Number One. January, 1919.

Voices

Edited by THOMAS MOULT

F. V. BRANFORD
NEVILLE CARDUS
LOUIS GOLDING
J. H. WARD
BERNARD WRIGHT
AND
THE EDITOR

ONE SHILLING NET.

EACH VOICE SPEAKS AN INDIVIDUAL AND INDEPENDENT VISION.

CONCERNING "VOICES"

MONTHLY **Voices** ONE SHILLING

In Poetry and Prose Edited by Thomas Moult

VOICES is a monthly magazine which was founded immediately upon the Declaration of Armistice in the belief that the barren years in the Arts since August 1914 were about to be followed by a rich period of aspiration among young artists towards the utmost freedom and strength of expression.

For such freedom it was felt that no contemporary journal could, in the nature of things, provide a worthy medium. The purpose of VOICES was unique in that the magazine would be the first monthly periodical for many years in which definitely Creative Art was to take chief prominence and to occupy practically all its pages. . . in which a group of writers would be represented by their latest and ripest work . . a group that was not a "clique" and which would receive the perpetual stimulus of new blood . . . in which neither question of space nor of topic would enter, nor political theories and ethical predispositions be regarded or disregarded; this, of course, signifying that artistic depreciation would be welcomed equally with artistic appreciation of Lenin alongside of the Divine Right of Kings. . . . The artistic worth of the composition was to be the one and final test.

CONCERNING "VOICES"

VOICES, indeed, to quote a passage by Bernard Wright from one of the early issues, was to stand for that "generation which returning now from war with the naked energy born of sheer force of living in their eyes shall cleave with their utterance to the heart of things. Their hands shall tear aside the clogging vestments of convention and prejudice and ineptitude, that strength may enjoy again the fair body of Truth; and from such mating shall spring a royal lineage of poets fit perhaps, who knows? to rank with the princely Elizabethans."

The first number of VOICES appeared in January 1919, with the declaration that each "Voice" in its pages represented an Independent and Individual Vision. By the ideal of bigness in such vision has VOICES stood consistently from the first, and by this ideal alone can the Magazine have justification for its continuance in the difficult but splendidly hopeful future. A periodical which, in these days of semi-blindness and feverish materialism, has the clearsightedness to stand for Groping after Big Things—with all the blunders maybe of groping—rather than for Accomplishment in Petty Merit, has naturally been reviled . . . in a cold half-minded fashion; but it has been welcomed also. Nothing can indicate so plainly the contrasting warmth of this welcome than that the first volume is now being completed with its sixth monthly number—and six numbers are regarded as a long life for the journal which no millionaire-politician has deigned to finance; the extent of the welcome, by the fact that VOICES is already subscribed for and read in Italy, Holland, Spain, New Zealand, Rhodesia, France, the United States . . . indeed the world

over, and accepted in these places as the most adequate expression of young English artistic life; and the promise that such welcome has given may be gathered from the manner in which VOICES has extended to include at this early stage the work of such writers as GORDON CRAIG, D. H. LAWRENCE, LASCELLES ABERCROMBIE, and W. H. DAVIES.; also SIR A. QUILLER-COUCH.

Big sacrifice and intense Endeavour have dominated the life hitherto of VOICES; and the Magazine can lay claim to having printed the most vital work of the time. Poems such as "The Daemon," by F. V. Branford; "Numbers," by Louis Golding; "In the Dunes" by Lascelles Abercrombie; the "Farmyard Prayer," by P. S. Beales; and such prose as "The Last Prophet," by Maurice Samuel, will hold a place in literature, and each has been already included in VOICES.

The new Volume of VOICES commences with the July number. Among the opening features will be Three Poems, by

D. H. LAWRENCE;

an Essay on the Durable Theatre, by

GORDON CRAIG;

the Second Part of "The Last Prophet," by

MAURICE SAMUEL;

Poems and Prose, by

W. H. DAVIES,
MICHAEL SADLER,
ST. JOHN G. ERVINE;

a long Dramatic Poem, by

LASCELLES ABERCROMBIE;

CONCERNING "VOICES"

and the newest work in Prose and Verse of

F. V. BRANFORD,
NEVILLE CARDUS,
LOUIS GOLDING,
THOMAS MOULT,
BERNARD WRIGHT;

and others. The work of entirely new writers, distinguished by that quality of Vision which renders it unpalateable to the mass of contemporary journalism, has appeared and will appear.

We appeal for the support of all lovers of fearless and clean literature. VOICES can only continue upon a basis of an adequate subscription. In a time when things of the spirit so urgently need utterance, we feel that this cannot be withheld.

VOICES - Edited by THOMAS MOULT

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VOICES

LOUIS GOLDING

THE flame flickering in that spacious chimney-piece made of his old hair a splendour of spun silver. As the evening deepened the yellow walls withdrew into remoter mysteries. Here and there, on the shining tables of black oak, a solitary candle burned steadily in a brass candlestick. Faintly against the windows the leaves of the sycamore tapped in the dusk. Far beyond the square in which this forgotten house stood, with its robe of two centuries hanging like a cloak round its shoulders, the high road stretched its metallic and sonorous length.

"For you know, young friend," said the old man, "there is nothing which for me has not its voice. I know not only the brave smell of a stone, but the brave voice. The sound which has attended every stone along its meteoric flight through a chaotic world is for me not yet stilled. I hear a music in quiet and seeming inanimate things, which reacts upon my ear-drums in a way neither physical nor ghostly, but definite as the call of a bird. It is a sound like the droning of a bee half-asleep in the convolvulus or the twanging of the harp-strings when the harpist has forgotten his harp. The shell has retained the music of the unforgettable sea within its walls. So the pebble cast by a long-ebbed sea into a dry and inland place is attended by the alternations of waves and the soughing of sands. Do you say that only the volcano utters thunder? There is no mountain

which does not roar challenges of loud sound, remembered from the time of riven ridges and breaking continents, into the unquiet air. It is because of these challenges that the stars tremble and the moon is pale.

" There are voices also in the buildings built by hands. When the men and women who live in the stucco houses of the suburban wildernesses are muffled in their beds, their homes continue the spiteful whisperings of the day. The chimneys that soar high beyond the roofs of houses, beyond the towers of churches and galleries, utter plangent voices, commanding and austere, knowing themselves lords of this civilisation wherein we are planted. But there is such music in Gothic towers and Byzantine domes that we know the ancient builders will come again to re-fashion the old beauty into new forms. Nor shall the chanting of Athene ever more be silent from the pillars of the Parthenon.

