Yours in much sympathy
W. H. T. Gaither.

W.H.T.G.
TO HIS FRIENDS

SOME LETTERS
AND INFORMAL WRITINGS OF
CANON W. H. TEMPLE GAIRDNER
OF CAIRO
1873–1928.

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PREFACE

THIS little book has been compiled at the suggestion of many friends who wished to have a lasting share in what has been called my husband's " greatest legacy " —that is, his letters and informal papers. And indeed this thought of *sharing* is a keynote of the book, just as it was also of the life of Temple Gairdner—one who was ever eager both to enter into the lives of others and to share with them his own.

Writing was to him no labour ; it was inevitable, easier often than speech. " Read what I have written," he would say, when asked to describe some incident.

But it is to the circumstances of his life—his residence as a missionary abroad, with the inevitable long and frequent separations from kith and kin—that we owe the mass of his correspondence. There were letters on purely personal subjects, giving sympathy with friends in joy or sorrow, or vividly describing some latest happening in his own circle. And when " news " there was none, the stream of letters continued just as full and free. It was an adage of his mother that " A good letter-writer can write an interesting letter without any news to give " ; and of himself he once

wrote : " I am not very good at general letters, for mostly my letters have not much news. They are all individual, written with an individual in mind." In such letters, then, he shared with another his latest and best thoughts on all manner of things, both in heaven and on earth. But when the great events happened —those thrills, whether of Travel, Music, Works of Art, Beauties of Nature (and who so readily thrilled as he !) —his happiness was never complete until he had shared the experience and the joy with others. " I write [he said] because it is the only way to share these glories with you all, and so redeem me from utter selfishness." While the tide of enthusiasm still ran high he would pour out description and impression in vast circular letters to his intimates—" My dear Unfortunates," he would call them when a letter reached its forty-seventh sheet. In the queerest places, and at the oddest times, such " circulars " would be dashed down ; the last of this long series (an account of a four-days visit to Paris) was rapidly flung on to paper by a figure perched on a bag amid the noise and whirl of a Paris station, intent on his task, yet with an eye and ear on the alert for the arrival of his family from England. For obvious reasons of space, only mere fragments of such letters are here given.

To the letters are added some papers read to an informal Literary Society in Cairo. These were not intended or prepared for publication, and are now

printed quite unaltered in the spontaneous and intimate style in which he dashed them off.

To our children, all of whom have taken part in the preparation of this book, as to myself, the task has brought real happiness, in spite of a sense of our unfitness. To all the friends who have willingly shared their letters with others our thanks are due ; but most of all to my husband's biographer, Miss Constance Padwick, without whose inspiration and leadership this book had never been begun ; and to Mr. Kenneth Maclennan, but for whose efficient help it had never been carried through to completion.

M. D. G.

OXFORD,
January, 1930.

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CHAPTER I

The Near East

My heart is full of praise to God : " All things are yours " . . . I have claimed the heart that enjoys ; only the slavish " dolish " spirit cannot. But he who has shod his feet with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace has heart-leisure to enjoy God's works, and to praise their Maker. I felt God loves to have it so,—to have His masterpieces appreciated.
(From his journal.)

Desert near Port Said. (His first sight.)

Dismal, featureless, giving you the sensation that no one had ever trodden it since the beginning of the world. For it was utterly lifeless : not even a heron stood on that doleful shore. Altogether it gave one the impression of being a sort of fag-end of God's earth—like the useless, shapeless snippings which fall from the making of a beautiful garment and are swept away.

All the same, as you may see from the way it has impressed me, it has a sort of weird influence upon me : like Kersland Street on a wet December evening.

Seen from the Pyramids Road.

Yesterday afternoon (Saturday) I rode out to the Pyramids—reading the *Spectator* as I rode along, to the great amusement of the natives. The sun set when I got half-way and the afterglow was simply lovely ; such soft half-tints as baffle description. But what was

chiefly remarkable was the reflexion of the wondrous sky in the pools left by the inundation in the midst of the limitless verdure of the cultivated plains. These pools were simply lovely water-colour paintings—opalescent studies in indescribable livid, soft crimsons, blues, and daffodil, framed by the rich green meadows. The dark, emerald expanse—which astonishes even a visitor from Ireland—glooming ever more and more in the waning light, but always rich emerald green, broken by those bright gleaming pools of soft purple and crimson or more brightly shining daffodil-yellow ! Can you imagine it ? or is the pen wholly powerless ?

A Desert Walk by Night.

Well, to celebrate the last occasion before entering definitely on old age, the humble pair took train to the station before Helwan as the sun declined, walked across the two and a half miles of desert plain, reached the foot of the steep rocky mountain just as the sun set, gained its top as darkness fell, sat down in the unearthly solitude and silence of that desert place and by the light of the stars wanly lighting up the deep darkness of night ate their frugal meal . . . then waited, listening to the dense silence of those hills ; until, at about 9 o'clock, the east began to pale with a mild silver light . . . this increased a little, and lo, at the spot where it increased Somebody from beneath the eastern horizon pushed up the edge of a gleaming disk. . . . So the moon rose and the ghostly darkness grew brilliant ; the weird uncertainty of the landscape in the starlight suddenly transformed itself into the jet-and-ivory of moonlit buttresses of rock, jagged crags, precipitous ravines, and the long flat ridges of these desert hills. So we rose and walked round the top of a great ravine, sometimes rolling stones down and listening to the uncanny hollow crash and bang as the

stone smashed to pieces on the rocks below, and the echoes of the barren hills took up and reverberated the sound. It was weird. Once M. went on in front as I was rolling some stones down, and when I looked she had disappeared ; and when I called her there was no reply ; perfect silence—that was still weirder. We walked about till midnight and arrived back at 1 A.M. Another day we shall sleep out.

The Muharram Procession.

Last week, for the first time, I went to the procession of the Shia (Persian) Mohammedans on the tenth of the month Muharram, the day on which they commemorate the death of their " martyr " Husain, the grandson of the Prophet. It was a disgusting sight—all the more so, I felt, because it was so *organised* and in some ways so unspontaneous. Egyptian police headed and brought up the rear of the procession ; curious and unsympathetic crowds lined the streets (for the Egyptians are not Shia Mohammedans, and only regard these proceedings as a show), and it did seem disgusting to see those people deliberately hacking themselves about, *to order*, you might almost say. It was quite a small procession : first came some ordinary Persians ; then a group of devotees, stripped to the waist, beating their bare backs by heaving a knot of chains over their shoulder, a sort of conductor giving the time, to which they gave a hollow short " Hassan, Husain ! " and lammed the chains over their shoulders. The skin was beginning to get all rawish when they passed. Then came a little crowd of breast-beaters : they were tame—they only did it with their fists—all in time to a conductor, as before. Then came a disgusting lot, two lines of devotees lining each side of the street. . . . They had shaved and bared their scalps, and with the short swords which they carried in their

hands they from time to time smote the tops of their scalps, in time to the beat of their conductor as before, so that they bled like pigs ; their blood flowed like water all down their faces and clothes, which being white linen made it all the more horrid. The last two were boys of eleven or twelve ! I was at the very outside of the crowd, and the gory creatures passed me as close as to touch. One turned, and his bloody face looked so wild, that I shouldn't have been surprised to see him try his sword on *me* ! We took an evening stroll in the old part of Cairo thereafter and later saw one of these wretches staggering home. On one side he leant on his small child ; on the other side, on his wife, who, dressed in the ordinary black *habara* and veil of an Egyptian woman, was mopping up the blood that was still flowing. His scalp was now covered by a white linen turban which of course was *soaked ;* ditto his linen garments right down. There was no more poetry in it than there is in the sight of a butcher's shop. The chap was just staggering along, groaning, and sitting down every few yards. No wonder !

A Soudanese Zikr.

A *zikr* (mystic worship) of special solemnity and with a specially full attendance—a " command " *zikr*, so to speak—was arranged for Dr. W. and myself on the occasion of my visit. Chairs were placed for us, with the leading members of the family, in the midst ; and the senior, a venerable old Sudanese, representing the Grand Master of the Order, who was away from Omdurman, explained things to us as they proceeded. He told us that we were the first Europeans who had ever seen certain parts of this *zikr*. At the end he made a speech to the whole company of devotees, saying what a pleasure it had been to them to show a *zikr* to those who had studied Sûfism and were able to enter

into the meaning of what they saw; and making various other kind remarks. To this we replied in Arabic, there in the midst, addressing the whole of that throng of Sudanese devotees—there, not far from the Mahdi's tomb, from the spot where the hero Gordon's head was exposed, from the Khalifa's house and the scene of all the misery to which the battle of Kerreri and the occupation put an end, only a quarter of a century ago ! . . . But the point which it is desired to emphasise is the singular nature of the friendly connexion between our Mission and that powerful and influential order and its "lodge" in Omdurman. It is a connexion which is not only personal but *spiritual.* Government officials, even respected ones, are not admitted to these *zikrs*, nor are they saluted with the special salute which implies spiritual affinity, as our workers are.

Khartoum Revisited. 1918.

I am on my way back, traversing for the fourth time the eternally delicious Nile scenery. Its uniqueness lies in the combination of pure desert scenery with pure river scenery: a river passing through the desert, an elongated lake or fiord in a desert-rock basin, *that* is the uniqueness, and that is the charm. Also, that accounts for the delicate *economy* of the scenery. Tropical richness is suggested all along the banks; but profuseness is prevented by the Desert, which acts as the delicate and fastidious critic of its tropical partner, the River. These hundreds of miles with a new water-landscape every few hundred yards, wealth with restraint, the minimum detail, but *what* a minimum !—and not a stroke too much.

You can imagine the joy it causes each time and all the time. At this time, the lake above the dam is so full that it runs up into the little side *wadies*, converting

them into delicious little creeks, sheltered by yellow rock and rich dark green palm-groves, and fringed by a goldeny strand . . . regular little Robinson Crusoe inlets, here in the heart of the Sahara ! for the whole Nile valley is simply an art-work, which Nature chooses to paint on a narrow section of the infinite expanse of the Sahara canvas. . . .

Dawn this morning was wonderful ; owing to a twist in the river, we happened to be going eastwards, and the nose of the boat was therefore pushing along the still, lake-like waters, right into the sunrise glow. It seemed as though I was in a twilight auditorium facing a glowing stage from which the dark curtains had been caught up to right and to left, making a burning picture. The sky was a " living glory bath " of mild yet radiant, transparent primrose, sharply relieved by a dark rugged line of hills, which ran right across the nature-stage ; below which, again, the radiant light renewed itself in the rippleless waters of the lake. And, into that still, silent glory we were steering straight, as though that eastern stage had been curtained and unveiled for our special delectation,—or for mine, for I saw no others watching it.

At Khartoum, there was an incident which brought home to me very vividly the change between now and " 30 years since." The wife of the Governor-General had asked school children of our schools up to the palace, to spend the afternoon. I accompanied the river-steamer which had been sent to convey the children up from Omdurman. We were on the very track of Gordon's " penny steamers " which he mentions scores of times in his journals, and whose evolutions he watched with such anxiety from the roof of that palace. From that roof, a solitary figure, gazing north and west with field-glasses might have been seen . . . 33 years ago . . . We moored opposite the

palace steps, ascended them and made the children fall in on the narrow esplanade in front of the palace-gates, *exactly* where 19 years ago detachments of British, Soudanese and Egyptian troops lined up with their backs to a silent ruin, facing the Sirdar and his staff. There and then the 14 years belated funeral service " for a hero " had been held. And here and now stood this regiment of gleeful children with their black faces and ivory teeth, and neat *gallabiyas*. The signal is given, and they file through the gateway, pass through the cloister-like hall, and out into the glorious tropical garden behind, right past the foot of the steps where the body of the hero fell that day, early on a January morning, pierced to the heart by Dervish spears. Into the grounds, through which on that morning, the yelling crowd had rushed " to the palace," trotted the little children to pass their happy afternoon on the lawns, among the date palms and tropical trees, dancing to two-step and rag-time, played by the Soudanese band, with brass instruments glowing like the morning, and wood-wind all resplendent in ebony and silver ; the bandsmen whereof, for all we know, may have been the grandsons of the infuriates, who rushed to yonder palace steps and hurled their long spears into Gordon's quivering flesh. And this year completes the " one generation," which has seen all these changes—the tragedy, the late funeral, the children capering under the palms which swayed over all three. And I have eaten in the very room where he walked up and down into the hopeless night ; have stepped over the landing where he came out for the last time on that 25th of January to face the barbarians, and descended the steps down which his body fell dead.

Quarantine in the Turkish Empire. Our Doss-house in the Lazaretto or A Rest in Syria.

Scene : A space the size of a farm-yard, surrounded by cow-byres. In one of these byres is found Our Party —the only English people, one might say almost the only Europeans among the 600 Inmates of the Byres. Our Byre is a largish apartment with broken mud floor, and walls off which the plaster is coming. There is a door. There is one window. There is a partition, the other side of which is an Eastern family with screamy voices. They haven't a monopoly of the screams, however. Our Party has three children under two !! as well as two others. One of the Babies is ill. All are bored. We can rise to as many as three or four screaming at once. It is magnificent, but it is not a holiday in Syria. Besides the children there are five grown-ups. They are English, they are Syrians ; they are male, they are female : they are married, they are unmarried ; they all sleep there ; some eat there ; feed and wash the babies there ; are ill there (if they want to be ill, and are ordered by the doctor strict rest and quiet) ; cook there ; and generally pig there. There are no chairs in this Cow-Byre ; there are no beds ; there are no basins. We have therefore to share. The English borrow mattresses from their Syrian friends, who are fortunately " flitting " ; the Syrians borrow the Baby's Bath from their English friends. That bath is useful. Babies are washed in it. So is linen ; the B.A. of Trin. Coll., Oxon. (2nd in Greats, including Philosophy, which here comes in useful) also finds it useful and takes a modest bath behind a screen (made from an old gate and a shawl by the Alumna of Cheltenham College) in a dark corner of the Byre. The Syrian mother is sleeping with her little girl in one corner ; the baby swings in a hammock

above them. It cries—it howls. The Eastern Party shout at it from the other side of the partition. Having first rebuked them for noise, we are silent, feeling foolish. The English baby joins in. It is glorious. The B.A. has a gastric attack and temperature. He lies on a "Bed of Suffering." He enjoys the noise. He got a 2nd in Philosophy. Presently quiet reigns again. The Syrian Party sleep in their corner. The B.A. in his. The English Mother, two Babes, and Capable Nurse in theirs. No one is shocked. We seem to have been doing it all our lives. The morning comes. We gradually get up and robe. When one does this, the opposite sex go to sleep again. It is quite easily managed thus. The result of dressing would not commend itself to the Marine Parade at Brighton. I will not describe it. I will draw a veil over it. Living in Syrian Cow-Byres is what did it. Let us say no more about it. The Baby did well enough. But Little Billee is not up to the summer standard of Bath Villa—I feel that. While his parents . . . next scene, please ! . . . We wake, as I said, at sunrise. We take a portentous time over dressing, washing, Baby-washing . . . we struggle to Breakfast . . . we take a portentous time over it—not because we eat much, but because it comes slow. Back to the Byre. We make disheartened attempts to clean and tidy it. We fail. We occupy a huge time in failing. We observe a former Captive has inscribed the word "Pigsty" on the whitewash walls. We assent. The pigs stop tidying. "We have consumed the morning—it must be time for Table d'Hôte ! " Horrors, it is only a quarter to ten o'clock ! "Your watch is Egyptian time ! " That makes it worse !! It is only half-past nine !! Will the morning never end ? We do nothing —yet have time for nothing. At last Table d'Hôte. *They* do their best to kill time at any rate—they wait

twenty minutes between each course. At last it ends. Hungry still, from the prolonged waits, we go back to the Byre. We sleep on the pallets on the floor. We rise and have tea. Another appalling interval. "It must be Little Billee's bed time." Horrors! It is only half-past three !! Will the day never end? The B.A. takes the senior Babe to the Cliff. He stares like Odysseus over the "violet sea." The sun crawls downwards. An early pallet claims Billee. Another interminable meal. The long day has come to an end at last. The Prisoners go to bed before 9 P.M. and the curtain may gently descend.

Sunset at Brumana, Syria.

Such are the natural colours—but what shall I say of the magic results which the morning, noonday and evening sunlight gets from these? Words cannot paint this.

It is the half hour before sunset that this wonder culminates. As the sun sinks towards that great deep band of misty blue dotted with cloud-islands and cloud-icebergs which is the Mediterranean, 3000 feet below, the whole atmosphere becomes gradually suffused with lustrous, translucent rosy light. The cloud-islands leave the sea, and stream inland up the valleys in procession: they also are smitten by the rose shafts and turn into rosy mists. The mountain wall that fronts our windows is one glowing amethyst; the hillsides are transparent purples—the whole world seems to have put on rich purple, to be bathing in liquid amethyst. It deepens and increases till you are aware that an ashy shadow is creeping up from the plain; up it comes, quenching the mellow light and turning everything into shadow, until only the furthest ridge and peaks remain lit up, hanging above the shadow-world in unimpaired brilliance. At last the shadow reaches

them too—they turn ashen, then leaden ; the brilliant sky darkens, the stars rush out, the lights twinkle from scores of villages all over the mountain-side ; and night has come.

Three Vignettes from Palestine in War-time.

(1) *Hidden Music.*

We passed through Beer Zeit. The place had been half destroyed by shell fire, but was nevertheless occupied by certain of our troops. Passing through the quiet semi-ruined streets I heard bewitchingly sweet, soft strains proceeding from somewhere—or rather they seemed merely to hover in the air as perfume does. Instantly I was hobbling with my lame foot to nose out this sweet sound-perfume—and tracked it to the almost subterraneous basement of a ruined house, where a soldier-orchestra—small but well selected—was practising in their khaki trousers and grey shirts. The piece they played was a solemn and beautiful thing by Thomas. Altogether it was a fragrant and rather romantic experience, ranking in my mind with the memory of an R.N. band in an illuminated gondola playing on the Grand Canal, and another of a gypsy company of musicians heard from afar through the pine forests above Buda-Pesth. . . .

(2) *The Church at Beer Zeit.*

The C.M.S. Church had had one solitary shell through it, but was otherwise intact and is being used as a chapel for the troops. It is a little building, but very spacious and sizeable by reason of its vaulted roof and solid building. The altar and reredos ; the forms (not filling the church, but leaving the back spaces free) ; the books placed ready for service—above all the sense of sanctity and peace with which the little place was

filled—all these were silently proclaiming that the place was *not* deserted, but spiritually inhabited—inhabited by God and man. A window open at the dim east end beside the altar gave a sunlit view of a terraced hillside beautiful with cypresses—a sunlit picture of peace and loveliness framed in the " dim religious light " of the interior. It looked like the background of some specially beautiful and speaking picture by some old Tuscan painter. It was a real privilege to kneel and pray in this little C.M.S. shrine—the centre of a congregation that has suffered terribly on this campaign.

(3) *A Chameleon in the Trenches.*

Apparently we happened on an unusually quiet night, for a battery of guns (it seems) usually bangs off quite close to my quarters, and the falling of occasional Johnny shells is fairly frequent. But nothing of the sort this time. In the morning, by special permission of the General, I was taken right up to the front line. Thus one was able to follow up to its ultimate filament and twig-extremity the huge organism whose roots one had seen at Kantara, trunk along the El Arish railway, bough-fork at Lydd, and main branches at various places further north and east. I now tracked it, as I say, to one of its extremity twigs—in the shape of a dug-out a few metres from the sandbags of the firing line, right on the crest of a great hill, in which dug-out were breakfasting two trench-mortar subalterns and one chameleon. All three looked in absolutely the pink of health, and the hill air evidently gave them all a keen appetite. The chameleon was looking inscrutably at the flies which were everywhere in that dug-out. His protruding eyes were set in eyeballs as goggly as a hemisphere. The lower half of the sphere seemed to be set in a cup-and-ball socket, to judge by the way in which that visible hemisphere moved north, south, east

or west, carrying with it its periscope-like eye. And weirder still was the fact that the two goggles moved absolutely independently of each other, so that while the right one might be fixed in a sinister stare on a fly settled on the tablecloth behind him, the other might be swivelling round to rake another fly on the sugar in front of him. The mask-like face and absurd big mouth remained sphinx-like and inscrutable, and for seconds or minutes nothing would happen, though flies galore were within range. Then a very close observer might notice that something which I can't call a light came into the dead yet moving periscopes, something which can't be called an expression into the passionless mask, some shade of a shadow of a chameleon-mind was finally made up, and then—hey prestissimo—before you could say the first part of the J of Jack Robinson an incredible tongue, as long as the creature itself from head to tail had *streaked* out and back like greased silent lightning,—and one fly had been transferred from sugar to sphinx's mouth. . . . But both mouth, goggles, and mask seemed combining to say to the spectator *and* to the remaining flies : " What, *did* I speak ? Surely you must have been dreaming ? "

Centipedes in the Valley of Hinnom.

Ge-Hinnom (the Valley of Hinnom) is still a lonely place. Now we saw why it was given over to be defiled by the refuse-heaps which kept alive " the unquenchable fires." It is because it is not a thoroughfare to anywhere. Those who passed out of the city at the " Valley-gate " (S.W. angle) for Bethlehem, or at the " Fountain-gate " (S.E. angle) for Siloam and the Dead Sea, would have it on their left and right respectively ; it leads nobody anywhere. To this day it is very silent and deserted. On our day it was wonderfully beautiful, its beauty only *heightened* by its

striking cliffs and chasm-like hollow ; for everything was so fresh and green ; the birds sang and the flowers sang too. The little fellows were soon at work (intermezzi between lections from the Book of Nehemiah anent his circum-ambulation !) picking nosegays with unbounded enthusiasm and making Hinnom's grim grey hollows ring with their clear-pitched voices. When, later on, they came upon perfect swarms of black centipedes, evidently also enjoying the season of love and frolic, their voices rose to perfect shouts of glee ; and it is certain, I suppose, that in the days to come the Valley of this Son of Hinnom will be to *one* small boy at least simply the delicious place where, one spring morning, he gathered some delectable bouquets, and where, alas ! *no* bottle could be found to imprison centipedes in ; or rather *bottles*—for each little boy was quite clear that it was of the highest importance for *each* to own one absolutely.

It was here that, owing to its retired position, the horrible Moloch sacrifices took place ; and here, therefore, after it had been defiled by that unclean fire, the rubbish of Jerusalem was piled—shot down those steep slopes or carried through the gate still called the Dung-gate (Neh. ii. 13), and was then consumed in never-extinguished pyres. One can understand that *then* those sheer crags, to-day so grateful to our Scottish eyes, looked grim enough. *Twenty-five centuries* ago Manasseh making his eldest boy pass through the fire to Moloch in this valley ! *To-day*, M. and I, with *our* eldest, picking lilies and shouting at centipedes in the fresh spring morning ! O Time, O Centuries ! Can it have been ? Can it be ?

A Dream at Kantara. 1918.

I had been pondering very much the circumstances of the German drive from Lassigny, so as to turn the

French flank on the Oise and to clear them out of the angle made by the Oise and the Aisne, and the wooded region of Compiègne. When I slept I seemed to be talking with Lloyd George. He was very grave and evidently extremely anxious. I thought to myself that here is the *other* side to his inspiring optimistic speeches. He had just come from France and had written a *communiqué* for the Press. I read it and found to my concern that it was a particularly crude and naked, almost despairing statement that the French had been defeated and that a wholesale retirement from the corner of the Aisne and Oise and the whole forest of Compiègne was inevitable. "What!" I said to him. "You don't mean to say that you're going to give *that* to the public! Let me write it again and put it differently." He assented and I wrote it out in the approved style you know so well—"according to plan," and all the rest of it, but nevertheless took leave of him heavy at heart.

Then of a sudden I seemed to be walking in the district of Compiègne itself—either that, or the Aisne just west of Soissons. I was on the north side of the valley and in front of me rose steeply the valley's steep hillside, glorious with summer woods, "one green plenitude of May." I had passed through a town and was ascending one of the roads leading northwards out of it up through the woods. All of a sudden I heard a singing, and little parties of French schoolgirls, pretty and trig, passed me going *downhill*, all singing a strongly rhythmical song which I have forgotten, and shooting at me merry, but not forward nor impertinent, glances as they passed me, four or five in a party. Having had some practice in excesses of female society and in schoolgirls' ways (as I said to myself) I bore this fire with fortitude, being really growingly delighted with these fresh, pretty, merry girls, their rhythmical song

as they danced downhill, their roguish but friendly glances, and their charming consonance with those rich, glorious summer woods. Then when I had passed them all, I seemed to take a wrong turn, and arrived at the end of a lane which was closed by the entrance to a house, which when I entered it proved to be the girls' school itself! Simultaneously with the arrival of the head-mistress to see who the stranger was, there arrived the *whole* of the schoolgirls *en masse*, coming *back* to the house up the lane I had just traversed, and *all* singing in chorus the lilting, rhythmical song which I had heard the snatches of before. I was afraid of this head-mistress, remembering Mr. Pickwick's sad adventure on a similar occasion, until I perceived that she too was young and fair, and had the same friendly, soft, trustful look as her young pupils. Her face was oval, her cheeks were delicately rosy and her hair was, I think, in ringlets. Her look at me was neither unfriendly nor forward, nor suspicious, but it was questioning. Sad at heart, from my interview with Lloyd George, I signified to her that I wanted to see her alone, and to bid farewell to the young ladies in a little French speech (!) the only phrases of which I can remember are " vos *yeux* " and " mes demoiselles " ! Then she and I went down the woody hill together until we were alone. Her eyes were now anxious with interrogation.

" Oh, Mademoiselle," I said, " I have something to tell you. It is not known, but it is true. You must leave at once. This whole region and your beautiful school is to be given up to the Germans. The French are in retreat and all the country from Soissons to Compiègne is to be evacuated." She said nothing, but the beautiful kind eyes grew more and more troubled and the face full of great sadness. She bent it lower and lower, till it reached my arm ; expression

and action as of a daughter seeking comfort of a father. Her face rested on my arm a long space during which we both remained quite still, with a current of deepest sympathy passing between the two. Then she raised her face and without a word went up the summer wooded hillside. I, deeply troubled, with heart profoundly moved and yet enriched with a strange content, bore northwards, returning, it seemed, to England.

Cyprus and Mount Troödos.

Mount Troödos is the Cyprian Olympus of old times, and was pretty god-haunted therefore. To-day it is the Simla of Cyprus ; thither resorts the administration during the hot months. The High Commissioner has a small lodge there, called Government Cottage, and as our cousin Captain X was acting for him, he was staying there, and there I abode.

The steep road wound up between *hedges*, or the nearest I have ever seen in the East to hedges. The trees became more and more profuse ; pines in abundance, and larches ; also holm-oaks, carobs, arbutus, chestnuts, olives, poplars. Delicious smells were wafted to one on the cool breezes. And, most delicious of all, clear, cold streams appeared, cataracting down deep glens all fragrant with bracken, wild thyme and mint. Think of *bracken* for the eyes and nostrils of an exiled Scot ! And truly those upper slopes were more reminiscent of Scottish glen and mountain scenery than I could have believed possible in the East : certainly much more so than anything in Syria. Lebanon is either fertile with fruit trees or somewhat torrid. In either case the soul knows and realises every minute that it is not in its *ain countrie*. But Troödos comes far nearer to giving one that dear illusion. The very fruit trees reminded one of home.

The last evening I went out alone after the others

had retired. The moon was full, and "with delight looked round her when the heavens were bare." I went along a mountain path until I reached a point which commanded the view of the whole mountain-side to the south. The night was very still and the pines did not stir, nor did so much as a leaf rustle. The only sound that broke the stillness of the moonlit hills was the musical chirruping of two or three cicalas answering each other across the glen, and the whirring of a few moonstruck grasshoppers. At my feet the mountain-side sloped steeply downward to a valley, and thereafter slope after slope, fold after fold, down to the foothills, then the plain, and finally the sea, all dim, blue-black, softly indistinguishable in the night, yet revealing the contours of the main ridges and valleys in the moonlight. The dim velvety obscurity of mountains, how lovely it was! all garish colour, all excess of detail softly blotted out, leaving just contour, half concealed by the darkness of the night, half revealed by the radiance of the moonlit sky. Down it sloped, ever down for all those miles to the broad band of sea, 5500 feet below and twenty-five miles away—as far as Ardrossan from Glasgow. Man, beast, tree, sun and winds had gone to rest, one felt; only the sea watched silently with the moon: or perhaps it was her Endymion, asleep yet transfigured by the goddess's light.

As I only had a week on Troödos, and all the antiquities of the island are in the sweltering lowlands, I have nothing to tell you about the glorious Gothic, crusading and other remains, with their thrilling reminiscences. I have been to Cyprus and at least seen the scenery that the gods, Venus, Ajax the Less, Zeno, Publius Claudius, Elymas, Paul, Barnabas, Othello, Desdemona and the last Venetian hero who defended Famagusta, saw with their eyes in their days of old.

CHAPTER II

He Sees the World

I took a long, photographic glance at the scene for our album of invisible pictures. . . . Oh the living memories of the living past! Not dead! "Because I live, *it* lives also." (From his journal.)

Paris Visited. 1927.

