a deterioration in several American expressions is conspicuous, due to adulteration with European ideals. The matter has become serious.

America is in the midst of a formative-creative art epoch closely resembling the historical archaic periods. Contact with a decadent art such as prevails in Europe results in immediate deterioration of the American product. Early expressions can not stand this proximity. Negro sculpture ceases to develop when European knick-knacks become the rage. Europe can and does borrow safely from America ; jazz, advertising, etc. are the foundations of aesthetic schools abroad, but the reverse process is deadly.

America must not imitate Europe. This is hard on those of our intellectuals who only receive aesthetic emotions from the esoteric cultures of other continents, but foreign artists do not pity them ; in fact they understand with difficulty the American's blindness towards the creations of his own people.

A short digression into the past is essential.

The evolution of the artistic expression of a people, can be divided into three basic divisions.

(1) The creative formative period during which the function of art and religion is to make the universe habitable for man by removing its strangeness and inscrutability. Poetic and plastic concepts simplify, coordinate and transfig-

ure externality. Art has a religious inspiration and religion an artistic expression, so that one is tempted to define such art as the eternal residue of religion. The expressions of these times are always definite, conventional, and have a *universal appeal* during their tenure. The theme is more important than the artist, and perfection is approached by infinite trials of anonymous workmen. Great art forms may eventually be created which epitomize the civilization of nations and races. Originality is not only *not* required, but is taboo.

(2) The classic period, which follows the creative epoch, has usually been concurrent with the attenuation of the inspirational religion. The loss in sanctity of the religious symbols permits the breakdown of convention and individuals manipulate the left-over forms according to their will and pleasure.

(3) The decadent period is marked by the exhaustion of the traditional forms. It is naturally not simultaneous in all the arts. Critical expressions which appeal to the intellect thrive. The outstanding creators excel by force of personality and not by projecting the social vision, thus individualism and originality are the most desirable virtues, and novelty is often confused with art. Another symptom of this period is a world search for exotic forms not indigenous to the place or time.

Each of these divisions of art evolution can and does produce great art. There is no reason to believe that a Cézanne painting must have less absolute beauty than a Byzantine fresco although they are necessarily different. The test for all art expressions is the same — how great an aesthetic appeal do they still possess when the causes and conditions of their own time have passed away ? For instance, those archaic expressions which are considered great art have outlasted the religion whose concepts they defined. The inspiration has created something greater than itself.

Thus one need not sympathize with Taoist mysticism or comprehend Buddhist metaphysics to thrill to a Sung painting, nor is a knowledge of Voodism or Totemism of assistance before a Negro sculpture. The eternal quality, the essence which calls up aesthetic emotion, is called, in the language of to-day, plastic import or significant form. It is customary to use these terms only in reference to the plastic arts, but there is a similar essence in any artistic creation which appeals eternally, even though the content or matter represented be distasteful.

The art of Europe is obviously in the third or decadent period. The condition is well recognized, though many would dispute my characterization of it as decadent. It would be admitted, however, that contemporary artists strive to be different, to be original, to create new forms. That art is believed to be

the passionate affirmation of a *personal vision* and that this credo is at variance with the credos of archaic and classic times. On the Continent of late, the weakness of contemporary art has been studied and several recent movements attempt to recover the vigor of earlier epochs by scientific means. As a result there has been a great revival of interest in archaic periods in which the expressions of contemporary America are not overlooked.

But to return to the present.

A portion of the artistic expression of the United States admittedly belongs to the European tradition. This expression is the chief concern of that group whom I roughly term " intellectuals ". Their contribution to the art of the Occident is admittedly low in proportion to the national eminence of their country. For this reason, the intellectuals in their critical function incessantly belabour their compatriots.

The genuine expression of the United States, however, is not related to the European art tradition. It resembles not at all the prevailing decadent art, of, by, and for individuals, but rather parallels the archaic expressions of less sophisticated races. Americans, like many early peoples, adapt themselves to their environment by interpreting and evaluating the objective world through a conceptual system which, in their case, is not known as religion, and which expresses itself in diverse forms, not recognized as art.

" The prerequisite of all living things and of their lives is : that there should be a large amount of faith, that it should be possible to pass definite judgments on things, and that there should be no doubt at all concerning values. Thus it is necessary that something should be assumed to be true, *not* that it is true." (1) This need has been satisfied in the past by what is termed religion. It is filled to-day in America by the *Mysticism of Money*.

Money, because that which was originally but a medium of exchange and a valuable metal, has become the measuring staff of all values and the goal and reward of all efforts conventionally accepted as proper.

Mystic because the validity of the money standard and the intrinsic merit of money making are accepted on faith, extra-intellectually. One does not question them ; the rash interlocutor who seeks to know why the banker continues to augment his unspendable wealth is catalogued as slightly touched. One would as soon prove that two plus two equal four. Reasons are superfluous when a belief is obviously true.

Thus the Mysticism of Money resembles the religions of archaic times

(1) = Will to Power = Frederick Nietzsche.

in that it is not necessary to defend the credibility of its assumptions by rationalism.

The result is that money and business — the making of money — have assumed a sacrosanct character.

The pious disciple may accept board, lodging, clothes, jewelry, etc. from a friend or relation, but money he cannot touch, or, if forced to borrow, cannot rest till the loan is refunded.

A child, before it has learned to put a nickel in the slot and push the knob for chewing gum, is given a miniature bank so that the seriousness of coinage will be one of its first concepts.

Curiosity on making an acquaintance, has shifted from interest in who were his forbears, or to what sect does he belong to, how much money does he earn, and how does he make a living.

In national emergencies such as the late war, public opinion does not turn to teachers or statesmen, but to business men, men whose training has been the making of money. Curious ; at bottom no one is considered quite normal, practical is the usual word, except those whose goal is great earning capacity. One may seek this in many ways, even by writing or painting, but unless this ideal is the inspiration of the activity, one is set down as an addle-brained idealist.

These commonplaces are symptomatic of our civilization, which is so familiar, that seldom do we realize its strangeness.

Business and state are now as closely knit as church and state in the middle ages. The main foreign preoccupation of civil government is the safeguarding and fostering of the business of its nationals and its basic internal function is protection of property. The great crimes of the day are not sacrilege or treason, but complicated forms of robbery. Our heretics attack the capitalistic system and are prosecuted with deep religious indignation. The secret service and the third degree often perfect tortures that only the Spaniards in the days of the Inquisition surpassed. Our higher clergy are eminent members of the vested interests, some of whom take seriously their duty of inculcating morals. The lower clergy, ministers, teachers, etc. reverently hold out their ears to them in order to catch suggestions for their Sunday or weekday sermons. Thus they preach war or peace, friendship or enmity, regardless of Christianity or wisdom, but careful of the interest of their potentates and of the religion which preserves them. And all with the sincerest of convictions and the most honest of motives.

Capitalism originated in Europe, perhaps in ancient Rome, and the historian can point to even earlier trading states which concentrated on the production of wealth ; but the American Colonies, which waged one of the first modern

business wars, "no taxation without representation," have carried this form of civilization to its logical extreme as they were not hindered by vestiges of an older order. The differentiation between business in America and business elsewhere is that in America it is an end, a good in itself; its pursuit, the virtuous life. In Europe it is a means; wealth aggrandizes the states or gives pleasure and possibly position to the individual. Spending is more important than making, and if the latter is unnecessary so much the better. In America the making of money is all important; even sons of millionaires to be moral must make money. Consequently, hoarding wealth is not by itself an excellence. Americans of the faith are world famous for free spending. The fundamental rule of conduct for the devout is *Competitive Ostentation*. This is pushed to such extremes that some of the younger worshippers spend more than they make and mortgage the future. This discipline of pretentiousness has a very great importance for the artistic expression of the time.

A common misapprehension is that the Mysticism of Money is a religion of selfishness. As a matter of fact, it is one of the most idealistic faiths to which a grave people has ever been converted. Most past religions have been concerned with the saving of one's own soul in eternity or in escaping the vengeance of the Gods during terrestrial life. The Mysticism of Money is comparatively altruistic. Many practicioners devote their lives to it with only a secondary thought of personal gain. One finds them in offices, devoted, laborious, faithful, giving all that is them, careless of promotion or reward. One finds them in high positions slaving for wealth they can never use which they sometimes distribute lavishly to charities — with great *élan* and publicity it is true, for the motive-impulse is rather *Competitive Ostentation* than the good of the beneficiary. In general, people sacrifice most of their waking hours to the making of money because they believe it is the proper activity of this life (virtue), because they enjoy the game (play), and because they thus obtain the wherewithal for life and may receive a superfluity which will make them envied (selfishness). Different individuals mix the three ingredients in different proportions, and different conditions of life affect the blend, *i. e.* the very poor must of necessity make money to obtain the wherewithal of life, and the very rich often exert their efforts for one or both of the other motives.

Following the precedent of archaic religions, the Mysticism of Money propagates its concepts by poetic and graphic definitions and transforms the aspect of life by infinite new expressions that may or may not eventuate in art forms. These can be divided into those directly designed to make money, those which appeal primarily to the spirit of Competitive Ostentation and others which are merely in the rhythm of the new era and therefore irresistibly contagious,

The art of forming objects in the round or in relief by chiselling, carving, modelling, casting, etc. has reached greater proportions to-day than possibly ever in the past. Engines, forges, hearths, furnaces, turbines, kettles, motors, generators, dynamoes, automobiles, ships, aeroplanes — the list has no end. The purpose of all these is the efficient performance of specific tasks, which tasks are required by the industrial organization brought into existence and urged ever onward by the Mysticism of Money. These forms are not static but, like the older art forms, continually evolve through the introduction of small variations, in the direction of greater efficiency. The result is simplification, elimination of inessentials, balance and beauty. As perfection is approached, the designer becomes more and more conscious of the aesthetic possibilities so that in well developed forms, such as the automobile body, new variations are primarily justified aesthetically. Other things being equal, the more beautiful form has a higher selling value. Thus in the end the technical intent of the designer is aesthetic.