" These are the voices of seeming inanimate things. But there are subtler voices made by the things that grow. Have not all the poets heard the sound of grass growing in the night-time, a whispering as of seas in a remote world, the communings of holy presences beyond the boundaries of the sun? With what a wash of foam does the sap run along the veins of the growing tree! What a blare of crimson music does the rose make in startled gardens at noon-day! The symphonies of the scarlet bells of pomegranate within the brazen fastnesses of the pomegranate-tree are like the jangling of bells on the thighs and the hands and feet of a dusky dancer within the innermost

room of the Shah. Winter is driven away by the white fluting of crocuses above the snow; and in summer all the downs shake to the voices of harebells, who sing to each other and drown the skylarks.

"The music of instruments is the subordination of the music which is at the heart of things, and is the circumference of things, into definite form—even as painting is the abstraction of colour in particular from colour in general, and its subordination within the limits of a canvas shape. It is the focussing of inchoate voices into coherent music. This music is the result of the physical contact of sympathetic textures, the bow and the strings, the fingers and the keys. Yet the greatest of musicians rose finally so far superior to this contact that his deaf ears could respond at once to the superbest orchestration and the most intimate pleadings of the violin, when his eyes followed the notes on the printed page.

"It is this music which the deaf Beethoven heard that I too hear rising from the quiet stone.

"But if I can hear non-actualized voices so plainly, not less are actual voices to me the richest and the most significant things in the world. The creaking of heavy carts, the thundering of trains, the whisper of leaves, the moaning of engines—my soul is full of their voices. But grander still are the voices of living things, bulls bellowing, plovers calling, little pigs twittering below the bounteous udders of the sow.

"It is when I come to human voices that all other sounds are still for me. Shelley knew.

'Music, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory.'

But not only music. Painting, sculpture, architecture, the weaving of tapestries and carpets. In the quality of the human voice I have responded to the appeal of that quality which is unique in each of the arts. It is not the thing said which produces this reaction any more than the thing said in a picture is in the least relevant to its appeal, any more than the mere argument of a piece of music or a lyric makes either of these a work of art. Nor, similarly, is the quantity of the utterance a thing of any significance. Do you not in a single note perceive the master's hand on the violin?

"So there are voices, pictorial, vibrant with colour, as men have known from the beginning of days; intensest violet, like the Aegean waters rolling towards Sunium, orange like the noonday Sahara. Men who have eyes as sensitive as my ears have *seen* human voices as an aura around the human head. I have heard voices profound and massive as a sonata, tumultuous and many-organed like a symphony. I have heard voices architectural, building tower beyond dazzling tower, and in their lower depths cavernous cloisters and unfathomable crypts.

"So that, I say, the human voice is informed for me with all the impulses of all the arts. But there are other things I hear, not deeper, but different—religion, philosophy, history.

"What need have I of formal singings and stated prayers when every voice declares Cosmos in a pæan of superb and unconscious praise of God? when every voice is a miracle of ordered sound and shall no more cease again than a ray of

light from a remote star? So too is every voice philosophy, being a challenge to the secret of things, and a revelation of its mysteries.

"And I say finally, all human history resides in the human voice, from the baby's stammerings, which are the earliest articulations of post-Simian man, to the perfection of speech in the theatre of Dionysus. Has no woman's voice yet recalled you to the irrevocable Garden where you ate the bitter-sweet fruit?

"Listen! there is a crowd gathering away on the high-road; can you not hear? O the surging of the sea upon the sands and the long grinding of pebbles and the angry reverberations of the cliffs! Listen! Now it is the wailing in an Egyptian palace because a foreign God has spoken and the first-born are dying throughout the land. Now it is a shout of triumph from the further shore, because the waters have clashed together and the beards of the heathen are sodden with the spume. And now, listen again! They are shouting at the foot of Calvary; they are carrying a limp figure through them to the sepulchre.

"They are gone now, are they not? Yes, I can hear the sycamore-leaves tapping against the window.

"There was a girl I heard upon the steps of Saint Paul's. She was chanting 'Roses, roses, lovely roses, roses, lovely roses.' But I heard not her so much as Cleopatra upon a golden barge with Antony on her lap. The air was full of the playing of dulcimers and there were peacocks upon the banks of the Nile. Around her were roses

from Chalcidice and roses from Libya, and as she passed roses through Antony's hair and pressed petals upon his eyelids, she murmured 'roses, roses, lovely roses, roses, lovely roses.'

"I have heard—O I have heard many things. And you, as you listen now, can you not hear a dead man crooning in a cave at Périgord; can you not see sunset slope upon the sandstone walls, the bison he has drawn, and the flints heaped at his feet, and his streaming hair?"

LOUIS GOLDING.

"HOW BEAUTIFUL THEY ARE . . ."

THOMAS MOULT

HOW beautiful they are,
The Kingly Ones,
They walked the earth once humbly as
we walk,
Our men, our sons.

They walk the earth no more;
Yet they abide
More closely by us now; always we see them
At the hearthside.

Once we were twain by chance;
Now are they near
In all our wayfaring, their faces shine
Like the young year.

Their laughter, too, is April's
After the storm.
Their thoughts are shafting sunlight in wet skies.
Their love is warm.

We shrined strange heroes once.
Now, memory faints
On the holy men of old. Henceforth
These are our saints.

These that we touched, and kissed,
And frowned upon;
These that were frail, yet died because the good
Was overthrown.

That they in one dread hour
Were terrible
Stains not their sainthood, nor is heaven less sure
That they knew hell.

[How

How beautiful they are,
How bright their eyes.
Their hands have grasped the key
Of Paradise!

They hold it out to us,
Our men, our sons
. . . . To us,
The lonely ones.

THOMAS MOULT.

* *

LOVERS' LANE

THOMAS MOULT

THIS cool quiet of trees
In the grey dusk of the north,
In the green half-dusk of the west,
Where fires still glow;
These glimmering fantasies
Of foliage branching forth
And drooping into rest;
Ye lovers, know
That in your wanderings
Beneath this arching brake
Ye must attune your love
To hushéd words.
For here is the dreaming wisdom of
The unmovable things . . .
And more:—walk softly, lest ye wake
A thousand sleeping birds.

HERE FOR A TIME, A BREATH OF TIME . .

THOMAS MOULT

WITH the lone hills of sheep,
Stone-scarred and gray,
And the lone bleat;
With the brown old sleeping meres that meet
The storm's sweep,
The sun's sway
And the stars, and all the seasons, with unaltering face;
With the moor-mists swifting
As they have swifted
Down the slow dayfall since the ancient days;
With the sound of the last curlew drifting
As it hath drifted
To the nestward beat
Of tired innumerable wings:
With these most solitary things,
These pitilessly aloof
In their harsh loneliness,
These pitifully weak
Against the stress
Of the eternal rebuff,
Here, for a little span
On their illimitable bleak
Abideth the warm memory
Of man.
Here, for a time, a breath of time, he brings
Faiths groping past the hills, and visionings;
Faiths and visionings great and sure
As the calm of the moor.