(1) *La Sainte Chapelle.*

S. Louis—King Louis IX's—great monument, in which we have the very embodiment of his spirit, is the Sainte Chapelle. Twice I found it *fermé*; once the day was too dull; but on the last afternoon I brought off my pilgrimage to it, and was rewarded by a sunny day—this is necessary in order to see the marvellous stained glass attaining its maximum of glory. The chapel is really indescribable. The lower chapel—like its contemporary the lower church at Assisi—made me comprehend what a secret of richest royal beauty these Gothic builders discovered when they blazoned their groined vaulting with royal azure and gold. But it is the upper chapel that holds the soul spellbound. Its shape is familiar to us all from Exeter chapel and (in bathos!) Hillhead Church (which, however, notably succeeded in uglifying the Chapelle's wonderful proportions). But its glory is its glass: *all of those fifteen great windows*, with their long, long, slender mullions and exquisite geometrical tracery, are *completely* filled with the most marvellous glass, claret, crimson-reds and royal azure-blues predominating: so that its

walls, built it would seem " with light itself," glow and sparkle with wondrous tesselations of ruby and sapphire. The whole of the walls, from floor to roof, are just one glory of coloured radiance—1100 panels, composed of countless thousands of coloured fragments of glass—one mosaic of coloured lights.

(2) *S. Eustachio.*

I found the church *the* most remarkable and perfect *mélange* of the Gothic and the Renaissance that I have ever seen, or that exists anywhere, as I suppose. And the strange thing is that it is effective and in good taste ! The church, which is very large and extremely lofty, is in its *lines* entirely Gothic, and in its details entirely Renaissance ! Imagine a Gothic cathedral of the later style but with *all* its arches rounded at the tops, and all its tracery taken out and replaced by Renaissance rounds and curves ! The mouldings of the towering pillars which ran up from floor to vaulted roof were actually broken into stages to allow of the insertion of various Renaissance features, including a row of pure Corinthian pilasters the whole length of the clerestory ! A Gothic cathedral without a single pointed arch in it anywhere—did you ever hear of such a thing ? The service we attended was a *very* important one, for a Cardinal-Bishop was present, who was evidently a tremendous personage : his throne was surrounded, during the whole service, by a little ring of clergy and acolytes, except when a chair was placed for him in the middle of the chancel to hear the sermon, and another time before the midst of the altar to have his hand kissed by an assorted stream of evidently selected Faithful, beginning with clergy, then acolytes, then gentlemen in frock-coats, then others, and lastly a bevy of about twenty girls in white dresses and veils, who went up with a banner, kissed his Eminence's hand in turn, and

came back again. Perhaps he blessed their banner for them ; otherwise it was not clear what these nymphs turned out for in such array. The music was beautiful, and I was especially ravished by a plain-song hymn which oddly enough E. had shown me the Sunday before. This time—and for the first time—I was able to follow the Roman Mass from start to finish, as I had taken the precaution to get a copy of the thing itself without devotional trimmings (always a difficult thing at R.C. shops). As I said, the music was beautiful—a mixed selection from various sources : alas ! had I been a Sunday earlier it would have been a Palestrina. Alas and alack ! It was sung by a choir (with orchestra and *small* organ) out of sight in the ambulatory. The big organ was not used. Query, was not S. Eustachio César Franck's church ? If so, what an additional consecration to our Sunday morning !

(3) *Versailles.*

Can you figure to yourselves (for if you can't I cannot describe) miles and miles of galleries and halls and corridors, the walls of which are *completely filled* with acres upon acres of vainglorious, gesturing, not to say posturing, representations of battles, assemblies, and swaggering kings, princes and lords ? And the statuary —necropolises of it—all posturing and gesturing too. And the architecture to match—grandiloquent, full of vainglory. Of beauty, in the true sense, *nil*, so it seems to me. Everything in the " classical " style—supposedly—but of the true " classical " spirit not the least trace, so it seemed to my wearied soul. But a most true and veritable embodiment of the France of le Grand Monarque, and of the First and Third Empires. These may have been times of great scientific, literary and military achievement, but less and less do I believe in their *artistic* achievements. One's soul gets sated

with them, and, finally, antagonised. So far from representing the climax of civilisation and enlightenment, the whole thing began more and more to appear to one's soul as essentially barbaric !—barbarism with a highly polished veneer : as false and worthless as the ethics of the people who called these things into being, the ethical and aesthetic aspects have here a profound correspondence, so it appeared to my mind.

The soul is merely stunned ; it is deafened by all the shouting—by France shouting at you, incessantly, with the ten thousand tongues of Versailles, " I am glorious ! I am very glorious ! " Do a nation's glories (" Toutes les Gloires de France ") really need such strident self-advertisement ?

However, most dutifully, I walked and walked and walked : from 11.30 to 4 I was walking those interminable galleries and avenues, and most dutifully perusing the manufactures of the artist by whom " the walls were well-filled," to use Miss M.'s expression. And if I can't say I was delighted, or even in any deep sense impressed, I certainly was tremendously instructed. I might say that even more than the Bourbons, Napoleon is the hero of Versailles.

But after all it isn't for these things that one says to oneself " à Versailles ! " One says it with the same reference as those who said the words in 1789. It is because of that crowd and their mad rush, because of Louis XVI and his Marie Antoinette and those fatal days, that one goes in pilgrimage to Versailles. I confess that with 1789-92 filling my mind I walked through the Hall of Mirrors and therefore, in spite of 1871 and even 1919, could not raise a thrill.

That hall is on the garden front—running almost the whole length—a gigantic hall. Contiguous with it, looking the opposite way—over the vast entrance court, the Place, the town of Versailles and the long

broad road to Paris—are the historic royal apartments, the original part of the Château.

It is *these* that give the thrill.

I first viewed them from the Place, the very Place where that tumultuous army of Paris maenads encamped that whole dreary afternoon, anxious night and tragic morning, as described in one of the finest chapters of Carlyle. I tried to picture the scene, to re-create it. It is a vast area, and slopes *up* and up *continuously*, to the very walls of the palace. Versailles town is lower than the avenue that leads to the Château ; that avenue is lower than the great Place outside the Château precinct ; that precinct is lower than the outer court, and finally that outer court is lower than the little court (surrounded on three sides by the old château) in which the vast perspective culminated. So that when Marie Antoinette took the little Dauphin, and part proudly, part contemptuously, part graciously, showed herself and him to the super-excited masses of humanity that had flooded avenue, square and precinct below, she must have been easily visible to every eye ! What a roar must there have broken forth—deep as the sea, and with what an ominous growl discernible as undertone to its hysterical enthusiasm ! I looked for, saw, the very window—that one on the left of the balcony on the first floor. I tried to imagine the apparition of that proud queen and her child at that casement. . . .

And then I went into that chamber, and to that casement from the inside, and tried to see that vast prospect with *her* eyes. . . .

It was the King's bedchamber—and the room in which the Grand Monarque had died a century before. Not a large room for a king's bedchamber.

The Anteroom, where the lords waited for the King's levée, is next to it. This was the celebrated " Œil de Bœuf," mentioned scores of times in Carlyle.

I *wish* I could have identified the banqueting hall where the fatal banquet took place at which the " O Richard, O mon roi, l'univers t'abandonne " was so unseasonably sung. But I could not.

But perhaps the spot that is even more typically moving than that balcony-casement is one other which I visited, and " stood awhile in thought " : the door on one side of which was a queen, with her terrified children and women, and on the other side a howling mob of Paris apaches, mad for blood ; and facing them a few heroic Swiss guards. *There* was the staircase they came swarming up—listen to the horrible thunder of their feet—it spells death ! Round that corner, through that door, into that ante-room—it is the guardroom to the whole of the Queen's suite of apartments (at right angles to the King's suite and the Hall of Mirrors). A single guard is there—he is struck down, dragged away—done to death : another, and then another . . . there is a slaughter of those poor heroic Swiss, caught between " the fell incensed points of mighty opposites " in a quarrel not theirs. But their resistance gave to the Queen time to escape, and to Lafayette time to come up and restore order. . . .

Finally, later on that day, the King and Queen put themselves into the hands of their people, and are " willingly compelled " to come along with them à Paris, to be under the vigilant eye of the People, who will now see that " the Austrian " behaves herself. One sees the strange tragi-comic procession—the royal pair bravely pretending—for hours and hours, and dreary mile on mile all the way to Paris—that they like it. And so Versailles knows royalty no more (for who, after that, would count a Louis XVIII, a Louis-Philippe, or the Napoleons either ?).

Hot Days and Cool Drinks at Boston.

Ever and anon we would refresh our inner man and woman respectively with that American institution called iced-cream soda. These are somewhat luscious. A flavouring of lemon, vanilla or some other drink is added to cool sparkling soda-water, and into this clear cold pool is dropped a lump of ice-cream. The long glass is then handed to you with a long spoon. You half eat at the floating lump, and half drink the cool nectar, until, as you reach the bottom, the two become one in holy union, and you finish up your fivepence worth with a reverent sigh. These and other drinks are invariably served at the "drug-stores," (*anglice*, chemists' shops !), which appropriate a special counter to the purpose. The number of dimes passed over these counters on a hot day in U.S.A. must total up to an incredible figure. A dime is fivepence, and a dime is the sum you sink each time you sin with an iced-cream soda.

At Tiffany's, New York City.

Tiffany, the Jeweller in Fifth Avenue. A shop like this really determines the shopping centre of New York ; when it moves further up Fifth Avenue all the shopping quarter moves with it. Tiffany is not merely a jeweller's shop, it is a treasury full of *art*, art-jewellery, objects of vertu of all sorts. In another part of the city he has *studios* where his designs are worked out by decorative artists. The "shop"—but the word is absurd for a place that looks like a great gallery, or central hall of a museum, occupies the whole ground floor of a block, and is not divided by partitions, but is just one open, spacious, beautifully proportioned gallery throughout, with rows of thick columns like an Egyptian temple, all marble. Likewise are the floors

marble; the "counters" (absurd word) things of crystal beauty; the walls exquisitely decorated with mosaic and so forth. And this palace-hall is just filled with every sort of precious and beautiful thing, all open to the gaze in their crystal cases; aisles and aisles of these cases, full of whole trayfuls of pearls, trayfuls of diamonds, of opals, jacinths, onyxes—every imaginable precious stone, all smooth and round, or beautifully cut, lying thick in their little trays. Then you come to wonders of glass, of china, of precious woods, of metal—all with the rarest and chastest designs. You walk through this palace, for nothing. No one bothers you to buy, or even speaks to you. Yet *you could* spend "quite a little" there, you know. One just wonders how much wealth is represented within the four walls of that one room. I left it all there, however, as far as I was concerned. My purchases amounted to £0 0*s.* 0*d.*, which you can translate into dollars when I tell you that one dollar equals 4*s.* 2*d.*

Niagara.

I feel the same reluctance to begin writing about Niagara as I felt to approaching it. I hung about and finally approached the river above the Falls themselves—as bashfully as one approaches a mistress. And how shall I begin to write of it?

It is *a roaring sea tilted up*, seething down in great billows, gigantic waves leaping madly, not because they strike a rock but simply because they are burst upwards by the intolerable pressure of the furious waters beneath, all tearing pell-mell down, shoving each other down, up, aside, in the rush for annihilation over the fatal brink. And weirder and more terrific than the noise and the commotion of the rapid, is the *silence*, the helplessness with which they finally disappear over that edge. It is in the curve of that Horse-Shoe

Fall that the waters really heap up, and that you realise the *quantities* that are going over. It is there that the water, as it seems to pause for an infinitesimal moment, shows the clear, deep body that reminded me again and again of that astounding description in Exodus " as it were the body of heaven in his clearness."

When the audacious mortal tries to force an entrance into the very arcanum of Niagara, and dares the passage *behind* the Fall ! That is the most thrilling—and the most baffled moment—of all.

This is the entrance into what is called the Cave of the Winds. Why it is so called will be clear in a moment. It is situated behind a small section of the American Fall, about fifty feet broad, isolated from the remainder by the occurrence of a very small islet above. One goes over to Goat Island, enters a changing-room, takes off every stitch of one's clothing and dons a suit of flannels with a complete oilskin which is drawn over the head, and weird canvas shoes which make one's two feet look like the tail of a seal. Then comes the descent by a spiral staircase enclosed in a chimney of wood, down the face of the cliff of Goat Island, till the screes at the bottom are reached.

We turn to the right and make towards the corner of the American Fall. Where it hits the screes, it divides into two or three cascades which come foaming down the rocks in two or three channels. These are spanned by small wooden bridges. Then, as we set foot on the first of them we are immediately enveloped in fine spray-mist. . . . We penetrate into the middle of the cloud. . . .

And then—oh wonder ! Marvel of beauteous marvels ! What sight is this ? A RAINBOW. But what a rainbow ! The like was never seen, save by S. John, around the Throne. A brilliant sun is shining overhead. Its rays of intense light fall on and

suffuse this saturation of fine spray in the midst of which we stand, and the result is a rainbow of unimaginable intensity and brilliance—a double Rainbow. But—how shall I put the rapturous sight into words—it is *not an arch*! It is a circle! It bends about me on this side and on that side, yea, seems almost to meet behind me at my very feet! And oh ye gods, what is this? It moves, it moves as *I* move !!! It surrounds me and moves with me !! When I go forward my rainbow goeth forward !! It is MY RAINBOW! I go back, it goeth back, for it will by no means leave its lord. Ha! What is this? Am I a god? By Jupiter—I *am* Jupiter! What ho, Ganymede! Bring me my golden flagon of nectar! My eagle, perch on my right hand! Hither to me, Lady Juno, and hear the behest of the rainbow-encircled one . . . Heavens! It was a godlike moment. The oil-skinned one with fishlike tail of canvas yelled with exultation against the bellow of the cataract, and cavorted, encaged in his rainbow, upon that slippery bridge.

Oh godlike moment, must thou pass? Yes, for I came to discover not a divinity for myself, but to track down the divinity of Niagara within her own temple. The Valhalla of this goddess is not the Rainbow-bridge on which I stand, but the deep mysterious recess to which this Rainbow *is* but the bridge. On, then, again.

I crossed the bridge and began to go up the path by the cascade direct towards the Fall. Already on the bridge one had been drenched from head to foot, in spite of the oilskins: a torrent of water had at once found its way down by the neck over one's whole body. But torrential though the rain of spray on the foot-bridge was, it was child's play to what followed. As I approached the foot of the cataract I was assailed by

a perfect blizzard of wind and water, hurricaned across the path by the impact of the falling water on the rocks. One must half shut one's eyelids and sidle along by the hand-rail peering and blinking. And yet that again was child's play—only the vestibule to this tempest-goddess's shrine. We now prepared to pass right behind the Fall, or rather, you understand, that small band of it which is isolated by the two islands above. The passage into this Cave of the Winds is made possible by the occurrence of a hollow, which the cataract clears in its leap from the ledge above. Into this veritable Hall of Aeolus, we now struggle.

A fight it is indeed. We have only some fifty feet to go, but they must be struggled through. The Cave of the Winds ! Justly named ! A perfect hurricane is blowing ; this is no metaphor ; the speed of the wind *is* that of a violent gale : it is the air that has been violently driven down by the falling water, packed and compressed, and now has been turned inwards and, being liberated, smashes obliquely, up and across, towards the opposite cliff-wall, bouncing off from that again, meeting the opposing current, fighting it, and with it producing a wind-inferno. With this alone one would have had almost to close one's eyes and grope along by the hand-rail ; but that is not all ; these winds carry along with them flying gallons of thick drenching spray. It dashes itself against one's face ; it assails and assaults the eyes till they smart : mouth and nostrils are smitten till breathing labours ; while the ears are deafened and the brain deaved by the shrieking of the blast and the pelting-sound of the driven water striking the cliff, far more (apparently) than the noise of the Fall itself. The very senses with which one must look upon the goddess are giving out, used up and paralysed by the goddess's mere attendant slaves. Nevertheless I made one last, and supreme,

effort to behold her. Standing fairly in the centre of the footway, where the fury and the din were at their height, I faced—not so much the Fall, as the direction where I knew the Fall was. Disregarding the shrieking and the buffeting, I slowly pulled my eyelids apart and forced the smarting eyes to look straight ahead. . . . In vain ! Utterly and entirely in vain ! Niagara I saw not : only a vague dimness and obscurity, flying scud, and infernal, elemental din : *that* was no more *Niagara* than to stand on a dark night in a gale on a spray-swept deck. No ! Divinity veils itself by excess of light, and blinds the powers of perception that would scan it, not by taking them away but by the intolerable over-supply of the percept. Niagara I found not—saw not (unlike Gerontius) even "for one moment." I only saw her terrible attendants. Lo, these were but the outskirts of her ways ; but the thunder of her mighty power who can comprehend ?

French Canada.

It was *French* heroism and adventure that really opened up America. For at the time when New England hugged the coast at the north and New Holland did much the same a little further south, it was French Canadians, both soldiers of the army and of the Cross, who ascended the unknown St. Lawrence, discovered Lake Ontario (they thought they were going to discover China !! and a district there is called La Chine to this day), discovered Niagara, discovered the chain of the Great Lakes, crossed at Detroit, pushed south, discovered the great Mississipi waterway, and thus pushed down by the hinterlands of all the then discovered parts, right to the Gulf of Mexico.

Yes, and not only so. In the whole annals of missionary history, I know of nothing that for sheer, stark, superhuman, desperate, cold-blooded heroism comes

near that of the early giants of the Jesuit missions to the Iroquois and the Mohawk Indians. At a time when their nation was actually more or less at war with these tribes, they took their lives in their hands and went to them with their message, knowing perfectly well that they were going, with practical certainty, to death by slow, inconceivable torture, with refinements that only a torture-artist like the Red Indian could have invented. And so, indeed, it happened, time after time. The history of the Christianising of these fiends, or at least of the first attempts to evangelise them, is *French.* And the nuns were as bold and as devoted. And these attempts—nay, the conduct of the whole colonising enterprise—were, as far as I can make out, purely and sincerely humanitarian. Champlain himself, one of the noblest of men I think, was just as much a missionary at heart as he was brave soldier, merciful administrator, and skilled colonist. There was none of the " slaying the Canaanite in the name of the Lord " business about these French colonists ; and on the other hand their Catholic zeal was totally free from the frenzied and bloody fanaticism of the Spaniards in the south. I doubt whether a more humane as well as a more glorious page of human history has ever been written than that inscribed by the French colonists of Lower and Upper Canada.

The Pan-Anglican Conference. 1908.

(1) *The Opening Service in Westminster Abbey.*

The voluntary ceased ; its last echoes, rolling amongst the vaulted and groined arches and aisles, died out, and there was a silence. Then suddenly a single voice far away somewhere was heard chanting the first verse of the 51st Psalm. The chant was an extremely beautiful Gregorian, full and sweet rather

than dismal. Entirely unsupported and unaccompanied, did that one voice sound all through the great Minster. As it ceased a burst of harmony, in astonishing contrast to the naked simplicity of the first, filled the whole place. It was the harmony of voices only : the organ was mute throughout. Full, sweet, in absolute tune, and blending like the chords of a faultless string-quartette, the choir sang that alternate verse. The full harmonies, severely simple yet so ripe and rich, pervaded the whole place, coming from the invisible singers somewhere down the nave. The inner parts, and especially the men-altos, seemed to *fetch* their notes, feeling after them and laying hold on them with faultless accuracy in a way that made the chords sound like live things, alive with human tenderness and spirit.

(2) *The Closing Service at St. Paul's.*

As we waited, suddenly trombones rang through the cathedral. It was a great orchestra beginning the Voluntary, the three orchestral movements of Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang*. It was glorious. The spaces in St. Paul's are too vast to admit of one hearing everything—nuances and pianissimos were almost lost ; but there was something fascinating in just catching the great *outline* of the music ; its chief melodies and grand climaxes ; and hearing the drums and the heavy bass tuttis reverberate and rumble and grow chaotic in the echoes of the dome.

Then a stillness, and then the procession of Bishops began. The choir led, *singing the Litany*, as they moved slowly up the long aisle from the west end. The unending train of 250 bishops followed ; the whole procession took twenty minutes from first to last. Every nation or province kept together, and was marshalled by a mace-bearer. The choir had now reached their stalls, but still the procession kept pouring in at the

west end, while the Litany proceeded. Between the kneeling throngs they passed up the nave, under the dome and into the choir. A glorious touch was supplied by Nature herself: it was a radiant day, and through one of the topmost windows of the dome, there stabbed downwards a burning shaft of light, long, straight, slender and sharp, cleaving the dim spaces of the dome as clearly as the mystic ray in *Parsifal* at Bayreuth. It smote the pavement; it smote the white-clad procession as it passed; as it passed under that radiance, every figure was for a moment baptised with a sudden splendour ere it passed into the dimness of the choir, while the glory fell on the one behind him, and so on and on. All through the long service that heavenly ray slanted downwards like a benediction, shifting its direction round the south; and at the end *two* windows were sending two stabs of sunlight down on to the worshippers in the dome beneath. . . .

Trinity Great Court, Cambridge.

The centre of the heart of Cambridge is the Great Court of Trinity. I never got near it before, but this time, through the happy accident of having been given a bedroom in college I felt I came near it. On Sunday night I came into college late, and passing through the Great Court on my way to my room I sat on the outer steps of the hall. And there I sat without moving one muscle for nearly an hour. . . . And the spell of Cambridge seized me—it had time to work. It was a grey, warmish, half-moonlight night. The court was quite still save for the sweet incessant plashing of the most musical fountain I have ever heard in my whole life—it reminded me of that exquisite page of fountain-music near the beginning of the second act of *Tristan*, in Isolde's moonlit garden. That murmuring music filled the court, it *inhabited* and gave breathing and soul

to the unbroken stillness. Lamps were burning at intervals all the way round the court, and in some of the rooms there were lights behind soft-tinted curtains. But half-way through my meditation a porter went round, and rhythmically (so to speak) extinguished the lamps one after the other, and left the court to the warm half moonlight and to me. [When he passed the perfectly motionless figure on the hall steps he asked if it was feeling quite well ! Possibly he thought it was feeling something else.] The chapel was right opposite, and one saw with one's inner eye those perfectly marvellous white statues in its ante-chapel, of Newton, Bacon, Whewell, Tennyson — the most wonderful statues I have ever seen, the most wonderful sight in all Cambridge ; Oxford has *nothing* to put alongside of them. With that, and as one looked round the Gothic windows of the rooms in that moon-twilight court, and thought of Tennyson and the other great ones in poetry whose rooms had glowed many a Sunday night like that years ago, one felt the spirit of Cambridge pass for a moment right into one's soul.

Harvest Decorations in a Lincolnshire Church.

They were decorating the beautiful, old, grey church, with its pure Lincolnshire, Perpendicular architecture, for the Harvest. The workers moved about in the dim light. The air was heavy with the adorable smells of autumn—ripe apples and wet plants and fruitage, and asters and corn—lading the heavy autumnal air. The little child moved like a little fairy about the church, now sitting on one of the splendid oak seats with carven backs and sides, holding a book open in her hands and singing ; now sitting in the pulpit as if it was her house. It was a very sweet scene.

At the " Heart of England."

We had a great day. The weather had the decency to be fine, and in a coat of snow, softly lit by wintry sunshine, Stratford presented a beautiful study of an old-world town, a " harmony " in soft greys, dull white, and black. This morning was even better. Frost was in the air, the sky was clear, the sun shone out ; and in great spirits we three walked across the fields to Shottery, where Shakespeare courted Anne Hathaway. We saw Anne's cottage, an almost opulent little place it must have been, and were brought very near to Shakespeare ; for there was the very " courting-bench " on which he and she must have sat (if their courting was recognised, which I believe is doubtful). Through the low thick-glass windows one looked out into the clear frosty sunlight and the pleasant English landscape. As we came down the oak stairs, and stood at the open cottage door, *glittering drops* were falling from the eaves on to the threshold, owing to the surface thawing of the snow on the roofs in the warm morning sun : and through the glitter one looked forth on to the pleasant world—Shakespeare's England, from Shakespeare's bride's cottage door. It seems incredible, yet so natural, that that stupendous being existed here, and here had his birth, bringing-up and death. One is haunted by him—and what a genial, not-uncanny " haunt " ! On Sunday one was kneeling, with one's two boys on either side, in full view of where his dust reposes and shall repose until the crack of doom. Earlier X. and I had knelt at the Communion rails right over his tomb. To-night we listened to the *same* curfew bell as he had listened to, the same that tolled the knell of his decease. Shakespeare is as wonderful, as inscrutable, as unintelligible, as all humanity itself.

Where better could I have brought these boys? The very heart of England's heart. Well, well; it looks as if we should have to give up calling ourselves, much less our children, Scotch. Shall we go in for being utter English-folk?

CHAPTER III

At the Sea

Stayed at the bows till 7 P.M. as is my wont; the fresh, pure sea air filling nostrils and lungs; the infinite expanse of blue heaven and deep-blue sea. The sea! the sea! Oh associations of Ardrossan first, then Rossall! I greet it with full heart as one greets a known friend.
(From the journal of his first furlough.)

At the Bows, Homeward Bound. 1902.

I always thought that the Sailor's song in the first scene of *Tristan* was of the sea sea-y, of the salt salty, and I have now proved it; as the wind sings over the bow, I have been singing it, shouting it; it is as airy as the air itself.

The Coast at Aboukir Bay.

The stern, constant roar and wash of the surf breaking on the beach just below our little settlement fills my ears as I write this.

> "Listen, the mighty Being is awake
> And doth with its eternal motion make
> A noise like thunder everlastingly."

It is wonderful, most moving. The sound is so full-bodied, so ceaseless, so pervasive. I remember the sound that used to come through my dormitory windows at Rossall: what was sung in the Poem for the Jubilee as

> "The sullen drop of ocean's heavy tears"

—but there it was a dull thud followed by a silence and then another thud. Here there is an absolutely continuous deep hiss, deepened at rapid intervals by a bass-toned thirty-two foot pedal roar breaking into it and mingling with it. Fancy one's ears filled with *this* night and day. It is life-giving! We live in huts practically open to the elements, so their musical thunder is never dulled or muffled. And then the view of it! There it lies—neither calm nor rough; but always a bright, brilliant azure-blue, with its line of surf the most brilliant super-snowy white tumbling ever irregularly on the sunken reef of rocks which lies a few yards off the actual beach. The presence of this reef and the practical tidelessness of the Mediterranean cause that this line of surf never changes its place. On it goes pounding and pounding away at the self-same spot. There is no change, no advance, no regress, no alteration of size or shape of breaker: always the same tumultuous, irregular surf ham-ham-hammering upon the self-same phlegmatic flat shelf of reef. I think both have their merits. The merit of this is the soothing effect conveyed by the monotony of sight and sound; and also what I cannot describe by any other adjective than a "magical" effect. I have not a Keats here, but there are two lines in the *Ode to the Nightingale* (I think) which haunt me in connexion with this sea:

"Magic casements opening on the foam."

That's it exactly! The whole of the sea-side of our huts are open casements, and they look perpetually out at this strange tumbling motionless-moving sea.

Land-Crabs on Burullus Beach, Egypt.

Here there are notable sea-beasties, half-way between land-crabs and sea-crabs. They live in the sand of the beach in incredible numbers, and reach a large

size, but are incomparably more agile in their movements than the sea-crabs. I doubt if a runner could keep up with the small ones, when on the run, and the large ones go nearly as fast—so fast that you can't see their long legs, only the disc-like body which seems to be skimming along three inches above the sand supported on nothing in particular. At sun-down they leave their holes in the dry sand and come down to the water-edge. Then, if one walks westward along the strand, one scares them at a distance of twenty yards or so in advance, whereat they fairly tear down the wet slablike slope into the wash of the surf, where they are caught by the rush of the foam and water, overwhelmed and rolled back on to the wet slab again. Here they find their feet, and again bustle into the wave, and so on, da capo, for all the world like the Lobster Quadrille in *Alice* described with so much excitement by the Mock Turtle and the Gryphon. The performance *appears* destitute of all purpose except pure play, and is therefore most fascinating to watch. And as your progress along the strand regularly budges all the crabs within the next thirty paces of you, you appear to have a continuous and endless succession of literally thousands of these grotesque animals, scurrying little figures, jet-black against the brilliant yellow or luminous livid sheen of the wet beach, which alternately mirrors the sunset glow, or is sluiced by the snow and pearls of the in-washing wave. If one quickens one's pace, the seaward scurry quickens in proportion. But if one breaks into a sudden double and dashes into their midst, then for fifty paces ahead there is a veritable *stampede* of crabs, hurtling and hirpling down the shingle to the water at the rate of a young express train, and in batches of a dozen at a time.

A Swimming-Lesson in Deep Water.

On the morning of E.'s fourth birthday we took the entire family down to the bathing-pool in the harbour of Alexandria. We went out in a cutter, and the little fellows were so keen that they undressed in the hold thereof! and while we were still nearing the jetty sprang off the cutter into the water, swam to the raft, climbed up, rushed across it and dived madly into the pool. They think just about as little of jumping into deep water as two frogs would.

I dived in with the little girl under me. I tried the little girl's swimming a lot, and found she had the strokes quite well, and would seem really to be swimming; but when I took away my hand . . . alas! she simply *stopped* moving her arms and legs and . . . quietly *sank*! This happened several times, till I was quite annoyed and gave her two spanks. But do what I would, the little lady *would* stop her little engines at the identical moment when they were particularly wanted to go on, and quietly, very slowly, and gracefully—sank! I have never seen anybody do like that before; the ordinary person at least sinks *struggling*.

However, she now has a clause in her prayers " and not to sink," so I hope to hear of *her* swimming too before this month is up.

Holiday Haunts Revisited. (To his schoolboy son, aged fifteen.)

For the sake of old times I went to the Sidi-Gabir haunts on Monday and had a bathe in the old pool. I undressed at the identical flat rock in the alcove in the cliffs, and put my clothes on the identical slab. Took a header off the usual place into the first pool. Climbed over the reef and launched into the farther pool. It was a black-flag day, but what of that?