Many thousands of years ago the ancient civilization of Egypt believed in the duality of man and the return of his spirit to an image, if the corruptible body should by chance be destroyed. As a result, portrait statues in granite and diorite were executed. It is probable that the first attempts were not works of art. However, after the generations had endlessly improved on them, statues such as the stone images of King Khephrem and Queen Nephret were produced which have never been excelled and are the apotheosis of the force and simplicity of Egyptian culture.

In the same way, the multifarious creations in forms of contemporary life are the resultant of the Mysticism of Money and the technique of the American people. As they evolve they become more and more beautiful. Aesthetic pleasure in the balanced masses and curved belt lines of machinery is already recognized. The best of these forms are more likely to be considered by the future as the ultimates of American Genius than any of the imitative statues that masquerade as art.

The great innovation of this applied sculpture is the combining of movement and form. The steam shovel, with its geometrical and sharply delineated motions, the gold dredge, like a huge squat worm devouring the earth before and spewing it out behind, the threshing machine, smoking chaff and eating wheat stacks, will be tempting material for a classic age whose individuals are freed from their utilitarian purpose.

Some of to-day's forms have, I believe, plastic import even judged statically as we judge an antique statue. They will still have beauty when quite divorced from their utilitarian purpose ; just as the Apollo of Tenea is a magnificent statue though the last worshipper of the Greek sun god died some time ago.

And if we admit the legitimacy of moving sculpture as an art expression, many of our machines, etc. will have to be reproduced in future text books on the history of art.

I am not alone in foreseeing this development of sculpture. Lipschitz has already worked with the notion, and the most recent school of Russian sculpture, the Constructionists, has adopted motion and modern construction as its fundamental principles.

The art of filling a two dimensional space with colour and form has been mainly used by the Mysticism of Money for advertising. Again the primary purpose is religious, *i. e.* to sell goods to make money. However, the factor of beauty as it assists in catching the eye, holding the attention and driving home the message, has a monetary value and is often sought. The pretentious ads, consciously artistic, which borrow their technique from the lowest phase of European pictorial realism, and sugar it with sentimentality, nearly equal the popular magazine cover in garish ugliness.

The more indigenous product, the combination of abstract trade marks, pithy slogans, fresh, forceful language, photography, and superlative typography have an aesthetic value of no mean order.

This was recognized by a few individuals in the United States years before the war. Nevertheless, America had to wait for Europe to extend this aesthetic discovery just as Europe so often has had to wait for America to utilize her scientific discoveries. Marinetti, about 1910, realizing the decadence and impotency of continental art and placing the responsibility on the worship of tradition, paraded up and down Europe preaching — smash the museums, wake up to the present. His positive contributions do not amount to much as his theory seemed to be that, because a moving engine is beautiful, a painting that will evoke the sensation of the moving engine, will inevitably be beautiful, a super-realistic theory that has long since been exploded. But in writing he consciously or unconsciously incorporated the lessons of American advertising. Heavy type for emphasis, free placing of words on the page so that the visual sensation will reinforce the literary content, etc. The aesthetic value of these innovations is still under discussion, but meanwhile Wyndam Lewis took up the idea in England (Blast). The Dadaists and their precursors, Apollinaire, etc. have further developed it in France and now every center in Europe from Prague to Brussels is making designs, with the print of their poetry so that the typographical form will reinforce the literary content. Even with this world competition American advertising remains preeminent in the field.

Advertisements have not, of course, a purely plastic appeal. Their literary and representative attributes are as essential to their efficiency as their form and

color composition. However, neither this, nor their utilitarian intent, is sufficient to dispose of them as potential art forms. Chinese hieroglyphs have both these subsidiary qualities and possess nevertheless an aesthetic value. The final test for an ad. is the same as for all art forms. Will the best of them still possess a plastic content when the causes, conditions and purposes that produced them have passed away ?

However we answer this question, we must admit even at this date that their influence on occidental art has been greater than that of American painters.

Architecture and Engineering : — The art of building impelled by the Mysticism of Money has also broken with tradition. The innovation of flanged steel and reinforced concrete, as structural cores, is as revolutionary as the introduction of the arch, or of broken-joint masonry. But architecture, unlike machinery and advertising, has at the same time clung to the hallowed motifs of Europe at least in so far as they concern the embellishment of the facade. This compromise accounts for the most obvious defects of American buildings. A great part of contemporary work attempts to harmonize the inner steel construction with the old decorative forms.

In the most pretentious and weakest phase, that of bank, library, Church and State buildings, the new structural element is subordinated to the traditional aesthetic canons. The result is pseudo-Greek, Roman, Renaissance, and Gothic temples. Though the fine technique of American architects frequently succeeds in erecting handsome structures quite correct in every detail and skilfully planned, nevertheless the sensitive passerby is conscious of a lack, an emptiness ; for the repetition of a formula, after the inspiration has evaporated, can never result in true creation. Probably the continued popularity of the Greek temple style for bank buildings is due to the symbolism, but it would seem as if the banking business had become sufficiently sacrosanct by now to drop this anachronism. Churches and colleges are of course quite right to continue using Gothic. The reminiscent facades correspond to the formularized inherited routine of the services held within.

Office buildings, lofts and apartment houses realize to a greater degree the magnificent possibilities of steel. Their geometrical forms, rise in great tooth like rows, incisors and molars, cubes and pyramids. The old decorative motifs plastered on their sides, where the windows permit, are strictly subordinated to the design enforced by the structural demands and seldom detract from the general effect.

In European architecture the facades have always been part of the structure — the walls have supported the roof — this has limited decoration, and good taste has always insisted that this restriction should not only be shown, but should be utilized. The new steel core architecture does away with this

necessity. The facade is now merely an ornamental covering, a mosaic veneer and not part of the frame work. This opens up unlimited possibilities as the whole surface of the building becomes a field for experimental design limited only by the position of the windows. The present practice of making external masonry seem as if it held up the cornice is as hypocritical as faked flying buttresses. — Perhaps in time the faces of buildings will be used like magazine pages for advertising on a tremendous scale, slogans such as UNEEDA BISCUIT raised in relief in coloured stones, trademarks, etc. sculptured in great panels, reading matter, poetry and prose dodging in, out, and around the windows; at night the whole surface flaming with incandescent colored lights and search lights.

Strangely, the only precedent for this architectural development with which I am familiar, is on the American continent. The Mayas used a rubble core, of mortar and stone, which was quite independent, and faced it with decorative masonry. Though their primitive engineering necessitated an unbelievably great proportion of wall to room space, their genius adorned the great facades with a lavish magnificence. Geometrical and realistic motives combine in abstract designs unlike anything else ever done.

Lastly factories, and bridges, acqueducts and tanks, great bare forms, unprecedented and uncompromising: with these, surely, steel and concrete have justified their right to be. No old adornments disguise the new beauty of man's latest ventures. Balanced, poised, heavy as giants yet soaring bat-like over rivers, squatting on hillsides like mushrooms, holding back lakes with a gesture, no fanciful imaginings have conceived in advance the engineering commonplaces of to-day.

The most interesting and aesthetically significant phases of the above three plastic arts are those most closely knit with the Mysticism of Money. The creations whose sole purpose is to make money are far more satisfactory artistically than the hybrid combinations which share the old and new inspirations. In fact, in each case the responsibility for bad taste can directly be laid on snobbism, a genuflexion to traditional ideals not vital to our civilization.

Music :— The art of combining sounds with a view to beauty of form, and expression of emotion, still functions healthily in Europe. The continued introduction of new methods and new fields has prevented the exhaustion which has overtaken other arts and that great bogey, *imitation of nature*, has, with a few exceptions, been kept at a safe distance. America does little with the highly complex development of this art. America, however, has rediscovered a rhythm, by the agency of her natural singers, the negroes, which oscillates the diaphrams of the Western world.

Clive Bell in a curious article recently published announces that Jazz si

dead. Then he goes on surreptiously to change the subject and forgets about Jazz to speak of the jazz movement, meaning of course the recent European ragtime fad. He credits this movement with having dominated music and colored literature during the last ten years, 1911-1921. The genius of Stravinsky has been nourished by Jazz according to Bell. T. S. Eliot, Cocteau, Cendrars and Joyce are supposedly its literary foster-children and *les six* are its *petits maîtres*. Mr. Bell has more surprises in store ; he asserts that the inspiration of Jazz is the same as that of the art of the *grand siècle*, that its source is in *la bonne compagnie*, in lounges of great hotels, in transatlantic liners, in *wagons lits*, in music halls and in expensive motorcars and restaurants. We'd like to tell some nigger singer : " way down yonder in de ole corn field " about this here jazz movement.

Though the jazz movement may shortly undergo an eclipse — I find few symptoms even of this — syncopated rhythm is emphatically not dead Ragtime is the auditory expression of the new life which has overtaken us unawares, and as long as the Mysticism of Money and the speed and the agitation of the industrial civilization which are its product, last, Jazz will continue to vibrate the nerves of man.

Jazz can hardly be considered a folk music. It is rather the philosopher's stone which transmutes the music of the world into a medium possessing common appeal. Its melodies come from everywhere, stolen, bought and invented, but what do they amount to ? Last year's Jazz tunes, like last year's style in women's wear, leave only evanascent memories. No melodies endure the test of insatiate iteration. Also Jazz is dependent on the technique of the interpreters The barbaric tomtom beat with the exotic accompaniment of gongs, conches, syrens and voices is often more important than the musical score.