[With

With feeble scratchings hath he made his mark
On the hill's steep;
For a day and a dark
They endure,
By a dark they outlast his laughter and tears,
His song.
The feeble scratchings he hath traced along
By the hill's feet
Fainter as they uplift to the farmost crest
And the cloud-veils,
Outliving by a dark
The faiths and the fears
Of his breast
And the visionings—
By these he maketh his mark.
With the lone hills of sheep
Overspreading his eyes, and on his ears
The lone bleat,
He sinketh in sleep.
Deep
As the deep of dales
Is his sleep;
More deep
Than the brown old sleep of meres that meet
The storm's sweep,
The sun's sway
And the stars, and all the seasons, with unaltering face.
He dreams: in his dream he passeth not away.
He endureth even as they
These most solitary things,
These pitilessly aloof
In their harsh loneliness,

These pitifully weak
Against the stress
Of the eternal rebuff :—
The lone hills, stone-scarred and gray,
The storm's sweep,
The stars, and the sun's sway ;
The moor-mists swifting
As they have swifted
Down the slow dayfall since the ancient days ;
The sound of the last curlew drifting
As it hath drifted
To the nestward beat of tired innumerable wings.

THOMAS MOULT.

* *

HUNGER

THOMAS MOULT

LET me but linger here a little while
And I shall hear great mother-breasted moors
Stir into croodling song.
They suckle the clutching heather-buds
And the lone unpastured sheep,
Their wild children.

Oh I would leave the places that defile
My being with sinister and luring sinecures ;
Yea, I would pant along
These sweet coarse bosoms till their harsh nurture floods
My senses to the uttermost deep,
And I, in my uncouth savagery, am strong
To be a child among
Their wild children.

QUEST IN ART

J. H. WARD

ART is the eternal quest of the soul for Perfection.

Often the artist is like a dumb man, who, with strange gesticulations and inarticulate noises, seeks to communicate with his fellow-men.

Similarly the artist seeks correspondence with something (frequently he knows not what) which is Absolute.

This Absolute is not only transcendent, but immanent.

It indwells the Aboriginee as the life-force indwells the corn lying in the granary.

And it stirs in the soul of the artist as the life-force stirs in the newly sown corn.

This inner Absolute is imperfect, because in both it lacks completest integration.

But in the great artist it struggles for rhythmic adaptation and co-operation until some dim foreshadowing of the Eternal Beauty is limned.

And yet the form of art is mortal, transient, because no sooner is it brought forth than the transcendent Absolute fills the mind of the artist with wider visions of Perfection.

Hence the form of art is an eternal flux.

But the essence of art is itself Eternal.

Perfection is infinite and immortal.

The soul of the artist is finite.

But the life-force which makes him an artist—this too is immortal.

The immortality of art is not in the form. It is in the essence.

The artist can be an iconoclast regarding form and still be an artist.

But he cannot trifle with the Absolute or he destroys not only his art but himself.

The artist who mistakes form for art and worships form becomes the laughing-stock of the gods.

He encounters an immutable law and is crushed. The artist in him dies, for he has foolishly tried to imprison the infinite within a finite cell; he has attempted to consolidate everlasting fluidity.

The quest of the artist is therefore the Time quest for Eternity.

J. H. WARD.

FLANDERS

FLIGHT-LIEUT. F. V. BRANFORD

TWO broken trees possess the plain,
Two broken trees remain.
Miracles in steel and stone
That might astound the sun, are gone.
Two broken trees remain.

* *

THE SECRET TREATIES

FLIGHT-LIEUT. F. V. BRANFORD

WE thought to find a cross like Calvary's,
And queened proud England with a diadem
Of thorns. Impetuous armies clamouring
For war, from the far utterance of the seas
We sprang, to win a New Jerusalem.
Now is our shame, for we have seen you fling
Full sounding Honour from your lips like phlegm,
And bargain up our soul in felonies.

O England! It were better men should read
In dusty chronicles, of how a death
Had found thee in the van of these crusades;
To tell their eager sons with bated breath,
And burning eyes, about a golden deed,
A vanished race, and high unmortal Shades.

THE COCKNEY'S DREAM

FLIGHT-LIEUT. F. V. BRANFORD

HE heard a voice storm up the falls of song,
A vision flamed across his soul's dark blind.

He saw huge serpents hurrying along,
And a great lion raving in the wind.

On shattered red tremendous feet, the grim
Ghast ghost of London gaped—and gripped at him.

* *

KINGSHIP

FLIGHT-LIEUT. F. V. BRANFORD

I WALK the world with mountains in my breast,
And hold the hiltless winds in vassalage,
Transtellar spaces are my fields of quest,
Eternity my spirit's ambassage.
The uneared acre of the firmaments
Under my hungry harrows yields increase.
While, on the threshold of dim continents,
They stand and wave who bear the stars in lease.

And yet am I a thane of foreigners,
Enthroned on sapphire, in an unkinged house,
Arrased with honours, broidered in gold sheen,
And palace to a town of sepulchres.
Voices he hears, but knows not what they mean,
His own to him the most mysterious.

EACH WITH A SORROW

FLIGHT-LIEUT. F. V. BRANFORD

EARTH, Air, Ocean, came in desolate grace,
With natal gifts of elemental rune,
Like the three souls of saga to commune
Each with his hollow breast, and empty face,
Over the ancient cradle of my race;
Each with a sorrow—in a broken tune
Bar of that long-lost epic I have hewn
Out of a wandering heart on windy ways.

* *

SHAKESPEARE

FLIGHT-LIEUT. F. V. BRANFORD

WHEN to the market-place of dreams I went
To bid a penny for the firmament,
I sudden came upon a star-high man
Whose mighty composition hid the sun
With wings as wide as worlds. And when he ran
In space, I thought the wind and he were one.
Abrupt he checks those truceless feet and stands
Deliberate, with lightning in his hands,
Over the Sphinx. Created things attend.
The speculations of the Gods descend
Upon Earth's human champion stood at bay.
A moment's pause—slow subtle smile—and he
Murmuring " Lord, what fools these mortals
be!" . . .
Heedless goes swinging on his boisterous way.

FIRST LANDS AND LAST

FLIGHT-LIEUT. F. V. BRANFORD

THE enormous eye of midnight guides
With white glance reluctant tides,
Through wind-woven veils
Of mournful cloud.
Here the silent heron sails
Like a floating shroud.

Horrible as death the owl
Sends forth—that elemental fowl—
In haunting discords the hunted cry
Of fears that live in hearts that die,

Lo! a brave man in his porch
Of poverty, prepares a torch
To light awhile, (as lights the sea
That great death's eye), his misery,
In naked bunting bound
Unstarlike to the ground.