Greatly longing for my two Sea-Beasticles on my right and left, I let myself be carried out by the usual orthodox current. I then made for the orthodox rock at the right. Climbed on to it after a wild tussle and considered what to do next. Looking further east (towards the Barracks) there was the wavelashed flat-topped rock to which *once* we three went out. I remember how I fought my way on to the top and then was swept off, shouting with laughter, by the next wave, and buried, simply *buried* in the cool clear depths beyond. And so time after time. Neither you nor H. managed to scramble up, but you were amused to watch my somersaults from the rear. Ah, but you missed that glorious overwhelmment into the cold sizzling boiling depths —helpless—knocked over with a woolly violence that did not hurt, by the huge boisterous Newfoundland-puppylike waves, their bark and roar only drowned by the hissing gurgle of the deep. Well, just to celebrate the memory, I repaired thither. The sea, however, was too choppy : not big regular rollers, but nasty sideways swishes. I tried to hoist myself up once or twice but each time was swept round the lee of the rock. Once I was sucked right under for a moment by a very mild imitation of a whirlpool. Perhaps the absence of my Beasticles made my efforts languid : also it was my first swim that year. So I wended back : found the break in the side reef exactly where I thought it would be, passed through between two distinct sets of blustering breakers, and so through the outer pool up to the good old reef, as shelving, softly sea-weeded, and accommodating as ever. Inspected both ends of the inner pool. Had the usual difficulty of swimming back from the deep end . . . And so out. Ah those long swims through the clean warm water with my two precious Sea-Beasticles ; anon swimming right out beyond the farthest reef, anon sampling a hidden rock,

anon supporting one or another for a short rest before fresh exertions, anon shoving vigorously from behind when the current seemed a trifle too obtrusive . . . back to dear, patient, uncomplaining mother, and tea ! Well, just to celebrate the memory I walked round the little bay—there was *one* of the two spots where we used to sit down to our post-bathing picnic, just under those funny holes in the low cliff : the very spot ; I looked to see whether seven ghosts sitting round the shade of a table-cloth and the phantom of a thermos flask could be descried. I should *like* to have seen them : but no. Their owners in Cumberland were too substantial, I think—and am glad to think ! And so pensively but thankfully to the Giver of all good gifts past and present did Parens Beasticulorum suorum Beasticularumque take his way to Cleopatra Station, soberly satisfied with his pious pilgrimage.

CHAPTER IV

Christmas and Easter Festivals

Our Christmas season began with the carols in New College Chapel. Never have we been so absolutely *steeped* in the most beautiful of Christmas music. . . . Some of the words too were worthy of the music ; what think you of this :

" Midnight scarcely past and over
Drawing to this holy morn ;
Very early, very early,
Christ was born." (Letter from Oxford.)

A spring scene, a scene of life and beauty, an Easter scene. How easily we think of Easter and spring and Christ and those who have gone before, together in the same thought.

(Easter letter to his children.)

An English Christmas Scene.

There was a half-moon in the sky. Anything more quiet and beautiful than that night-morning into which we emerged I never saw. The world was absolutely hushed—it slept. The darkness was very dark, and yet brilliant with those jewelled stars and the white softly-radiant moon. Somehow the silence, the darkness, and the brilliance seemed heightened by the frost. It was mystic. I went down the avenue, sombre with its double line of great gloomy firs, which reared their dark, steep pyramids into the starlit sky. Then out at the gates and along a curving country road to the little country church. There it nestled—the yellow glow in the windows contrasting with the cold, steely colour —or absence of colour—of the frosty world without. It was an absolutely picture-card Christmas morning !

A Christmas Letter. (To his absent children, on a small model of Bethlehem.)

On Christmas Eve we had the Shrine ; it looks as beautiful as ever this year, if not more beautiful than ever. We have more figures of " shepherds," and I arranged them at all stages of " hastening " all over the expanse of snow in front of the Shrine, and all the nearer ones in attitudes of adoration. Two had arrived, and, dismounted from their beasts, were bowing very low at the front steps of the Shrine. Two or three others, also dismounted, were plodding over the snow, also bowing. Three others, dark against the snow, and further from the Shrine, were " hastening," followed by their sheep. In a meadow at a lower level reposed a singularly moody cow, which apparently had failed to respond to the general excitation ; also a camel, against which slumbered a singularly life-like figure, half-veiled in wisps of snow. All the figures were extraordinarily life-like in their various attitudes ; the Manger was brilliantly illuminated, and once again one was conscious of that spirit of breathless stillness, cold, clear, pure and austere as the upper air, or a polar night glorified by Aurora, with Heaven's radiance and graciousness.

An Easter Letter. (To his absent children, when their Mother had made a little model of the Garden Tomb.)

Now I think I have just time to describe Mother's beautiful Eastern Garden-Tomb model. The tomb structure is on the left, of rough building stone, most convincingly put together so as to form a real rock-tomb, hollow and spacious within, with rough surfaces both within and without, smooth floor, two marble steps leading to its small entrance, within which the

interior can be clearly seen, with the low marble shelves, on one of which, at the very back, the "linen clothes are lying wrapped together, and the napkin that was about the head." There they lie on that shelf, white, and still, and suggestive of the body that once filled them and now has just been withdrawn—spiritualised, leaving "the linen bands lying." And what are these two white figures on right and left with reverent bent heads and forms towards the sacred mystery, and drooping wings? The two angels!—there they stay hour after hour, motionless yet full of the idea of motion,

> "And downward cast their burning eyes
> At mysteries so bright,"

guarding the place where He lay. All is so quiet and still, yet living. Even the place of death speaks of life rather than death. At the door is Mary, kneeling, with tiny basket and earthenware pots for the spices. And then the garden! Truly a radiant spring garden. The yellow limestone rock is set off by the tender-green creeper that clings gently to it and lets down a trailer over the top of the dark entrance. Palms are there too with their graceful fronds. And the colours! It is a rock-garden, with paths picked out with stones almost as bright and variegated as precious stones, strown with bright desert sand, and bordered by the loveliest spring flowers—such colours! deep blood-reds, and pinks, and purples, and all contrasting beautifully with the greenery that is everywhere, and the tawny yellow-greys of the rocks. These flowers are indeed the very soul of spring. And how do you think they are potted by our clever gardener? In the cups of half acorns from Emmaus! Also in tiny conchs and shells—an idea almost equally felicitous.

Along the path—making for the lych-gate, are two

little life-like figures, in single file, in oriental dress and turban. They are Peter and John stealing away and leaving Mary there. John the younger is in front, and Peter the elder has a staff. They are not speaking to any, nor to each other, as they "hasten forth with reverent steps away."

A spring scene: a scene of life and beauty, not death and horror: an Easter scene.

Easter in America.

Early Service on Easter morning was at 6.30 A.M., which involved early rising. Hartford weather, the oddest, trickiest, most paradoxical creature I have ever struck, had in store for us its *chef d'œuvre*. . . . As I looked out of my window "on Easter Day in the morning" the air was thick with snow-flakes, the ground and roofs white with snow! A happy Christmas! For a Christmas scene verily it was, on April 16, a spring Easter morning. Truly wonderful!

The Early Service was inspiring to a degree. What do you think—it was *choral*. The choir was there in force. I felt that the processional entry, the stirring hymn, the exhilaration of both the choir and of the *crowded congregation* utterly smashed up that *intense* individualism that characterises Early Communions in England. If something were lost in quietness, greatly more, I think, was gained in joyousness and *philadelphia* and sense of triumph. A note was immediately struck that seemed to vibrate until the very end of the day. Not once, but many times, the sheer rapture of the whole thing thrilled one and well-nigh brought tears to the eyes.

The whole choir had "favours" of beautiful spring flowers. When I noticed it, so far from feeling it a little bit of mundane decoration, what came over one with a thrill fit to raise the hair from one's forehead was

the connexion between the Christian Easter and *spring*. Not by mere coincidence one saw, did Christ go to Jerusalem for the *spring* festival, the Passover, there to enact the conquest of spiritual winter by an everlasting spring, ushering in, so to speak, an eternity of April. . . .

After the service, the ladies of the congregation served breakfast to the clergy and choir in the Church Room adjoining. Here I admired the place given to the human and social element; for if Easter was not the restitution of the *human* to its divine normal, then I fail to see what it was. The little scaramouches of choir-boys, highly pleased with their efforts and performance, as they might be, had now ample opportunity to let off steam, and to get rid of a large quantity of the spirits that afflict the human animal at that age, especially when it has got up early and imbibed a good deal of coffee. When the admirable organist and choirmaster appeared—a good man who puts his soul into his work—he got a huge and very noisy ovation.

I take it that this giving of place to honest human high spirits which is what boy-animals of that age are most capable of, and the connecting of the same with Easter, is a very wise way of laying the foundation for something deeper later on—something which older people can and do feel, and share with Peter, John, the Marys and those others of the first Easter Day. What do you think?

Christmas Eve in Cairo.

Christmas was ushered in by our Christmas Eve Carol Festival. The guests began to arrive by 4 P.M., and before long our noble Baronial Hall (the Hall of the School) was humming with joyous, festive humanity, representing a very respectable number of races, nations, colours, tongues, ages and sexes. The very size and baronialness of that big hall gives (to my

mind) a festive, mediaeval feel on such occasions, and especially at " Chrystimas " :

> " Make me merry more or less,
> For now is the time of Chrystimas ! "

Presently the sweet bells of the Campanile burst out, and announced Christmas Eve in the true sense of the word. . . . The church looked as brilliantly lovely as last year—the apse blazing with mellow, yellow light (from concealed source), which made the cream stone of the arcading, decorated with fronded pilasters of darkest green, picked out with the ultra-vivid blood-red of scarlet poinsettias, almost unearthly in its glory ; in the midst of which glory was the dark oak Altar and oaken Cross. Such was the feast for the eyes which the worshippers had in front of them the while time, while their ears were being filled with lovely strains, also from unseen source, floating down from nowhere in particular, while overhead the dome shone in mild radiance, lit with scores of concealed lights ! Compare this with the usual sight that accompanies beautiful concerts—that calm glory radiant and rich, yet so pure and remote, instead of the frantic waggings of a conductor ; the fussy movements of fiddlesticks ; trousers, and unbecoming hats, and wide-open mouths !

CHAPTER V

Letters to Children

Oh my God,—
Obedience restores the golden, free days of childhood, for the twice-born are children always. (From his journal.)

Self-Portrait. (To a tiny daughter.)

Father's darling wee Girlie,—

It is so long since we have seen each other, and we haven't written in the between time, that I am quite sure that you have forgotten all about Father, and I think I must remind you of what he is like by describing him to you, and then you'll remember and send me a nice letter with love and kisses in it. Well, on the top of his head there is something growing just like the thing you stuff chairs with. It is very convenient for pulling. Underneath are two very curious things that open and shut. When open you can see two things like coloured balls that can move from side to side. I expect they are moved by strings from inside. Evidently these things are very precious, because Father has to keep them under glass except at night. Underneath these there is an extremely odd thing sticking right out from the face. At night Father sometimes makes music with this thing, so I spex it is a sort of musical instrument. Then underneath that there is something much funnier—a sort of box that opens and shuts. It has two red rims that close it when it shuts, and behind them a lot of white things

stuck in for ornament, but they are also useful for nipping one girlie's ear with. The odd thing about this box is that certain people called Cooks have a funny game by which they get ready different sorts of things to throw into this box, and you may not believe me when I say that, once these things are thrown into this box, they never are seen again. This is called conjuring, and only very clever people can do it. When not conjuring like this Father often makes music inside this box, but generally when he is awake. The funny thing sticking out above is kept for music when he is asleep. Underneath all this is a pointed sort of thing, which he uses for poking into your neck sometimes to make you laugh, especially when it has on it things like what grow on the top of the head, but shorter and more tickly. Sometimes at the same time he uses the two red flaps just above (he is a *very* funny father, I think, but I must tell you how he loves his girlie) ; he puts the two red flaps on her face and shuts them and then opens them quickly again, and they make a sort of squeak like psp, and he seems to think that's rather nice, because he does it again, and perhaps often.

Well, I am sure this is enough to remind you of Father, because I am quite sure that whoever has such a lot of funny things and behaves so oddly as this must be a very, very queer, funny man.

Perhaps you will soon see him again, and then you can see whether this description is right. Father loves his wee precious girlie.

From FATHER.

To a Four-year-old Daughter, for her Birthday.

MINE OWN PRECIOUS,—

Father was at a wedding (Egyptian) to-day, and he was given a lot of sweeties in a handkerchief. And

when he opened the hankie he found it was such a pretty silk one that he thought a certain wee little tiny darlin' pet Four Year Old in Scotland would like to have it, so here it is, ribbon and all.

Now I want you to be a very *good* little girlie this year. Remember you are 4 years old, and that is far too old to have *any* little black dog in the cupboard or outside it. Only baby-girls of One, Two or Three are allowed black dogs. I expect to hear that my girlie has given up hers altogether—no pouts, no tempers, no sulky-sulks, no " No I won't "—but only " Yes Auntie, I *will*." I will ask Mumma to tell me every month how you have been. If black dog comes out, I shall have to have the silk hankie back to ky on to.

Your ownest
FADER.

When You Say Your Prayers. (To his five-year old son.)

Now I will tell you a very nice thing *indeed.* It is that you can speak to the Lord Jesus, and He hears. When you say your prayers, you are speaking to Him (for God and He are One), and I want you really to speak and not just repeat words. Then again, when you are alone, perhaps in bed, you can speak to Him in your mind and He hears, like Samuel, you remember. He also speaks to you, like Samuel, not perhaps with a voice you can hear, but when you feel glad inside because you are speaking to Him, that is the Lord Jesus returning your talk. Also when you feel something saying to you " Don't cry when you fall down," that is He. Also when you feel something inside say to you " Try to please Mother by doing such and such a thing "—like dressing quickly or something like that, that also is He. Aren't these nice things?

Goodbye our precious one,
Your FATHER.

The Spring and the Little Brown Wren. (To the same.)

And then again there are the *wild* flowers which we hardly have at all in Egypt. And best of all, there are the songs of the spring birds. Oh do not you think the blackbird's song the most beautiful thing you ever heard in your life? And the thrush makes a good second. It would be *as* beautiful, only just at the end of the phrase his voice drops a little, and sounds rather croaky and not at all so pretty. Then the little brown wren has such a wonderful *loud*, piercing song for such a tiny wee body: he seems to sing it with his *whole body*—he just shakes with the effort. It is as though his little body would burst because there is so much and such loud song inside it, trying to get out. And it all comes out in quite a short phrase, and then stops short as suddenly as it began, leaving a deep silence all round, except that your ears almost buzz because the sound was so loud—if you happen to be standing near. Here there are not so many birds, but all the sweet spring smells are filling the air, which is as sweet and fragrant as—as what?—as itself, I think, because you cannot compare anything with it. The spring air is itself the pattern of all that is fragrant and sweet. For indeed the earth is just one garden in the beautiful spring days.

To His Boy of Twelve.

I have twice spent the night with a friend at Helouan lately. Each time I slept out on the balcony. It is lovely sleeping absolutely in the open air. One's sleep is so deep and refreshing. The last thing one saw before going to sleep is the stars. And waking up for a few moments, once or twice, before dawn was very beautiful. All the great sweep of desert from the hills down to the Nile was one smooth water-colour-wash of

pearl grey, as toneless in colour as it was *utterly* still—void of all sound, all movement: while the broken line of hills above Maasara and Wadi Hof were etched, as with Indian ink, black upon the pearl-grey sky. It was the breathless hour of the first faint dawn. No, "breathless" is not the word—*that* belongs to a later stage just before sunrise, when the world is as it were holding its breath and making ready to breathe deep the air of morning. "Breathlessness" implies breath. But that dead-still pearl-grey was not even breathless. The world was a perfect but lifeless body waiting for the breath of life. Another time when I woke up and looked to the hills, I saw the plain brighter with a more lucent light, and the mountain-edges still etched black, but this time against a soft deep glow of geranium-red. It was so beautiful. I took it in for perhaps five seconds, with great approval, and was asleep again!

To a Syrian Baby. (Whose parents had felt vexed by an oversight of W.H.T.G. Translated from Arabic.)

OUR SON EMMANUEL,—

After loving greetings I request you, little Emmanuel, not to take to heart, my child, that I sent you a question, by your mother Mrs. Gairdner, which showed a doubt as to your baptism. Perhaps you and your family may feel that I was much to blame for this and such an error should not have been made by your pastor. Only let me explain to you that the error came from my copying names from a list (compiled before your Baptism) of all our babies yet unbaptised at that time. *Of course* I remember perfectly the happy day of your Christening when you, Emmanuel, became one of the very children of Emmanuel, and of the Church of Emmanuel (the "Church of the Saviour") and with the help of

Emmanuel, Lord of Glory, you shall ever be a Christian in the fullest meaning of the word ; this is our great hope for you and for Fred and Freda and the two little mischievous ones as well.

Now God be with you all ; I send you two kisses from your loving Pastor,

The Qasees GAIRDNER.

P.S.—I ask your prayers for about seven little lambs like you who will be baptised very soon if Emmanuel, Lord of Glory, will.

On Children's Letters to Grown-ups. (To a small nephew.)

MY DEAR OLD JACK,—

I am your Uncle Temple. I am really William-and-Hugh-and-Eleanor-and-Douglas-and-Patba's Daddy. That's who I mostly am. I also came down to Lambrook once and Farrs once when you were there. Now I have told you the chief events in my life, so I hope you quite know where you are. . . .

What sort of letters do you write Mother and Father in South Africa ? How they will want to hear from you and about so many things. Isn't it a fag the amount of things the grown up people want to know about. Really they never seem satisfied. Then again they never will be content. For example, *you* would be quite satisfied if *I* wrote you a letter like the following, but grown ups wouldn't. . . .

DEAR JACK,—

I hope you are quite well. Is it hot at Ambleside ? Yesterday I went to the Cinema. When I see you I will tell you all about it. To-day I am going out to tea. Yesterday at tea we had tea. Last week I didn't fish in the Nile and there was a boy who didn't catch two Crocodiles. His name wasn't exactly Smith

but it was very like it. Now I am just going to have a lovely interesting time so I must stop.

Your loving,
UNCLE TEMPLE.

P.S.—Last week I had such a lovely interesting time that I can't write about it.

UNCLE TEMPLE.

Hullo ! I seem to have got to the end of my paper *and* to my signature too : evidently a sign that I *must* stop. I send you something to tell you that not only am I the Daddy of W., H. etc. (I really forget the rest) but *also* my dear old Jack's loving

UNCLE TEMPLE.

A Nursery Nebuchadnezzar. (To a six-year old daughter.)

MY OWN PRECIOUS WEE GIRLIE LAMB,—

Instead of a letter this week, I will tell you another story, now that you have had your bath, and have your nice dressing-gown on, and so can sit cosily on Father's knee. There ! just like that—one minute, your hair is tickling my ear. I must get that wisp tucked into your knot behind—*that's* better. Well, once upon a time in the days of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, there was a father, who had one little girl who was called Elnorchadnezzar, and they loved each other very dearly. One day the little girl was a little out of sorts in her little inside. Her father wanted to give her a powder. But unfortunately the powder had rather a bitter taste, and, as it was well known that the little girl did not *like* bitter things, the father feared she might refuse to take it. So what do you think this cunning, naughty Abu Elnorchadnezzar (that was his name) did ? You will never guess, so I may as well

tell you. He put an awfully nice blob of jam all round the powder. It had everything in it the little girl Chadnezzar (cause Elnorchadnezzar was sometimes called that for short) most dearly loved, such as pine-apple, chocolate, Babylonian delight, strawberry, vanilla and twenty other things such as jujube, liquorice (specially bought by her old grand-nurse Matteschad-nezzar—nearly everybody's name in Babylon ended in chadnezzar), lemon drops, acidulated squeeze, Assyrian stick-jaw, toffee and peppermint, etc., etc. Well, then he laid the spoon with the jam *and* the powder in it on the table in the nursery. And that little girl just went near and sniffed at it, and tasted . . . and ate it. She ate it although she knew the grey bitter powder was in it, and she could sort of taste the powder, but she could *not* resist that jam. She went back and back to the table and had a go at the jam each time. Nobody made her. Her nurse, who was called Nursach Rapso-chadnezzar, just left it there, and the little girl just went back and back, and each time she took the jam, she took in some of the powder, until all of both was quite finished. And then the little girl went to bed, and next morning she felt so much better, that every-body said she looked better. Well, another time the people at the house told this father that this dear little girl was falling into a certain fault, and he wanted to correct that fault, but he felt that that would be too much like that bitter powder all by itself. So, what do you think that that naughty, queer, cunning old father did (for Abu Elnorchadnezzar was very old, going on towards 100 and getting one year nearer that age every twelve months). He thought of what would be likest the jam in which he hid the powder, and he decided that a lovely *story* would be likest it. So he wrote the story, and it was so interesting that whoever read it *had* to go on reading it, and *had* to finish it. And into every line of this story he wove his little

lecture or sermon ; not just like a moral at the end, which little Chadnezzar *might* have cut out, or stopped short of, but all mixed up with the story, so that in reading one she had to take in the other. Her kind nurse copied it all out so that she could read it by herself, and though the little sermon made her feel rather queer, she simply could *not* resist the story, and she would be seen reading the one and so, at the same time, taking in the other, until it worked just like the grey powder, because that dear little girl set to work to put that fault straight, and was soon able to write to her father a dear little letter, very nicely written, in which she said, " I am trying to remember the thing you wrote about in your letter." And at the same time he heard from Nursach that the fault was much better. Whereat he was *very* pleased and came over from Nineveh, where he was staying, and gave his little girl such big kisses that his beard tickled her under her neck. And that is the end of the story, and what chiefly strikes me is how *little* fathers have changed since those old Babylonian days, yes, and little girlies seem much the same too. And now I tuck you up in your nice warm bed, and give my ownest little girlie six big, long, necky kisses, from her loving, naughty, funny, curious old

FATHER.

A Moral Tale. (To the same.)

Now I must tell you a story as soon as you come down off my head, because it is rumpling my hair. Now then, as you're sitting on my knee I can begin, but not until I have given you a big pokey-with-the-chin kiss, and you have given me 1 hug. Well, once upon a time there was a little girl, and she had

	1 father
	1 mother
Total	2

And this little girl was a very lucky little girl. In her short life she had met :

231,469 people altogether all her life
and only 1 nasty person of all these who was unkind to her (and he had horns, 'cause Mr. McGregor doesn't count, and Satan is different),
leaving 231,468 nice people who were kind to her and spoke sweetly to her and paid attention to her, especially when they called in the afternoons and either visited that little girl in her nursery or she came down to the drawing-room.

Well, the result was that that little girl began to think a little too much about the nice things those kind people said, and began to be too fond of hearing those things : and so she began just a little to try to get them to say such things by putting on side a little, which means showing off a little.

Well of these

231,468 nice kind people, as I said,
there was 1 father
leaving 231,467 people who were kind without being her daddy,

and this father was always very anxious to show this girlie whenever she was behaving foolishly, and so he did this time. He said to her one day

" As well as me, you have
1 Mamma
and 1 Nanna
that makes 2 ; those are people who it's no use showing off at *all* to, cause they know all about you to start with. So you don't. Now the other 231,465 people may perhaps praise you or notice you a little,

but if they see you are showing off *at all* they will only laugh at you behind your back for a little silly. So don't."

Well, she didn't. From that day on she began to behave more quietly with strangers, being kind and bright to them, but thinking more of *them* than of herself.

And when her daddy heard of this he was very pleased, because he was beginning to think that 231,468 was more nice people than was good for his girlie, and that he would have to send the Man with the Horns to speak to her roughly for once.

A Salmon Leap. (Described to a ten-year-old son.)

I must tell you of a wonderful thing we saw that very evening. We walked up the beautiful Beauly river to a splendid linn, i.e. a deep cleft between rocks where the water falls over a ledge and dashes boiling down between cliffs to deep dark pools. As we looked at this waterfall what do you think we saw? First a salmon jumped out of the water below the fall, then another. Then, as we looked down we noticed the water seemed to be full of salmon, all swimming up-stream. Hullo! there went one, slap! at the fall trying to jump to the very top. He hit the waterfall about the middle of it, and the rush of the rain-swollen torrent overpowered him and he fell back, splash, into the pool below Biff! there's another, and his leap takes him smack! against the rock at the side of the fall! . . . he flaps and slithers down the rock, and falls off into the cataract, which carries him in turn down to the pool. Often we could see the poor salmon quite tired, just holding water in the pool and then getting up steam for another shot. And then hip! hup! HO!! . . . no go! they couldn't leap high enough, and each time came *slop*! against the water

of the cataract, or crack ! against the rock, and so tumbled down into the pool. What a sight it was : they were jumping three or four to the minute, scores of them, I dare say. You see every salmon at certain times of the year is seized by a wonderful *nifs* (desire) to go up these Scottish streams as far as he can go. At other times of the year it occurs to him with equal strength that if he doesn't smell salt-water he will feel very bad ; so down he goes to the sea. They then leave their promising families of eggs and go to get a change of air from their children at some watering-place on the coast. One old salmon as he passed up-stream told me he couldn't imagine why I had bothered to bring four of my small-fry up from London (evidently he thought " up " meant up some river). " Leave them to take care of themselves " he said, " they'll grow right enough." " But I must take them to a school " said I. " What ! to *porpoises* ! " said he ; " only *porpoises* have schools : horrid animals ! " " No, no, somewhere they can learn." " Pooh," said he, " I let mine learn by themselves. Well goodbye ! —I must have my ninth shot at this wretched old fall." Here goes."—Scroooooosh, <<< shshshshquop !—<<< smack !!—*plip poop* >>> —and down he falls for the ninth time into the pool ; but avoids me this time, as he is too indignant to talk about family affairs, which at the moment he thinks a *bore*.

The Egrets of Egypt. (To a schoolboy of twelve.)

Do you remember those big banyan trees half-way along the Old Cairo street, between the tramway and the river ? Well, there is a certain breed of bird which is protected by Government because they eat the cotton-worm. It is a species of very small stork, called *egret*, the body being not as large as a crow, and the legs

about fourteen inches. It has multiplied very much through protection, and it makes a point of roosting in huge flocks. They made such a nuisance of themselves at the Zoo on the other side of the Nile that they were shooed away, the result being that they have come over to this side, and have taken to roosting in those banyan trees in the O.C. street. Yes, at sunset those trees are *literally* hopping with them. Hundreds on hundreds of these big white birds on these low trees. From afar the trees are quite white with the flock of them. But owing to their innumerable droppings the trees are unsittable-under and nearly unrideable-under. And the stink they make is something cruel. A horrible fetid stench which nearly makes you sick as you go along the street, and which you can smell hundreds of yards away if there is a breeze blowing. I can distinctly whiff it from any open windows at night. What they are going to do I don't know, for if this lot breeds what will we all come to? I understand for the first time why in the Bible birds are "unclean" and why they are taken as a type of evil, not good. The Palestinians were accustomed to kites, crows, vultures and ghastly stinkadores like these egrets, not to our dear little woodland birds with their innocent ways and their sweet songs. What do you advise? I will represent to the Government whatever you advise. Something must be done, otherwise O.C. will be stunk out.

Anxieties of a Father about his Return Home. (Confided to his young daughter.)

MINE GIRLIE,—

It is actually become doubtful whether it is worth while replying to my letters. How nice! Still, I think you might manage one to this, if you are sharp. It will encourage me not to change my mind at the last minute and cancel my berth which otherwise I might

do, because I have to pass through Italy, and also because I am afraid that the majority of my beasticles have become wiser than their father after so much lessons. I hope you will remember to be kind to the poor gentleman. Remember he is not so young as he was and is a little old-fashioned. But he means well, and it ought to be easy for you all to train him into a very useful parent. At present, however, he is a little nervous, and so, as I said before, a farewell letter or two, encouraging him before embarking on his voyage might make just all the difference.

When he had to Leave his Children.

MINE OWN CHILDREN,—

It is within a few hours of sailing (midnight) and before that I must turn in and make up for a very indifferent night in the train. But before doing this I must, as my final act before leaving Europe, add a little postscript to the family letter which I have sent to Mother, in the shape of a few lines all to yourselves. We have had six sweet and happy months together, dears, and I feel that they have been so full and rich that they leave no room for any "*sadness* of farewell when I embark." The memories will be living, not dead ones ; they will be energising our present lives, giving life and vividness to our letters to each other, and making us look forward to our next meeting. You have been dear good children all through : never has a father, I do believe, received from children what I have received from you, and I love you for it more than I can say. I have you continually in my remembrance, and almost every remembrance leads to a prayer. May the Great Heavenly Father bless and keep you all and give you more and more direct knowledge of Himself in Christ our Lord. I am yours, you are mine, and we are His.

With love more than I express to you all jointly and each separately and equally and specially,

Your own
FATHER.

I miss you all dreadfully. I do not seem to be more than half alive without you all. But I think of the sweet times we have had, and the good times you are having, and the beautiful times we *shall* have, and I look forward to hearing often from each one of you.

On Spiritualism. (To his daughter, aged sixteen.)