America has a real folk music, negro spirituals and plantation melodies, some of the genuine negro rags, the music that " jes grew ". One does not tire of these tunes, several of the oldest still haunt us, some have been picked up by college boys, " Oh, Didn't He Ramble ", etc. But they are rather a testimony to the genius of the negro race, than a product of the American people and the Mysticism of Money. This religion has inspired little music.

Up till the present, musical creation has not been utilized by the money system. Musical interpretation is a paying proposition, both as accessory to the movies and on a more pretentious scale, but composing remains ephemeral.

Perhaps a combination of advertising and talking machines will be devised. If a hundred thousand energies should be turned towards evolving a melody and poem by the offer of a big reward, each line of the latter, for instance,

to end in " Take Eno in the morning ", the winning melody to be distributed free on phonographs records throughout the constipated territory, it might prove such a paying proposition for the selling corporation that the reward could be made really munificent and a national interest be aroused, so that everyone would follow the individual competitions and the inter-corporate rivalry as they do the baseball contests. The result might be as interesting as graphic advertising

The art of conveying thought by the symbolism of the printed word is a major industry in the United States. Even literature in the post-Rennaissance European tradition has been pursued more efficaciously than have the other traditional arts. This is probably due to the fact that books can easily be transported and reproduced. The literary output of Europe is available to our authors for study and comparison, while the representation of the plastic arts is both partial and belated. Even so, the ranking of America is only high-colonial, not proportionate with her size or eminence, and until very recently was excelled by several minor European States.

On the other hand, the religious writings, the various expressions of the Mysticism of Money, flourish like undergrowth in a tropical forest. It is beyond the scope of this paper to study in detail all the manifestations in writing that are fostered by this faith. One would have to scrutinize in turn everything from news columns to movie-scenarios, from the magazine story to the popular novel, from advertisements to sermons of Billy Sunday, some good, many promising, the majority worthless; rather is it advisable to leave the futile on the junk pile of Time and mention only the conspicuous achievements.

A new language has evolved. Vigorous, crude, expressive, alive with metaphors, Rabelaisian, resembling Elizabethan rather than Victorian English. Conceived on sidewalks and born over bars, it can be found comparatively pure on the sporting sheets of newspapers, on the funny pages, occasionally in advertisements and on the stage, quite frequently in short stories. A few men make poetry of it. Several of our standard writers like O. Henry and Mark Twain utilized it advantageously, the latter coming to grief when he deserted it for traditional English as in Joan of Arc. Not that this book is not competently written, but compare it to Huck Finn. Mark Twain, like many others, suffered from frequently attempting to write what his time called " literature ". But the creators of our new language, true to the archaic period, remain anonymous and only a few individuals have realized the great resources to be exploited.

A new narrative technique has crystallized. The famous Nick Carter stories, sold in every railroad station in Italy, are the first examples of it to come to my notice. Their essential ingredient is speed, accomplished by elimination

of data which usually accounts for logical continuity. This results in repeated shocks which eliminate tediousness so long as the senses can stand the strain. Surprise follows surprise, alternated with high spots of emotional intensity. Coady was the first to draw attention to the artistic value of these narratives and went so far as also to praise them for character delineation. In this I do not agree ; the personages are types or puppets worked on strings with electric speed. Differentiation of individuals is not a faculty of archaic periods, in fact only in times of decadence is it emphasized, and though geniuses such as Ibsen based on it their dramatic technique, the old epochs such as early Greek Tragedy, Noh Drama, the Hindoo Theatre, Mystery Plays, etc., properly neglected realistic individuation. We should not require it of our time. It is questionable if the individual can ever be properly tragic, but rather if he is not material for caricature, and comedy.

This leads us to the third important phase of American writing. The creation of types. Ignoring the European tendency of the last centuries, America has conventionalized several striking characters which can easily be recognized even though disguised by the borrowed, narrative or theatrical realism of Europe. The strong man, gentle as a dove, mighty as Hercules, not very clever but when he knows the right, adamant in its pursuit. Females do not fall for him except the one woman, the pure virgin, who recognizes her predestined mate after the scantiest of preliminaries.

This chaste young girl, pretty rather than beautiful, has a miraculous physique in that she passes from virginity to motherhood without the need of any of the customary intermediate processes. Though she is innocent, a lucky star officiated at her first appearance on earth, and fortified by an iron nerve worthy of a warhorse, she assists her brave and virtuous hero to fame and fortune, often won against the will of a ruthless but rich and affectionate father.

That grey, stern eyed gentleman typifies power, like the kings of old. Hard but just, all men bow before him and only seek to frustrate his will by treacherous and underhanded means. Except perhaps the hero who, with sublime courage, sometimes dares to stand up against even the symbol of money when he knows beyond all peradventure that he is right.

More interesting than these are the villains. The fortune-hunter, slightly resembles Ulysses and Robin Hood. His enemies are the powers that be, and so he attacks the money system, exhibiting wonderful cunning to keep within the letter of the law. He is quite irresistible to the purer sex and usually pals with the villainess.

This lady dark and exuding magnetism has little to redeem her except her fascination. One wonders how the Hero can even let his beloved Chastity

hang around the dining room after he once glimpses the balefully beautiful eyes of the woman of mystery.

The villain proper has been so devitalized by the sentimentality of the pseudo-cultured that he frequently disgraces his ancient predecessors by repenting in the final dénouement. But not always, sometimes he passes into the coma of death with his prominent teeth clenched and his small mustache jauntily tickling his left nostril.

The Mysticism of Money has not as yet produced a literature. No Shakespeare has emerged to bind together into a magnificent whole, the vigorous language, the speedy narrative form, and the conventionalized characters. But it is a little soon to expect this. Archaic periods excel in sculpture, painting and architecture, but seldom lay more than the groundwork of music and literature.

The first great figure to arise is usually the herald of classic days. Aeschylus and Sophocles followed soon after Homer. Sometimes, as in ancient Ireland a culture has been interrupted before the innumerable tales, carried in the minds of the poets for safety, could be converted into formal written poetry. The stories distributed through European libraries in crude scenarios, are being slowly translated and utilized by present day writers, suffering from the disadvantages consequent on the lapse of centuries.

In America, there are already signs of a classic period, though conditions are blurred by the intermixture with European culture. For instance, the stage and movies are nearly ruined by the acceptance of the foreign technique of acting and staging. Conventionalized figures, formal plot and realistic acting make a weird combination. If masks were worn and gestures formalized, one could better judge the potentialities of our theatre. The movies occasionally escape this dilemma. In low comics and adventure melodramas the acting has been permitted to rise to the American dramatic conception. Life is not imitated, but transfigured. The result is one of the most vital theatres existing in the world. The Parisian artists throng to the latest American movies as the New York intellectuals crowd into the Theatre Guild. This last winter doubts were whispered. Is America going into decadence? I finally traced the trouble to its source. Several feature movies had crossed the sea. Girls à la Duncan danced barefoot on the Palisades, stories were adopted from European novels, acting, setting and lighting were straight European imitations. No wonder the French were worried. But The Kid finally arrived and ended the uncertainty.

Charlie Chaplin is frequently considered in Europe the greatest living dramatic artist. His acting technique seems to be derived from the circus clowns and the Sunday paper comic supplement; he uses a narrative form

which has all the speed and surprise elements of the Nick Carter tales. By his personal genius he has created a new type. Charlie Chaplin will probably live on the stage long after the original Charlot is buried. His art must be included among the archaic expressions inspired by The Mysticism of Money, according to his own statement published in " Soil ", December 1916.

" Making fun is serious business. It calls for deep study, for concentrated observation. It is the business of a funny man to know what makes people laugh and why it makes them laugh. He must be a psychologist before he can become a successful comedian.

The whole world loves a laugh. The important thing for those who deal in laughs is to find out how to make the most people laugh. There are some sorts of laughs that cause nearly as many frowns as laughs. One-half of the audience remains unsympathetic. That is not good funny stuff. It is the sort that often makes the picture exhibitor laugh on the shady side of his mouth by cutting his patronage in two.

The American public loves grotesquerie. So does the French public and so does the British public. Up to a few years ago we did not know that the Chinaman had a sense of humor. Grave and learned gentlemen assured us that the Chinese never laughed but at most only grinned.

Now I'll tell you one important reason why the Mutual Corporation pays me $ 670,000 a year. Looks extravagant, doesn't it ? It isn't though. My employers had their money back some time ago. They are riding on velvet cushions now. So am I, for that matter.

I wasn't paid that salary because I can amuse the American public alone, but because the stuff that makes Americans laugh also makes Chinese laugh, rocking the roof in all sorts of dingy little theaters along the Yang Tse ; hits the solemn Jap in his risible section, splits the visage of the Turk in Constantinople and gets the money that the Moujik used to spend on vodka. In short, we have discovered, through the media of the film, that elusive touch of nature that makes the whole world kin — the sort of stuff that makes everybody laugh".

What a curious contrast this avowal makes to the code of our artists of the European Tradition who seek indefatigably for the special and exceptional. The wielding of universal appeal is to them a cause for more than suspicion, while to be nearly incomprehensible secures respect and careful treatment.

If space permitted it would be interesting to examine in turn the minor arts and crafts. One discovers analogous results. Where the Mysticism of Money has had freedom to function, amazing products ensue. In those cases where Competitive Ostentation demanded an imitation of Europe, the

Mysticism of Money obliged. Take interior decoration; a high priest of the faith, a steel man for example, wishes to go his compeers one better. Presto, an architect; one year later, a Palazzo, divided into rooms. We pass from Directoire to Rococo, from Baroque to Gothic with sometimes a dash of Adam or Queen Anne. Then we ask to wash our hands. We pass into wonderland.