The gnarled tongues of tuskéd brutes
Distort the velvet lips of lutes:
Human-hearted, the violin
Trembles on the untempered din
Of screech-owls, on the desolate plains,
Where all this perfection reigns

Whence I am I hither home
To this first and last land come.

RETURN

FLIGHT-LIEUT. F. V. BRANFORD

THE hearts of the mountains were void,
The sea spake foreign tongues,
From the speed of the wind I gat me no breath,
And the temples of Time were as sepulchres.
I walked about the world in the midnight,
I stood under water, and over stars,
I cast Life from me,
I handled Death,
I walked naked into lightning,
I had so great a thirst for God.

* * *

The heart of the Mountain overfloweth,
The sea speaketh clear words,
The Ark is brought to the Tabernacle.
Lightnings, that withered in the sky,
Are become great beacons roaring in a wind.
I see Death, lying in the arms of Life,
And, in the womb of Death, I see Joy.
I had said 'The spirit of the Earth is white,'
But lo! He is red with joy.
He devoureth the meat of many nations,
He absorbeth a vintage of scarlet.

Though my head be with the stars,
All the flowers of Earth are singing in mine ears.
Though my foot be planted on the sea-bed,
Yet is it shod with the thunder.

Sorrow for Earth Transient is passed away,
Pain of martyr'd splendour is no more.
They have left a fair child in my lap—
A lusty infant shouting to the dawn.

The Ogre of midnight hath perished.
He shivered in the glare of the mountain,
He screamed upon the sea-swords,
His bowels rushed out upon the lances of the Wind.

I shall look through the eye of Mountain,
I shall set in my scabbard the sabre of Sea,
And the spear of Wind shall be my hand's delight.

I shall not descend from the Hill.
Never go down to the Valley;
For I see, on a snow-crowned peak,
The Glory of the Lord,
Erect as Orion,
Belted to his blade.
But the roots of the mountains mingle with mist,
And raving skeletons run thereon.

I shall not go hence,
For here is my Priest,
Who hath broken me in the waters of Disdain.
Here is my Jester,
Who hath mended me on the wheels of Mirth.
Here is my Champion,
Who hath confounded mine ancient Enemy
Ardgay—the slayer of Giants.

F. V. BRANFORD.

OF THE MAGIC THAT COMES WITH COLD WATER

(A chapter from a Novel)

THOMAS MOULT

IN the white darkness of new morning I rose up and stirred myself to proper waking in the one fashion lawful for a man whose life leaps heartily outward with the first flickering of eyelids after sleep.

The world around me was vague as the emerald sheen in a spinney's first budding days. Barely four hours had spent themselves since the last jingling echo of Twelfth Night carnival faded for me to a jingling dream. But there I was, slipping the leash of sleep as eagerly as though custom had not been pilfered of a moment, let alone two hours from my usual six,

Those mornings of silver and pearl that a hard freezing night is tightening as it were to concert pitch do pack their first broken silences with sound twice so loud and ringing as that which breaks them. The silence rang therefore with all my soundless movements. Even the thin chiming of unearthly quarters by my obliging timepiece came as the crashing cymbals of a barbaric army from the chiselled case of gold.

And yet it was with no noise at all that my candle was lighted and the chill crossing accomplished from my bed to the little room which my Father long since had fitted up in a style that would have caused a stranger to stare agape had he chanced to enter it. Which chance was worth little, I do

assure you, if 'twas to be reckoned by the madness of speed that shot him through my village to the mortal anxiety of mothers, the delight of small boys, the discomfort of babies who would seem to be modelled out of mud (pink-dappled) squatting through sheer love of it in the middle of the track-like contrary flower-buds in a garden path; and of leggy chickens, cats, and dogs. Which last-named species did no longer include our own Mrs. Tagg; for since she was bowled over though without hurt in the roadway outside Sweet Knoll farm-gate, she would slink trembling back to heel always at sight or even far-off sound of the approaching evil.

Not at all unlike the tinkle of teaspoons on our best wild-rose porcelain did the delicate coating of ice crackle and splinter as my feet broke splashing into the tub. Hale and gladsome-warm it was because my heart was there.

Gleefully I crushed in my hand the tiny icicles that clung desperately to the giant sponge which had been left floating yester-eve on an unfrozen surface. In the next swift moment I had overwhelmed my glee with the first sobering onslaught of kissing water.

I staggered in a miniature Atlantic with mad seas plunging, my sponge squeezed to emptiness overhead and myself making recovery in monstrous pounding spasms; and I was all soberness then, without a doubt. Biggish frozen chunks, seemingly, that met my nakedness with stinging clouts was the water that morning. A second dash of it across my chest and betwixt my shoulders behind me, and even my soberness was suspended.

And yet I was never unaware of the pearls and crystals and diamonds tumbling and glistening about me with each lifting of the sponge. Though breathless often and pitifully nigh being off my body's balance I was lustily alive, and withal a-glorying.

My blood scorched anew at each fresh vehemence of that stabbing water—scorched as never before. The soul of me was in every stinging jewel of it, and from the water my soul began to laugh out to me harshly and happily that the day was good and nearing dawn simply because I myself was splendidly alive and a lover.

And I laughed back to my soul that the day was indeed good, albeit having seen naught beyond the pale yellow range of candle-flame, and knowing with no certainty that there was a day anywhere at all!

Then, casting my sponge aside (and but one half-minute had that sponge been busy), and slipping first to the knees in the water (so that the sudden icy contact caught my breathing into one monstrous vocative that might well have wakened the sleeping household had I not taught myself through ten years of daily practice how to smother it) I made a quick half-dive and half-crouch that raised no splash at all, so easy was the accomplishment.

One moment only did I stay with the whole of me beneath the surface, without heaviness and buoyant as a water-bird. Raising myself out of the intensity of the water's clasp, swabbing the clinging drops from my hair and body with two great hand-sweeps, I flung myself out and on to the mat, and my morning tub was over.

Indeed as my feet touched the matting I stood upon one of the highmost peaks of physical life.

One summer day when I was very young my Father called me to his side and set me by his knee and safd :—

"It baint enough, Jan my lad, to be always in company with earth and earthfolk and the sun by day and the stars, though I do reckon 'twill be time enough later for thee to know what I be talking about. To break trail to a thrush's music through fields in dewy marnings of summer; to feel about the limbs in white weather the easterly winds searching out and blighting what is rotten and flinging life tempered to steel in powerful stinging handfuls at every thing worthy enough to shrink not from its coming; to warm one's self before the home hearth, and to joy at the home table in the day's eating and supping—which are indeed goodly things in themselves, lad; to have about one those beloved and reveal to them without stinting that one doth so love; to laugh in the hearty sunshine of human laughter (or to quarrel with equal heartiness, but outside my hearing, Jan), or sing; to lie deep in grass at midday and forget that one is ever separated from earth; to hearken to leaves supping eagerly after rain:— these be life itself, Jan, as thee'm beginning to find out for thyself. They have all living powers to influence thee, and I do hope . . . but never mind, us shall leave that for another day.