Talking of Myers reminds me of a subject you asked me about, and I have never yet replied to. Spiritualism has always been to me a subject to which I have had an instinctive repugnance, the methods of which I have hated and distrusted, and most of the results of which, as far as they have come my way, I suspected. The possibilities of actual fraud and unconscious self-deception are so enormous, and have so frequently been proved, that the whole subject and method seem to have become utterly tainted. Two impressions I have —they are only impressions, I confess—first that whether "the spirits" are imaginary, or do amount to something, GOD is not in the business. It is extraordinary what a farrago of information spiritualists give us, and how little or nothing on the one thing that matters—God. For if *He* is, I need no further comfort concerning our beloved Aunt, my Father and Mother, and all those others: whereas messages from *them* that get me no nearer *Him* leave me doubtful and cold. The other impression I have is that most spiritualists deteriorate in subtle ways. There is something capturing and druglike in the thing: that it really ever stimulates the higher faculties, interests, and apprehensions I doubt hugely:—I rather should always

fear that it subtly *honeycombs* them. I don't believe God is in it : no more now than when Isaiah wrote his *locus classicus* on necromancy (and what *is* the spiritualism of to-day but necromancy ?) in viii. 19, 20, R.V.—words to which I return again and again. I feel therefore that either there is *nothing* in it (*Road to Endor*), or jolly *little* in it (*Mr. Sludge the Medium*), or the *devil* in it (!) (*The Necromancers*, by R. H. Benson). I feel disinclined to touch it, and as for the séances I wouldn't touch them for anything. As regards thee, mine own girlie, I think I have only the right, at this stage of your life, to forbid the séance absolutely. The general subject is bound to come to your attention in various ways ; and the above represents your Father's reaction thereto.

The Last of a Cairo Home. (To his five absent children.)

Sharia Falaky is no more. Yesterday it passed definitely out of our hands. I think I shall try never to pass down that road again. Its soul was beautiful and is immortal—why should one pass by its corpse—especially when that corpse is likely to decay rather rapidly ! You may be sure the *memory* of it will always be dear, for your sakes : but those days being so completely changed, I think I prefer that the shell should be destroyed, rather than that we should have stayed on in the old house under wholly new circumstances. Hence it was rather poetic that we should have removed out of it *precisely* as we finished the last line of the closing chapter of The Book of the Children Five of our family story.

The Lord's Prayer in Child's Language.

Our Father in Heaven,
Let Thy Name be kept as holy on earth as it is in Heaven,
And let Thy Kingdom come and Thy will be done here on earth just as well as in Heaven.
Give us food to-day enough for our needs,
And forgive us what we have done wrong,
and we too will forgive any who have done us wrong,
And do not let us fall into temptation,
but save us from the Evil one,
For Thou art our King,
and Thou hast the power and the glory, now and for ever,—AMEN.

CHAPTER VI

PORTRAITS

Beauty consists in raising what you essentially and truly are to the highest power of outward expression. (I invented this canon of art myself this moment.) (From a letter.)

A "Sea Beasticlette."

In my Fairhaven letters a year ago and before that, I may have hinted that Baby Patria was a good sort. I may have betrayed, more by a passing allusion than otherwise, that she was hard or rather impossible to beat. I must, however, now confess that these epistolary efforts must all be washed out as absurdly inadequate : and yet I shall still probably fail to do justice to the theme. Francis Thompson tried his hand at "syllabling to Sylvia." But I don't know how even to begin "parabling of Patria." I will merely say that I have decided (and the decision has been borne out by the Pope of Rome by wireless), that of all little female angellettes from the eldest sister of Abel (never mind Cain) down to the latest who will only just anticipate the last trump, she is *facile prima.* Fearing, however, lest you should think that this verdict is too ecclesiastical and generalised, I had it confirmed by a more concrete proof, namely that all the mothers of the settlement decline to let their hopefuls enter into a competition with Patria for the best baby in the highest, deepest, broadest, and fullest sense of that inadequate word : (at least they certainly would do so

if I asked them—which I really did not consider it worth doing). You never did see such a laughing merry witchlet. No laugh at the seniors' table but is echoed loudly by this junior at the very bottom of the table of the small-fry. Her temper is of the " finest," a fact which is shown *not* in tamely *never* being ruffled, but in the invariable transience of the little cloud, and the easy placability of the little offended. Her voice is musical and sweet, her smile and laugh of the easiest to draw, her intelligence is complete.

When I get up in the morning, if a little figure with a head like a tousled angel, rosy with sleep, golden mopped, clad in a white nighty down to her rosy toes, and looking just like a lily in it, or one of the minor cherubim ; *if* such a figure appears, then no doubt it is immediately excluded by Father and strict orders are given to Nurse to prevent any similar intrusions in future.

When I enter a few minutes later for breakfast and find the same figure now metamorphosed from a cherublet into a sea-beasticle, and it lifts up a milky little pair of rosy lips and says " Dadda kiss Patba," then, naturally, it is informed in unmistakable language that no such thing is allowed in this camp.

When finally, after the arduous labours of the day, the entire process of the undressing and bathing has been finished (I being present simply in order to make sure that Nurse is not shirking her duties), and the sea-beasticle has become again the *lilia angelica* ; when, having demanded to kiss the photograph of her *eldest* brother she is laid in her cot looking exactly like that miniature of her *second* brother at that age ; and when at that exact instant, like all the well-behaved water-babies that ever lived in sea-nurseries, and all the minor seraphim that ever inhabited the skyey ditto, she puts one thumb neatly up to and into rosy mouth, suddenly becomes very grave (after keeping up jokes

and pranks till that instant), and looks up out of bright, grave eyes with dark lashes, but saying nuffin, and thus will be perfectly good until she goes off to sleep ; *when*, I say, all this happens, then of course I sit down and write to the Head of Limpsfield to find out how *soon* so useless a little bit of mortality can be taken off my hands and leave me free for more important business.

A Tea-Taster at Aleppo.

The British-Indian Afghani, the Sheikh el-Tirmidhi, through whom chiefly I won through to the company I aspired to, was a remarkable man. He and his family had been driven from Afghanistan years ago for their pronounced foreign sympathies.

I used to sit in his reception room, or on his roof, sipping his admirable tea, and listening to the talk of the all sorts and conditions who came to squat around —peasants of various weird fossilised creeds that abound in North Syria, who have been ill-used by some official and whom the Sheikh might be trying to assist. . . . The tea was an immense institution, in which he specialised ; he professed strong views about tea. Like a connoisseur he introduced me to several varieties, all delicious, poured rather weak straight off the leaf into little tumblers, and plentifully sweetened. I suspect they were all China teas, coming in by way of the caravan routes from Turkestan. Really they were delicious, though quite different from ordinary " tea " ; for example, one recognised that to add milk would be to ruin their flavour.

Another Sheikh also gave me some admirable stuff, but the climax was when he gave me some tea of his own invention, made from the leaf of a plant which grows near Aleppo and is one of the peppermint family. The dear old gentleman, who is a botanist of the old Arabian type (one could imagine him as the physician

mentioned in the Epistle of Kharshish), invented and made this " tea " all by himself. The flavour was quite unique and really delicious. Even when one plucked and chewed the leaf of the plant it tasted fragrant ; and all that fragrance came out into the hot water. We really must look around for these teas when we get back to Cairo.

A Scorner of Bakshish.

This Sheikh and I visited various sainted tombs ; he greatly enjoyed showing me the tombs of various pupils or masters of various sages, and declaimed their accomplishments and excellences with enormous gusto. " Come and see a thing to which the world affords no parallel [a favourite expression, indeed a formula of his !] : the tomb of the great Doctor and mighty Sheikh So-and-so, from whom the mighty renowned El Farābi took (lessons). Effendim, he was a learned man indeed, he wrote books on astronomy and mathematics and botany and medicine and grammar and accidence and syntax and rhetoric and Koran commentation, and all the sciences." " Allah !! " would put in his two servants, astounded by such an unparalleled display of learning combined with piety, and with faces of the most pious devotion they would recite a *fātiha* (a sort of paternoster) and touching the tomb with both hands draw both palms twice or thrice down over their faces, as Moslems do when they want to anoint themselves with the blessing which is as it were exhaled from some venerated object. These servants greatly enjoyed such expeditions ; they got, for nothing, opportunities of acquiring blessing at all sorts of saints' tombs—and not for nothing either, for did not the Khawaja " have respect to their feelings " at the end of the day ? This is the Syrian euphemism for the cherished bakshish.

The Sheikh professed the most unbounded contempt for the itchers after bakshish, and more especially for those who refused to take it when any superior was looking on, but who would receive it when pressed on them afterwards. I always let him do that part of the business for me, and he cynically enjoyed doing it. I have seen him pursuing, with flying skirts, an apparently reluctant Turkish corporal, who was retreating in horror before the offer of a franc for taking us over the citadel (because I was by) and catching him up round the corner. There the deed was done, and back comes my Sheikh to me, snorting contempt, the curious deep Afghan or Indian aspirates permeating his Arabic as he vociferated, " Hypocrites one and all ! hypocrites ! face-observers ! humbugs ! all of them the same : they only looked to the face of your Excellency, but behind you they received with all readiness your bounty ! . . . "

A Head Master. (After the War.)

I asked him, " And how do the X. boys do in *life* ? Does the fruit of all this thought put into their education appear ? " And I shall not forget the reply, or the little, broad, sad-looking man as he made it. " It is too early still to say," he replied slowly, " but one thing I have noticed ; when they come back to see me, *they are totally without side ;* totally without all side. And I am content " ; then—with his hand over his eyes, as if talking to himself—slowly and with an indescribably sad intonation, " *I am content.*"

Her " Acidulated Dropship." (Description of a baby girl.)

I have called her a little tigress kitten, for I believe the kittens of the tiger-cat are as beautifully kittenish in their ways as any other, except that on occasions

a fierce little episode reveals their nature. So this little vixen ! When she is put out, she *immediately*, and *without warning*, instantaneously in fact, ejaculates a a short, sharp, cublike "ow !" glowers and looks daggers, and lets out with her hands or nails or anything you like. If rebuked, she immediately bursts into a passion of tears. In twenty seconds the whole thing is over. It is a caution to see ! At other times I liken her to irresponsible, taking, fierce little monkeys so exactly like to those sudden monkey-ejaculations are her sharp sudden sounds, accompanied by the vicious monkey-like grab ! She is just as sweet as an acid-drop—you know the sweeties we used to suck. I mean that this touch of acidity on her sweetness is really rather taking. Such a darling little shrew can she be. In the morning if she is hungry, she may have a dozen of these tiger-kittenish displays over one (large) plate of porridge if the spoonful is deemed by her acidulated dropship to be even the fraction of a second late in following the previous one. One can't *yet* do very much in the way of disciplining it, as she still can't understand the point of your rebuke. For instance, if I rebuke her for one of these demonstrations over her porridge she thinks my stern "no" means she is to have no more porridge, and gives way to the depths of woe. In due time I promise myself the joy of disciplining this little Turkess whom we have gotten. The sweet little pet ! Sweet with the aromatic sweetness of cinnamon ; nothing cloying, but full of sharpness and tang.

A Bedouin Family near Cairo.

We saw a fine hill-fox (grey) ; killed a small but poisonous snake which the Bedouin we were walking with was just going to tread on, but fortunately I stopped him ; heard (from the said Bedouin) of the fauna of the district, namely foxes, jackals, an occasional

hyena, mountain sheep, gazelle, ibex. He was the most simple individual I ever met, and the poorest, even poorer than that family at Carradale (you remember?). They had almost no clothes, and no tent, bedding, or blanket; they slept on the ground under some ledge of rock. In the bitter cold of the winter they lay among the animals (a few donkeys and some fowls) to keep warm. The establishment consisted of his mother, sister, an idiot brother, and this Bedouin. They made their living by gathering rock-salt and (I suppose) breeding donkeys and fowls. The idiot brother (a deaf mute) was more like a monkey in attitudes and ways than I have ever seen a human being. They live in total solitude in a desert valley as bare as a skeleton.

The Passing of an Egyptian Christian.

Much in our friend's early life and circumstances was particularly drab and uninteresting. Apart from his inward possessions he had little indeed on earth that gladdened existence. Was it not then beautiful of God to vindicate the truth and worth of his inner life, and to reveal how truly He had "made him to drink of the river of His pleasures" during those dull days here, by simply overwhelming him with an experience of heavenly beauty and delightsomeness; so that the "dark river" was for him rather just the same "river of God's pleasure," with the loveliest meadows on its earthly side, and who can say with what beauties on its heavenly? . . . He began suddenly to collapse; with the help of his friends he staggered to a divan and threw himself upon it. After a moment he said, "Where was I?" His friends made some answer, but he said, "No, no, you are wrong; I was among the angels of heaven, and they called me. I am going to die." And then lying there he repeated the Creed, then the Lord's

Prayer, and the General Thanksgiving. And after that he uttered a long prayer, in which he pleaded for his family ; for the work ; for his successor in the preaching in the hospital ; for the clergy and much else . . . and thus he continued a long time. Then there was a pause, and suddenly those watching him saw him clasp his hands together as though in a sudden access of joy and delight, and a light of joy pervaded all his face, and he smiled as one who perceives something surpassingly fair. " What," he said to those around, " are you not going to get a chair for that Effendi [gentleman] there who has come in ? " " What Effendi ? " they asked. " No one has come in." " Do you not see him ? " he cried. " *I* see him. See ! he is clothed all beautifully in a white garment ; oh, oh, he is a messenger from the Awaiting One ; he is telling me that they are awaiting me above ! " And while the delight and the smile on his face still continued, he cried, " Wait, Jesu, Thy command shall be fulfilled ; only wait until I have completed my duties " ; and forthwith fell to prayer again.

After a while he looked round once more and said, " Heavens, how beautiful ! Where did you get these pictures, and who framed them for you ? The frames are all glistering, and in them are beautiful shining figures, all moving ; they are angels ! And where did you get those palms from ? And all the ground is carpeted with green sward. It is too beautiful ! " And he lifted up his voice and sang. Then he broke into the Gloria in Excelsis, and shortly after this he said, " Jesus, the matter is finished." And when he had said this, God took his spirit.

A Baby Explorer.

X. is a little specimen and no mistake. I don't suppose he is a tenth as popular here as he was at

home, simply because his clinging ways and seductive overtures are a thing of the past (except to a stray black eunuch or so possibly, but I think that too has passed), and his one feature is now independence, casualness, and objectiveless determination, which leave little or no room for the cultivation of the tenderer graces which make babies beloved ; though of course he is greatly admired, but at a distance,—the distance which he usually leaves between himself and others. His gracious moments are quite arbitrary as are the reverse. For the most part he trots resolutely about, encumbered as much as possible by a long spade or some other toy, the proper use of which he does not observe for a moment, unless it be a thing to drag, if possible with a loud grating noise. During these tours he examines nothing and inspects nothing in any artistic or scientific way ; from these points of view they have no interest for him ; things for him have no uses, nothing that requires questions or information ; they are simply interesting to him according as they can be got on or off, carried about with some difficulty, moved with some violence and noise. People are mostly to be disregarded except as they aid or impede these movements ; if they do the latter, they are voted a nuisance with invariable impatience. I hope the South Pole won't have been discovered, or aeroplanes perfected before he grows up (Ruwenzori is unfortunately finished,) for only difficult, and if possible useless, feats will provide him, I am convinced, with a *métier* in life. His affections are there right enough, but they are well subordinated to the stern demands of these aforesaid useless tasks. He is very heart-whole, and recognises the duty of kindness to his parents, and if he breaks it feels ashamed of himself, and puts himself into the corner. A word or a pat will go straight to the little conscience, down will go the little head, up will go the

little fist into the little eye, and the question "Are you good now, Boy?" will be immediately answered by an affirmative grunt, after which a kiss will be granted. Often I can only get a kiss by (1) deliberately thwarting a plan or south polar expedition of his, (2) getting him naughty, (3) patting him, (4) forgiving him—after which, (5) a kiss—total process, 15 seconds! But his heart is in the right place, I know well, and nothing can please me so much as to see independence and initiative, and a *very* moderate development of the artistic and meditative qualities, because that is a description of what his father is *not*, and I should be alarmed if I saw him reduplicating me too faithfully, every father loves best to see the qualities in which he is *deficient* coming out in his son.

A Small Actress in the Home.

To me the cream of the whole thing was the ecstatic joy of the small girl in acting the principal lady's part in every scene without exception; the delicious way in which she *anticipated* the necessity of seeking out fine and ever finer costumes, on every possible and impossible occasion; the enormous satisfaction with which she added finery to finery; the complete abandon with which she assumed the beautiful heroine's parts; the entire satisfaction with which she received, rejected, or accepted the worship of adoring swains ("Oh, Father," she said several times, "you *did* so much want to marry me!")—all this I say, was to me the cream of the whole evening. . . .

The Passion Play at Oberammergau. (Some impressions.)

In the more terrible scenes either the players shrank from representing one tithe of the real outward horror of the story (as in the scourging, for example); or the inward tragedy proved nearly as much out of man's

depths to-day as it was out of the depth of the three who failed to watch in Gethsemane. Both in that scene and the Crucifixion one felt that representation had come to the impossible, though that to which it actually attained was very wonderful. Thus it was the more purely human scenes that fairly gripped the audience and wrenched its heart-strings. The first of these moments was the parting between Jesus and His Mother at Bethany. I think the very limit of human pathos was here reached. Though it is quite a short scene, the whole audience was strung up in such a way as almost to break with strain, and the exhausted collapse as the scene closed reminded me of the close of one of Principal Caird's perorations a hundred times magnified.

Ottilie Zwink (the daughter of "Judas"!) made a truly beautiful Mary the Mother. Her face though not physically very beautiful had an extreme beauty of spirituality. Her voice had a cadence that spoke of a pure and beautiful soul, besides being steeped with pathos? How shall I ever forget those tones, or that sweet upturned face? She half faints back into the arms of her friends as the separation takes place. The whole of the tragedy of a whole heart-broken world of bereaved mothers seems to be in her last exclamation. One knew in that moment the meaning of "Deine Mutter!" And what shall I say of the marvellous pose of this peasant woman at that moment? As she fell away from her Son's bosom she, as I said, half fainted back into the arms of her friends. . . . She still stood with her feet on the ground, but her body was almost horizontal backwards, supported on the strong arms of the others. Her arms were stretched out at full length, as though straining after the embrace from which her destiny had torn her; and the lovely *holy* face, with eyes closed, remained

upturned as her supporters kept her from falling. Unfortunately there is no photograph to be had of this wondrous pose—though I hate the word ; for to this Bavarian peasant woman it was not a pose, but the natural expression of inward reality.

CHAPTER VII

He Sends His Thanks

I hate ingratitude like the Devil !

(From a letter.)

He thanks a very small Daughter for her Gift.

And then you sent me that dear little jug for my birthday, for my study-teas at Cairo, with a dear little inscription, so that I shall remember my lambkin every time I have tea in my study at Cairo. I do thank you for it all, for the jug and for the dear letters, even though I have been such a naughty, silent, unresponsive, unlettery, unpicture-postcardish Fader.

As an Oxford Undergraduate he writes to his Old Nurse.

I remember when I was a little boy after bathing in the sea at Ardrossan I used to be enveloped in a huge warm towel, and carried from the rocks to the Villa. And as I felt the warmth after the cold sea, the comfortable being carried after the sharp stones, and the strong arms of the nurse, and heard the gravel crunching under her feet, I just clean *abandoned myself* to her, knew how safe I was, and wished the walk would never come to an end. That was all trust, utter abandonment. I knew I should not be dropped.

That has *often* come back to me so clear that I can hardly imagine it happened seventeen or eighteen years ago. And it seems to me to be a *picture* of our faith in

the strong arms of our Lord ; a child's clinging, unquestioning and entire. Why, Mary, surely you must yourself have been that very nurse ?

To show my gratitude to you then, let the bread cast upon the waters come back to you after many days. Take it as a real picture of Christ carrying us. And when we have abandoned ourselves to His keeping, He *will* keep ; He won't let us drop.

To the Nurse of his Children. (When she had to leave them.)

Never think that your connexion with us and the children is in the least ended. My heart does indeed go out to nurses in general, mothers in all but physical fact and name, and yet condemned to the most cruel periodic terminations, deaths, you might almost call them, of their motherhood. I know they will have their reward. In your case, *some* of this tragic sadness has, I know, already come : but this time it must and shall be different. We both feel that what you have put into these children, and done for them, and been to them, makes it impossible for the relation to end. You must always consider yourself our friend, and the children's. And I hope and am sure that somehow it will be possible for us all to meet. You know that we both feel that we shall never be able to thank you enough for your work for these children, just because its influence with them simply cannot be measured. I am truly glad that you enjoyed the years with us. The coming years are to be very different for us as well as for you. But I am sure that God will have *other* joys in store, if not exactly the same ones over again. And now, may He richly bless you and reward you with every happiness, is the prayer of yours with kindest and high regard.

To Dr. Mott. (The last evening of the Jerusalem Conference, 1924.)

Conference Room.
Monday Evening.

FRIEND,—

I write this with one eye on the Findings, and one ear on the discussion, so I may not be able to make this note very intelligible, but I fear that if I do not write it now, I shall not be able to do it at all ; and I feel I just must send you a message ere we part. My mind has been going back to 1894, just thirty years ago, when I first heard you speak, and I find that it strengthens my faith to do so ; for in exactly the same way as you helped me then, I find you helping me now ; all these thirty years then you have " continued," like Daniel, in that deep life in Christ which you pled for to us—in 1924 as in 1894 ! There is something in this which touches me very much. How *much* I owe to you—and every bit as much in 1924 as thirty years ago. Only I feel ashamed to reflect that I needed that pleading in Helwan and on the Mount of Olives more, *far* more, I fear, than at Keswick so many years ago. Surely the best way I can repay you my very heavy debt of gratitude is, *this* time at least, to practise the sinking of those shafts apart from men, and leading that life with which you so powerfully moved us on Sunday. It touched me so much to see that *that* subject moved you more deeply than *any* of the subjects with which you have been dealing. I shall remember your emotion, perhaps after I have forgotten the words themselves, and the thought of it will move me in years to come, and recall to me your pleading.

To-day again I feel I have been deeply touched by seeing you in the chair. It *has* been a lesson to us all. You were probably the most tired of us all, yet you could not afford to relax one moment. And yet not

for one moment did that huge Christian courtesy of yours relax, and when *we* were getting a bit rattled, you preserved your poise and calm. To watch this all to-day has moved me much.

You must not be vexed by this tribute ! for it emanates more from affection than from admiration. The latter truly has been mine in fullest measure, but from the very beginning the affection has predominated, as I believe you know ; and I am certain you are one who would always rather be loved than admired. My own children have often made me feel that LOVE never spoils, for it is the sole thing that simultaneously humbles one to the dust and exalts to the stars. Have you not felt this ? . . .

And so, God speed, O my friend. If you think of me, think also of your words of Sunday morning, and pray that I may be faithful to that call. Sincerely I pray that you may be kept in health and strength so that you may long, long serve us—and your Lord—by this ministry. Be sure that all have been moved in the same way that I have been, even if they do not have my thirty years boldness to express it !

With full heart I commend you to God and thank you again and again.

Your friend in the love of Christ.

To a Friend who had sent him Gramophone Records.
(During his last illness.)

DEAR MISS A.,—

I lazily trace these lines which are on my heart to say to you.

You can have no idea what those two things " O Sons and Daughters " and " O King of Glory " meant to me and the Sitt during our forty days on that rock (a hospital in the desert).

At some of the worst times they helped us spiritually over the stiles, and uplifted the soul in an unbelievable way.

They will mean very, very much to me the remainder of my life, I think. So you see what your kind thought accomplished.

Again thanks beyond words for the help of the wonderful prayer sustainers by night and by day. It has done wonders. God bless you all.

CHAPTER VIII

He Shares the Lives of his Friends

Absence is in so many ways a death, and the communion with the absent a communion of spirit, that Death is much better prepared for by those at a distance. (From his journal.)

Hailing the Birth of the First Grandson of a friend.

Dear old J.,—

Yours of 24th March has been reproaching me for two months. I did ought to have said ere now, Three cheers, and three *times* three, for G. B. W. O. !! Hurrah and again hurrah. My dear fellow, this is the biggest thing going—the finest thing you ever brought off. *The* grandson to carry on the noble name and tradition. Long life to him and every blessing " to the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills "—whatever that glorious phrase means in the most glorious of blessings !—anyhow it *must* mean just everything, and so I appropriate it for the little man of the many and big initials.

It touches me so much to think that he *just* touched his grandfather's lifetime, just forged the link, so to speak. Shall we fancy that he had just time to take the torch from his grandfather's hand ?—may he bear it worthily !

I would that he could have known what it was to have his grandson in his arms, on his knee, and later to hear his chatter and patter through the house. Let

us hope and believe that more gets through to the spirit than we perhaps think.

I end it as I began with three times three ! By the way, it makes me a great uncle at least, eh ?

Let me know how he is and of the unique things he thinks, does and says, and believe me,

Your antique friend,
W. H. T. GAIRDNER.

On an important step taken by a Friend. 1899.

I am deeply glad that you have been quietly led thus far, and have reached a definite point of departure. . . . I am glad that after so much anxiety and mental conflict you feel so much at peace about it all. . . .

I am trying to make it more and more a guiding thought in my own life, that *God is working His purpose out* in it. . . . This thought gives much relief from all anxiety as to ultimate success, or avoidance of failure, and all fear as to wasting one's life. Do we not believe in God ? and a God Who is supremely concerned in *our* life-work, and Who will assuredly guide it according to His divine plan, if we allow Him ? If we do *not*, let us give up even the pretence of religion. But we do ! Then let us abandon ourselves to this faith. Let us, as Gordon said, pull up our anchors, and with utter quietness allow the wind of God to blow our ship whithersoever He will.

To a Son in the Faith. (Translated from the Arabic.)

OUR BELOVED SON,—

All this while I have been wanting to write to you and meaning to write to you, and I hardly know what held me back from doing what I wanted and intended to do. Perhaps it was my absorption in family affairs. And then I have done some work also in visiting

colleges at Oxford and Cambridge and speaking at some conferences and preaching at several Churches, with the result that I had not much time left for correspondence. Still, I feel that I have come short in this matter, specially in regard to you who sent me so kind a letter so full of a son's love—as indeed we covenanted that you should be a son. But in spite of my apparent neglect I want you to know that I have remembered you very often throughout this time. Hardly a day passed but I prayed for you specially, for you and a few more of the brethren. I should not exaggerate if I said that your name was as often on my lips in prayer as the names of my children in England or India. And the special reason for this is that I am still remembering that talk of ours that last night under the dome of sky so sprinkled with bright stars. And I see from your letter that you remember it too, it is fresh in your mind as in mine. And every time I remember it is a fresh cause and encouragement to me to continue in the prayer I prayed for you that night, and to ask God to continue in you the good work to which He has called you for His sake, and to make you abound in it more and more. . . .

[There follows a reproof for a tendency to conceit as shown in some recent work undertaken by his correspondent.]

What can we say but that in this (criticism from others) we hear God's voice and find His wisdom? Only remember that His allowing such criticism to reach you is in reality an *encouragement* to you. For would He take such trouble with your education unless He loved you much? and unless He had a special purpose for you and your life in this world would He send you these individual messages?

Your faithful, loving pastor.

To a Syrian Friend. From one sick bed to another. (Translated from Arabic.) March 1928.

While I am lying ill in Helouan and you are the same in Cairo, I wish to convey to you my salutations at the beginning of this Holy Week. The circumstances, unfortunately, do not allow us both to attend the services of the Passion Week and Easter. But we can both attend in spirit with mutual benefit and grace, adding our prayers to those of the congregation in the Church.

Here I must say if I should be patient in such time, how many useful lessons I can obtain from you, O patient brother, who suffered and are still suffering from troubles and trials which are far greater than mine as you have shown Christian patience which astonished everybody.

I pray God to give conscience rest, internal happiness and spiritual revival in this week to you and all the members of your family who are sharing your troubles. Will you kindly let one of them inform me about you and about everyone of them? As regards myself, it seems that the new treatment although severe is making good effect as all doctors are satisfied with the progress I am making. I pray God to bless you all.

Your loving pastor.

To the Widow and Family of the Same. (Translated from the Arabic.)

. . . This is the first Arabic word I have written since I became dangerously ill, and perhaps the doctors would not approve. But none the less I must write, because I have heard the sad news to-day, on the day of the Blessed Lord.

Though I am able to write only a few lines our

hearts testify that we love each other, and how deep was that love between him and me. He fought and endured in a way that astonished and encouraged all who knew him. It helped me a great deal in my own dark hours to remember his great patience. Now he is at last enjoying the rest of the eternal world. As I lay in hospital, I prayed GOD to set him free from his long misery.

It was I who should have commended his pure soul to GOD yesterday, and buried him with great reverence at Old Cairo, remembering him in the Church of the Saviour to-night. But I thanked GOD when I heard that it was Mr. X. who had done all that should be done. He is a saint and nearer to GOD than I.

Mrs. Gairdner will visit you, both on her own behalf and on mine, and I pray the God of consolation and love and mercy to be your God to-day and for ever, Amen.

Your pastor who is still ill. . . .

Cairo, May 13, 1928.

On the Death of a Little Child who fell from a window.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—

I feel you cannot bear and do not need more than the assurance of our profound pity and sympathy with you at this tragic time. Who if not parents can realise something of what such a thing means, and also appreciate the mercy that mother and children were spared the horror and shock of *witnessing* the fall? We have the certainty that for the child it was an instantaneous and unconscious passage to the unseen world and the eternities.

Last summer I had occasion to think a great deal about what the Bible has to say concerning the dark mystery of what we call "accident." At first I thought

it was nil—and *less* than nil, for no provision seemed to have been made (for example in Gen. ii and Rom. v) for the obvious fact that quite apart from sin, " accidents " might happen and must have occurred, unto death, yes, in the Garden of Eden itself. But as I considered, I got hold of two things : may I pass them on to you ? for I feel that the very basis of real comfort (*comfortitude*) is the strengthening of the fibre of one's faith in God and His ways. The first thought was from Christ's word " One sparrow falleth not to the ground without your Father." *It does fall to the ground nevertheless.* But not " without your Father." He broke the fall. . . .