The bathroom is an American product. The architect had nothing to imitate. Beautiful, restful forms in porcelain, a mosaic floor of glistening white tiles Soft geometrical towels on nickel racks, faucets and stoppers in burnished metal. Perfect taste, perfect efficiency. One lingers over long before returning to the museum outside.

Some offices, stores, railroad station interiors, kitchens restaurant, etc. exemplify the taste of the unimitative American decorator.

Jewelry is a minor art nearly ruined by Competitive Ostentation. Once upon a time jewelry was beautiful owing to the designing of man as well as the finish of nature. Now we leave it to the oyster. The most desired piece of jewelry might as well be strung goats' droppings for all the artistry that man has contributed to its completion We have to search among watches especially in their interiors for a sign that beauty on a small scale is still sometimes accomplished.

The Mysticism of Money may prove, like the Christian Religion in the early centuries, a revitalizing force to most aesthetic expressions. Christianity inspired several archaic periods of great aesthetic value, Byzantine, Romanesque, the Primitives and the several Gothics. The Mysticism of Money seems to be on the way to a like series of accomplishments. It is too early to judge, however, as we are still surrounded by the worthless expressions which in all times outnumber the valuable ones, but which time can be relied upon to dissipate.

Also the moral issue beclouds the aesthetic. The deity of the Mysticism of Money is the most cruel of recent religions. He enforces a system of slavery, but unlike most ancient systems the slaves are only cared for when their work is needed. When their services can be dispensed with, they are left to starve and perish as best they may. Also this faith is based on several deleterious superstitions. The most noxious is called the law of supply and demand, which is used to extenuate its abominable crimes as if supply and demand were not as easily regulated as the milk distribution if fundamentals were examined. It has put into practice systems of torture that do not kill in a day or a month or a year, but stunt the body and shorten and embitter life. For example, scientific studies of muscular motions — the best known is the Taylor system — which save labour costs, but kill everything in the slave but his phy-

sical reflex actions. Such simplification is particularly deadening to children, who are not excluded from participation in the industrial mills.

The American people, as is true of all peoples, do not appreciate the expressions of their time for artistic reasons. Only the specialist is ever able to disengage the artistic from the religious appeal. Perhaps the nearest approach to universal aesthetic enjoyment is that of the baseball crowd. A large proportion of the individuals of which it is composed, seem to thrill to a beautiful pick-up regardless of the team to which the short-top belongs. But the crowd hardly ever goes beyond this. Chaplin, the greatest master of facial pantomime in the world, is enjoyed for horse play and sentiment. The buildings are praised for their bigness, the machines for their functions.

One can hardly look for aesthetic understanding outside of those engaged in the actual designing. The draftsman working on a bridge plan has some understanding owing to what the French call *volupté du métier*, but that is all. Real understanding must be left to the critic, to the intellectual; and instead, in America, the intellectual of late has been hammering the country for its emptiness of beauty and encouraging the greatest danger to America, the imitation of European art. Unless he can wipe the grit from his eyes, the evil he bewails may shortly be an existent fact and the United States be as devoid of beauty as his limited vision proclaims. For the Mysticism of Money is shaken, due to moral grounds, and it will be a pity if the aesthetic expressions which it inspires pass away with the religion.

H. A. L.

ETCHINGS

SHALLOWS

Thin river that can bear no ships,
Whetting your edge of liquid steel on rasping rocks;
You are like a lazy reaper
Forever sharpening his sythe

NOON

The slim grey shadows tethered to the tree,
Curl up beneath it now
Like guardian hounds
Asleep.

EVENING

The headlands kneel before the sea,
Huddling, with lowered eyes,
Like white-veiled buns;
The sea prostrates tall arms to them
Like white-sleeved mussulmans at prayer.
Do they mistake each other, in the dusk, for gods?

THOMAS PYM COPE

POPLARS

The stars come close to-night.
The stately poplars toy with them,
Like languid fingers
In a tray of unset diamonds.

EARTH

O great black sluggish beetle of the earth
Crawling upon a leaf of Time,
Your glistening wings of Day and Night
Are far too frail to lift you.

KATHRYN WHITE RYAN

BATTLE OF FLOWERS

I

Once upon a time there was a king and a queen who were put out of their kingdom by some wicked republicans. Sighing, the dethroned couple got into a limousine which the liberals had placed at their disposal as a final act of courtesy. While the two cannons of the kingdom were dissipating their war ammunition and getting out of breath in firing the hundred and one salvoes to celebrate the coming into being of the republic, the fugitives saw from the window of their auto the last corners of their domain: a mountain all black with crowded pines, a torrent torn with foam, a forest path picturesquely bordered with heather and gorse, and in front of a beer-garden a peasant in a green waistcoat blowing a melancholy trumpet.

II

A plaid rug protected the Princess from the draughts that entered the vehicle. A silver veil enveloped her swan's down toque, and lost itself in the collar of her furs. And when a fit of coughing suffocated her, one saw a tuft of hair, the colour of a ripe lemon, which seemed to grow out of the satin of the silvery veil. Then silence would fall again over the auto. The vagabond King stroked his beard; the Queen bit at her necklace of historic pearls; the faithful officer patted the triangular ribbons of his decorations, the servant examined the suit cases, and the cold planted its thousand needles in the throat of the little tubercular Princess.

III

There is but little difference between a family of peasants fleeing from invasion and a royal family which cedes its power to a constitution opposed to Divine Right. The poor people pile up their mattresses on a handcart, hang the canary's cage on the shaft, and stack up on the top of the wobbling pile of indispensable pieces of furniture a bloated red eiderdown quilt with menacing corners. Kings get into their automobile, put their jewel case in the trunk and the genealogical tree under the cushions. The crack of a whip, or the turn of a lever: thus the exodus of the homeless ones to the hostile ways of the unknown, the cold and the night.

IV

Crowned heads rarely suffer from overheated imagination. Etiquette and tradition regulate the acts of sovereigns with such precision that there is no room for fantasy or conjecture. A detailed protocol arranges the place of asylum, and

prepares the residence of kings in exile. If the triumphant political party respects the lives of the dethroned rulers, the latter have only to trust in fate to second the good offices of their intendant. There is one nation always ready to proffer them an inexhaustible welcome. This nation is France, who sets apart the best adorned corner of her territory for this asylum. In her burning Southern provinces, she receives the relics of revolutions which she labels and assigns a place in palaces consecrated to this purpose, just as she might arrange in parallel rows the urns of defunct royalties in the niches of a columbarium.

V

The King, Queen and Princess arrived then one autumn morning at a French railway station, where a cordon of police had already been drawn. The King continued to comb his beard, the Queen gnawed at her pearls, and the violent sun penetrated into the Princess through her white furs and moderated her cough — temporarily.

An official proffered the respects of the Republic to the fallen sovereigns. The local photographers clicked off their machines, jumping backwards until the faithful officer respectfully opened the door of the landau ordered by the municipality. A train which was waiting the conclusion of the ceremony to enter the station spat with impatience at the level crossing. And the Princess thought she was going to faint when she received full in the face the odours of iodine and salt which the sea flung up across the street, like a strong smelling bouquet of welcome.

VI

A bizarre-looking young man mixed with the crowd of sight-seers awaiting in the station the arrival of the royal train : three coaches, which a locomotive, respectifully mindful of the task, drew past advertisements of watering places. Superficial folk declared this young man was an idiot, and based their affirmation on the abnormal development of his cranium, planted with a frizzled moss of fair hair and on the flecks of slaver clinging to his soft, half open mouth. His green eyes were like two skinned grapes between his heavy lids. His hand played with a scapular, which rubbed against his flattened breastbone. Idiots' souls are often enough like those lordly demesnes, which to passers-by reveal only the monotony of their commons ; reserving the splendour of their façades to the initiated living between courtyard and garden.

VII

When the idiot had felt on his face the deep bite of the whip whose elm tree handle the coachman brandished, he understood confusedly how dangerous the vicinity of the powerful may be for the humble of this world. He dried with

the back of his hand the trickle of blood which dripped from his torn skin, and without exciting himself further, quickly mounted the footbridge which crossed the line. A fly with glimmering corselet sucked the tepid stain besmearing the wounded cheek. The sweat caused by his flight fell on the half wit's neck and forced a fleeting twinge from the sore flesh, while, at the same time, a greasy cold drop of perspiration touched the delicate shell of the ear encrusted with granules of dirt. But the young man carried under his lids the vision of a waxy woman smothered in a foam of ermine and lace. And he fled . . . bent double, his hands clutched over his wretched jacket, like a fanatic who has just stolen a holy relic.

VIII

On the side of the woody hill there were villas, white, blue and rose colour. There was also one immense villa whose delicate orange façade recalled the colour of fresh butter or old lace. It was in this asylum that the municipality's representatives installed the King and his beard, the Queen and her pearls, the Princess and her cough. After the customary greetings, the monarch recompensed the hospitality offered him by the town by conferring an out-of-date order on its first magistrate. The mayor, wearing the decoration, returned to his office, sporting an orange ribbon with fine black and red alternating lines, while the King condescended to mix himself a drink composed of gin and dark beer — a potion of which he was very fond.

IX

The old woman broke open a round loaf and soaked the split crumb with olive oil. She spread out on the slice she had so prepared two salted anchovies, a raw tomato cut into slices, and some shreds of onion. Then she placed the upper half of the bread like a lid on the soaked slice, and handed it to the idiot. She hoped to console her grandson with this magnificent nourishment. She had previously washed his wound, which a piece of white sticking-paper — with a green border like the paper one tears off the postage stamps, guarded from dust, blow-flies and scratching nails. But the idiot gently pushed away the oil-soaked bread which his grandmother offered him, and set himself to pluck all the roses in the hedge, until the sun smote him on the nape of his neck with its burning mallet. Then he went into the house, huddled himself up on the hearth where the kettle purred in unison with the cat, and occupied himself until evening watching the friable pictures of the live coals and the changing ashes.