"What I shall say to thee now, Jan lad, is this, and 'twill be enough. There are none of these things (and a cartload of others), which would not have been poorer for me were they unsanctified,

summer and winter alike, by the tub of cold watter in the early morning, and the afterglow. I do admit life without it might still be a treasure-house, and the song in that treasure-house never silent; but 'twould lose of its hearty sweetness. The dance in that house would never be still, maybe, but never so lightsome. The laugh always sounding, yet bereft by one touch of its likeness to skies running blue for ever.

"Jan lad, many many times thee'm begged me to allow thee a beginning of cold marning tubs. And always have I said, 'Bide a while, lad, bide a while till thy limbs be stoutish as thy wishing.' But now I say to thee, set agate of 'em to-morrow morning, and God bless the watter that clouts thee hardest."

Nor did he guess how well I understood the drift of every thought in that never-forgotten speech of his. . . .

Wondrous warm to my feet was the feel of the mat by contrast as I swung out from the tub. All my being exulted, and everything in that dim room exulted in unison. In the falling from my body of the last stray splashes ere it calmed to glassiness the water exulted in murmurous speech, for all the world like hyacinths chiming in my childhood when the fairy breezes tapped their pale blue bells. The candle-flame, swaying madly this way and that way in the huge fanning swing of my leap to dry foothold, exulted in shadowy rainbow movement. And all these things and all of myself were echoing together with great cocksureness——

"Alive indeed and a lover!"

And for my own part I would fain have roared it.

So eagerly indeed had my body taken to the icy tub that morning that even as I stepped out from it I was all throbbing with a giant's warmth, so vast that there came to me an immediate doubt that I had been in the water at all. Back I plunged to make certain-sure of it. . .

The towel scrubbing me dry was delicious on my limbs, crisp and keen and soft, like the sheep-cropped grass of moors in a dry spell. My feet gave to the pressure of it all the time, so that I worked it along my skin with little step-dancing movements, being wondrous-light after a dip, with my hundredweight and three quarters of honest yeoman stoutness, neither more nor less, and the lightness in spite of it.

But that morning's lightsomeness was different, because in my brain I knew a strange great splendour—the splendour of loving. . . Aye, loving until the very name of the loved one lifted me into heaven, and I had no doubt that it was heaven. Cocksure and swaggering I do reckon I would have shown myself had I come upon the angels there, which I did not, for I had been lifted no higher than my own heart.

A million times more hotly than the scorching roughness which the red leaping blood of my body was tasting from the towel, burned the sure and certain knowledge that I not only loved, but had loved long years, and they were years of blindness that I had loved through. I called back to mind old autumns, when a glimpse of her from afar off would set a mellow September day blossoming like Eastertide and I knew not why it blossomed. I could never mistake her because of the easy

swinging though never unwomanly walk which as it drew near seemed all dreamy thought, and I hungered to catch something of that dreamy thought, without knowing that I hungered.

When the note of her voice, calling from our gate to my sister Kitty to leave her house-task for a moment, drifted to the shippon and made me gentler with the cattle right to the end of the milking, I recked not that I was gentler. When I beheld her approaching arm and arm encircling with Kitty, I thrilled to see them, and foolishly imagined I thrilled as much to one as the other. And when at evening in winter she chanced to come into our kitchen for awhile, and I roasted chestnuts before the fire for everybody, I was sternly rebuked because I served her last of all instead of first, as a guest should be served, and then fearfully enough, without knowing what caused my ill-manners or my fear.

Indeed it was all clear to me at last! Through all those years, sunny-sweet unshadowed years for her, before her father and mother fell to sleeping almost at the same breath, before she went away with her pain and left me aching for I knew not what, I loved Joan Melody. . . And now I lived the knowledge. I did not think it. My water-splashing and towelling were over-swift for thought. In all my consciousness there was too much magic to hold up at any moment and ponder. I absorbed everything as the bees absorb their sunny life in the golden orchard-days.

The icy dawn came flooding upon the warm rosy nakedness of me as I cast the towel aside and opened the lattice. A little powdery heap of snow

fell whispering to the floor. It was still snowing heavily.

I swung the heavy iron bells above my head and took in great lungfuls of rich, pure air; delighting but the more to see the white flakes come driving over the tip of morning into the room and melt on my breast. The snow had carried with it on the previous evening more of bitter-coldness than we had known for many years, but I heeded nothing of it then. I watched the muscles move slipping beneath my skin, vowing that the beauty of a silken skin is true happiness to gaze upon, rubbing my face against the warmth of my bare shoulder and revelling in the softness thereof.

And I was glad in my heart with a new kind of gladness that I was clean and young and mighty, a giant over life, with life even in the form of ice and snow not at all a giant over me. I began to sing defiance under my breath to the new-born world beyond those darting flakes; and I flung my unsounding chant that I was a lover, and dared to tell the snowflakes that I loved Joan Melody. Indeed all things around me in that dawn and dancing candlelight were hearing the news quickly enough.

So little does a man, as distinct from a woman for whom I shall say and therefore need to gainsay naught—so little does he desire to keep secret the greatness which has been thrust upon him, that before many hours of that same morning had passed I was stifling gigantic inclinations to blurt out at breakfast and later to clamber up and proclaim from the farm-housetop that I was a lover and loved Joan Melody!

Even when I pulled myself up warningly that Joan Melody showed no sign of love for me, and likely enough had never thought of it, I was undismayed. While that strange great splendour that was not strange stayed hot and flashing within my heart and brain I could never be dismayed. Instead I began to think of so many different matters concerning the one matter that my head began awhirling with memories of Joan's most recent attitude towards me, which memories appeared more filled with golden hope for me than was warranted, and with plans for present days and future years as golden as the hope. In those few moments at the swinging iron bells I planned out all our future lives to infinity, I do assure you, and stopped at infinity only because I was well content not to look beyond it.

Close upon those few moments of rosy pictures and plannings rushed a thought that chased them topsy-turvy out of my head.

"Maybe there are lovers! . . . "

I made an involuntary step London way, and my bare foot came back to the warm matting mighty quickly, so chilly was the start forward. I contented myself after that with a rapid review of the young males at yesternight's party, and lo! I found them all her lovers, even our Kate's Dick o' Silver Side. But I gave to none a second thought, bar Bob Stafford who had scowled at me to see her dancing in my arms; and I dwelt on him a moment longer only to pity him before I forgot. Then I laughed in my soul with a conqueror's laugh and threw out my challenge to an invisible world of lovers beyond the snowflakes and the dawn.