" Fear not : one such little one is of more value than many sparrows."

The other thought was in regard to the " accidents " which befell the children of Job. They did not fall, but the house fell on them. But not " without your Father." There *was* a reason underlying the entire tragedy : but it was connected with a. great unseen drama involving far huger issues than Job's affairs, in the unseen universe. From *this* Job's sight was withheld, had to be withheld, and remained withheld till the very end. He was left with his faith in God as Father, that the tragedy was not, somehow, " without Him."

At the " apocalypse of the sons of God " there will surely be also an apocalypse of the dark veils which till then are to veil the face of these sore, sore tragedies. They had to be very dark and thick veils to keep back the light on their inner side : but for that very reason how brilliant with light must be that inner side !

Yours with true sympathy and in the Christian faith and hope,

W. H. T. GAIRDNER.

On the Death of an Infant.

Just a word, dear friends, of true sympathy from one who is a father, and who, being the one who married you and baptised your firstborn, stands in certain paternal relation to your two selves. I do share with you your grief. How often, in the early days of our parenthood, I used to turn with horror from the bare idea of the possibility of the very loss which you have been called upon to undergo, and wonder how it *could* be borne. I can only pray earnestly that you may know and experience *how*, in Christ, it can be borne: and that the knowledge may both draw you together as nothing else could, and also enable you to be to others in their hour of sorrow what no others could be.

On the Death of a little Feeble-minded Child.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—

We were very much touched to get your printed letter, and gladly do we give the sympathy that you desire, all the more because we, unlike most of those you wrote to, knew it all. Except indeed that I have often lately wondered if the little fellow were with you, or transplanted to the heavenly orchard where all fruits ripen. . . . How it all recalls happy days, that seem long enough ago. In that picture of the past, that little fellow has a very definite place and position; which makes us know for certain that he was not made, nor lived in vain.

None but parents, I feel, can understand or enter into what you have felt in regard to X.; none but parents who have had a similar experience can, I am convinced, *fully* enter into it. We are perhaps, then, unqualified to give you *all* the sympathy that some others will give you. But the sympathy of *parents* we can and do give.

I never go to A——, but I miss the past and you as bound up with it. Let us be pressing on towards a future when all that was goodly and pleasant in the past will be conserved and re-realised in the heaven of perfected truth and reality. And there, beyond doubt, little X. and all he stood for will have a mansion.

Commemorating a Loved One at Christmastide.

You may imagine how particularly our thoughts and hearts and sympathies will be with you this Xmas, especially as we go to the Service and as we take our Xmas Communion. We shall be thinking of you and of that dear Presence-Absence ; our beloved who was all-in-all to you at Christmas-time whether present or absent ; and now the memory will haunt you—perhaps too the sense of something like a presence at the gathering of which she was the heart and soul and life and inspiration and love-focus. Those two sets of stanzas in *In Memoriam* will be very precious to you this year. She would not desire you to be sad, to be forlorn. She would desire you to carry on feeling that somehow the kind eyes are smiling down on you ; our beloved.

I was so struck by that remark of yours about the " hollow room " when you made some jest or allusion, and only got back, so to speak, the echo of your own voice, the responding voice silent and still, gone. I have caught myself in the same way once or twice lately, and have thought how it must be *many* times with you. But let Love believe all things, hope all things ! Let us believe the MAXIMUM of the Communion of Saints. Who knows ?

At any rate we know that she is nearer the Lord of Christmas, and the thought of *that* will help to sweeten and glorify ours.

On the Death of a Husband.

OUR DEAR FRIEND,

—for dear you have ever been to both of us and always will be, just as *he* was—and is.

I want to thank you for giving me the privilege of reading so many intimate and moving things to-day. They and you did me much good—much more than I could ever hope to do : I so *longed* to be able to comfort you as we parted : but words seemed useless, so I lifted you up in prayer instead : perhaps it would have been a comfort if I had done so with you ?

The truisms are the truths after all—they only seem truisms when put into feeble words, whether spoken or written. So I did not, and will not, speak or write them : but I think them instead, and then they seem just truths that make all the difference.

The photos made me realise what great and rich happiness your life has contained, and the beautiful things that life still contains for you in those two boys. I know it is those very happinesses that make the ache so great, but it is they also that bring to the ache their balm.

I thank God for that last half-hour you had with J. My sister's last words to me were " Au revoir, beloved." *Your* husband was unable to *speak :* so may not my dead be the interpreter to you of the silent sign of yours—if it needed interpreting, which it did not ?

" We believe in the Communion of Saints."

On the Death of one in absence from his home.

DEAR FRIEND,—

My heart went out to you and those dear children the instant I heard.

Be sure that the thing that has pierced you with *sharpest* sorrow has also filled us with most special

sympathy—your separation at the last, and for so long before the last. It is too sad, too perplexing.

The one thought that comes to me is this—his life was a sacrificial one, and most of all sacrificial in regard to his family life in regard to you and the children, and in that sacrifice you too sacrificed yourselves. It seems therefore that to him and to you it had to be in death what it was in life—sacrifice to the very end, to the rendering up of the breath of life ; the separation in life, which was your cross borne so wonderfully, had to be separation in death too.

A sacrifice so complete, has it not been truly very precious in the sight of God, very acceptable ?

You have been so long, so constantly and so strangely schooled to know that separation did not touch love, schooled to love and enjoy love in *absence*, unseen—will it not be specially given to you now, I wonder, to know and feel that this longer and more silent separation also does not and will not touch love, and the consciousness of its continuance, undiminished, always.

I pray that for these children, their *thought* and unseen spiritual experience of their father may prove a greater and stronger and more abiding influence and reality than what is given to children who never had to experience separation. Surely they will carry through life, deep in their hearts the image and memory of this supreme sacrifice.

I often spoke about it to him, for he impressed me so much in this matter, and it impresses me that he and you were called to render it up to the end, and at the end—with all its accompaniment of longing and sorrow unspeakable.

I loved him : I shall never forget him, nor will the unique character of the image of him which I bear be effaced. He was my earliest friend in Egypt (after D. M. T.).

And what a *friend* he has been, as well as husband, and father, to *you* !

I only say this that you may know how much I enter into what I feel must be the *inner* sorrow of this great sorrow. Oh that you might find the balm of your comfort laid *just there*, not on the outer surface of the wound, but *there* in the innermost deepest place where its secret hurt is. Then he will be indeed wholly yours, for that would be comfort indeed.

God bless you, comfort you. My tender love to the boys.

Your friend,
W. H. T. GAIRDNER.

To a Friend on the Death of her Husband in his early prime.

Now to-morrow, as you lie resting, I feel sure the anguish will assail you at many points. You must be forewarned ; turn it all into love ! It is the only way : I know by experience. You will think of this or that book which he read or intended to read. . . . Say " Not in vain ! it did its perfect work ! " Those lessons ; the first two years. . . . " Not in vain ! They did their perfect work." This and that book of laborious letters, the fruit of anxious, lonely thought and late hours . . . apparently nothing to show for many of them. . . . " Oh not in vain ! they did their perfect work." Those nights of restless thinking, round and round, trying and trying to make two and two make five or six. . . . " Oh not in vain ! they did their perfect work." (" Let patience have her perfect work ! " his own word.) Those discussions of plans that never came to anything. " Oh not in vain, my God ! " Nothing that is so pure is in vain. Thrust at the Tempter hard, if he comes to you like that.

Or perhaps it will be this or that sweet reminiscence.

. . . " I loved him. I love him still ! " " Love never dies ! "

Or, " He was grieved to the very soul by this or that thwarted effort, wasted strength, sacrificed youth." . . . " God ! all that has been resolved into harmony, and he knows it has."

Or, " A young-old man ! " . . . " An immortal in the company of the morning stars that sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy ! Younger, essentially and eternally, than the young man to whom you were betrothed, yet with the added wisdom of the man at the end of his course."

. . . It is not, it must not be, that " Bitterer is the grief devoured alone." NOT alone : even I can follow you a good part of the way, and where I stop, the Lord Jesus goes on—the whole way, and dear A. (in Him) I dare say, too.

And, on the other hand, dear Friend, don't fear to let the fountain of tears break, if so Nature demands, to-morrow when rest brings relaxation of strain. It is no shame to weep as even Augustine allowed himself " the small portion of an hour " Such tears, it is my belief, get transmuted into energising love, and in that form, somehow, or somewhere, reach the dear one for whom they were shed, by the mediation of Christ.

It is only the barren pangs, remorse or yearning, which are vain, and which in essence deny what we believe ; that, I am praying you may be wholly saved.

A. is wholly the same, only more so. . . .

To a Friend whose Father lay critically ill.

I ask God to take you very deeply into the eternal presence at this time : it is a region that lies above even the griefs of this world, and the thoughts that come to one there indeed lie too deep for tears. I think He gives one glimpses of that region at times like these,

during which we touch His spirit and the spirits of those we love. They are short glimpses and we soon are taken down and back to the region where grief and tears have their claim upon us ; but they are enough to utterly change the meaning of life for us. So I have found : so have you already : so may you be finding in this great trial.

On the Death of a Father : to his Children.

. . . It is for you we are feeling. We know that an invalid, instead of being less of a personality is *more* so, and we feel how very much you will miss and long for the presence which has made the house what it was ; the thought of which was continually in your minds, shaping your daily plan of work, and giving character to everything you used to do. And now the room is empty ; the dear, genial, quaint, characteristic, much-loved presence is fled ; and you cannot but feel very desolate. For you loved him as few fathers are loved, and it was not less on his side. But I think that just *that* will be your greatest comfort ; that you can look back on such a cloudless past in your relationships with him. I always feel there is a peculiar blessedness in being able to look back at a connexion with any human being across which no cloud ever came ; no misunderstanding, no sharpness or bitterness ; no interruptions in love : but where love had her perfect work. Death in writing the END simply emphasises how perfect was the blessedness, and prevents anything from ever marring it or spoiling its memory—in fact perfects it. Even the ancients with no hope of a hereafter felt this, and how much more we, to whom Death is only, as it were, the END of the First Volume, and is also the beginning of another Volume which has no end, the contents of which must of very necessity be perfect. . . .

CHAPTER IX

Reflexions on some Deeper Things

It's grand up here alone on the mountain top. I've been feeling the want of it, the want of a closer walk with God, with the greater command over the minutiae of life which that spiritual power gives. Christ mastered his own life through sheer spirituality. . . .

Life is so complex, and its motives and aspects so multiplex, that it is only a genius who can hold everything steady in one glance, and see the whole in every part. . . . (From his letters.)

On the Value of Patriotism.

I warmly second your idea that these thoughts (*i.e.* on Nationalism and Patriotism) must be developed consistently with your " remaining an Englishman " as W. S. Gilbert has it. I believe that any attempt to denationalise oneself is rather like unsexing oneself. *It generally leads to becoming acidly anti one's own nation,* and THAT defeats itself, for ultimately that sort of thing, though it at first flatters the adopted nation, alienates and disgusts even *it,* while by the other it is rightly judged as a form of matricide. Houston Stewart Chamberlain was a very good case in point. He became a German—an ultra-German . . . a particularly bitter anti-Englander, and ultimately got abused and detested in his adopted country itself, first because " he tried to teach *us* what Germanism is," and then because of the inherent indecency of the performance. Nor can one regard Mrs. Besant's nett performance as anything but a monstrosity.

How do you reckon that C. F. Andrewes' line has worked out ?

On International Friendships.

Press home what is your own attitude to these peoples. Is it one of mere dislike? That leads nowhere save to ruin. Of superiority? I do not believe in superiority. Even in attempted service, condescension is *démodé*; the very expression "superior person" is an unpleasant one. *Noblesse oblige*—and I am convinced that, in that nobility and that obliging, there is *not* the spirit of superiority, or of condescension, but of amiability, of fraternity, of readiness to like and to be liked, of interest, of primal human sympathy in fact. Is this your attitude to these peoples? I believe that this attitude is probably compatible with a conviction on both sides that inter-marriage is undesirable. I believe that this reciprocal refusal to intermarry need not rest on reciprocal contempt, and need not lead to it. But for our life we must win through to this attitude. On it depends our nation's—who knows, our personal salvation!

The "Chief End of Man."

Aristotle came very near the mark with his *eudaimonia* as the "chief end of man," but did not *quite* get there. Perhaps you have had such a keen relish for "happiness" as an absolute good, that this has rendered it more difficult to tolerate, or to deal with, the reverse. But does it not help to remember that both happiness and unhappiness are secondary things, and that the first thing on which the whole attention should be concentrated is something, which, for the present, may be indifferently called Duty, the Will of God, or the Kingdom of Heaven? To get the order right is the shortest way to get everything right. There is immeasurable depth in Jesus' "Seek ye *first* the Kingdom of God" (Duty, the Will of God) and

happiness shall be thrown in too, and unhappiness disappear unnoticed. And to this corresponds Dante's " In His Will is our peace." . . .

On the Real Meaning of " Success."

If there is one lesson I have understood, I don't say fully learned, from Life it is this : that the outward seal of succeeding is not the sole sign, nor even always a true sign, of the true, inward success. The former depends so largely on things beyond our competence. The latter depends on ourselves—on the effort and goodwill put in. For *this*, God ordains an inward joy and a real reward which are really the only things worth having, though to the world they are as paradoxical as " the peace " Christ spoke of—" my peace " —on the verge of Gethsemane, and the " joy "—" Your joy " which " no man taketh from you." He was really speaking of the same thing. For the soul-filling joy and peace come (in the sphere of our ordinary secular effort) not from succeeding, but from the true-hearted effort. So you see that all religion and all philosophy are not too big to apply to—Toggers !

A Strange Thought.

Strange how in this time-scheme of things one good thing, or ideal, interferes with another—one pole of an antithesis pulls on the other—result, perpetual tension and antagonistic tugging, never resting—and yet an antagonism between things which so far from being fundamentally opposed, are really necessary to each other. A mystery.

Love in Absence.

I should very much like to see you and you all in the flesh. But if ever for a moment I fear lest absence should really sever us, I go back on this thought that Christ is real and eternal tho' unseen, and that you therefore who are " in Him," *though equally unseen*, are

real and eternal. Fancy, you are as unseen to me as Christ. I can neither see, hear nor touch you. Truly it is no wonder that short of the Spirit the absent are really as the dead, and grow out of one another. But in His Communion surely all is different. You are real, solid, active, eternal in my life, as I in yours—so long as, and the more, we abide in the Eternal. I like to think this, too : that two people who meet after a very long time of absence, with perhaps very few letters, will find if they have continued in prayer for each other all the time, that they have nothing to make up and no new start to make, no acquaintance to remake : they will not, it is true, be where they were before, for both will have advanced from that : but both will have advanced in Christ, and so together ; and they will recognise each other when they meet just as if they had grown together in each other's presence. There will be no strangeness—not the least bit.

Only these things make you all at home real to me. But they *do* make you real.

On the Mystery of Suffering.

I am sure you will understand if I write wretchedly, because the excess of thoughts kills expression. What was uppermost in my mind was this—the apparent cruel mystery of our poor P.'s life. With " parts and character " that fall to the lot of few indeed, all wrecked and ruined, and apparently foredoomed to ruin if not from the very first, certainly from very early. To our human vision, a masterpiece of misguidance and misdirection, causeless and pitiless. Like the saints of the Old Testament I crowd on the shades of agnostic gloom, because it wasn't till those saints expressed all, all they felt along that line that they got their ray of illumination : see especially Job, and Habakkuk. And some of you have darker tints to add, which I can only imagine, and cannot bear to

dwell on even in thought—your sight of his actual pain, so protracted, fruitless, terrible. . . . Just before the news came I read, in a rather complacent chapter, that the message of the Book of Job had been largely superseded by the New Testament. I queried it as I read, I query it even more now. The New Testament has indeed enormously enlarged the area of illumination, but so long as we are in this world of limitation and do *not* yet " know as we are known," so long it seems to me will the Book of Job be a sheet-anchor in insoluble difficulties like the life and death of P. What I get back to is this : some areas in heaven and earth are illuminated, and some remain black as primitive night. From the illuminated one has faith to believe that the whole is illuminable, that is all. I will interpret the unilluminated areas from the illuminated, not vice versa. Is that irrational ? Possibly it is the reverse that is really irrational. A mere turn, a single datum, and a whole universe of dark area might light up and be explained. Calvary has enormously enlarged the illuminated area of that dark riddle, has in *principle*, I believe, given us its key ; but in the application of the principle whole areas remain dark still. Somewhere in one of these, no doubt, P.'s mystery works—perhaps works redemptively, who knows ? Not all his " thirty years " were Gethsemane and Calvary, there were the years of Galilee and of Nazareth—with how much of sunshine, joy, and laughter ! We can think of these too, now his terrible ordeal is over. . . . *Requiescet, requiescet, requiescet in pace—pace :* loved before, loved now, loved for ever. Love, it seems, has no end, though pain, it seems, has.

The " Fatherliness " of God. 1902.

(1) I saw a pretty sight to-day—a little girl of three lost sight of her father in the street and was sobbing

piteously—many people turned to look at her and one man was bending over her. Then her father came back and she caught sight of him and ran towards him. When a few yards off she stretched out her two little arms full length—such a gesture of longing infinite, and in a moment was in his arms, hers twined closely round his neck, her little tear-stained face on his shoulder, and her little sobbing bosom resting itself on his. Oh my heart, my heart, is God less willing, less longing to take you than that father, or should you be less able to sink upon His bosom and bury your ache there?

(2) I came away from that last Goodbye with heart very full. If he can be that to me, why should I not be thus to Thee, seeing that whatever I am or can be to him, Thou willest to be infinitely more to me. . . . 1919.

Thoughts on Love and Death.

What, can Death give such gifts? Even so, when it is, as with essential Christianity, a mere form of life. . . .

Did you ever give this celestial logic a still wider reach? Were this life all, it would be cruel for people to live rich, vivid lives, for them to grow into adorable personalities, for them to be lovable and loved beyond words! . . . just because, in proportion as this happens, Death is so cruel, so ruinous, a mere monstrosity—were this life all! The agony of loss would make it better that there should be less to lose: better that all should live dully, and so inflict the less agony on those who love, and are nevertheless dealt so cruel a blow by those whom they loved, when they leave them. But this is a *reductio ad absurdum.* And therefore, because I believe in the rationality of things, I must believe that the withdrawal of these lovely things is *not* a blank tragedy: that their loveliness is

a prophecy of their permanence, not their cessation : that Ascension Morning, and the disciples returning to their Jesus-less Upper room, their Jesus-less Galilee, *with great joy* !—gives the one true key : the key which our Beloved knew so well to hand to us, so as to unlock with it the mystery of *her* departure also.

Let us live *more* intensely, then ! Let our dear ones, our children and all, become more indispensable than ever ! with this clue we can rob Death of its worst terrors beforehand, even !

His Joy in the Gratitude of Children.

(1) I have always said, and I say again and again, that *never* have parents had such *reconnaissant* children. Not all parents have even *responsive* children : responsiveness is much, and it is the most parents have the right to expect ; but the spirit of gratitude, so *conscious and expressed*, is quite a rare thing, and not to be expected by any parent till quite late on. But you dear children have always had it. It is a noble trait—but " spoiling " to parents, for it tends to reduce their " good gifts " to a mild form of selfishness, so sweet is the reward !! It makes me realise vividly too how different *we* were—certainly I—towards our parents, with their infinite kindness. I am certain I took it all for granted—the sort of thing natural for all parents in relation to all children. I am certain I gave them, not even my dear, dear indulgent affectionate loving father, *no* such " conscious and expressed " thanks : I doubt if ever I gave much " responsiveness." And I have recently thought that the fact that they did not seem to ask for, or expect, these returns is by no means a proof that they would not have enjoyed them if offered, or perhaps even that they did not secretly miss them.

(2) That small boy's letter is very touching. I'm sure I never had such generous impulses ; I'm sure

I never thanked my father or mother for *any*thing of that sort, or indeed for anything whatsoever (I verily believe) until very much later. To me parents were institutions whose normal duty was to feed, clothe, send me to school, supply pocket-money to, nurse when ill, cherish but also spank, and so forth. Doth he thank them when they do these things? I trow not. Either I must have been a thankless child, or else these children are remarkable. Perhaps it is partly our policy of taking them into greater confidence as to the working of things, and of our own minds. My parents never did that.

Thoughts on the Holy Spirit. (Written to a Friend in his days as Travelling Secretary for the Student Christian Movement, 1898.)

MY VERY DEAR FELLOW

I do not suppose a day has passed, hardly, without my remembering you to God and praying Him for the continuance in you of this blessing. . . .

I need not go over the points of your letter. All that you told me fills me with gratitude and joy to God who has done all, all.

I am particularly glad about the improvement you have been enabled to make in your office, etc. I think that is so splendid. . . .

Jesus Christ has a scheme for your life and mine; a scheme which includes the very last moments of our earthly life, and which will bring us over into the life of eternity. . . . But for Christ I am truly unfit to live. But through Him I can look others in the face, because we can look God in the face, in Him. Every fresh revelation of self drives one not further from, but nearer God, because of the Covenant, because of His love to us, because of His good will toward us. I used to say

these things and in some degree mean them. Now I feel them more and more ; for the consciousness of sinfulness leaves one with no option between the love of God in Christ and sin.

" What thanks shall we render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward us ? We will *take* the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord."

He has given us the *right* to consider ourselves forgiven, the *right* to be the sons of God, the *right* to be holy, the *right* to do good, the *right* to love, the *right* to wait for Christ's coming and the new, sinless, free, untempted body that He will then give us.

And of all this the Earnest is His gift of the Holy Spirit. I have been thinking a great deal of this last subject, and should like to tell you the results of what God has been showing me, as I have a feeling they may be helpful to you. I know your longing for the Holy Spirit and your joy in the possession of Him. Where we need to be *careful* in this matter is, I believe, the fact that what attracts most people in the doctrine of the Holy Ghost is *the power* which the gift is promised to bring. This too is what is usually preached, and this we ardently covet. But my belief is that this is dangerous, except to those who have sought and appropriated the Holy Spirit for other reasons first ; for graces which are not exactly power, and which may possibly never bring the striking manifestations of power which people look to find. Power is a two-edged weapon. It has succeeded in deeply corrupting worldly men, and in perishing Christians too. Few people can stand power. It is more the sign of true power to stand its possession than simply to possess it —I feel this strongly. The apostles were such as not to be corrupted through the pride of a divine power in them ; so they had it. But how few of us could stand the temptations connected with swaying thousands and

bringing them to our feet. It is awful to think of. To me the miracle would be if God saved me after such an experience, rather than if He gave me it. . . .

I feel that the power of the Spirit is inseparable from, depends on and flows from the Holiness and the Conformity to Christ in death and life, which are the *first* fruits of the Spirit. These we should covet first, and let the " power " take care of itself; assuredly it will flow from them, tho' perhaps not in the manner anticipated by us.

I heard a man once say : " We desire the Holy Spirit for power, but He is only given to enable us to do God's will and fulfil His life's plans for us." That life plan *might not* mean outward success in service at all ; it might mean to lay you on a bed of sickness all your life long ; the Spirit would be given to enable you *completely* to glorify God in that position."

To make us ONE with the glorified Christ in the heavens—that was and is the ultimate object for which the Holy Ghost was given. To make us limbs of His body : identical with Him, " in His name " : and thus to make us like Him in holiness ; to give us the *wonderful* (but unseen and unrecognised and uncounted and unpraised) power *in prayer* (for the mouth of the Spirit-filled man is the mouth of Christ in prayer), to enable us to do His will perfectly from day to day, even if that will is unseen and unnoticed suffering, loneliness, loss of fame and ambition, failure if you like : these are the things that God tells me I must seek when I seek the gift of the fullness of the Holy Ghost. To seek success as an evangelist is surely a miserable parody of such gifts as these, unsatisfying to oneself and not honouring to God. I confess these thoughts give me deepest peace and rest, which the mere thought of the power of the Holy Ghost never did. We should pray (I believe) for the character to which God *could safely*

assign the gift of power. I cannot say that I have this character, but long for it.

"Thy will be done, not mine"—there was the prayer of the Spirit-filled MAN: and it is our ultimate prayer too. It keeps us from choosing our own way. God will fill in the details when we give Him *that* framework. This relieves us of all anxiety, all ambition, all restless longing.

I shall be glad to hear what *you* have to say on these subjects. I have told you what I seem to have been taught since Ripon. I long to work out all this.

Do let me hear from you.

Ever yours affectionately.

Thoughts on Personal Holiness. (As the foregoing.)

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—

. . . I half feared that something like that would happen, and I confess to you and to God my fault in that I did not give you more help by telling you my fears. . . . Forgive me. Had I lived closer with Christ I should have had the spirit of discernment which would have enabled me to speak clearly and without offence. . . . I felt dimly, dear fellow, and not clearly, that your mind and testimony were so monopolised with one fragment of Truth that you were losing the sense of the whole. . . . I suppose there is hardly a single truth that will bear exclusive preaching.

It is misleading to one's own soul, and yet more misleading to others. For they have not knowledge of the soul-history of the speaker and from him therefore they seem to get a fragment instead of a shining whole.

And once more, there *are* truths which much more than others can bear continual emphasis—those which lie at the foundation, the root. . . . The foundation in which you appeared to me to have almost lost interest

was the forgiveness of sins through the slain Lamb of God. . . . "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth *us* from all sin." It was the aged and sainted St. John that wrote these words of *himself* and of his fellow believers. Ask yourself if it is not true that for some months these burning words would have had comparatively little meaning for you.

Mysterious though this whole subject is, one feels sure that such an attitude of mind is wrong and denotes some failure of spiritual vision. Holiness, I am convinced, comes to no man as the complete and immediate result of some act of surrender, however great. No, the power of holiness is given him, but his growth in it will be gradual and will be wrought out in tears and much striving against sin. We must learn to suspect ourselves : to find that the thing which seemed right yesterday seems subtly full of self to-day. We must learn to sorrow over these daily discoveries, and yet not be cast down, knowing that it merely means that the old self is being more and more *shown up*, gripped and cast out. To blind a man to these things and to make him walk in a fool's paradise is a veritable triumph for the enemy of our souls.

And this is the universal experience of the saints. We may argue against this as much as we please : find it hard to reconcile with our logical conclusions, nevertheless it is fact. Not until we behold the King in His beauty and receive the new body of glory shall we be finally delivered from this *process*—growth of holiness through renewed discovery of our need of holiness.

Our true self is hid with Christ in God. It is true that the evil, slow-dying creature who is our natural self apart from Christ is not our true self : and that we

must disown him, and repudiate him. "Not I, but sin that dwelleth in me." Nevertheless he was once our true self: he would still be but for God's goodness: he may still be if we fall from God. Therefore we have not done with him, and it is ruin to think that we have. Don't let us be afraid of having him dragged out into light, even if it entails the accounting as lost some of the actions we most congratulate ourselves upon. If he lies hid, we are undone. Our salvation or holiness depends on his being continually made manifest.

There is no difficulty about humility in such a case. No difficulty about claiming the blood of Christ.

I could wish (may I say it?) that you were a member of the Church of England. For in our services, and especially in our more frequent Communion services, one is reminded of these things again and again, and never suffered to forget. . . .

And now, dear . . . , if these things are wrong, and inapplicable, tell me and let me pray for a truer message to you. But do not despair, or even sorrow overmuch. God is going to lead you out into a deeper, deeper life, based on a more thorough comprehension of the laws of His divine life: into a life less sensational perhaps, but equally powerful, forceful, and purposeful.

Do not doubt for an instant—I do not doubt—that what happened to you at Ripon was real. It was deeply real. But it does not follow that it was ultimate, it may have been but the first step towards a life more hid with Christ in God.

Do not fear about losing influence if you have to confess failure. Who are we that we are not to fail? The world does not expect us not to fail: but it does expect us to own to failure. God knows those who confess. Be strong and of good courage. A great work yet lies before you.

Above all remember that Christ has gripped you

first. He still grips you. He is no cold monarch on a high and slippery throne, up which you have been trying to climb and have now slipped back. No, He is infinitely near, and this discipline is to draw you more permanently near. " Follow on, that you may grasp that for which *you were grasped* by Christ Jesus."

I am,

Yours now, as ever.

I meant to say a word about " Guidance." I somehow feel that it comes like Holiness—not suddenly, completely, infallibly : but gradually increasing in refinement and minuteness, not without many mistakes. As the magnetic needle shivers and oscillates, yet ever feels the pole and at last comes to rest.

CHAPTER X

Art and Artists

Oh to be wholly pure ! Some men can delight in the world, in men, in things, apart from holiness. God has decreed that I cannot, and though the flesh sometimes makes bondage of this decree it is the supreme mark of His love. (From his journal.)

Joy in Art.

" Art and absolute pessimism are incompatibles," he said. " The artist's joy in creation negates the cry that everything is very bad. . . . To the Artist, therefore, regeneration will always seem possible. Regeneration can be thought and stated : (*a*) from the empirical, material viewpoint ; or (*b*) metaphysically and transcendentally ; or (*c*) intuitionally, by faith, by the intuition of pity. Now Art unites these three aspects, its subject-matter is material, its spirit transcendent : and it necessarily possesses that intuition of faith which is capable of saving the core of religion ; and Art can manifest the same to the minds of men."

After receiving a Letter which said " In all art I find temptation."