X

Pearls maintain a universal value which defies the caprices of fashion. A conscientious jeweller convinced the Queen of this truth, and the delicate exile

began to shed her pearls so as to preserve a semblance of elegance at her little court, much in the way one crumbles up a brioche to feed the useless swans on the lawn. The King had never to go without his favorite gin, the Queen was able to surround herself with her customary parasites, and the Princess could stretch out her shrunken body under a rose-embellished pergola hung with barbaric silks. Passers-by tried to catch a glimpse of her through the iron gratings of the villa, while she received with the same icy indifference the bows of straw-hatted counter-jumpers and the stiff salutes of officers going to the forts which traced their geometric lines, as if drawn by a ruler on the rigid sky.

XI

The local industry was that of exploiting foreigners. The casino offered them its dancing hall and green tables ; the sea its yachts and fishing parties in flannels, the mountain its painted villas, well combed gardens and waterfalls, guarded by turnstiles, and the town itself its carnival with the slow procession of oscillating cardboard monsters, the multicolored rain of the confetti, the hail of the rattles and the flying exchange of bouquets. The coarse *métèques* pelt each other with confetti. Those who are offended by the savagery of this sport reserve their favours for the battles of flowers, where fortunes fade with the heaps of cast blossoms, whose odorous corpses are carried away in a special boat on the evening of the *fêtes*. During this season, the rage for pleasure tears the perfumed crowds from the depth of their villas. Pleasure flings them among the stunted palms and the velvet-dressed mimosas. The sea breeze sheds its odours to impregnate itself with the artificial perfumes which the happy moving crowd leaves in its wake. And the long drawn out sticky agonies painfully developing in the sanatoriums are forgotten for a few hours.

XII

The old woman placed a basket of woven osiers round the neck of her grandson. She carefully piled up in the receptacle nosegays, poor little bouquets of white violets, fragile pansies and wild roses such as the beggars offer to the foreigners under the palm trees of the promenade. The idiot allowed the old woman to go on working. His arms swung, his hands hung down uselessly, and he looked in turn at the sun, the earth and the flowers in a state of perpetual wonder. He sighed deeply from time to time and while his grandmother exhorted him to sell the little bunches for half a franc each, he let his senses wander over the warm garden like a magnificent net to capture the perfumes, the colours and the sounds of the season. Hls soul evaporated from his miserable body. A morsel of white cheese dried on his parting lips.

XIII

The exiled Queen sold a diamond clasp in order that the Princess might appear in the finest turn-out of the fête. Two white horses with shining cruppers, on whose closely cropped skins the movements of the muscles brought out wavy lines, drew an immense shell of white carnations. In the concavity of the vehicle, the Princess who seemed even more fragile in a tunic of white crêpe, abandoned herself to the rhythm of the flower-decked wheels. A page in satin led the horses by their fine silver bits, and when the coach had passed the barriers, and entered on the track, a shudder went through the grand stand, so miraculous did the white apparition seem, so removed from life, space and time. The battle of flowers ceased at its passage, the odorous arch of the flying blossoms seemed to collapse, and the sick Princess passed through the fête amid a respectful and lacerating silence.

XIV

The idiot alone advanced to meet her. The police had allowed him on the course out of pity, but the customers would have nothing to do with the modest flowers with which the old woman had decorated the panier. The idiot advanced, dragging his feet, amid the crowds of transplanted bouquets, the dust and the horse dung which attendants, dressed in rough red smocks, swept rapidly into large wooden scoops. And when the idiot saw the Princess, it seemed to him that a second sun was piercing the February sky. He walked towards her with firm steps, and when he was but a yard or so from her carriage wheels, he suddenly emptied the flowers from his basket over the vehicle, preserved till that moment from all vulgar contact. The pansies and roses broke the white monotony of the immaculate shell. A bouquet of violets grazed the cheek of the Princess. The page drew himself up stiffly, and police inspectors rushed to the rescue. But the virgin stopped them with a gesture, and covered the idiot with a rain of flowers which she drew with both hands from the hollow of her shell. The half-wit closed his eyes under the whiteness which clothed him, and when he reopened them, the apparition had vanished, but the miracle of the precious blossoms, lilies, carnations and Bengal roses filled the little basket and attested to the passing of the divinity.

XV

By thrusting apart two bamboos in the hedge, the half-wit discovered that he could see the Princess again. And from that moment he passed all his time glued to the railings of the villa with his neck awry, lying in wait for the celestial image. The servants drove him away with sticks, but tired of worrying him, ended by tolerating this silent witness, who would inevitably come back and who seemed really inoffensive. The half-wit thus passed some thrilling afternoons

with his eyes ever bent on the pergola with its falling roses, while a cough that grew more cavernous with each evening seemed to mark time to the flowers' whirling fall. The white roses dropped to earth one by one. And the day the first red rose let fall its first petal, the idiot saw that the Princess picked it up all blood coloured in the lace handkerchief she had just put to her mouth.

XVI

The municipality and the organizing committee of the festivities unanimously decided to offer a banquet in honour of the Princess. A ribbon of cerise satin was sewn on to a ribbon of bronze satin, and they were hung together on an olive wood staff. Then the municipal delegation crowded into an automobile, and went up to the exiles' villa. The idiot admired the officials' uniforms and the magnificence of the flag which a retired magistrate held up proudly. Around the *chaise longue* whereon the Princess lay stretched out palely there was a throng of frock coats. The murmur of a voice reciting passed through the fine leaves of the bamboos, and then there occurred a little confusion in the rose-decked pergola, for a sudden syncope had cast the Princess on to her ermines and made her one with the tailless fur.

XVII

The sea sparkles at the bottom of the stone corridor formed by the great hard lines of the street. The sea mixes and bruises the scales which the sun precipitates to its surface, and the entire street is filled with a rhythmic fracas of pounded metal. But the stupid warlike noise of the cannon which punctuates the end of the festivities suddenly muffles this harmony. The stream of flower-covered vehicles breaks up into the adjacent streets and moves towards the stables. Tattered and torn, the floral decorations hang over the varnished carcasses of the Tilburys, the Landaus and the Victorias. The dust dims the silk, clouds the velvets, powders the clinging wraps. Wrinkles cut the faces tired from smiling overmuch. The idiot runs along the pavement with its little pointed stones, and his still full basket tosses against his heaving chest. He has forgotten to offer to the public his vulgar stocks, his miserable marguerites, all falling to pieces, and his dog roses whose odorous cores are destroyed by the early May bugs. On he goes. And since he has not seen the Princess for whom he was waiting, he feels abandoned, and so lonely, that he begins running amid the crowd as if he were in the depths of a virgin forest.

XVIII

The grocer's shop smells of dried cod, chocolate, soap and shallots. The proprietress talks with the servant of the Registry clerk who presses against her bosom a cauliflower, bloodless as the head of a decapitated man wrapped in a newspaper. The half-wit waits his turn to be served, and the little jar which

he is bringing back emptied of anchovies reflects the reversed images of the two gossips in a rainbow frame. A cat cleans its fur on the copper counter. The string for cutting the butter stretches a fine hazlewood switch, and looks like a savage's bow forgotten in the rancid lump. An hour falls and bursts like a ripe tomato. Bit by bit, the idiot learns that the orange crop promises to be the triple of last year's, that the air is warm even in the shade — and that the little princess died that morning, choked by a clot of blood.

XIX

The police inspector examined the fragments of the conservatory and the overturned pots of flowers. Then, since a constatation always implies a conclusion, the official asserted that the entry had been effected by a professional. Count de R. . . lamented the affair, as it spoilt his collection of hortensias, and orchids. But the Countess, who had been called in haste to the scene, very sensibly observed that the robber had only taken away the white flowers and that he had respected all the other examples in the collection. One mysterious point peppered the banality of the affair. And the Count de R. . . who did not disdain to degrade himself at the cinema every Friday called to mind the gentlemen burglars of the screen. The police commissary who had an acquaintance with fine letters pronounced the name of Ophelia. The Countess de R. . . née Milliasson spoke of the *Dame aux Camelias*. Thus the official inquiry ended in the most literary manner possible.

XX

The old woman had risen with the dawn to gather fresh flowers for her grandson's basket. And the dew moistened the harvest which the slopes, the hedges and the sunken paths superbly offer to the poor of the countryside. The idiot ate with melancholy a slice of black bread where a sprig of garlic had left the shining trace of its passage, and drank fresh water with little sips from a cracked earthen vessel. He let the old woman arrange his bouquets : then with puckered brows and his tongue sticking out of his mouth, he spilled the flowers picked by the old woman on to the doorstep. Then he set off with his basket empty, while the grandmother cried and kissed her scapular, where the Virgin stretched out her two hands on a square of blue cloth. She went down on her knees before an image of St. Cassian and implored her good patron saint to protect the child whose eccentricities were becoming worse. Shaking her fist at the statue, she turned it round with its face to the wall, because that day was the last battle of flowers of the season. The sale which the half-wit had failed to make would have kept him and the old woman for at least a week. And, the presence of God is superfluous when there is no fire in the grate and the cupboard is empty.

XXI

She will not see this flower fête thought the Queen, whom mourning had completely stripped of her pearls. The servants divided their attention between the bare neck of the sovereign lady and the state bed where the embalmer had laid out the Princess. The King was dozing with his nose in his beard in a black velvet armchair. And the dynasty, whose barbaric name had made the Balkans tremble for seven centuries came to an end and was dissolved in this low-ceilinged room before this fat collapsing woman, this gouty old man and this slim corpse emptied of its organs. A chaplain murmured prayers between two flames of dripping wax, whose perfume mingled with the exhalations of the funeral roses. One felt that the whole house was in a hurry to expel the dead body which oppressed it and to throw open to the full sun the clattering shutters — destroyers of the wisteria.