I clothed me quickly, bethinking myself in an afterthought of last night's mistletoe and the gloves, and, although I had kissed many maidens, confident she would look easy upon it all. Panting and all glowing with clean vigour, I tapped at my Father's door in passing downstairs, where I lighted the fires for the day and fought through the white storm to the shippons for early milking.

It needed a spade and much powerful digging-work to get across the farmyard from our porch that morning. The snow was heaped up in drifts that reached in places above my head, so thick and storm-droven had been the night. By the time I had cooled down in the shippon my Father had followed me out of the white darkness, and as I sat in the silence with my head digging into the cosiness of a cow's flank, none would guess that I was drunken with a giant's madness—unless it were Marie Antoinette and Cottage Maid, the cow I was milking and her stall companion; for they woke up from a standing doze and turned their heads now and then in wonder, blowing questions through their great sensitive nostrils. Otherwise there is no accounting for such inquisitive movements in so uncurious a folk as cattle.

For in those first mad moments of my gianthood I took the world into my heart there and then as became one who towered over it and found it all marvellous-beautiful and ready for the taking.

Marvellous-beautiful because the world was beautiful for me always.

Then I heard the soft paddling of footsteps outside, approaching from the house, and knew it was my sister Kitty come with steaming mugs of

coffee for us both, as was her wont in winter, and vastly welcome.

A big wave of trembling broke over me of a sudden, and I knew before I turned my head that Joan was alongside Kitty. They came laughing into the shippon like bright colour, all fresh health and merry greeting, and even the sleepiest of cattle stirred into welcome. Kitty had thrown over her head her winter shawl of pink, and Joan framed her own duskiness in a Paisley plaid whose soft maroon and blue texture made a rare gipsy of her.

"Good morning to you, Master John Hyde," she said demurely, coming down to me with my coffee, and mischief bubbling above the cup and saucer.

My newly awakened gianthood over life deserted me in base fashion, I do confess, before the greeting of that one maiden. No longer was I big with the world in my heart. I took my drink clumsily and vacantly as any gorm of an April-tide, setting my gaze upon the mug most intently until every drop had passed my lips. Nor could I find any comfort therein, for she was chattering the while of snow in our village compared with snow in a great city and of last night's party, and of many things appertaining thereto, such as Alice Fletcher, the mistletoe, and a plentiful supply of fashionable gloves.

Even before I spake I knew that my tongue was lost and witless without that gianthood, And because her mischief had vowed to make me speak back sooner or later, it took its turn desperately in the end and made a hearty fool of me.

THOMAS MOULT.

DEVON LANES

BERNARD WRIGHT

O DEVON lanes are deep in peace,
Entrenched in friendly green,
And you may enter alleys there
Would please a faerie queen.

Enfolding byeways fully fraught
With grasses falling long,
Sumptuous with ferns and trailing plants,
With hedgerows up along

Of sapling young and buxom bush
And chase of golden gorse,
And flower-folk that singly peep
Or meet in brave concourse—

Here, idle feet good fellowship
And shepherding will find,
And sweetest pasture for the heart
And sweetest for the mind.

I love their high thatched banks that bring
The eyes to near employ,
Nor let the wilful senses shun
Immediacy of joy.

Close hidden ways I love, that hold
A sweet immunity
From thoughts that mar the mirrored calm
Of patient reverie.

Within these covert roads I'm given
To vivid quietude,
Wherein the subtle grace of things
Is willing to be wooed.

[I haunt

I haunt their cloisters, loitering
With happiness content,
As some wise monk who quells desire
Of damning increment.

Low bowers there be, at noontime dim,
Where trees catch hands across
Tunnels of cool quiet walled
With deeply bedded moss,

While sunbeams, shifting through the leaves
In timid truant glee,
Like evanescent moonlight elves
Work aimless witchery.

Mermaids underneath the sea
Have no more blest retreat,
Where thoughts are dreams in realms of wide
Tranquility complete,

And threading drowsy water plants
Shadowy fishes flit,
And magic colours flush and change,
And jewelled lamps are lit.

O Devon lanes are deep in peace;
Languorous and warm they be;
Green alleys you may enter there
Have given my dreams to me.

BERNARD WRIGHT.

A FOOLS' PARADISE

BERNARD WRIGHT

A WEARY night without and dull within,
That night you came and melancholy fled
The people hid its face as from a sin,
But we, who followed hearts' caprice instead
Of straitening rule,
Observed in it a night, untenanted,
To play the fool.

A friendly rain, like sheltering curtains, hung
The world for those who crave whate'er was dreamed;
As they were all Aladdin's, street lamps flung
Largess of beauty down smooth ways that streamed
Celestial light,
And we possessed a magic world that seemed
By wizards dight.

We two were as adventurers who cry
With young delight in cities of romance;
Each praised the rain with eager face on high
To be caressed and note each circumstance
Of gleaming tress
Where slipped the rain through light it did entrance
With loveliness.

Then had we turned our faces each to each
At touch of intimacies newly found,
And let the drift of wondering instinct teach
Our lips to join,—night with close tenebrious arms
Had held us round
And stayed us in the place of secret charms
Where love is crowned.

[Those

Those nights I love of gentle-kissing rain
When long lights in the paven wetness sprawl :
I think we laugh at merry quips again,
And barter hats, link arms to race and fall
In treacherous pool—
I hope *you* sometimes think how well in all
We played the fool.

BERNARD WRIGHT.

* *

SEX IN ART

J. H. WARD

I.

DEEP in the heart of humanity lies the power to perceive the Beautiful.

Entwined with this power is the power to express the Beautiful.

The perceiving power is universal. The power of expression is also universal.

The one responds to Nature. The other is inspired by Nature.

The one responds to expression inspired by Nature.

The other is in turn inspired by those expressions.

Hence we get appreciation of music, painting, poetry, and of the stuff of music, painting and poetry.

Hence also we get expression in music, painting, poetry — character — the realization of the futurist's ideals—growth in art—and life.

II.

Folk lore is universal. Rightly understood, it is an expression of the Beautiful.

Folk lore comes of the Folk Sense.

The Folk Sense is the primitive and local institution after the Beautiful

Demos is the child of Theos.

The voice of the people is the voice of God—the All Beautiful—faint in its murmurings, crude in its music, Infinite Thought breathing through clay, Heaven's harmonies in a reed of tin—but the voice of God.

True Democracy is therefore Theocracy.

But Aristos—Aristos is the elder son of Zeus, keen in Beauty's perception, accomplished in Beauty's expression.

Aristos is the artist. He speaks in rhythmic words. He discourses in blended colour. He chants in chords divine. He portrays the everlasting qualities in character.

He is the mortal reed of Immortal Music.