It contains very hard sayings, and comes rather disconcertingly to one who has been for some years trying to synthetise to " join " the very elements which this saint is more and more led to " put asunder " ! Without going into that, however, I feel that the whole letter is a deeply interesting and moving exhibition of the

first stage—the earliest, best, purest and most beautiful stage—of *Puritanism :* of Puritanism when it is itself instinct with the very beauty it feels it must so sternly limit and repress (so different from the coarse later stage, when beauty is flouted by those who were never capable of even knowing her !)—the stage of Milton, where repression itself is apt to produce some masterpiece of the very beauty that is abjured, some beautiful masterpiece cold, stern, unearthly. I feel that his attitude is too much conditioned by *reaction* (the reaction caused by some irretrievable personal error), to be valid as a full or final philosophy or synthesis of the subject. Is it not rather the attitude of one who has righteously and faithfully obeyed the command of Christ to pluck out the offending eye, and cut off the offending limb . . . and yet the eye and the limb, in *others* who were not offended, are good and fair, are God's creation, and are moreover necessary to the completeness of the body. The amputated one is not one to frame the formula of completeness.

Arrangement at the Louvre.

I will say this—they have succeeded gloriously in their placing and setting of the Venus de Milo. They made no mistake *there.* The Samothrace Victory would also have a good setting but for the ill-lightedness and uninspiring grandiosity of the great staircase where it has been placed. And in the dullest, darkest corner of that staircase, out of the track altogether, lit in one case by a dingy skylight, and in the other, *not lit at all,* they have placed the finest paintings in the Louvre—the two Botticelli frescoes ! The colours are nearly invisible ! It is incredible, it angers. The Louvre has proved itself unworthy of them. It is tragic that they are not in Florence or at the National Gallery !

French and British as Architects.

I am afraid it must be confessed that the British have not got it in them to make a success of a gigantic architectural scheme. With all their faults of grandiosity, as I think, the French do get somewhere. I still think that the finest big thing of modern times is the Houses of Parliament. It requires some courage to say this, but I was delighted the other day to see someone of note in the artistic world saying boldly exactly what I felt. . . .

" *Hamlet in Plus-Fours.*"

Apropos of that *Hamlet* idea . . . a man told me something very interesting the other day. He was speaking of " *Hamlet* in Plus-fours " which he had seen. He said it was the most moving possible experience ; that it had made *Hamlet* a new thing ; that the audience was profoundly touched ; that the grave-diggers' scene was felt to be as necessary for relief as the porter's in *Macbeth ;* and that *nobody felt that there was any* Hamlet *problem at all,* everything seemed perfectly clear—they were simply looking on a human tragedy. It is very curious how exactly this hits off what I was driving at, and confirms the idea that the mystification of this play was the result of sophistication in study and class-room. From thence it passed to the stage itself—even the actors (probably) were obsessed by the idea that they must give an " interpretation " of *Hamlet,* i.e. were to be penetrating commentators of a problem, rather than interpreters of a human tragedy. Result—people came in that mood, watched in that mood, and were left cold. The violently unconventional change of costume was just able to hitch both actors and audience out of that intellectual rut, and give them a new start on the true plane.

Pavlova and her Swan Dance.

The poising of the entire body on the absolute tip of the toes, you might say on the tip of the *last joint* of the great toes, was, I saw, not an end in itself (extraordinary though the feat is), but a means to an end. In *itself*, it is not actually beautiful, for in the first place our feet were made to go horizontally, not perpendicularly, and for another thing a muscular development of instep and ankle is thereby necessitated, which does not make exactly for *beauty of foot.* It is really a means to an end : *only thus*, I saw, was the maximum impression, and reality, of *perfect poise* reached : only thus, therefore, did the entire body of the dancer become a single piece, an organism every single part of which moved under direct, simultaneous, and equal control. I can only liken it to what you have noticed in a serpent—a creature whose spine makes its whole body *like a single spring.* That *Première* attained to that : you felt that every joint, whether at ankle, knee, thigh, wrist, elbow, shoulder or neck, was moving together under a single impulse—which came —from where ? *Not* from the feet at all ! there was the secret of that poising. There was none of that sensation of laboured motion that is discernible when instep and ankle are *obviously* the *motors* of the body. In *her* they became just a minimum connexion with earth, a concession to the popular superstition of earth-gravity ; as though it would be easy to dispense even with that amount of contact with earth. The seat of motion—the motor—thus seemed to be transferred from the feet to the entire body, or to the soul which animated it : just as you cannot tell where is the seat of motion in the serpent, or in the kite when it sails motionless through the air ; or the swan when it floats *on*, rather than *in*, the water, so that sometimes you

could say that it was floating a fraction of an inch *above* the water, so high, so airy, does it sail this way and that. Exactly so with that danseuse, and that is the reason that her Swan Dance was to me the finest of all. *She used the ground exactly as the swan uses the water*—both give you the sensation that they could dispense with the support they get if they cared to. She just floated about the stage—*sailed* hither and thither with exactly the skimming, gliding motion of the swan, irresponsibly fast or slow, or anon coming to complete equilibrium, and anon moving off again, by sudden (but never jerky) turns.

It was really a lovely piece of true art. She was dressed in white, "all entire," the bodice being arranged with soft, swan's-down like stuff. When she poised and was motionless still, the legs, straight from the toe-tip upwards, the short spreading skirt, and the small white body poised above that again, and then above all the head in a posture of effortless, languorous grace—all these things made her look more like a *white flower*, straight and graceful, planted on the stage, than a swan. At the very end of the "dance" she did indeed become more flower than swan. For as the music died away in a gradual diminuendo, she just as it were drooped downwards, down, down—no suspicion of effort or strain: the sitting posture was reached equally gradually and with no hint of a rush to it: down still, equally, gradually, the graceful body and head float downwards like gossamer as it were, until at last it floats to the supporting earth, where it rests. A little white bird going to sleep—a white flower closing its petals after sunset! Yet it seemed equally at rest *during* its motion thither, just as you could not say that the gossamer floating gradually to earth was less restful, as it slowly fell or rather floated downwards, than when it last actually stayed motionless on the floor.

A more straightforward, clean exhibition throughout I never saw (of course there were many other things). It was an advantage that both Prima and Primo had attractive and *good* faces, the young fellow especially, whose face was that of a good-natured smiling boy, straight out of Theocritus.

The Russian Dancers. (Described to his schoolboy son.)

I have twice been to see Pavlova and the Russian Dancers—I say Russian, though I was pleased to see that about half of them were English, and that the English dancers did as well as any of them. I had not seen Pavlova since America, when you were a man of three months old ! It is perfectly wonderful how she keeps her agility and figure and looks. It was a smaller show than I saw at Hartford, and a *much* smaller one than I saw some years ago—1914 I think —in London—a truly gorgeous spectacle, not with Pavlova, though. I did feel that that dancing has a strangely refining and elevating influence, and I am *beginning* to understand how the Greeks and others worked dancing into their sacred rites and mysteries. (Show this to W., in connexion with the *Hymn of Jesus* !) The whole thing is so utterly remote from reality and the gross prose of human life : it is as though you were transported on to a different plane altogether, a plane whereon fairies flit, and beings remotely like humans, but with emotions and actions the mere shadows of theirs. For *fully* as beautiful as their dancing, indeed I think *more* so, is their dumb-show, the movements of their arms and hands, their facial expressions, their statuesque poses. I should like to see them do a piece *all* dumb-show and almost without dancing proper, just to revel in the unspeakable beauty of the movements of their arms and bodies and heads. All this, and the tiny *shadows* of emotion expressed by gesture

and expression, renders the whole thing as remote and other-worldly as classical statuary is : on *such* a plane and in the refined air of *that* atmosphere everything gross can not merely not exist but is directly negatived. In other words it has the same effect as *the ideal* always has in every art.

And then the more folk-like dances were too delicious ; I liked them better than the ballet-ish ones ; I mean the national dances of Poland, Russia, etc. There again nothing gross can enter in, but for a different reason, namely, that everything is so jolly and so good humoured, with all the sweetness of human nature when in a good temper : like meadow-sweet and " Come lasses and lads ! "

I am so glad you have such happy memories of Cairo and especially those last weeks. Naturally the years in England, with separated parents and no fixed home, seem to yield more chequered memories, dear old boy, but you will find that one day they will present themselves to your memory happily enough. Can you translate this line of *Virgil*, " Forsan *et* haec olim meminisse juvabit " : " perhaps it will be a joy one day to remember *even* these things ! "—that is to say, the things which at the moment seem less attractive or even very *un*attractive. Be sure that Mother and I *do* know and feel with our boy and girl in the trial which separation and lodgings mean to them. We do, we do. You must look on it as part of your contribution to the work of Christ, because that is what has caused it all, really. And you may be sure that we are all the time trying to think of ways to sweeten everything and to make your lives as happy as can be. And you always have *Oxford*. Applying what Mrs. Mott said of her husband (ask Mother) I would say " I'd rather be in digs at Oxford than in a nice house at Mudmarsh-cum-Slocum ! " Do you agree ? And finally, you have

always your father and mother's heart and love—all of it. So you are a rich boy, aren't you? Live richly—in digs! It reminds me of a piece of rich embroidery worked on coarse commonplace canvas. The *embroidery's* the thing.

Dearest love and a hug from your own

FATHER.

CHAPTER XI

HELLAS

My God ! I think half my soul is Greek.
(From a letter.)

A Return to Hellas.

Neither can I tell you of my return (with *passion*) to Hellenic themes (not yet through the medium of Greek itself—it has been pushed too far back by Arabic—but otherwise). My God ! I think half my soul is Greek. Before the wondrous miracle of Attic tragedy I stand amazed. Did God ever create or inspire an art-form so perfect ? And another thing : to think that we ever allowed the Oscar Wildes and Swinburnes, or all and any decadents of any age, to arrogate unto themselves representativeness of Hellenism ! Or to give the impression that Hellenism is a sort of pagan Sybaritism ! Aeschylus and Plato ! —were Isaiah or Job more austere, more nobly serious than they ? It is there we get the authentic Hellenism —not the sham article vamped up by Rome under the Empires, by Italy in the sixteenth century, or by Putney in the nineteenth. No wonder, as Dean Inge notes, true Hellenism welcomed Jesus of Nazareth as its very own.

On Kingsley's " Heroes."

The road climbs and winds its precarious way along the cliff for several miles : *the very cliff* (and how one

sees it all now !) on which sat Skiron the robber, taking his horrible toll of all travellers who passed, *and had to pass*, that way. For we are tracing, yard for yard (but in the reverse order), the exact path traversed by Theseus when he rounded the Saronic gulf from Argobis to Athens. He also ascended this rocky track : [1] on one side, close in, the precipices of Geraneia tower ; on the other side a sheer drop into the sea. Of course with meticulous care I selected *the very spot* where it must all have happened, "just so," after successively rejecting promising candidates for the honour. How that ever loved, admired and glorified book returned, and has returned to us all these days—Kingsley's "Heroes"—my first clear step into Hellas, and the atmosphere and soul of Hellas ! How I remember getting hold of that book in my eighth year or so, reading it "in the carriage" as it waited at the door of No. 9 waiting to take my Mother "down town" or to Bearsden or Garscube. How the drab, shabby-brown, smoky air of Glasgow rolled away, and one found oneself with Aethra floating eastwards past Sunium from the blue Saronic into the blue Aegean, or with Theseus on these Megara crags ! With what marvellous fidelity did the illustrations in that edition aid in giving the right feel ! For here, to-day, I recognise that the visions given by that book to that boy of eight in that dingy city were true visions : corresponding exactly with the realities revealed to-day ! My gratitude to that book has always been profound, and my admiration for it intense. While I live will I sing its praises, and put it in the way of young men and maidens, and lucky little boys and girls. And then, to think of it—"Kingsley's Heroes *retold* for the children" !!—call it hashed, and re-hashed ! Modern

[1] The Greeks called it the *kakē skalē* of Megara—the bad stairs, or ladder.

spoonfeeding with pap, *ensuring* mental rickets, I should think !

In the Theatre of Dionysus.

I tried to meditate in the Dionysiac theatre for *two*—for myself and my classical daughter ! To this extent one's ardour had, even this time, to be restrained, namely, that none of the existing stonework had at that period been cut—the period of Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides and Aristophanes. The paving of the orchestra, the masonry of the proscenium are Roman, and so are the marble seats of honour which fill the first few rows of the auditorium. Even the rows cut in the living rock which fill the rest of the auditorium were subsequent to the golden age, for they date from the next century (the fourth). Still, it is the identical site. *Along that hillside* sat the crowd of citizen-spectators as close as was necessary—often bringing their own cushions, as Aristophanes mentions ! In that circular space went the choruses round as they danced and sang those unmatchable odes of purest poetry. And on that proscenium, at the very level where I stood, the awed Athenian crowd saw first the ravings of Cassandra, the passion of Oedipus and Jocasta, and the despair of Hecuba and her Trojan women. What sights for those past dead audiences ! Yes, and what a sight they must have made for the actors on the stage ! for words fail me to describe the size of the place. In the photographs, unfortunately, it does not in the least come out, as only the bottom (and therefore the smallest) third has its stone seat-rows preserved. Above that you only get hillside until just the top. But *that* top ! it is far, far, far up and away, ever so far and away, right to the vertical fall of the Acropolis rock. The mere idea of *words* carrying distinguishably up there !—of difficult choric words, sung by a company,

embodying those profoundest thoughts in another dialect and in expressions that could hardly have been easier than difficult English poetry is to us ! If they did carry, still more if they carried on any but the stillest day, then I say the phonetic miracle, the miracle of articulation and voice-management, is complete : and the same applies to the solo voices of those actors, enunciating their lines from out the cave-like hollows of their masks from down there—from so far off that the features of the living face are wholly indistinguishable : no wonder then they discarded facial play, and went wholly out for fixed symbolic expression ! As I said before, that vast auditorium, accommodating a good part of the entire citizen manhood of the city at one time, must have been a sight for gods and mortals. Seventeen thousand it could hold, with its 78 rows up that radius of 165 feet from the orchestra.

Though the marble chairs and the thrones of the " orchestra stall " were later, it *is* nevertheless still thrilling to read the inscriptions on the seats, showing whose official seats they were from the golden age. . . . And so goodbye to the Theatre of Dionysus—insufficiently studied, insufficiently meditated in : the only way to do justice to it would be to sit a whole day in it from morn to sunset, reading and reading some of the immortal dramas produced there, until the present fell away and the past really lived once more. . . .

On Reading Homer. (To his daughter.)

It thrills me to think of you reading all that glorious Greek literature. Some of the happiest hours of my life were when I stretched myself on the shore at Rossall, on summer afternoons, and for sheer pleasure read on and on at *Odyssey* IX to XII, simply abandoning myself to the beauty and romance of the adventures —while the unchanging sea (alas though, not *ioeidês*

at Rossall) enabled me to leave the Lancashire coast far behind, and on the wings of the summer wind fly to those caerulean seas and coasts of Hellas. At that time I could read Homer nearly as quickly as Tennyson and a great deal more quickly than Browning—ah me ! Still one never knows what one may get back to one day. With regard to Virgil the *Aeneid* is certainly unequal, and I found the late books intolerable : but the 6th cannot be matched. It touches far deeper and more modern chords than the *Odyssey* XI (isn't it ?) and must have been the book which of all others gave to Dante his inspiration.

CHAPTER XII

On Books and Authors

I make a point of finding out what all these moderns are thinking about. Strange that in these days when Christianity is so vigorous, and making such extraordinary progress, there should be the phenomenon of a contemporary literature simply soaked in non-Christian or anti-Christian sentiments and principles. . . .

Holding, as I do, that the good, whether in the realm of art or of conduct, of æsthetics or ethics, has an *objective* basis, is in fact a branch of Truth, it follows that all artistic or literary criticism must be of the nature of aiming at Truth. (From his papers.)

The Queen Mother. (From a paper on *Hamlet.*)

As for Gertrude, the queen and mother, she also was a wondrous, goodly sight to look upon. We have seen her lover-like husband doting upon her all those thirty years till the day of his death ; one of those women of lovely, languid, sensuous beauty, the sheer power of which successfully conceals, through the long, easy, untested years, the undiscovered fact that beneath the perfect face and body there is nothing, no beauty or rarity of soul. Consummately practised in the diplomacy of a court, and with an easy-going court to queen it in, she had no difficulties, no cares, no griefs, absolutely no mental exertion which could mar or age her ; it seemed as if Time's only power over her physical loveliness was to mellow and to deepen it. To her lover-husband she returned an apparently equal

passion, for her type possesses physical passion in superabundance :

> " Why, she would hang on him
> As if increase of appetite had grown
> By what it fed on "

—a type of all the ages ; we know it ; Helen of Troy, Gertrude of Denmark. Created to be looked at, admired, enjoyed, always and for ever ; to be tested by Life's realities, never. Perfect so long as she remains untried and satisfied ; only the advent of the test reveals the essential commonness of the soul—that her ease and luxuries are all that she cares to secure, because they were all that she really cared for before. Even physical passion must continue to find its accustomed satisfaction, it matters comparatively little who the successor may be. And thus who ministered all good things to her before is forgotten immediately he ceased to be there to minister them.

Hamlet never remembered the time when he had not derived infinite satisfaction from simply gazing at his sweet, lovely Mamma. Her Helen-like beauty and the godlike grace of his father made up a picture that ravished his beauty-loving soul. And she was kind to her only son, too, in her superb, indolent, queenlike way. And so he asked of her nothing more ; for his ardent intellect and soul found their stimulus elsewhere—with his friends and his father. It was wholly enough just to be allowed to fill his young eyes with her, and to receive her languorous caresses. That he, and he alone, should be able to call this goddess " Mother " was too wonderful ; how should he not adore her ?

Charles de Foucauld.

The name, work, mission and message of Charles de Foucauld is beginning to penetrate to these parts.

It seems wrong that the fruits of the soul toil and mental travail, and mental toil and spiritual discipline of such a saint should not be as fully available as possible, especially among those who could receive light and instruction therefrom. . . . I feel there is so much we have to learn and to unlearn. We stretch out our hands to these unseen and unknown Brothers, who have lived more celestially, and thought more profoundly, and loved more charitably than we.

On a New Prayer Book.

What does your sister think about the Prayer Book discussions and the present prospects? We had Lord X., one of the Grey Book "bunch," here, and I had some fine talks with him. I succeeded in convincing him that even the Grey Book "Church Militant" prayer wasn't militant enough yet, that it had too little of the central idea of our January article in it, personal witness by every lay Christian.

Talk of alternative prayer books! The alternative book we really need is one in modern speech that you could use with children and illiterates and stand a chance of being understood. I baptised a boy of ten yesterday, and had written out for him into modern English the Questions and Answers, and the words of the Reception. I felt it made a stupendous difference —the difference between dignified ceremony and soul-transaction.

Extracts from a Paper on "Some Novels and Some Novelists."

(1) DICKENS.

. . . Dickens in many ways presents a very difficult problem to the critic ambitious to score bullseyes: for, as Chesterton has remarked, his best work is above criticism and his worst beneath it. All sorts of things

in his work make one itch to mark it low—Dickens, go down six places !—but the size of the man is too obstreperously evident. His pathos may be maudlin, his tragedy Adelphi Theatre, his whole style John Bullish, his characters often as infantile as griffins and hippogriffs : but the dreadful thing is that it is all unforgettable. One may consign Mr. Carker and his white teeth to the lowest limbo of artistic Hades as a stupid impossibility, a wretched cliché : but unfortunately one remembers Mr. Carker and his teeth so vividly all through one's own little life-time, that one fears that these horrible canines will be found gleaming as freshly as ever through all time, not to say eternity, and that the Carker will, in spite of them, be compelled to give to their owner and their author the amaranthine crown.

And so for Quilp, Rosa Dartle, Dora, Uriah Heep, Little Nell, Joey B., and a hundred others—all bad—and all unforgettable. Time will exert itself to erode them away, but, I terribly fear, Time will fail.

The Adelphi Theatre villains !—they do scowl so nicely, and boo so loud : your Ralph Nickleby, your Fagin and Bill Sykes : the hisses of the pit and gallery never fail, to the immense delight of the happy author ! Those terribly cheery and benevolent men—Cheeryble Brothers and the rest of them—how the pit and gallery roar ! And the naïve dénouements where the villain gets so satisfactorily knocked on the head, or strings himself up to slow music from the orchestra, *and* one ray of limelight from the R.P. flies ; with the final scene where the brave, good, blue-eyed hero with the open brow comes to his own ! And what wet pocket-handkerchiefs when the consumptive little heroine is carried off by consumption after carefully choosing a damp church-yard to sit in ! As for Rosa Dartle, she must have a sentence all to herself ; but no, before her

all comment is paralysed. . . . All this is middle-class Briton and unmixed Adelphi Theatre. Can melodrama ever be other than bad in kind? Only Dickens's melodrama is so huge in its badness. (Perhaps the eternal judge is keeping it from death in time, so as to have something to damn immortally, in order to keep the taste of the universe sound by *exhibiting*, and not by merely *annihilating*.)

I object ferociously, too, to Dickens's cheap atmospheric tricks. In symbolic drama it is allowable to the playwright to make Nature reflect the action: thus Pelléas and Mélisande must be all the time in unchangeably gloomy, stifling woods: but the reader here knows that he is in the world of poetic symbol, the art of which has its own canons. But the novel, and especially Dickens's novel, is essentially realistic in intention. Hence the device, for example, of making it always rain at the Dedwood's place in Lincolnshire, so as to make the pit and gallery feel nice and dreary, and heighten the sense of the ominous dreariness of the house of Dedwood, is just a poor stage trick. Everybody knows that the Lincolnshire country was really pretty enough and cheerful enough in itself—and by token jolly well had to *be* both pretty and cheerful when the exigences of the maze-like plot brought Esther and others of the Cheerybles of the story into that part of the country. The rain cleared up fast enough then! The sun suddenly shone, and the birds perked up with surprising celerity. Not thus do the greatest novelists in their greatest work handle Nature, or rather are handled by her. Such effects are naïve but they are none the less humbug. The fact is, the plot business only contributes to spoil Dickens's work. *Pickwick's* grand merit is to be plotless: but after *Pickwick* Dickens seems to have felt himself bound to produce a story, and that story a particularly thick plot. With

lavish hand, he crowds in his characters, scores of them, moving perhaps in five or six strata which are most artificially connected together, thus involving the most appalling abuse of accident and coincident. So artificial are the clamps that hold the several story-sequences together, that sometimes (as in *Our Mutual Friend*) you can pursue the fortunes of each sequence by itself *in turn*, right through the book, with very little loss. Or else (as in *Bleak House*), the ligaments which bring the various members of each group into maze-like relations with each other are grossly artificial, and strain the device of accident beyond all conscience.

If, therefore, as Chesterton avers, the true Dickensian is suspicious when he hears the *latest* Dickens novels praised for their "carefully constructed plots," then I proclaim myself a super-Dickensian, for it is with me *Pickwick* first, and the rest nowhere—as *books*, though of course every one of them has immortal scenes and characters. *Pickwick* has the following enormous merits: (1) it has no plot, (2) no tragedy, (3) no great seriousness, (4) no sentiment tap, and no water-supply. Consequently the lime-light is turned off, all is high spirits and delightful. In such a milieu exaggerative tendencies are just as welcome, and indeed as right and inevitable as they are in Rabelais, for caricaturing is good art in the sphere of *humour;* it is when the author begins to feel solemn that it turns and betrays him. Again, strain being absent, the action of *Pickwick* moves in a real atmosphere, just the atmosphere of Old England, bright, wet, cold, spring-like and foggy by turns, and each turn jolly and enjoyable if you are in any spirits. In that atmosphere, Dickens even attains naturalness; how rare, after all, in Dickens is a really broadly drawn nature-portrait, like that of old Wardle and his old Mother! As for the Wellers, the

universal and the individual meet in them, and the eternal is achieved. While even the exaggerated characters are felt to be as inevitable as the classical ones, for in some genres the grotesque is not only legitimate but necessary. But in the other novels, I maintain that real greatness is only achieved incidentally, when the plot is forgotten, and the story is for the moment become a piece of Pickwick-like adventure. I believe my childish instinct was perfectly correct, which shrank from the attempt to understand how on earth Mr. Squeers ever came into the main thoroughfare of the plot at all, and which felt that his introduction into it immediately lowered the artistic value of Mr. Squeers himself. Let him remain, I dimly felt, unexplained and inexplicable, alternately at the Saracen's Head, Snowfell, and at Gretna Bridge, Yorkshire. *There* he is immortal. In his subsequent London experiences you feel he is masquerading : you get a manufactured villain, and you spoil a heaven-created rogue. The first is nil in value : the last, who shall estimate his worth ?

It will be understood then that the greater proportion of irresponsibility in a Dickens novel, when the characters are thrown in pell-mell, and adventure is more in the author's mind than plot, the higher I place the book, and vice versa. In this way *Nicholas Nickleby* and *David Copperfield* come high in spite of Ralph and Co. in the one, and Steerforth and Little Emly in the other. An appalling example at the other end of the scale is *Dombey and Son.* There we have Dickens at his most lamentable, his cheapest, his worst.

I regard *The Tale of Two Cities* as exceptional. There the exigencies of a historic situation made him more restrained and careful, and the work more artistic. Still more important, for the core of the plot he had struck on an incident essentially tragic—simple in its

emotional nature, classical in its dramatic appeal. It is the difference between Alcestis in the open-air theatre at Athens, and a G. R. Sims in the frowsiness of the Adelphi, Strand ; nay, between the Alcestis and a sob-stuff film in the American Cosmograph (Cairo).

It is notable that Dickens had the true instinct to confine himself to *England*. His little trip to Paris must not be taken too seriously, for the atmosphere there is not really any more *French* than the atmosphere of *Hamlet* is Danish. Now, had he gone north to Scotland, or west to Wales and Ireland, it would be very different. With true instinct he lets these things alone, for truly awful would the result have been. Dickens had fancy rather than imagination : he could create in his own familiar milieu : but he could neither project himself into a foreign milieu, nor into that eternal sphere where we meet Humanity, practically stripped of the accidentiae of century and country. The fact is that Dickens, both in his excellencies and vices as a writer, is essentially John Bull. The opinion of the Continent upon him would go a good way to settle the question how far his greatness is absolutely first-class.

(2) STEVENSON.

I hold that Stevenson is a very great novelist. The reason why this is not more frankly admitted is probably this fuss about plot and construction : Stevenson, it is said, never could keep up the long pressure of novel, and the backbones of his stories have a way of breaking into two. I think that this is the shallowest of criticism. I have shown how plot is as often as not a delusion and snare : many of the very greatest works of fiction (e.g. *Don Quixote*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Pickwick*), are plotless, and loose to a degree in construction : that the adventure is the thing, and that *good* plots, if they are not born, cannot be made. Now Stevenson has, before

all novelists, this spirit of radiant adventure. Again, he is consummate in his dramatic use of history, and of the reciprocal impact between history and the characters of the story. Again, his nature-atmosphere is as true and as luminous as his history-atmosphere. He makes full use of it, but he does not stage-manage it. It is sunlight and moonlight and starlight ; not lime-light. It makes him : he does not make it. Its winds are from Aeolus himself, not from a wind-machine behind the scenes. Its rains are turned on from no main, nor forced through any gimlet-holed lead pipes. He has conquered Nature only by obeying her. Whether it be the grey, blowy Edinburgh streets, or the glories of the Highlands, or the sweet, breezy links of the East Coast, or the wild yet pastoral bareness of the Pentlands, or the warm tropical seas, or the jewelled coral islands of the Pacific—all is just, sincere. The story makes one piece with the scenery, and that by none of the elaborate charlatanry of which stage-managers, like Dickens, and grand, super-stage-managers like Victor Hugo, marshalled their effects, but simply because the creative inspiration, when it seized the author, projected into his mind equally and at once the highlander *and* his moor, the lowlander *and* his hill, the trader *and* his purple seas, sailing on from island to island, summer isles of Eden lying in deep spheres of sea—scenery for heroism and villainy or mere jolly adventure, as the case might be.

It is this same piercing imagination that enabled Stevenson to people these true Nature landscapes and seascapes with true men and women, living and breathing, from Mother Nature's own breast. Every personage is a character, stands out from the canvas like a Van Dyke, or, say, a Raeburn—and with what apparent effortlessness ! creations, enormously great as anything in Scott like Alan Breck, or quite small affairs

like the characters that just cross the pages once, as the lawyers in *Catriona* and many others in *The Wrecker*, etc. How sure his touch is ! hardly ever does it err. Attwood in *The Ebb-tide* is an exception ; an immense amount of pains was lavished on him, perhaps just a little too much, and the attempt just fails : the work is too self-conscious ; Attwood was, so to speak, made, not begotten.

But the great majority of Stevenson's wonderful company of characters were begotten, not made. They live and move. Light is about them. And they are communicated to the reader in English which has the true classic distinction of style. One says : Here is true romance, the romance of *life*, not of *books* ! And again, Here is literature !