XXII

A cannon announced the opening of the battle of flowers at the moment when the funeral procession was crossing the park and moving towards the cemetery. And as it was a day of rejoicing, the little Princess set out all alone between her ~~six~~ planks of precious wood towards the dark fields whence one never returns. The municipality and the committee had sent their representatives to the obsequies, but they had not dared to postpone the battle of flowers. The dead must not annoy the living. These gentlemen folded their hands resignedly. The porter did his duty, and the gate closed with a grind while the fox terrier of the Princess, forgotten in a room of the villa, prolonged with his lingering howls the plaint of the creaking gate.

XXIII

Thus it was that the idiot saw his Princess again for the last time. She appeared before him in a white flowered carriage drawn slowly by two white horses, just as he had seen her at the first battle of flowers when the destiny of the half-wit was decided. But today the wreaths submerged the Princess, and she had changed her ermine scarf for a veil fringed with silver. The half-wit began to laugh. He was not the kind of person one can easily deceive. He knew that his sovereign was awaiting him, and would reply to his first onslaught of flowers. He advanced with measured tread toward the hearse, and plunged his two hands into his miserable basket miraculously stuffed with an astonishing collection of hortensias and orchids. Then the horses reared, the cortège put out of order, flowed back towards the railing, and there was nothing under the sun save an idiot in ecstasy pelting a white coffin with bouquets of white flowers.

ALBERT-JEAN

(Translated by Edward Storer)

APHORISMS

The fundamental question which the existence of humanity sets each one of us is this : Can we forgive it ? Can we tolerate without an insupportable feeling of wrong and shame such an agglomeration of stupidity, meanness, disease, weakness, deceit and failure ? In all Europe there is only one voice which has said clearly and without shadow of doubt : Forgive. It is Russia. There is another which has said as clearly : Do not forgive. Man is something which must be surpassed : that is to say, do not tolerate man. In both these attitudes shame is overcome ; but in the greater part of Europe men live on permanent ill terms with themselves, and this inability either to digest or to reject, this continual sticking of man in his own throat, is sometimes given the most unexpected names, such as original sin, knowledge of human nature, a sense of humour, or even savoir faire. Well, to make the best of a bad job, even when oneself is the bad job, may be a form of ineffectual courage not without its aesthetic value.

* * *

The attitude to nature which became common with the advent of Romanticism, and which has now become almost a commonplace, was the far-thrown echo of immediate and disagreeable sense of loss. A few young men realised, after the passing of the eighteenth century, how far they were exiled from something within themselves which the age of reason had refined away. There was something wild, chaotic, spontaneous and unadorned in their natures which they could no longer enjoy but which they desired poignantly to enjoy. They chose as a symbol of this whatever was wildest and most "natural" in nature, and a romantic landscape awoke in them accordingly feelings of abysmal longing and regret, and especially a sentiment of estrangement. It was this landscape, *within themselves*, from which they felt estranged. They stood at the opposite shore of the strait which separated them from their own nature, and sent out an unutterable yearning towards *it*. We have all fallen heir to this feeling of exile from nature, and even now a fair proportion of our poetry is evoked by it. In the end, however, one writes one's poetry to oneself.

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The Eternal Hamlet: I have always sought too eagerly for harmony, and therefore I have constantly found chaos within myself. My soul has sat high on its watch tower over the changing sea of my desires; and it has been distrait whenever a breeze has flecked the lovely, regular rise and fall of the smooth tides. Life must be a windless calm! I am the eternal manipulator of fine weather: ah, that is the reason why I am so anxious, so many-sided, so subtle, so incapable of action. How weary one grows with sailing round every storm!

***

Men's happiness depends on what kind of weather they like. One is safest if one likes every kind.

***

One ceases to think any more about the problem of happiness when one realises that, in all great adventurous natures, it is excess of joy, terror of experienced joy, which makes them embrace mad, cruel or perilous deeds. It is their desire to suffer, their hope that they may suffer, which drives them to risk their lives. They put themselves in such a position that calamity may easily befall them; this is the farthest that they can go, for it would be pointless and inhuman to inflict deliberately calamity upon themselves. Love of danger is really disguised love of unhappiness. There is a certain hypocrisy in it. The desire for suffering arises out of experienced joy, with just the same naturalness and necessity as the desire for happiness arises out of experienced suffering.

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Why does one sail away to discover the North Pole? Why does one go through the most agonising years, ruining one's health and one's nerves, and becoming old, to see, for instance, the source of the Nile? Why does a philosopher, an exceptional, heretical philosopher, now and then sail out into the treacherous sea of metaphysics, having first carefully lost the chart, and also the compass (the Absolute)? Partly because one's chance of being killed is tremendously increased: there are casualties, too, among philosophers. Partly for glory. And partly to show that one does not care. The chance of being killed, however, is the most solid reason of the three.

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* *

In the novel the hero, after having elaborately insulted the villain, turns his back calmly upon him and walks out, with the almost mathematical certainty of being shot. (He is not shot.) There is hardly another action which appeals so strongly to all conditions of men.

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* *

The spirit is strong : the flesh is weak. Exactly the wrong conclusions have been drawn from these premisses. The body should be ceaselessly and vigilantly nurtured ; it is so defenceless. Sickness and wounds disfigure it ; it cannot endure pain without losing some of its beauty. It can only be happy and strong if it is made happy and strong. But the soul can endure all things. It should be protected against no danger and no evil ; for in passing through suffering, calamity, and disease it becomes more beautiful. The opposite of this has been generally taught.

*
* *

From time immemorial, priests have gone into solitudes in order to find God. In India, they went into the forests ; in Egypt, after the coming of Christianity, into the desert ; in Eastern Christendom, into Byzantine monasteries ; in Western Christendom, into monasteries built in the Gothic and other European traditions. It would be interesting to discover how much their conceptions of God have been affected by the setting in which they have found Him : how much of the forest or of the desert has been in Him, and in how far He has been Byzantine or Gothic or Baroque. In the modern world with the decline of the habit of solitude, the aloofness and the infinite distance and serenity of God has been lost ; He no longer dwells in transcendent unapproachability ; He is everywhere, in my neighbour, in myself. And last of all, He has been given a touch of Darwinism ; He struggles, according to Mr. H. G. Wells, and on the same side as us : we can help Him. First, He was aloof, for the hermit who contemplated Him was aloof ; then He was in the very thick of life, for democracy had arisen and philosophers had become gregarious ; last of all, He has been made the leader of a party, because our thinkers and artists have become propagandists. Man is ineluctably anthropomorphic, as Goethe said.

***

Even if there is a real Heaven and a real Hell, the atheist who denies the existence of both must be nearer to the truth than the " believers " ; for their conception of these states is so ridiculous and so unreal, and by the nature of the problem must be so, that it is both a denial and a caricature of the reality. And what is it, after all, that the atheist denies ? Simply this Heaven and this Hell of the believers, this piece of naïve anthropomorphism. But if there are two states after death, or twenty, or a hundred, we cannot either affirm or deny them.

***

Men are sometimes driven to adopt a certain aristocratic humility because they feel that whenever they enjoy themselves they are inexpressibly vulgar and self-satisfied. They have the unhappy knack of seeing their own clownishness and vanity with fastidious, passionate detachment as if from a different climate of the mind ; as, for instance, a sober man might see a company in which all the others were drunk. They feel then that in their jollity they have been servants to yokels ; and happiness becomes to them unseemly and monstrous, an offence to the sunlight. Finally they conclude that they are altogether vulgar and hateful. The passage to contempt for the world and to priesthood is then not long. The Church derives its spiritual distinction from men of this kind.

***

The man who is hard towards himself is hard towards others. The man who is lax with himself is lax with others. What are we to make of the man who is severe with himself and yet overflowing with indulgence to everybody else ? We feel kindly towards him because after all we benefit by his qualities, which make things easier for us. Nevertheless, he is only a special kind of hypocrite, who constantly deceives himself, violates himself — for what ? Perhaps first, from sheer timidity, or from the desire for a certain reputation ; but eventually the whole business becomes a habit. Yes, finally, he does all this because it is a habit. As a rule, we waste far too much time in subtilising the activities of men. They do what they do because it has become habitual.

EDWIN MUIR

MORNING WALKS IN THE CITY

I. Narrows

Mouldy fragments of the sky
stick between uneven teeth
of munching housetops.
All the windows of the block
have the self-same heaviness of eye;
all the doorways jerkily
wipe away a yawn.

II. Early Morning

The regular cats wave left and right
like measuring pendulums
ticking in a visible night.
The wind is made of mild ho hums.
The avenues shaking out the light,
the shattering shadow now succumbs,
and over it sunrays, lean and trite
spar like sparrows over crumbs.
Heed the hydrants and the height
of their lonely, quizzical thumbs.

III. Park bath

In the park which sits beside
motherly offering a lap,
one can see that dew is but
an ablution of the earth.
Ponder how the grasses dry
their slim, wet fingers in the wind;
how the trees slap out their leaves
like wet dogs thrashing clean.

I. Schneider

ONE THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS IN A BAR-ROOM

OR THE IRISH ODYSSEUS

Thanks to the imbecilic censorship enforced from time to time in America and England the profane books of the period are enveloped in a cloud of moral castigation or embellished with a halo of artistic martyrdom, as the case may be. Out of this situation arises the fallacy that such and such a writer is "ahead of his time," that he is a social evil or a prophet. It is thus that James Joyce's formidable *Ulysses* passes between Scylla and her colleague, and is consecrated at once by horrid little people who believe in emancipation and by equally horrid people who believe in societies for the suppression of vice.