He is the tadpole climbing from slime up the high mountain of God.

He looks with beseeching eyes to its lonely Peak.

On this lonely Peak stands the white Temple of the Ancient of Days, Whose sanctuary shrines Perfection.

The Holy Lamp swinging before the Alabaster Altar is the Light of the World, because thence all other fires came and come.

It is the fire which lights the flickering flame in Demos, and bursts into clear radiancy in Aristos.

Its brilliancy is Genius—God's flashing flame brightest in loveliness of spirit.

[But

III.

But the climb up the mountain of God is a long, arduous climb.

Nature may and does fan the smouldering fire of immortal desire within.

Nature may and does bring forth a flickering flame.

But the lonely Peak and the White Temple, the calm chancel and the Holy Sanctuary—these are only seen and known and longed for (and in some dim manner foreshadowed in Time) as spirit touches spirit.

IV.

The secret of Aristos is personality.

Personality is not an isolated individualism, idiosyncratic.

It is integrative and communal—not bending by its will to Power, but winning by its will to Love.

Personality is the fusion of numberless souls.

It comes not of earthly lineage, but is a divine inheritance.

It does not, cannot dominate by law based on antecedents and arms and might.

Rather it shapes and fashions all things by love, the Light which burns forever before the Eternal Throne.

V.

Nature lights the fire in the soul of Demos, but only as spirit meets with spirit does the fire become a flame in the Time-lamp of Aristos.

Spirit is male. Spirit is also female.

Sex is the beginning of the growth of Personality—the torch at which the fire is lit.

Therefore Zeus girdled the earth with sex.

And woman makes Personality possible to man.

And man makes Personality possible to Woman.

Man never sees the White Temple apart from woman, because without woman he knows nothing of integration.

Woman never reaches Sanctuary apart from man, because without man she suffers in halfness.

VI.

Therefore man and woman are essential to Love.

And Love is essential to art, because Love is the Soul of The Beautiful.

Sex too is essential to Love, because the inner absolute must see the outer absolute in personal form.

The Emotion of the Ideal in man is called into being by Woman.

The Emotion of the Ideal in Woman is called into being by Man.

Perfection is reached by way of Sex, because Zeus is perfect fusion of man and woman—infinite harmonization—completest Personality—The Immortally Beautiful—The begetter and bearer of Undying Love, the supreme Aristos.

J. H. WARD.

CREED

LOUIS GOLDING

I SHALL insistently and proudly read
Into the mud of things a mudless creed,
Out of mud fashioning a palace so
Clamant with beauty and superb with snow,
That in this glory shall men's eyes be blurred,
Stars be made slaves to this most potent Word.
I in thick mud shall hear swift stars proclaim
The intolerable splendour of the Name.
I in a beetle's nerves shall search and find
The processes of the chaos-cleaving mind,
On my clock's second-fingers I shall see
The tidal journeyings of Eternity,

* *

OUR JACK

LOUIS GOLDING

OUR Jack is dead, our jolly and simple Jack.
To him are fierce stars clay and snow is black.
Black blinding silences are all his hours,
He knows not birds nor laughter nor any flowers.

And when white winds come calling over the hill,
To him no white winds call, he lies so still.
And now, when all his singing pals come back,
He'll not leave France behind, our little Jack.

MY LADY OF PEACE

LOUIS GOLDING

IN the sickening away of the trumpets and the shuddering of the drums,
She comes, my Lady of Peace, with her grief, her grief, she comes.
With the blood on her teeth she comes, the lost wild eyeballs stare;
There is foam in the blood on her lips; ashes are strewn in her hair.
Like flowers are her dry fingers, pale flowers grey frost has nipped,
Being empty of hands they held like desolate seas unshipped.
And she dances, the strayed white woman, she dances a forlorn tread,
Being sad for the men that are living, and glad for the men that are dead.

* *

TO MY FRIENDS WHO WRITE POETRY

LOUIS GOLDING

WE are the inheritors of the lovely things of the earth;
By understanding they are made ours, they are won by the kiss of our mirth.
To us are the flowers not flowers but girls and spirit and fire.
For us is the craft of cathedrals in hummocks of weeds and mire.

[By strange

By strange wet roads there wanders to us in our
midmost slums,
Lutanies from frail elfin-land, dulcimers and dim
drums.
Upon gross croft and cinders cherries and oranges
grow,
From islands swept by singing round which blue
rivers go.
For once in the time of our morning, we lying first
at the breast,
There was a bird in the wind was seeking for
warmth and a nest.
Our souls opened blindly like buds whose blind
mouths open in Spring,
And the bird came in through our blindness, and
the bird was a poet and king.
A perfume, a music, a glory, was hidden away in
our veins,
A music that shook in the morning and a perfume
that smelled in the rains.
Out of the scarlet of sunset we made us a robe for
our dreams.
Stars came down in a torrent, our boats raced
forth on their streams.
The winds to us were as maidens whose lips came
clean and bare,
We rocked in the cool of their breasts, our fingers
went through their hair.

So that now we have inherited the loveliest things
of Time,
The violin and the lamp and the road, the red
heart linked to a rhyme.

LOUIS GOLDING.

QUEEN LAUGHTER

LOUIS GOLDING

HOW shall we serve Dame Laughter? (She is our Queen.
In red brick cities she ruleth, in fresh fields green).
Where shall we build her an altar, if altar she needs?
Shall we bind her around with a worship and lame her with creeds?
A censor of myrrh and of spikenard then need we to swing,
With a heifer to slay for her slabs and a bird of white wing?
Confusion seize thee, O heretic, swell thee with gout,
Put thee, with all of thy kind, to disease or to rout.
Neither is Laughter a mummy for embalming in spice,
Neither the God of the Hebrews that wielded the lice.
She is a wisp of the morning, and dare you to place
Your hand on the hem of her skirt, she hath left you no trace.
There is only the sound of a mockery faint in the noon,
You are left in the broad white day, like a stump or a loon.
Thus shall ye serve her, who know her, the Queen,
Who ruleth in red brick cities, in fresh fields green.

[When

When the kick of mischance shall assault you on
your sad shins,
When they mutter, the dear dark darlings, of
Death and of sins,
You will place your hands round your belly, and
these held tight,
You will laugh like the lash of a whip, you will
slaughter the night.
In the great white blaze of your laughter, of night
you shall make
A harp vibrating with music, a burning lake.
When you on your road through the cities shall
see a lorn
Child with a murk on its lips and a wee heart torn,
You shall empty your pockets of silver and take off
your shoon,
Strip off your trousers and shirt, stand nude in the
noon.
These to the child shall be given, but given to you
Laughter subduing the winds and smiting the
blue,
The broad grand sea into laughter in time with
your mirth,
And the great hills holding their sides and the
moon and the earth
Laugh till all sorrow be shattered, healed all scars,
And the stars shall be laughing, and you shall
laugh with the stars.