And what shall we say of the glorious fragment that would have carried his greatness to an indisputable zenith, *Weir of Hermiston* ? In this marvel of a book, all the admirable features already noted are crowded in concentrated essence, and to a heightened power. Here was to have been true " plot " and not mere adventure, for *once*—and *what* a plot ! a true one, no complications, all sheer and elemental as a Greek tragedy, terrible, inevitable as the first part of *Faust* ; no attitudinising, no ranting, no Adelphi Theatre—good Lord ! the Adelphi Theatre is as remote from *Weir* as the Strand is from the mid-Pentlands : no stage-villain, no Mephistopheles—just an unprincipled young fool : no artificial aristocracy—just Scottish country people and a couple of country Scottish gentry. No kail-yaird saints or *Green-shutter* devils—heaven forfend us from both ! But men and women, my masters, large as life, and (as it needs must be in the highest art) just twice as natural : every character a study : the deepening tragedy, which nevertheless is an idyll, clean as the Midlothian hill air, hill-scented as

though the book had been laid in bog-myrtle and wild-mint : scent just *suggested*, colour and scene just suggested—none of your second-rate artist's paint-slinging, as in William Black and R. Hitchens : emotion too deep for antics ; pathos too dear for tears : *drama—heroic*, Sophocles and Euripides in one, as the hidden fires are seen kindling and silently glowing up in the breast of the elder Kirstie, and under the sensitive reserve of young Weir ; as the Four Black Brothers, who, as the story opens, are just plain Scottish men after the one heroic episode of their youthful days—a myth of the past, well-nigh—but are visibly being prepared suddenly to reach a second time heroic dimensions under the stimulus of the story's tragic crisis. What a lesson to moderns in the true heroics—strong, concentrated in power, yet restrained as Greek art itself, classic and romantic fused into one, Nature's own substance stamped with Art's own form ! Where shall we look for its like, whence expect it in these or the coming days ? And to think that it is a fragment. Sappho herself is not more cruelly limited, nor more sufficiently and triumphantly represented—by her two odes.

(3) MEREDITH.

Enough : let us quit this double tragedy of author and book, and let us consider a pillar not horribly broken across as this one, but finished to the last tendril of its carved capital : *George Meredith.* Here I want my shot to be brief and bold with a strong arm of conviction behind it ; namely, that *The Egoist* is one of the greatest things in the language—a colossal *tour de force* indeed ; that *Richard Feverel* is worthy of being mentioned with it, and that, compared with these two the rest are negligible, unaccountable, fumbling failures. How the man who could write the superbly

beautiful *Feverel*, and the gigantic *Egoist*, could fumble with the futile persons who crowd the canvas of *Harry Richmond*, *Beauchamp*, *Evan Harrington* and *Diana*, I know not. In these four books I only allow one first-rate success—the Countess; one second-rate, Diana. In *Harry Richmond*, the man who *could* draw boys like young Richard and Crossjay, outsicklies David and Steerforth and even challenges the wretched Eric himself. Meredith never seemed to know what he was aiming at or writing for in these books. The characters are muzzily drawn, weakly impelled from within, and by an uncertain hand from without. I would wager that if these four books could be forgotten and put on the market anonymously, there would be no need to go on reprinting them. But *Richard* is a thing of loveliness. It has one big literary defect though, which Stevenson, with that fine, kind and just criticism of his, noted—namely, the book is a really high comedy that has been needlessly forced into tragedy. It is possible that *Weir of Hermiston* would have shown us the reverse mistake—a story tragic in its very warp and woof, yet given " a good ending " by its author, too humble perhaps to set himself to that most awful literary responsibility—a tragedy—a thing which none but God's own great ones should or can touch. We have seen that Dickens only reached it once. Now Feverel had no business to die. He was really bludgeoned by his author, not pistolled by his duellist opponent: and bludgeoning by an author is a fell crime: in *Richard Feverel* it spoils the book: it irritates, not moves. It purgeth us not of pity, but raiseth within us unpurged wrath. A fine race is lost on the tape, because the runner looked aside—to the gallery, I think, and not to dear Truth.

But, it may be said, *What* Truth? Is it not true that anyone, whether his life set out to be tragic or

not, *might* be any day bludgeoned out of life, by, say, a clumsy motor accident. A life of essential comedy—Dan Leno's, for example—might (one can't deny) be sadly terminated on his wedding morning by falling down the altar stairs. If Nature ever behaves thus, is it not the highest truth and fidelity to Nature to follow her occasionally in this behaviour when we write?

No, it is not. For artistic truth and natural fact are not identical. Every work of art has something of the symbolic about it: its end is present in its beginning. It is a picture, not a photograph of reality. Nature might wreck Robinson Crusoe on his way home; but Art may not. Nature might kill off all the characters of *As You Like It* by an earthquake, say, or through Jaques going mad; but Art cannot. Conversely Melisande must die by Art's changeless decree, though Nature might admittedly have sent her a cleverer gynaecologist and pulled her through. The argument, therefore, that Feverel *might* undeniably have been hit by that pistol bullet is a frivolous one. He was as truly murdered by Meredith as was Little Nell, with shameful levity, done in by the atrocious Dickens—snivelling moreover like a very walrus the while. . . .

As for *The Egoist*, it is beyond praise, and beyond man's comprehension. For if it was written with inside knowledge, then Meredith reveals an unbelievable condition of soul. If imaginatively, then a miracle of thought-reading has been wrought. Am I right in the idea that Meredith never rose to these great levels except in the neighbourhood of Egoism (as a curious paradox)? For Richard's father was of the Patterne family. So was Harry Richmond's. And the Countess was the Egoiste, who, however, can't be taken too seriously. Thus in the book where egoism is the central subject, the dynamo of Meredith's creative power works at full power; and wave on wave of life

flows out therefrom, radiating into the utmost confines, the smallest surface-fibres, of the tale. The book gives the lie to the a priori judgment that the analytical novel paralyses the life of the characters.

(4) HARDY.

Of Hardy's massive powers there can be no doubt. His profound and detailed knowledge of Nature, his minute and sympathetic knowledge of at least some classes of men, and above all his exquisite sense of beauty, place him very high in English literature. For sheer loveliness the dairy-mead scene in *Tess* cannot be surpassed, and there are scores of pages in *Far from the Madding Crowd* that can be classed with these. The loveliness, moreover, passes over from the scenery to the humanity that people it. It is no question of kail-yairding that makes the beauty of those dairy-meads echo itself in the artless goodness that beautified the four lovers of Angel Clare. We are here dealing with *poetry*, and poetry at its best. Again as one turns over page after page of peasant talk in *Far from the Madding Crowd*, poured out with lavish hand, good measure running over, satisfying and yet leaving a delight that looks for even more still, one says to oneself—This is simply Shakespearean. Ruskin's words about Mannering's conversations with Pleydell recur. Here is a man preserving to us for ever something infinitely precious, which but for him would be hopelessly lost, giving it to us with a true realism which is only confirmed, not falsified, by being passed through the poetic processes of his own spirit.

What did its best to ruin Hardy's work, though fortunately it could not succeed, was his preaching propensity. Now I have no real objection to preaching. At the proper time and place, it is most useful and necessary ; but the preacher knows, or has to learn,

that however much he puts into his sermon, it cannot be *literature*. The grinding of any didactic axe can only tend to spoil a creative work of art. It is a detail that, while most preachers are at pains to be preaching God, Hardy was earnestly witnessing to a sort of Devil : the principle is the same. The Nemesis is very clear in his work. A wave of good humour, or the heat of creative inspiration, in *Far from the Madding Crowd* kept that beautiful work suddenly free from that corruptive reflectivity—it is amusing to watch Hardy doing his best to work in his dear old devil-stunt, but the healthy tissues of the story simply kill the bacilli before they have had time to get strong : and so its blood runs red and pure to the end. In *Tess*, on the contrary, Hardy was determined to demonstrate his Devil, and to manufacture a tragedy at all costs. Does not the reader feel that it is Thomas Hardy who is stage-managing these disappointments, misunderstandings, deadly coincidences behind the scenes all the time, the proof of which is the increasing artificiality of the closing scenes and the comparative staginess of the scenery and atmospheric effects at the end? Not that life is not or may not be tragic ; but

> " How pure of heart and sound of head,
> With what divine affections bold,
> Should be the man . . ."

who touches so much as the hem of the tragic robe ! The moderns seem hardly great enough ; they are too reflective and doctrinaire and pettish ; their tragedies are made, not begotten. The note of inevitability which characterises your true tragedy, *Job*, *Agamemnon*, *Oedipus*, *King Lear*, *Faust*, is absent in *Tess*. The spectator knows that at any minute he could have stopped Tess's and that, unlike David, she has fallen into the hands of man, not God. But in those others,

the spectator stands aghast and pitiful as he sees scene after scene leading with relentless Fate to their soul-piercing end : *then* tragedies are in the hands of God, not man : I mean the mysterious Scheme of Things, not the Scheme of the Author. But, for that very reason, there is in these true tragedies an unargued sense that the heart-piercing end somehow leaves the human spirit triumphant and master of its fate, and *that* whether or not an epilogue is added as in *Job* ; or a Part 2 as in *Faust* ; or a Coloneus as in *Oedipus* ; or nihil as in *Lear*. I hold that it is just the *arbitrariness* of Hardy's tragic method that robs his tragic conclusion of this tragic triumph, and that the absence of the latter leaves us sceptical as to the method, to say nothing of the philosophy. The artistic mistake brings its own Nemesis. We cannot be broken-hearted over Tess as we are over Marguerite, though we ought, properly speaking, to be more so ; and the real reason is that our instinct tells us that it is *Hardy* who has so successfully shepherded her to Winchester gaol, not without much trouble, while Goethe had absolutely nothing to do with the dreadful spectacle of Marguerite in the dungeon straw. The final breakdown of Hardy's method and its final Nemesis may be seen in *Jude the Obscure*, where the didactic virus is seen to have corrupted and weakened the very things which were formerly so strong—the grip on plot, on Nature and on character alike. . . .

CHAPTER XIII

On the Writings of H. G. Wells.

The master-problem, the consideration of which rules the whole of the thought of H. G. Wells and is paramount in his writings from beginning to end, is *the future of this planet.* This matter possesses him like a master-passion. " Curiously not-interested in things as they are, curiously interested in things as they shall be," such is his description of himself, in *Impressions of America,* I think. Now this problem may present itself to the mind either from a speculative or from a practical point of view ; and in Wells' writings both points of view are represented, though the practical greatly predominates. And this is not surprising, for there is reason to believe that when he lets the *speculative* predominate, as in his first work, *The Time Machine,* the conclusions reached are pessimistic ; whereas the conceptions that rule his *practical* thought on the same problem are invariably optimistic to the core. . . . That is to say, when asking, To what will this world come ? a tragedy seems to loom ; but when asking, To what may we bring this world ? the whole sky clears. Nowhere is the antinomy thus set up speculatively resolved. Nowhere, as far as I know, does he call in the Deus ex Machina of Radium, for example, to administer the elixir of life to the dying world of *The Time Machine* ; nor resort to the newest theory of the endless cosmic cycle for comfort in view

of the uncongenial thought that, as far as this globe is concerned, the human race is doomed. Rather, as we shall see, is the intellectual contradiction left quietly where it is, and sceptical Saul is once more found nakedly prophesying among the sons of the prophets the doctrine of Faith. . . .

This Faith, he tells us, is not in anybody or in anything particular, still less is it any creed of alleged dogmatic truth, made up of hard and knobby (or is it "knobbly"?) articles of belief. Rather is it a general atmosphere in which he, for one, lives and works; a general conviction which he finds practically necessary, though he does not demand the allegiance of anybody else to it, that the huge synthesis of the cosmos betrays an underlying orderliness, and that this in turn necessitates a faith in the existence of a purposefulness, and so in the non-vanity of the efforts of mankind. In *First and Last Things* he explains elaborately how purely personal and indemonstrable this faith is: though in *Anticipations* he seemed to think it would be inevitably the religion of the coming race of thinker-governors. It is further noticeable that in *Anticipations* he calls this underlying orderliness, or the spirit of it, somewhat emphatically *God*; whereas in the later *First and Last Things* he fights shy of the name, on the plea that it would be taken by people to connote more than he means it to. I am still not clear how far this "faith" includes the immortality of *the human race*, or merely the immortality of the evolving cosmos, so to speak. The strong impression left on my own mind from the general consideration of his works is that it does include the persistence of the *human species*, in whom, as he says, the whole living creation has come to consciousness (*First and Last Things*). In *Utopia* in a moment of spiritual exaltation, he rises by night and declares to the stars that they too

shall not escape the dominance of man. And somewhere he declares categorically his belief that the fruits of human effort are not destined to be lost, whether in the hideous murk of a world damned to the eternal cold of night and space, or in the catastrophe and conflagration of some cosmic collision. *Personal* immortality he dismisses finally, and with some contemptuousness, in *First and Last Things*. But, this being so, we might ask whether in the light of the general conclusions pressed on us by astronomical research, a belief in the immortality of the race is more tenable? Or rather, is it not considerably less tenable? Here there is another antinomy. Possibly thinkers of this type will find they have to develop their thought exactly as the ancient Hebrews did theirs and find in individual human immortality the only rational basis for that of the species itself.

In the valiant corporal of *The War of the Worlds*, Wells, as I have already said, betrays his lover-like passion for the human race, which has been evolved from below by so much travail-pain, and which is destined, he believes, to so glorious a future. We see in this conception an affinity to Nietzsche, though I still have to point out an important difference presently. Nietzsche's thought is itself an inverted Schopenhauerism. That is to say, both Nietzsche and Wells accept Schopenhauer's premiss of the will to live and to create, which has proceeded with apparent blindness until it becomes conscious in human reason; but both resolutely ignore his pessimism, which Wells thinks was a purely personal idiosyncrasy of Schopenhauer's, and insist that the will to live is the author of all the good, as well as of all the evil in the world, all the joy as well as all the pain; and that the human reason, which the evolutionary process finally threw up, is sufficient in time to deal with the evil and the pain,

and subdue them to good and to joy ; in fact to overtake disorder like a gardener gradually overtakes a wilderness, and to shape it into that garden which is Paradise.

This idea of the coming of the *Weltgeist* into self-consciousness in the human spirit is also a characteristic of Hegelian thinking. Is it not, by the way, not a little remarkable that humanist thinkers of all types, whether idealistic as Hegel, poetic as Goethe, pessimistic as Schopenhauer, agnostic-artistic as Wagner and Wells, are as nakedly *geocentric* in their thought as any pre-Copernican ? With them a poetically rapturous estimation of *man* takes the place of the religious dogmas which were supposed to necessitate the geocentric theory of the universe. To them Man is as much the centre of all things as man's world was before. It is notable that, the far colder, more prosaic and scornful intellect of Bernard Shaw seems to be anxious to avoid delusions in this direction also. He has no faith whatsoever that the race will necessarily survive ; if it has vitality enough, it will ; if not, no heroics of any sort whatever will buy its survival. I question whether Shaw thinks the human race either the most valuable or the unique and definitive product of cosmic evolution.

I still hope to see Wells working out the thoughts suggested by these surely very pertinent queries. Meanwhile, forsaking this high speculative ground, let us inquire what there is in Wells' conception by way of guarantee that the secular evolution of the society harboured by this planet is going to progress favourably in the *nearer* future. I have already shown that even in this more limited question, the *speculative* side of his mind shows the possibility of various catastrophes ; but *practically* he seems to believe that history will manage to steer clear of these. What, then, is the guarantee that a positive amelioration of things is

destined? Here we come to another prime article of the Wellsian creed, formally, emphatically, and solemnly stated by him as such in *New Worlds for Old*, viz. "I believe in Goodwill." Human Goodwill, never destroyed, though impeded, obscured and oppressed by innumerable antagonistic factors, exists, has existed, and will increase: and from the men of goodwill—their increase in number, and the gradual elimination of the factors that oppose goodwill—will come the salvation of the world.

A rider to the same article of belief is Wells' conviction that the will to co-operate is ineradicable in the human species, and that it is inevitably destined to increase. This article of belief is only a paraphrase of the former, for goodwill with him *is* simply the will to co-operate, to work together towards the attainment of the universal good. It is this master-principle that accounts for Wells' declared socialism, and it is here that he parts company with Nietzsche. The one features the world of the future as a beehive of willing and joyous co-operators in which degrees of talent, though recognised, are accompanied by no airs of superiority, no disdain, and by no soreness. The race as a *whole* in fact is to be Superman, not any section of it. The latter's scheme for the future race is rather a pyramid, in which the supermen at the top, individualists to the backbone, will trample with considerable joy on the feeble-minded masses, composed chiefly of socialists, Christians, and other slaves and sentimentalists, whose only function is to compose the base, and sustain the weight of the apex. They are at the base just because they *are* base. This attitude of contempt for the Polloi (which seems to be idiosyncratic rather than doctrinal, for it comes out in Anarchists like Nietzsche, Socialists like Shaw, Polysyllabists like Carlyle and Ruskin), is alien to the gentler spirit of

Wells, and in this respect he draws near to the democratic Radicalism of Chesterton. It is true that he will have nought to do with the worshipping of the *present* demos, or with "government by the grey," as he calls it scornfully; and herein he differs from the Chestertonian Radicalism. It is also true that in *Anticipations* he points with an inhuman coldness, which, however, is only *apparent* because he is writing a prediction, not an exhortation, to the "abyss" into which as into a midden the excrement of our present social system is and will continue to be cast, as long as present economic conditions are allowed to continue. But all this does not alter the fact of the general attitude of Wells towards men of every sort,—that of sympathy. As artist and poet he can appreciate even the picturesque rascal and wastrel; possibly he might even be sorry to see the disappearance of the Anglican clergyman, so useful does he find that pathetic creature to whet his sting upon. All he demands in regard to these and other undesirables is that they shall not be allowed to propagate their kind and so to clog the delicate machine of society.

This belief then of Wells, that the will to co-operate loyally is ineradicable and that it is destined greatly to increase is a cardinal one, and *it* also belongs to the promise of faith; for, as we shall see in a moment, it does not follow at all logically from the metaphysical presuppositions of his thought. Wells' type of socialism is not wholly or even mainly economic; consequently it aims at no short cuts to be effected by any socialist party acting as heaven-sent saviour. Wells would far prefer to see co-operative and (to use a favourite term of his) constructive ideals permeating all parties, than to see any one party claiming to possess the one orthodox creed, by which alone social salvation can come. Hence his recent split with the

Fabians, "after scenes of splendid exasperation" (G. K. C.) with the Fabian High Pontiff, G. B. Shaw: and hence his hatred and contempt for those party socialists who, in his view, are misrepresenting and degrading the great social ideal of co-operation, which is based on mutual understanding and worked by clear common sense—and is an ideal, a principle, a *temper* rather than a cut-and-dry programme. (Thus at the last election he deliberately supported a Liberal against a Socialist on the score that Lloyd George was working out socialist ideals in his own way. *The New Machiavelli* reflects his rebellion against all his apparent natural allies.)

It follows from this that Wells has seen—has probably come to see—much more clearly than in his more callow days, and much more clearly than many dogmatic socialists—that the practical realisation of the socialist scheme (as of every scheme) depends on the men who are to work it. The man behind the gun—the old story. This comes out very clearly in his *Utopia*, where the entire social fabric is sustained by a class of disciplined individuals, named by him Samurai. Eliminate these, and the scheme, he confesses, fades into a dream, collapses, disappears. . . . And though in *First and Last Things*, he has gone back on this idea of a class, or community, of rulers, the fundamental principle is not withdrawn—that the more the state is socialised, the more vitally necessary it will be to have raised up exceptional men to sustain it. And about the time of his break with the Fabians he was putting naïve questions to his socialist friends, which seemed to me to suggest that doubts as to ability of actual socialism to produce such men were beginning to force themselves in on him. Quite apart from this, the very stringency of the socialist conception of government, discipline, and State-supremacy, shows that

socialism is, and may easily become, the very opposite of Liberalism and of Democracy itself: Wells' hypothesis of the Samurai was only a clear and frank recognition of this fact, which is so unwelcome to some minds. Nor may these governors be conceived of as shadowy, anonymous bureaucrats, but as very particularly individualised individuals. The whole conception is, in short, neo-aristocratic; its enemies say, neo-oligarchic.

Our argument is, you observe, naturally drawing us on to consider the individualistic side of Wells' mind. As we have seen, he is only a socialist because he "*believes*" in goodwill, in the will to co-operate towards good. But the logical conclusion from his own metaphysical premises would rather lead to *individualism*, the sort of thing that sometimes expresses itself in the gentle anarchism of a Kropotkin, and sometimes in the iron tyranny of a Nietzsche. What, then, are these metaphysical principles? The discussion, and even the full statement of them would lead us too far afield, but they may be said to be, briefly, nominalism pushed to its extremest sceptical conclusion. Wells is a sceptic and a pre-Socratic to the bone; Heraclitus is his philosopher *par excellence*, the man who viewed the whole tissue of existence as *fluid*, incessantly moving, changing, *becoming*; so that you could not even say truly "I dip my foot in this river," because the river was changed as you spoke the word. According to this system every predication is more or less false, e.g. "Socrates is a man," first, because Socrates is always developing, and the Socrates who exists by the time you have reached your predicate is not the Socrates you left immovably stuck (as you hoped) on the pin of the subject; and secondly because "man" is a class, and classes have no real existence, and possess no more than a conventional meaning. (How exactly the feat of predication according to this philosophy resembles

Alice's attempt to play croquet with hedgehogs that *ran* away for balls, flamingoes that *fled* away for mallets, and courtiers that *sloped* away for hoops !)

Wells says that he rediscovered all these views for himself, not having had the advantage of an Oxford education. If anyone wants to read a really fresh, illuminating discussion, fresh, first-hand, making the dry philosophic bones live, let him turn to the Appendix of *Mankind in the Making*. I wish to goodness that I could have read that essay when I, who *had* the said advantage of an Oxford education, was trying unsuccessfully to understand, from what the dons and the text-books told me, *why* it was that blood as well as ink had been shed over the Nominalist *versus* Realist controversy. That essay would have enlightened one. In brief, Wells, led by his biological studies, denies the absolute validity of the conception of the species, the class ; denies its existence as a unique objective entity and finds in the *individual* the only unique. Even electrons, he avers, if you could know them individually and intimately enough, would be found to have as well-marked individualities as your aunts. I cannot hope to show in detail how this sceptical philosophy makes itself felt in all Wells' thinking, all his attitudes towards the various phases of life with which he deals. It explains, for one thing, that explosion of his against dogmatic socialists ; they were systematising too much for him, classifying too metallically, thinking too woodenly, overlooking the importance of the individual, assuming the reality of the type (hated and hateful word !). It partly explains his onslaught on his former friends, Mr. and Mrs. Webb, in *The New Machiavelli*. It still more partially explains, perhaps, his recent eruptions in the direction of individual moral freedom which, contrasted with the grave Spartanism of his Samurai conception, looks so peculiarly oddly.

Let me instead attempt to show the most important of ways in which this extreme philosophic individualism which is with him a dogma, modifies the socialism which is to him only a matter of faith and hope.

1. This philosophic scepticism and nominalism, with the extreme elasticity and fluidity of its general conceptions, makes the type of Wells' socialism fluid and pervasive, rather than rigid and revolutionary.

2. It emphasises for him the knowledge that social reform is not a matter of economic adjustment wholly or even primarily, and thus tends to make his socialism less crass and materialistic, less low-toned. Life is for him a seamless robe ; every aspect of it is important, and all aspects of it are woven into each other. Art is therefore as important as economics, and beauty must enwrap all economic improvements as an atmosphere, and pervade them like the ether. Art is therefore to Wells far more than the so-called Fine Arts ; it is simply Applied Beauty applied to every department of public, domestic and personal life. His enthusiasm for literary style is another manifestation of the same sense of the value and indispensableness of beauty. Wells waxes eloquent on the possibilities of the English language and evidently (sometimes of late too evidently) revels in the artistry of words.

3. A third direction in which his socialism is modified and enriched by his individualistic philosophy appears in his genius for characterisation. This, one feels, is not the line of social reformers as such ; they are so concerned with economic law, with strata of population, with facts and figures, with " types " and classes, that the individual is apt to become with them a " case " to be docketed and filed and put away, and souls to be treated in the gross, not one by one. Wells' individualism saves him easily from this snare ; to his sceptical philosophy, all talk about types is folly, and

when the type is living *men*, the folly becomes an offence. This, you remember, was one of the unforgivable sins of the unfortunate Altiora in *The New Machiavelli*. If even atoms are as individualistic as aunts, then what a sin to treat of aunts as if they were to be taken in the gross like atoms! I think we shall not be wrong then in attributing Wells' success in characterisation to his insight into the individuality of the individual. And this insight he owes to his philosophy.

Before I go on to the last section of my paper, naturally led on to by what has been said upon Wells as a delineator of human character—I might venture one criticism on this metaphysic. When this scepticism about the objective reality of the class is compared with Wells' practical presuppositions about mankind, an antinomy seems to reveal itself, comparable with the one already noted between his speculative pessimism and his practical optimism. If a class is always a shadowy thing, ragged at the edges, torn out of the seamless tissue of nature ; if, in short, it does not exist at all as a unique entity, and so there are no such things as the classes, chair, good, pink, bird, etc.—why, we may ask, does the whole of Wells' social thinking proceed on the supposition that there is a class *man*? I have already pointed out how his enthusiasm for the human race, in which all life becomes articulate, and beyond which he does not really point us to anything, makes Wells' outlook geocentric in fact. This suffices to show the importance he attaches to the idea " man." But according to his philosophy this is a mere name without any corresponding definite meaning in the world of reality. Why then this fuss about this one changing, disappearing element in the universal flux?

Turning then from our author's philosophic position, and its influence on his work, let us consider his merits and his limitations as a delineator of character. The

two really go together ; in naming limits we cannot fail to do justice to the merit thus limited.

1. In the first place, the most real of his characters stand in a very accidental relation to his visions of social regeneration. I call particular attention to this point, for possibly it helps to confirm the suspicion that it is not the schemings, dreamings, and labourings of socialism that are going to produce the strongly individualised characters which are admittedly indispensable for the life of every State, and, most of all, the socialistic one. Wells is fond of pointing ironically to the frequently entire negligibility of those through whom some striking advance in human knowledge is made. In his works we have the man who discovered the Food of the Gods, with his corns, his cloth boots and his Jaeger under-garments, dismissed out of the story with as little ceremony as if he were a tabby cat. And this quality of littleness attaches itself in some degree to all his real characters ; you might say the more they live, the littler they are, as Kipps and Mr. Polly. These characters you feel the author loves, and he makes you love them ; but they have precious little to do with the men of goodwill, of fine thinking, of clean, beautiful lives, etc., etc., of whom we hear so much in the social treatises. It is easier to talk about such men than to make them live. When he introduces them in his romances, they are failures : the Samurais, to put it mildly, look uncommonly like superior bores : the splendid young giant-supermen in *The Food of the Gods* are just handsome lay figures. The hero of *The New Machiavelli* is his most earnest attempt to make his social reformer (earnest, large-souled and all the rest) humanly interesting, and one feels it to be a failure, even though he is liberally endowed with human passions and frailties. Wells is happier and more at home with the

queer folk who in his disquisitions would probably figure as "contingents for the abyss"; with the eccentrics, the magnitude of whose destinies is set with intentional irony in glaring contrast with the engaging commonness, vulgarity, ordinariness, or queer oddity of their personalities. One cockney—for does Wells really understand anybody but a cockney?—watching while Hohenzollern demi-gods play at Providence from air-fleets, and another cockney taking signals from a friend in the moon—these are typically ironical contrasts of this kind.

2. This inability to create characters large enough to fill his *Châteaux d'Espagne* is all of a piece with his curious way of belittling the actual personages who are rendering the very social service for which his books are an appeal. In *Tono Bungay* there are signs that Wells is doing this quite consciously: for he makes his hero, swelling with noble aspirations, come in for a Fabian meeting, and takes wicked occasion to make him reflect on the somewhat ridiculous figures cut by the personages—all friends and comrades of H. G. Wells, by the bye, who are planning so assiduously the reformation of this world. But is that hero much better himself? Towards the end of the book an earnest attempt is made to ennoble him and superhumanise him, whereat he entirely loses interest for us. (Cf. *The Comet.*) The plain fact is that Wells is a born satirist; the instant he gets a good look at the real people who are playing the earnest reformer, he cannot for the life of him help laughing; he is absolutely in his element satirising the Ruskinite, Manning, that unconscious humbug, and those other conscious humbugs in *Kipps*. One day we hope he will satirise his own Samurai, his giants, his serious, large-minded, elaborately tolerant, elaborately non-saintly Capeses and other like heroes. They do not attract us

or convince us at all. The absurd Mr. Lewisham tearing up his Schema of the world's reformation and his own career as reformer, and addressing himself to a career as paterfamilias, is much more to the point. One day Wells may tear up his own Schema and satirise himself, and that will be best of all, and well worth waiting for indeed.

3. It follows from this tendency to be tickled by incongruities and to caricature, that his rough work as a character-drawer is limited and marred by some furious prejudices. Three classes of men are the subjects of incessant and savage onslaughts: bishops, schoolmasters and Anglican clergy. That perfect work of art, *Kipps*, is marred by an absolutely silly and pointless paragraph about the first-named. But they, with the second, are attacked in the *treatises* rather than satirised in the romances. Very different is it in regard to the third class, and I here must enter a protest against that libellous, melancholy procession of black-coated, lily-livered, anaemic, fushionless, weak-kneed, weak-mouthed, weak-eyed, brainless, nerveless, spunkless, idea-less, limp, fish-eyed, clammy-handed, humbugs or asses, the Anglican vicars and curates who figure in practically all his stories. This is assuredly a glaring instance of Wells' character-drawing being vitiated by his ungovernable prejudices.