To regard steadfastly the artistic aspects of this book becomes, then, something of a problem. One must put out of mind the impassioned exhibitionism of the author.

Ulysses seems to have received indiscriminate praise and abuse on both sides of the Atlantic, even such a diffident critic as T. S. Eliot referring to its beauties in the vaguest terms ; whereas, the book may be summed up as the work of a man who possesses an amazing sensibility for physical qualities, an extraordinary knowledge of English, and an inferior intellect.

In an early passage which relates the history of Father Conmee's promenade through Dublin of an afternoon, Joyce's characteristic talents and failings may be observed : the priest is led from one objective situation to another, and the greetings, the gestures, the expressions of all the persons he meets are related with a perfectly mad attention to detail, and with complete indifference to their relative significance. It is all rather interesting because of the richness of Joyce's observation ; it is unsatisfying because he contented himself with recording slavishly this procession of natural phenomena. And so we go up the hills and down the valleys, trusting that there will be lovely sights for the eye along with the swamps and the waste places. The prerogative of the artist-mind to shape matter, to depart from verisimilitude in accordance with his design, is not fulfilled.

But this is the truest way of rendering Life. I have given you the whole of Life, Joyce may say. Poor Zola and Octave Mirbeau thought likewise ; yet who would turn their pages now ?

For one who did not know and love the farther reaches of the English language *Ulysses* might well be of only the slightest significance. As Life, for instance. A well informed European who had read Kraft-Ebbing and Freud would find the psychopathological material antiquated and unscientific. Nor would Joyce's attitude appear new or arresting. The unbridled imagination of Lautréamont in *Maldoror*, the poetic automatism of Apollinaire in *Alcools*, the Cyclopean laughter of Alfred Jarry in *Ubu Roi*, these and other qualities which are immediate to modern artists had existed before.

Scrutinizing the literature of, let us say, the last quarter of the nineteenth century in France, we may observe that the language lacked richness, that in most directions its resources seem to have been plumbed. After Mallarmé, the poets echo each other's figures and images. The lucid felicitous prose manner of Villiers de l'Isle-Adam (*Contes Cruels*) and of Barbey d'Aurevilly (*Contes Diaboliques*) terminates with Rémy de Gourmont, who represents the last stage of thin, lucid, felicitous prose. Since this period, modern Frenchmen have been driven to extremes of violence and verbal anarchy to escape the " flatness " of the language, to gain richness and body.

The case seems to be quite the opposite with English : the nineteenth century writers evaded the great hazards and the vast ranges of the language which appealed so powerfully to the Spenser-Marlowe-Shakespeare era. The Victorians' preoccupation with theological questions may have been the restrictive factor, just as the obsessions of modern writers with social questions render their imaginations less lively.

Joyce's courage lies in his willingness to throw overboard all given principles of navigation and take to the uncharted seas. His inventiveness is admirable ; his rhethoric, shall we call it, is as bold as that of John Donne, in fact is very reminiscent of the Metaphysical poets. He has a cunning bag of tricks which should be systematically overhauled. There is a madness in him for *the word* : the play of it, the color, the tempo of a handful of them. But to his bag !

1. Modulation — A theme in words undergoes swift variations, is carried off from one octave to another and sounded in different keys, as in music :

" . . . the Stephen watching through webbed lapidary's window the fingers prove a time-dulled chain . . . Dust darkened the toiling fingers with their vulture nails. Dust slept on the dull cock of bronze and silver, lozenges of cinnabar, on rubies, leprous and winedark . . . Born all in the dark wormy earth, cold specks of fire, evil lights shining in the darkness where fallen archangels flung the stars off their brows.

This tendency toward flight — flight from reality, from perspective, leading as it does toward exaggeration in a broad burlesque manner, is perhaps the most attractive quality in Joyce. The execution scene treated as if written by a

romantic newspaper reporter, only "touched up" a thousand fold is a marvel of *flight*, burlesque and Chaplinesque fantasy.

2. Reconstruction of words — Words are deformed, amputated, grafted and pruned at the author's will, as:

"Mr. Best eagerquietly lifted his book to say . . ."

"The boys sixeyed Father Conmee and laughed."

3. Invention of new words, frequently with the use of nonsense syllables:

"Swiftly rectly creaking rectly rectly he was rectly gone."

4. Images — Joyce in his natural vein evades the simile, a thing *is* something else, it is not *like* it:

"Onions of his breath came across the counter out of his ruined mouth."

The onions issuing from the man's mouth seem perfectly natural and spontaneous as compared with this:

"Stephen followed out of the vaulted cell into a shattering daylight of no thoughts."

The images, as in this case, become more sophisticated, fall into the older tradition at times.

5. Jettisons grammar — Sentences are broken up, are projected without semblance of syntax, without verbs or subjects, in an effort to follow the unconscious movements of the mind hurrying over diverse impressions without bothering to complete the phrase.

6. Designs within the sentence — expressions or phrases are reversed or interposed like the elements in a Persian rug. One design which seems to appeal to him strongly is the pyramid standing on the point of another pyramid, the hourglass, if you will:

"Miss Kennedy sauntered sadly from bright light twining a loose hair behind an ear. Sauntering sadly, gold no more, she twisted twined a hair. Sadly she twined in sauntering gold hair behind a curving ear."

7 — 8 — 9 — 10 — 11 — 12 — 13 — etc. Joyce is an acrobat, a trickster. Along the trail of *Ulysses* there are many varieties of rhetorical fireworks.

The intensity with which Joyce manipulates details in the absence of any power over the ensemble is characteristic of his preponderant sensibility. I should hesitate to say that these tricks of language are deliberate; one feels, rather, that they come spontaneously out of the complex sensuous nature of the man. Fragments of astonishing poetry buried amid tedious tracts of talk or psychologizing. The value of his "stunts" is minimized by the ease with which they can be imitated, or have already begun to be. A mannerism can always be mimicked by a skillful actor. Nor must the novelty of Joyce's technique be overestimated. During the ten years previous to the appearance of *Ulysses* in Paris, the tendency toward verbal and rhetorical invention had been very

widespread in America, at least. It is for this reason I take it, that Joyce has been so well received in America. It is precisely for this reason that he may exert a dangerous influence, that of encouraging more and mere rhetoric.

Literature is really in a frightful morass at the present moment, as regards means and directives. It is clear that for those who have consciences the traditional forms of prose fiction are exasperating. Even in the work of Sherwood Anderson and Waldo Frank there is a stumbling away *à tatôns* from the plot-character-doctrine novel. In Europe the "poetic novel" and the "cerebral novel" divide attention. In this great crisis, in this painful want of directions, Mr. Joyce brings nothing in *Ulysses*, save, as I stated, his personal mannerisms.

The only sincere direction, manifested more strongly perhaps in modern painting than in literature, is toward a sort of formalism, by which the subject matter is used as raw material to compose a design with, regardless of their ultimate faithfulness to an empirical reality. Something in the very air of the post-war era seems to favor such a development. Joyce lies completely outside of this movement. His influence toward greater discreetness, formlessness, vagueness, obscenity, inspiration, must be fought off as a dangerous flank attack.

There are interminable conversations which cover at least three-fourths of the book As a method of projecting an epic it is interesting for the first 300 pages or so. But 700! Perhaps the sternest charge which can be made against *Ulysses* is its sinful length, its waste stretches of dreary gabble by ill-educated men. It may be said that the book might have been three hundred pages shorter without damaging its message very seriously!

The best thing that can be said for the profuse dialogues is that they embody what the French call *sur-réalisme*. That is, as a Mr. O' Brien converses Joyce puts extraordinary associations of thought into his head, makes flights, departures, such as would never come to a Mr. O'Brien. This is quite amusing and justifiable, and may be attributed to the sensibility of Joyce.

Elsewhere in conversations between men of superior intellect on Shakespeare, Maeterlinck, Greek Philosophy, Irish politics, it may be assumed that Joyce reveals in a measure his own reflections. The figure of the poet, Stephen Dedalus, occurs frequently in this setting. The speech is surprisingly awkward, immature, inarticulate and unimpressive. This was equally the case in certain portions of the "Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man," Joyce's previous novel. As virtuoso, Joyce is astounding; his power, his extraordinary mechanical memory will make him a controversial issue for many years. The mental collapses in the book, wasting so many pages, indicate simply an intellect inadequate for its great instrumental genius. The violinists, who thrill concert-audiences with their bowing while knowing music only superficially.

Ulysses reaches a quasi-climax in the third part, where for some 200 pages

the method reverts to the play form. For fantasy, humor, obscenity, action, this is perhaps the most exhilarating part of the book. A Dublin street night with harlots, sailors, and a nondescript mob of night-prowlers, with Bloom holding sway as an enchanted Protean personage who turns from pursuing male into a pederast, a sadist, a massochist, an impotent, what not? In turn, all of the characters of the epic are brought forth, do their little dance and vanish. The scenes are conceived with a whirling fantasy that suggests Chaplin again. Whether or not Freud is responsible for his overwhelming preoccupation with sex, Joyce certainly suggests the satyr. But following the Viennese interpretatation of the Unconscious, who can say that he is more the satyr than you or I?

In this part, there is a groping effort made to reunite the straggling elements of the Odyssey a task which is evidently too much for the Joyce brain, so lacking in sense of proportion. *Ulysses* thus remains a piece of sustained outlet. Pluck what you can out of it.