LOUIS GOLDING.

BEAUTY FOR BEAUTY'S SAKE

NEVILLE CARDUS

"MYSELF has always been so absorbing to me," Mr. Arthur Symons has lately written in his "Cities and Seas and Islands," "that it was perhaps natural that, along with that habitual companionship, there should be at times the desire for escape." There is a further passage, in which Mr. Symons expresses his remoteness from the crowd on Hampstead Heath—a remoteness of which, on the whole, one imagines he is rather proud. These references are made here because they seem typical of the modern attitude of artists to the things of this world. We have indeed come with the passing of time to a strange conception of art. Art is now no longer communal: it is anti-social. The moderns write and paint from ivory towers, thanking God they are not as other men. Their view of art is one which cannot be squared with any account of its origin, an origin quite utilitarian. "Art is the production of objects destined to confirm life," proclaims Emile Boutroux, "and to advance it in the more or less favourable conditions in which man finds himself."

A genuine artistic impulse, one imagines, arises out of some immense zest and love of life and a craving to give permanence of form to the emotions it compels, and surely any review of the masterpieces goes to show that an artist is great just in so far as he is seasoned with the common salts of existence. He is universal because he establishes, by an acute sensibility, so many points of contact with life.

Could Shakespeare have evolved Falstaff out of his inner consciousness if he had found for the best part of his life nothing absorbing outside himself? The moderns, especially the modern young men (Mr. Symons is one of them, for he has never grown up), will tell you that the dominant factor in art is personality or individual imagination; that life in the lump is drab and monotonous—as an immortal American has put it, "just one damned thing after another, and much of a muchness." They will also argue that the emotional essence of pure art is precious, even esoteric, and probably they will talk of the Ego. It is almost a shame to disillusion them, although it is the humiliating fact (which even the exquisite Oscar Wilde had to admit) that we are all of us made out of the same stuff. There is no great work of art which expresses any idea or emotion not fundamentally commonplace or even vulgar—using the latter abused word in the strictest dictionary sense, as pertaining to the common people.

Art is simply life in apotheosis. The stuff of it is ample enough in our workaday world, but there it is only potential. Who does not know a Pecksniff among his acquaintances—if an allusion to Dickens dare be made nowadays? The trouble is that life is not so ordered that we may arrive at a full and free expression of our (among other attributes) essential Pecksniffianness. We must go to a Dickens novel to find this beautiful side of our character isolated and given the emphasis and setting needed for its complete expression. And that is all that art of the highest kind does or

needs to do. Art liberates the human spirit. The great artist is

> "The human, with his droppings of warm tears,
> And his touches of things common till they rise to touch the spheres."

The lines are Mrs. Browning's, and they were written to Euripides. The allusion to "tears" was probably necessary for the purpose of the rhyme, and it limits as complete a definition of art as we could well wish. Art is rather the consummation of every human possibility of mind and of character in an ideal and permanent form. That is the reason why the best art is universal, and it is because the modern artist declines to fling himself into the common stream of existence that I find him (speaking as an average man) unreal and tiresome. Also he is disturbing. The idea of art as a perpetual pilgrimage of the spirit, the vision ever straining to pierce the veil of the unknown; the idea of a constant quest for disembodied beauty and an eight-hour day at sonnets and verse libre—such ideas strike me as vain things, ostentatious and rather exhausting.

The modern artist may attempt to crush such a protest with a subjective view of æsthetic emotion. He may quote Kant (at least one can make him a present of good advocacy of Kant's point of view), who held that the emotion of art was a purely internal affair, a creation of the mind, something affective and intimate. And one may agree with him to this extent: that beauty certainly is the resultant of an act of the individual imagination.

Beauty is, however, not the whole of art, not

even its main function. It is simply a condition which art must obey, and is an effect of technique in a larger measure than we suspect. It is not mainly, let alone solely, for reasons of beauty that the greatest artists make their conquests. "The Man with the Club Foot" of Velasquez is, even to-day, called ugly by people who recognise its superb artistic worth. And wherein is Goya beautiful, or Strauss, or the gargoyles on Notre Dame? The men who turn away from life to cultivate beauty for beauty's sake in art, instead of art for the sake of its masterfulness over life, are surely doomed to be the minor poets—Ernest Dowson, Beardesley, Verlaine, Mallarmé, Ravel, and the rest. These indeed are the artists who are understandable only in terms of their own definite personalities.

It is a strange paradox that the more personal an artist's personality the feebler it is, the less permanent, the less impressive. Shakespeare, who was a thousand and one men is also the man whose personality is sovereign; while the modern artists are so intensely and inclusively themselves that comparatively, they can be nobody. To say that a thing is Shakespearian is to identify it with the Stratford genius and the cosmic scheme at large, at one and the same time. To say that a thing is by any particular modern is to send nine hundred and ninety men out of a thousand to a dictionary of writers

May we speak of any character in the fiction of the newest novelists with such spacious human application as we may speak of Tom Jones, Rastignac, Colonel Newcome, Becky Sharp,

Micawber, Tess of the D'urbervilles? It is significant that the novels of the day which are richest in humanity are the work of writers definitely outside the coteries where the cultivation of beauty is become so much an affair of real industry. Mr. Wells's Uncle Ponderevo and William de Morgan's Joseph Vance are bone and flesh of us. But neither writer is in great favour where they read "The White Peacock" and draw art-curtains in protest against the dust of the outer world and the noise that goes up from Hampstead Heath. And what is beauty anyway? Is Mozart or Bach or Debussy beautiful? Correggio or Mattisse? Chaucer or Swinburne? Are the posthumous quartets of Beethoven in the sense that Chopin's study in A flat is beautiful? What does a word mean that applies so conveniently to things so different? What is its common denominator?

Beauty for beauty's sake is nothing less than the root evil of modern art. It is this pursuit of the perfectly nebulous that stultifies so many of the creations of the hour. The shadow is grasped for the substance. One with belief in a disembodied beauty—a beauty purely of subjective imagination—turns away from life, shuts his eyes to its manifold aspects. He becomes one of Mr. Wells's "pinkie-dinkies." Mr. W. L. George talks of the "incapacity of Dickens to conceive beauty." The notion has become an obsession. Why *should* Dickens "conceive beauty"? Rabelais might as well be objected to for the same reason.

Super-refinement is the death of art. To close

the mind to the passing show of common things is to close the soul. The artist must stand face to face with life, and enter into the ways and days of average humanity. For it is common humanity, after all (whether he is concerned "with results" or not), that will settle the question of the artist's posterity—whether he shall rank with the greatest or the merely minor poets. And to have no artistic posterity is to be a mere mule in art.

NEVILLE CARDUS.

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