4. And very close to this comes this final limitation, which shows how far Wells is from the great creative giants of fiction; the fact, namely, that his really successful characters are obviously taken straight from the somewhat narrow circle with which he is entirely familiar. *These* live intensely; they are drawn from the very life. And yet, even here, a distinction must be drawn. When Shakespeare throws an hostler carelessly on to the canvas in *Henry IV*, or Scott a fisherman in *The Antiquary*, you know indeed that they are

re-creating figures which were very familiar to them in their daily lives. But do we not feel that characters are being at the same time subtly universalised by the universal genius of their creator? The porter of *Macbeth* sums up for us the whole genus of impudent door-keepers who have ever lived or ever will live. In *Henry IV* the yawning hostler at 4 A.M. in the inn-yard, flea-bitten and scratching, is the "idea" of all hostlers, laid up in Plato's heaven, in company with the "idea" of all fleas and all inn-yards. Far other is it with Wells' admittedly life-like characters. *They* are clever life-like sketches, done by one who has the knack; magnified Ansteyan *Voces Populi*. But *those* others are portraits, in which universal and individual, ideal and real, meet together into one, and blend into imperishable works of art.

And beyond that narrow limit—Kent, Surrey, South London, the S.E. Railway main line, one might say—where everybody has a cockney accent—and South Kensington where everybody talks shop—is Wells ever really at home? He is not widely travelled enough to extend his gallery of life-like sketches—how absurd and frigid is his one attempt to describe an adventure far afield, in *Tono Bungay*! How uncomfortable is our cockney author in that African swamp, where Stevenson would have revelled, and Kipling would at least have made you *think* that he was quite at home! We really feel for his embarrassment, and are quite fidgety until he is home again on Waterloo platform. And this lack of wide experience is not made up for by that genial imaginative power on a large scale which enables real creators like Shakespeare and Scott to throw on their canvases figure after figure, owed not so much to observation as to the universal sympathy and the creative imagination of their souls.

5. It is only a step from this to the final limitation,

the *autobiographical* character of much of his work. Why does Wells never describe an ordinary, happy child, living with ordinary, happy parents? Why this succession of children, minus a father, and with an unsympathetic mother, or with father who dies untimely, or without both father and mother, at all events without the averagely happy family life, until you think that the *rule* in this world is children hopelessly starved and mutilated in respect of domestic affection and the training of the normal home? Why that sad procession of Anglican clergy, whereas hardly a single Nonconformist minister flits across his pages? Merely because Wells' parents or guardians took him to church and not chapel.

Nothing, in fact, is less edifying or satisfying than his recent incursion into sexual philosophising. His sceptical philosophy of course forbids him to regard morality as more than custom—*mores*—or to admit of the possibility of unchanging laws in any sphere of action. Consequently, ideas about marriage, like everything else, may and must go into the melting-pot. And the novel is selected (he tells us explicitly in *Mankind in the Making*, which appeared in 1904) as the most convenient way of treating the question, and of canvassing the various possibilities it presents. But was it mere speculative or sociologist interest that determined the fact that in the novels of the intervening period (especially *In the Days of the Comet*, *Tono Bungay*, *Ann Veronica*, and *The New Machiavelli*) the sex question has become a veritable obsession? At best, the exhibition is a pretty horrid one. Incidents of an evil (or a quite exclusively libidinous) nature are related sometimes with hardly a suggestion of censure—nay, they are at times justified as perfectly natural: or where they are criticised and blamed are certainly not blasted as character- and soul-destroying. "I'm going with my own woman. And England, and

so forth, must square itself to that." So his last word on passion and duty! Oh, sordid and sorry come-down since the days of the stern-eyed, Spartan-disciplined Samurai! In other words, everything in heaven and earth must give place to the discussion of the sex-problem, to promoting revolutions in the laws concerning marriage and the family, and the general turning of the world inside out. Verily this is no basis on which to discuss serious social reforms, or tamper with institutions which, there is some reason to believe, lie after all at the base of a society in equilibrium. And if this is the moral outcome of nominalist scepticism, then we see how easily the "faith" in considerateness may vanish, and moral anarchy take its place. We feel too how absolutely essential it is to "believe" that, convincing though the analysis is that leads to that metaphysical position, it cannot be the whole truth. Not only for the sake of morality, but for the sake of truth must a Plato after all come after the Sophist-sceptics: else is our fluid tissue of individual uniques but a chaos after all.

And is there not a trace of dogged blindness in the way in which just those ideals, that set of ideas, and that notion of discipline, one grain of each of which (in *Tono Bungay* and *The New Machiavelli*) could and would have prevented or saved the situation, are still ignored or definitely flouted? One grain (one feels) of the Christian ideal of love and marriage, which is not all self-negation, but in which self-control and considerateness for the partner-woman are ever-present elements, would have easily prevented or cured the very ills so bitterly complained of in those two books, yet so recklessly incurred. But no! God is thanked that (in *Tono Bungay*) the hero's boyhood was not interfered with by any fool of a parent or schoolmaster giving good advice about sexual matters; the very idea of purity is pronounced theoretically impossible,

and the word *itself* sneered out of countenance : the Christian notions of considerateness and chivalry that steadily hold a man down to look to the interests and happiness of the woman are ignored or satirised ; and when finally this infatuated animosity against what might have saved the situation leads to the breaking of the marriage-bond by an affair which confessedly began, continued and ended in sheer lust, there is not one hint that the Christian verdict—viz. that that affair was a vile sin—might even conceivably be correct. We are, on the contrary, given to understand that the incident was perfectly " natural."

Now it would have been competent to point out that not all men are lucky enough, unfortunately, to have had the Christian training in sobriety, self-control and honour, and that those who have not enjoyed such advantages should be lightly judged. But to depict a vile and sordid tragedy, and then to thank the Devil that you have succeeded in avoiding the very set of ideas that would have made it impossible does seem to me the insane attitude of a man fighting against both the truth and the light ; the very lie of the soul.

May it not be, however, that we have, in the miserable dénouement of *The New Machiavelli*, not the very blasphemy against the Holy Ghost itself, but the intimation of the down-crash and hopeless ruin of the one-sided philosophy of H. G. Wells ?—the demonstration that no mere poetic or enthusiastic " faith " in " goodwill " and the voluntary social self-discipline of men, plastered illogically on to an anarchist metaphysic, will make up for the firm frame-work supplied by heavenly ideal and by divine law, and that the merely fluid is, by the very terms of it, unstable as water and shall not excel ? And is it not possible that this shock and this discovery may be destined to open up yet another chapter in the thought- and life-history of H. G. Wells ?

CHAPTER XIV

On Elgar's Second Symphony

The paper which follows is an interpretation by W.H.T.G. of the Second Symphony of Elgar—"a guess at its inner meaning." In a letter describing an interview with the composer is found this reference to the paper:

My Second Symphony effusion had evidently touched the spot. I seem to have hit it off *absolutely* in general idea, and very largely in detail also. For example, it was absolutely correct to say that the whole thing represents the "passionate pilgrimage" of a soul; that the last movement represents the final issue of his "passion" in noble action, and that the last two pages is apotheosis and the eternal issue of the soul's pilgrimage.

He told me that the *fff* passage in the second episode of the Rondo is the most "horrible" thing he ever did. It is the *madness* that attends the excess or abuse of passion.

He pointed me out a passage in *Maud*,[1] where the hero imagines he has gone mad, and that he is lying under a street with the horrible traffic roaring over his head.

[1] Maud, Part II. v. 1.

"Dead, long dead,
Long dead!
And my heart is a handful of dust
And the wheels go over my head."

In the music he represents this by an incessant maddening hammering on the big drum, rising at the climax to a hideous din. He said that he had been closely associated at Worcester with a lunatic asylum, and had seen a lot of the patients, and knew their histories and symptoms. He thinks that all great music ultimately rests on experience of life. Where the young moderns are so lacking, he thinks, is in their *in*-experience in this respect. When they try to write great music they only succeed in setting up a big frame, and have not the life experience to fill that frame really. For the same reason, they excel only in slighter works.

THE PASSIONATE PILGRIM

ELGAR'S 2ND SYMPHONY (IN E♭).

A true Sinfonia Appassionata, if ever there was one. And because it is, in addition, one of the supreme artistic works of modern times, it becomes whoso has perceived its greatness to give voice to his perception. For this is one of the very few ways in which the debt incurred through a work of this kind can be—not paid—but at least acknowledged.

Is it not the greatest of all Elgar's works—though there are several others of the same quality? Comparing it with the first symphony, for example, one would say that the first is built on truly great lines—from the first bar it evidently starts out to achieve greatness—and succeeds. But of the second one would say that it did not start out to achieve anything except its passionate self. Its song just burst out

" because it must "—Shelley's Skylark and Keats's Nightingale in one, impassioned gladness and impassioned sadness blended, even as they are in the world. And the result a supremely great work of art, straight from Nature's own deep heart.

" *Rarely, rarely comest thou,*
Spirit of Delight."

This is the only key supplied by the composer to a piece which obviously cannot be judged as " pure music." All of Elgar's orchestral works are more or less " enigmas," and some more so than the Variations which bear the name. They all of them therefore invite, practically compel, attempts at solutions. The composer must not be vexed if some of these attempts are *out*, perhaps very much out. It is his own fault !—for so evidently having had a definite idea in his own mind, and for giving us only just the far end of the golden thread along which the idea may be tracked to its deep-shaded home at the labyrinth-centre. But in the hands of many the thread will break : perhaps of most, perhaps of all.

The " Spirit of Delight " we at least are given to know hovers over this poem—shall we say at once, over the poet? She visits him at times of rare, intensest rapture : and anon leaves him, perhaps in her shyness repelled by this or that alien influence. But the soul of that poet is her lover. With all the intensity and passion of his poet's nature he longs for her, he pursues her. Life is for him, from rapturous days of youth onward, a quest of her, a " passionate pilgrimage." Shall he run her down, capture the retreating spirit, turn her rare visits into lasting companionship? Well . . . pilgrims are also strangers on this earth. It is not here that they find their continuing city and home.

Act I

The first movement is, as clearly as if it were inscribed with words instead of notes, an ecstasy of youth. It is a veritable spring-song—the Spring of human life thrilling to nature's Spring. The Spirit of Delight has visited the soul of the pilgrim of Delight. The very first unison note in B♭, with its lingering syncopation, like the call of the spring birds in May, tells us this—a mere up-stroke though it is to the word which immediately follows. This word is none other than the theme which, both by its intrinsic character and its significant repetition in succeeding movements, proclaims itself as the theme of the Spirit of Delight, whether conceived as yearning on the part of the soul or as bestowal on the part of the goddess. It is a melody of extraordinary passion and beauty, bursting forth headlong—an accelerando in the very opening bars—and in its veins the ichor of youth and spring. It consists of but two bars, each of which plays an important part in the sequel, and which are complementary to the other ; the first (bar 2) with its syncopated, undulating arpeggio suggesting wooing, pathos, and gathering up for the second (bar 3), which bursts out and pours down like a very torrent. Even the semitone F♯ to G which leads up to this second phrase is very significant. It denotes the last moment before yearning finds vent in ecstasy : while later in the piece (27, last bar) the baulking of yearning is poignantly depicted by the repeated utterance of this semitonal appeal *without its rapturous sequel.* Again, in the two culminations and consummations of passion in this movement (42 and 65) the repetition (rallentando) of this semitonal call acts like a spur and a goad in response to which the whole of the impassioned energies

of the soul are summoned up for an expression of final and maximum intensity.

With this theme, then, the symphony begins outright. A modulation ; the theme thrills out again ; and away careers the Allegro on its way, like a stream down the valley of delight.

It is $\frac{12}{8}$ time ; the triplet rhythm, beloved of the light-hearted Mendelssohn, is itself eloquent of youth and joy. But what a long, long way have we travelled since Mendelssohn ! (Could Mendelssohn have written his *Joy Symphony* in any key but A major ? And would not Elgar have chosen any other rather than A?) Not from Mendelssohn could we have had this passion of delight which betrays an aching almost more than enjoyment ; while Melusine herself shows that Mendelssohn's most poignant woe was as nothing to what we already feel *this* " passionate pilgrim " to be capable of, though now its hour is spring and the riot of youth's spring—delight. This joy pursuer, we know, has *pain* in front of him. His deep capacity for this one emotion is the measure of his capacity for the other. The one intensity involves the opposite intensity. Storm and stress await him, though now all the woods are ringing, and every passionate lover—bird singing—ringing, singing, with the Spring, the SPRING, the SPRING !

And the poet's soul hears and answers the call. With every nerve athrill, with blood coursing through every vein, he and Nature become one in the Spring's rapture and intoxication.

The length and strength of the pressure is tremendous—it is shown in the very length of the so-called first subject, which, like the Prelude to *Tristan*, is a never-ending chain of melodies, each suggesting and leading into the others with extraordinary spontaneity. From its unseen source in the poet's deep, passionate

heart it keeps bubbling up—what a true lilt of spring-song we have in § 5 (last two bars), and with what an abandon of rhapsody it is repeated in § 6 ! This leads up to an emotional climax, after which a period of rest is both artistically and physically inevitable ; and thus, inevitably and neither formally nor mechanically, the quieter second subject (§ 8) comes, as the pool succeeds the rapid by natural sequence, not by rule. Here, as in the first subject, the proof of the immense reserves of emotional energy in this soul is the length to which the theme runs and the spontaneous way in which it throws off sub-themes. Elgar's super-fecundity in melodic material thoughout this symphony is indeed extraordinary—it surpasses anything of the sort even in his works. In the case of this more meditative second theme, the note of melancholy, which we predicted for our passionate pilgrim, begins to make itself heard, whether in a poignant counter-point to the main subject, afterwards keened out by the oboe (§ 13) with intensified poignancy, or the sub-theme with long-drawn calls that may one day turn to wailings (§ 11). But not yet : for this quieter and more wistful music soon speeds up and agitates itself into a resumption of the old headlong intensity, and another emotional climax is reached as the sustained nature-call of the very first bar is shouted out, enthusi-astically seconded by crashing tutti chords in slurred groups of two. And the emotional storm again begins to ebb.

We reach here a juncture which in the first symphony also at this very point was a critical one. An episode is absolutely inevitable not only constructionally but even psychologically. But what episode ? In the first symphony—also (surely) the pilgrimage of another noble soul, but one less vehement and eager, more devo-tional and with more definite aspiration—something

sinister came in at this point. And, unless one is immensely mistaken, so it does here also.

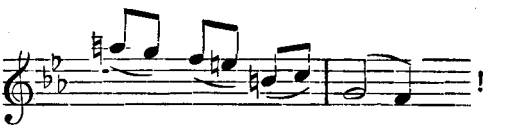
The whole atmosphere changes. Over the lovely countryside clouds cast deep shadows—not the fleeting, laughing shadows of an early April day, but shadows which bring with them a chilling wind. The birds' songs drop off, their chorus ceases, until only a single note is heard (23). We have heard that note twice before—in the first bar and at the ecstasy when it shouted and the orchestra shouted with it (20). But now it has become a melancholy note, keening in insistent rhythm (not syncopated this time), and the echo which follows each plaintive note is as plaintive as itself—it is, indeed, none other than the semitonal phrase of the second bar, but now, how much changed in spirit! Faint and ever fainter comes that wailing note, like a bird calling in vain for a lost mate; and then . . . it ceases, displaced—by what?

By a sinister theme of three chords (24) with a gride in their harmony (the augmented fifth in inversion). Snatches of the joyous lilts are still heard (26–29), but are withered each time by the breath of the eerie newcomer. The lights are very low now, and when they are at their lowest, then the sinister theme has its hour. It reiterates itself time after time, always with that gride at the heart of it, which is tremendously reinforced by one of the boldest pedals even Elgar has ever conceived. The dissonances thus produced, thin, acrid, put the teeth on edge. Above, the violoncellos (28) sing out a sad, regretful song in counterpoint. Of the old themes only that of the Spirit of Delight makes its voice heard—but the *first* half of it only, the wooing half, now heartbrokenly wistful, its semitonal sequel leading now—to what? Alas! no longer to the old rapturous shout; but only, by miserable counterfeit, to the sinister gride which has cast its baleful shadow

over a sunny world. And great heavens! What is this?

> "Ah! . . . beneath the dust
> A coppery sparkle all at once denotes
> The hid snake has conceived a purpose."

(29 bar 4)

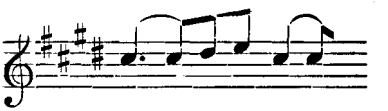


It is the whine of the oboe, thin, deadly-sweet, appealing, insinuating, sinuous as the snake, *cherchez la femme*! Beware! . . . O Eve, Delilah, Kundry, however thou art called, O Ewig Weibliche, but not of *Il Paradiso*, what doest thou here, tenfold deadlier and more dangerous because of thy cursed pathos, as Kundry was to Parsifal, as Bella to Richard Feverel, as the *deadliest* seductresses to the *noblest* of our passionate pilgrims? . . . It is over for the moment. The first half of the Spirit of Joy theme manages to evoke the second (30), but the tone is that of heart-break. Other fragments of the old lilt come back, but sadly and tiredly; the old spring has gone out of them; the most irrepressible frisker of them is twice hushed down (31 bar 3, 32 bar 3), and then "Sinister Street" has to be traversed again: the griding chords on the jarring pedal, with the lament from the 'cellos above (33) . . . they have it all their own way this time and reach their appointed end, unprotested against, in hoarse mutters deep down in the brass. The storm is over.

It appears that our pilgrim of delight has been having an evil hour. What has happened? We do not know: but he has been given to taste—or to drain

—a cup, sweet indeed but deadly ; and with an after-taste which is the very negation of Delight. . . .

But youth is youth, and May is not to be quenched by however chilly a spell of weather. Lo, therefore (35), after that last ominous and antipathetic grumble, the sun begins to come out, a warm wind blows from the old sweet quarter, and a bird announces the blessed change. His insistent note

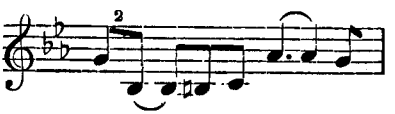


is taken up by " birds singing East and birds singing West," louder and louder, crescendo of sunshine and of bird song, till soon the woods are ringing again, and the Spirit of Delight which had fled comes again—here and here she sings, the joyous syncopation begins to chorus again, the sustained summoning call peals forth again (41), until, in immense and incredible volume, the Delight theme is *shouted* forth, thundered out (42), Lento, *fff*—the first bar that gathereth up, the second bar that bursteth forth, liberating the pent-up streams again, which now go dancing and singing down the vale, as they went at the first.

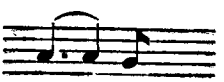
Technically, it might be remarked, this is " the return to the first subject ! " But emotionally and psychologically, it is absolutely inevitable, quite apart from symphonic form.

No more shadows cross our pilgrim's path. Spring and summer are long, and not for a moment does this youth tire of their length. Nor does the listener for one moment tire, up to the moment when with masterly skill, the movement is brought to a close. This close consists of an emotional climax that tops even the one just mentioned (none but a work of first-

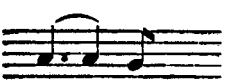
class calibre could have sustained the strains of these enormous demands). It comes (63) at the precise point where the development of the first part led up to and demanded an episode (24). At that identical point in the second part, it leads up to, demands and receives a coda which is the climax of climaxes. The lilting rhythm increases ; song-snatches are intensified by repetition and excited by a scrap of counterpoint



and then again



and again with increasing insistence and passion

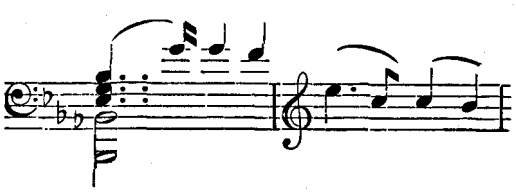


until a clarion call (65) ushers in these provocative semi-tones F♯—G ; again and again and again and yet again they shout their challenge. Not to be denied this time ! For, after a second's stunning silence, they lead up to such an interruption of the Delight theme as was never heard before. With the full strength of the orchestra, each chord emphasising itself in an impassioned allargando, and a crescendo that swells in a single bar from *pp* to *fff*—Delight and the Soul, self-abandoned, close in an embrace of utter ecstasy, and the full rich, red cadence peals forth " *Satisfied* " !

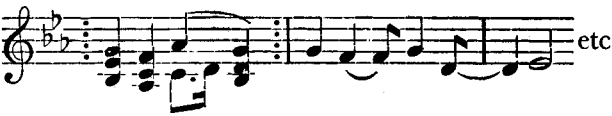
Act II

In the second movement, one of the most hauntingly lovely, slow movements ever conceived by musician, our pilgrim is still "passion's slave"; but a grief holds him, not a joy. What has happened? Some great sorrow has come his way. A long slow theme (67), with sepulchral chords from hushed trombones on the up-beats, seems to suggest Death. The quest of Delight is being interrupted by some Memento Mori.

The second theme, which immediately follows (69) is as poignant as two oboes in thirds can make a theme —and in the Magdalene scene in the *Apostles* Elgar showed how poignant that can be! Very melancholy is the echo of the two clarionets. And the violins (71) resume the sad, sweet strain. This leads through many bars of long, sweet, solemn melodies (74, 75) ever reinforced, deepening in volume and heightening in power, which prepare and lead up to a mighty, emotional climax (76) as passionate as anything in the first movement, but this time "wild with all regret." Yet there is nothing weak here; it is the simplicity of it that makes it as strong as it is infinitely moving. It is a noble soul that is here voicing its sorrow. And what capacity for sorrow must a soul have which had room for the sustained raptures of the first movement? It is voicing not its own pain only but the pain of humanity. See what a passionate sorrow is here: (note the truly Elgarian double-dot and semi-quaver in the first bar);



and what yearning pathos in



Is there anything quite like it in music—as simple as the sobbing of a child, and as heart-breaking? In the recapitulation [1] this climax is reproduced (85) with thrilling reinforcement, thrilling, ineffable. And again it, too, dies down to a sob.

The sob, in turn, is dying away, and then—O Mater Consolatrix! Dear Spirit of Delight who "rarely comest"—thou comest now, gently this time, with healing in thy wings! A mere echo (87), but a benediction from the days that are past, she hovers a moment—and (88) slowly vanishes into silence.

In that silence the theme of deep sorrow (88 bar 3) has the last word. There is a long sustained note on the horns, chords awful and sepulchral in the basses ascending and dissolving in the upper registers. Silence . . . Is it despair for our Passionate Pilgrim in his quest for the soul's delight?

Act III

Called a "Rondo"—as it is, in form; and a true Scherzo in character. Not that it is entirely "a joke" but then, so were not Beethoven's scherzi!

Youth is youth, and to deepest sorrow something must succeed. Sometimes that something is a reaction to gaiety. And unbridled in its gaiety is this movement, though it is not the sweet intoxication of the first move-

[1] The movement, for all its emotional character, is a model of summary construction. An interesting novelty in this is the use of the second subject as link to introduce the recapitulation, in which it does not reappear.

ment with the tinge of melancholy about as sweet as its joy. There is humour here ; rollicking but sometimes rather hard. Brilliancy, but the brilliancy is a little hard also. Traces of the past are very evident on our pilgrim in this mood. He is older, and there is something ironical in his tone. . . . The fun intensifies—it becomes rather like a revel—yes, and from a revel, a riot. And in the name of all that is wonderful—shall we have to say damnable—what is this that is flinging itself into the noisy rout ? We have our suspicions at 117 ; but at 119 whatever mask the reveller donned is torn off. It is the sinister, griding theme of the episode in the first Act ! but now prodigiously transmogrified. Gone is the weird mysteriousness with which it wormed itself in there ; gone is the wailing melancholy of its counterpoint companion. Now the two shout—well nigh bellow. They prance their way obscenely through the wild carnival. Small boon-companion themes shriek up and down, all round about, like little devils. The whole thing is utterly " unbuttoned " and unbridled. Do we indeed discern the figure of our Pilgrim moving *dans cette galère* ? It would seem so. . . . Well, he is certainly testing all things. He is trying to the uttermost what this strange alien spirit has to offer him. But, just as in the first movement, that spirit is fugitive. We look round the carnival for him. He is gone ! . . . But the fun goes on. The dancing is kept up late and long, and our Pilgrim is in the thick of it right up to its wildly excited and tumultuous conclusion.

" Rarely, rarely comest thou, Spirit of Delight." It is notable that into this sole scene, a scene of unmitigated pleasure, that Spirit never comes, no, not for one instant. Delight's place was vacant in this carnival.

We fancy our Pilgrim was very considerably enlightened as he reflected on this fact.

Act IV and Last

He has known the aspiration and the ecstasy of youth, the deep thrill of sorrow, laughter, folly and recklessness, perhaps the sting of sin. In all he has sought Delight. What is to be the end of the quest? "Vanity of Vanity," Ecclesiastes' end?

No: it seems that, like Faust at the end of "the Second Part," he finds his soul and his soul's delight in noble action. This Act rings with this action, and the joy of it.

"Con dignità" is the direction of the opening final theme. The storms and delusions of youth are passed. Manhood has come, "open-eyed and unafraid."

In the *Nimrod* variation Elgar showed us his remarkable power of musical oratory—climax piled on climax, the peroration apparently reached and accomplished, yet ever leading to a yet higher level. But the feat is far surpassed in this movement. We reckon the whole first hundred bars of this glorious movement as a single flight!—Long melodies which throw out offshoots and lead straight into melodies more beautiful still, the whole an ascending scale of astonishing climaxes, worked up into a noble peroration which again ever betters itself beyond all belief. Nothing shows better the intensity and the volume of inspiration that was behind this symphony than the composer's ability to win out in these most dangerous trials of endurance, and the ease with which these vast strains are borne.

Also, he has given us nothing fresher, more manly and ringing. Here is a maturer and richer *Froissart*. Here is the breeziness of some of the *Variations* and of the *Introduction and Allegro*. The Passionate Pilgrim now experiences the passion of action and of chivalry.

Of chivalry! For the second subject rings like the lists at a tourney. Strauss's "Hero" must have enemies, traducers whom he must meet in hideous fight and overthrow. But our Pilgrim has made no enemies. Yet "he drinks delight of battle with his peers" in the field of chivalry. Hark, a challenge (§ 139) at the north end of the lists—knightly, noble: instantly its answer rings out, another mounted knight stands opposite. Then a third, a fourth. The tuckets increase, the air is filled with them: the mêlée is joined, ha! 'tis a glorious joust; the blows ring, the shouts are heard—all is knightly, noble . . .

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We are doubtless getting too concrete and guessing too much. The above, however, is an impression rather than a guess. This lovely and glorious piece, when its general relation to what precedes it is grasped, can be judged and enjoyed as "pure music." The imperative call for interpretation does not come until the very end, at the Coda.

For the moment the attention must be concentrated on the marvellous puissance of this movement in its material and structure: on the deferred climax of climaxes when it comes at last (§ 153 bar 6), heralded, characteristically, by a thrilling trumpet-call; and then, the marvellous art of the anti-climax . . . the ebbing after the piling up of those surging tides of sound, perhaps an even more difficult feat, and accomplished with the same effortlessness which characterises the masterpiece throughout.

The cadence—a lovely anti-climax—comes at last, hauntingly sweet (144); then an upward soaring in counterpoint to the opening theme in the bass, and the movement might seem to be closing, or introducing a close. But as a matter of fact, by a harmonic twist at

the last moment, it (145) shakes itself and embarks on a long "development" full of animation and dignity and open-air feeling (145 to 156).

This leads back gradually to a quiet resumption of the opening theme, and the recapitulation begins. We are glad to hear the whole of that marvellous hundred bars of massed oratory again. Not a bar would we miss—but we are curious to see how the climax (see 143 in the first half) is to be made a super-climax—for at such a point mere repetition is inconceivable. Incredibly, the feat is performed (§ 165) and that by thickening the already gorgeous harmonies and by throwing in the most wonderful and glorious piece of counterpoint imaginable, which is fairly shouted out by the brass, a dazzling thread athwart the already thick, rich web of sound. It is a master-stroke! Then the lovely anti-climax (166) of that indescribably touching cadence, the lifting scale passage against the opening theme in the bass, and, once more, the movement might seem to have reached its close.

No: the Passionate Pilgrim has not yet reached *home:* the quest is not quite finished. The ascending passage finds the old familiar F♯—G, and (168), as though evoked in obedience to the magic watchword, very softly, very high up in the violins, the SPIRIT OF DELIGHT appears, hovers, descends (§§ 168–170) transfigured, softly as a dove! The music is very hushed now, very mystical. Soft trills are heard from here and from there, caressing the descending and ever-broadening theme: harps thrill, in golden upward-glissades, or in arpeggios of celestial harmonies, glorifying this heavenly theophany. It is a veritable transfiguration scene, like the last in the *Paradiso*, or like the close of the Second Part of *Faust* or the descent of the Grail in *Lohengrin*. What does it mean? That the Spirit of Delight is now transformed into the Spirit

of Eternity ?—or that the soul of this Passionate Pilgrim is being itself transfigured as its quest nears the goal ? Or both perhaps—for both must be true for either to be true. The knight-pilgrim now knows that only the Eternal Beauty can satisfy that joy-thirst of a soul not meant wholly for time.

The transfigured Delight-Theme has reached where the Knight is kneeling (170). It seems to rest upon him like a benediction as the scene closes in.

" That strain again ! It had a dying fall . . ."—it is the lovely cadence-theme (170 bar 7), perfectly satisfying and satisfied. Then for the last time the manly opening theme (171), now sounded hushed and slow against an upward scale, which climbs and comes to rest on the major third. It was the characteristic note of the opening of the Delight theme in the very opening of the opening movement (see bar 2). The note thus reached again is never again released. A natural symbol of profound solace and satisfaction, it tops the great tonic chords which now announce the end—through an immense crescendo . . . a burst of glory . . . an ebbing . . . a long, long fading away . . . to Requiem Aeternam.

The Pilgrim has reached Home. In that eternal mansion the Spirit of Delight no longer " rarely, rarely comes." Rather it " abides with him for ever."

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