In a bar-room men are gathered about the counter, conversing again. Nothing is too remote to be discussed: the Hungarian parliament, Denis's funeral, the last lynching in America, Shakespeare's Othello. These men talk with the freedom and vigor of the simple poor, employing the most picturesque vernacular and profanity. It is amusing to listen to them as James Joyce sits in and records their simple unfeigned speech. But eventually it becomes tedious, redundant, appalling. By the hour, by the month! Joyce buried in this trivial vulgarity. What kind of a mind must he have, what mad design on posterity, to continue indefatigably the precious relation of this saloon-talk. I had vowed a friend of mine to read the book in its entirety, to glue my eye to every page. Slang is healthy, should go into the language. The figures of speech of rough men are honest and physical. One grows tired and beer-logged. Someone take him home, sometime! Very well, I am the little ragged barefoot boy sent by poor grandma to pluck you by the sleeve to beg you to come home Mr. Joyce . . .

MATTHEW JOSEPHSON

NATURAL THINGS

Because the clustered stars or the pallor of dawn
Can make the heart break, the eyes sting,
I bend my soul to a will as tightly drawn
As a nocked bow-string.

Because a whisper of leaves can crucify,
A mist arouse the lions in my blood,
I keep my lip curled, my head high
In scornful hardihood.

Because there is love in me like a naked knife
Grasped hotly in the hand,
Dumb in a dream I seem to move through life,
My language dry as sand.

Too fine the whetted edge of my desire,
Too keen are the wounds I bear
From the moon's reluctant silver, the noon's fire
The unapparent air.

WILLIAM ROSE BENET

FACTORY CHIMNEYS AT DAYBREAK

They thrust their black weight into the twilit radiance,
Armoured, they stretch themselves upward with beetling menace;
Like a driven wedge they split the delicate hazes,
So that every waft of warmth is shattered against them.

Out of their gullets black serpents creep
To pale distances, which are hidden by a silvery veil.
Mutely they proclaim: "We are stronghold and shield!
The fires writhe, captives in our midst."

Morning is heralded by violet-tinted laughter.
The sky is filled with deep blue.
Then are they like frozen sentries, jaded with watching,
And they become peaked and bare and gray,
And stand helpless and as if lost
Amid the clear ether, which has given birth to a God.

ERNST TOLLER
(Translated from the German by P. Selver)

PAINTÌNG, PAST AND PRESENT

" The best jest is a brief one." Enough of your incomprehensible cubism. Dear reader. The cubist jest has been with us for fifteen years, and you have not yet consented to devote ten minutes of your attention to this question which so baffles you. However, as usual, wait 20 years, in twenty years you will agree with us.

Since time immemorial the chief end of painting has been to establish documents. These documents were our first books. These first " book paintings " were moral or historical. Then came the iconographic document, the portrait, the images of kings, then of the bourgeois, then the image of nature, when fashion turned the heart of man toward nature, then the image of the humble when it seemed humanitarian to occupy oneself with the lot of the humble.

This fundamental unity of painting goes back to the very origin of man. It extends over more than 400 centuries. It was painting, but it was not necessarily art. This activity represents the labour of millions of painters, but the whole history of art could be held in one volume.

The history of art could be contained in one volume and there are not more than ten great museums of painting in the world. And in these museums there are few works which are great works of art. Moreover, many pictures that once hung in art museums and private galleries pass one by one into the archæological and ethnographical museums.

There are millions of paintings and sculptures all of which told us more or less interesting things. But the works which remain works of art can almost be counted on the fingers from memory. The story told by a picture does not interest us. The works which interest us and continue to live are those which have such powerful plastic qualities and proportions that they stir our senses strongly and our intellects incisively, and thus give us greater perceptions of harmony. Forms establish relations between themselves. The great names of the past are those of the creators of forms. It is only because their works are the compositions of well ordered forms that all men of all times find in them that higher exaltation which is of a mathematical character and which is the highest faculty of man. The works of Michael Angelo, the Egyptians, the African Negroes, are not stories of good gods, nor are the pictures of Ingres and Poussin old wives' tales. These men are the creators of forms and organizers of sublime proportions. This is what humanity (to be exact, the specialists) find in them. This is evidently not what the crowd finds; the crowd looks at good gods and at old wives.

The value of a work of art is beyond its documentary significance.

A hundred years ago photography was invented, thirty years ago the

cinema. The document henceforth is infallibly achieved by the click of a shutter or the turn of a film. At first, painting took little notice of the new fact. Slowly painters began to worry and ask themselves questions about the destiny of their art and the future of their destiny. Thousands of painters asked themselves what they were good for. Confusion ! Daguerre might have changed something after all. But in fact, had he not rendered painting an immense service in obliging it to define its true aims ? Let us say at once that the artists saw clearly in the disorder. But to do them justice, we must consider another array of facts.

With civilization, phenomena are divided into categories. Problems of morality, history, iconography, science, become so many specialities each with its specialists. Do plastic beauty and aesthetic emotion depend upon these factors ? No.

Another thing : Societies express in every age "*ce qu'elles ont dans le ventre.*" That is the measure of their culture. It is called civilization. They differ one from the other depending on whether the peoples are young or old, burned by the sun, or chilled by the fog. Thus we acknowledge the great talent of the Periclean age, we admit that the Romans were great builders, that the negroes feared the mystery of the world, that Mediterraneans like definite solutions, that Occidentals are rationalists, that our epoch has much better taste than that of the Rennaissance so vaunted by the academicians. We find a certain spirit in each civilization, in each people. And this spirit also depends very much upon what the peoples do.

Our epoch, then, has its spirit. — Great industry, great finance, great administration ; a spirit made of love of precision, objectivity and calculation, a noticeable refinement of everything, a need of order, of abstraction, of speculation. In art, we are able to appreciate in the Parthenon the balance of its ingenious proportions which satisfy us, physically and visually, by their richness and precision. While we find in the work of Rubens only a rather feeble skill, a lack of clearly defined forms, and a heavy spirit animated by a somewhat coarse sensuality.

From now on, freed from the necessity of documentary representation, painting can fulfill its true function. This function is the same in all times — to move man. The means have not changed, simply because the faculties and the receptive organs have not changed. To-day the problem is stripped of the undergrowth which has up till now obstructed the road travelled by the few great artists whose work is really plastic. The spirit of our epoch is exigent. Our epoch demands a proud and simple art.

The fact must be faced that the photo and cinema can replace thousands of painters.

The work of art is a mechanism to stir man emotionally. More and more, plastic creation is becoming independent of all outside application. Music (in the past), certain architecture reached a state of happy crystalization. It seems as if art, now that it is freed from all practical ends, may take a leading place in the cycle of man's superior pleasures.

It is evident that the perception and the appreciation of plastic phenomena is easier for those specialists who can readily make the effort of abstraction, necessary to override the domination of the subject and to go directly to the plastic import. Such an effort is much more difficult for the inattentive or unprepared spectator who announces his satisfaction with an Ingres on account of its subject matter and its careful workmanship. His admiration is of quite a different category from that of the specialist. On the other hand, certain Egyptian sculptures evoke an identical enthusiasm in both specialist and ordinary spectator.

So far distant is the subject and so foreign to us are the religious elements they originally satisfied, that, little disturbed by the representative element, we are able to enjoy to the full its plastic significance as well as a completely intellectual and speculative one.

On the othe hand, this same spectator will still demand an explanation before a Picasso. The specialist goes directly to the plastic significance (pictorial or sculptural), while the public is bound by force of habit to the documentary interest.

However, the public participates in the spirit characteristic of this age, and when it realizes this, will easily grasp the tendencies which actually direct the arts. The specialist does not look at the antique masterpieces with the same eyes as the public. And the public before a modern production does not seek in ancient works of art the common factors which bind the modern works to the beautiful things of the past. There are common factors. Artists constantly turn towards the past in order to recognize them and to give themelves confidence. The public, amazed by this profound and sincere admiration of ancient masterpieces, accuses them of insincerity. There's the quid pro quo, easy, enough to correct.

Cubism and Purism are plastic expressions of an epoch. The epoch strongly manifests its spirit. These expressions made a revolution. To be exact, it was the public which was revolutionized. The Cubists and Purists are on the straight line which goes back, through all the Masters to the plastic expressions which have lived.

DE FAYET

(*Translated from the French*)

COMMENT

Boris Pilniak, whose story " At the Doors " appeared in August Broom, is one of the small number of young Russian prose writers who took the revolution as their theme. He is one of the still smaller number who treated this theme in a manner to render their literary achievement permanent.

Revolt of the masses, blind, instinctive, elemental — that is the revolution as Pilniak sees it. The intellectuals of all ranks, deluded into the belief of guiding its course, are helplessly swept along in the torrent, often to their own destruction. The masses — the peasantry really — though perhaps still superstitious and barbarous — do they not believe in witches, the devil and God ? — have a healthy and stubborn determination to become masters of their own fate. And they are likely to succeed for " There is some new truth here ; there is happiness potent in this destruction ".

Pilniak speaks of the revolution with intimate knowledege if he does not always accept it without reserve. He has followed its course though all phases, and has observed its effect on all classes. The revolution has seen him in Central Russia, in the Caucasus, in the Ukraine, fleeing the Tchekhoslovaks, fighting Makhno, cultivating a farm, organizing literary societies, rising to the honor of receiving the Academic " pyok. "

In these years of such variegated experience Boris Pilniak wrote some few dozen short stories and several novels. His method, especially in his late work, is baffling at first, for he has a tendency to shift the plane of action unexpectedly, to move backward and forward in time without warning, and to make seven leagued leaps in space unannounced. There, is, however, nothing tentative in his mode of procedure. Quite the contrary. The edifice he erects is measured with extreme care and planned with great science. If we only familiarize ourselves with his new architecture and look at the building from a sufficient distance, the organic unity, skeleton and outline will be seen in clear light.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Poèmes a Claires Voies and *Tournevie* by Céline Arnauld (L'Esprit Nouveau).

Points de Mire by Céline Arnauld (Jacques Povolozky et Cie).

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